

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OCCUPATIONAL FACTORS, INDIVIDUAL
CHARACTERISTICS AND BURNOUT LEVELS OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
PERSONNEL IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES
IN KENYA**



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of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Counselling Psychology of Egerton University.**

EGERTON UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented or published for the award of a degree or diploma in this or any other university.

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DEDICATION

To my late husband Wilberforce Adeli, to my children Eugene and Becky whom I dearly love, to my loving mother Rebecca Musundi and the entire Musakali family.

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ABSTRACT

Job burnout is a state of mental, physical and emotional exhaustion resulting in job dissatisfaction, lowered productivity, absenteeism and high turnover at the workplace. Student Affairs Personnel in universities are often required to spend considerable and intense time with students facing psychological, social and physical problems coupled with feelings of frustration, anger, embarrassment, fear, and despair. Such an environment can easily lead to burnout if not checked. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Occupational factors, Individual characteristics and levels of Burnout among student affairs personnel in universities. The study was guided by Maslach's Multidimensional Theory and Holland's Theory of Career Choice. The causal – comparative (expost-facto) study design was used. The target population was drawn from randomly selected 6 public and 6 private universities in Kenya. This population constituted personnel working in the student affairs departments who were involved with students on a daily basis to provide guidance and counseling services. Purposive sampling was used to select 179 respondents to form the required sample for the study. A Burnout Questionnaire for Student Affairs Personnel (BQSAP) and Dean's Interview Schedule (DIS) were the instruments used for data collection. The instruments were piloted for reliability and validity in one public and one private university. Percentages, frequencies and means aided in the analysis of descriptive statistics while the Pearson product - moment for correlations, t-test, one way ANOVA and multiple linear regression were employed in analyzing inferential statistics. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 19 computer programme was used in data processing and analysis. All hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. Results revealed that occupational factors (workload, Role conflict and Role ambiguity) positively made the largest unique contribution to burnout levels of the student affairs personnel ($r=0.709$, $P=0.001$). The results of the study can be used to help in the creation of burnout awareness, coupled with adoption of relevant counselling models among the affected staff. The assumption is that if one is aware of the burnout level then he/she can adopt relevant interventional measures and/or coping mechanisms. It is concluded from the study that occupational factors have a direct relationship with burnout among student affairs personnel. This study therefore recommends that in designing interventional measures, the individual, the organization or other stake holders should take note of occupational factors.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS:	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BQSAP:	Burnout Questionnaire for Student Affairs Personnel
CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
DIS:	Dean's Interview Schedule
HELB:	Higher Education Loans Board
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
JAB:	Joint Admissions Board
MBI:	Maslach Burnout Inventory
NCST:	National Council of Science and Technology
PSS:	Privately Sponsored Student
RAN:	Reuters and Alert Net
SAP:	Student Affairs Personnel
STS:	Secondary Traumatic Stress
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
USA:	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Burnout is a state of mental, physical and emotional exhaustion which occurs mostly among highly motivated and self driven individuals who come to feel that their work is not recognized or that they are not accomplishing their goals (Yousefy & Ghassemi, 2006). According to Moore (2000), professionals like healthcare givers, social workers, teachers and people in other service professions are the ones likely to suffer burnout. It is therefore a prolonged response to emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job.

The first person to write on burnout was a psychiatrist called Freudenberger in 1975, followed by a social psychologist called Maslach in 1976 (Kalliath, O'Driscoll, Gillespie & Bluedorn, 2000). The use of the term burnout for such a state dates back to the mid 70s in the United States of America (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). The studies were based on experiences of people working in human service occupations whose major goal was to provide aid and services to people in need. Included in such professions were teachers, nurses, doctors, social workers and police officers among others. Professionals in these occupational groups tend to be employed in both the public and private sectors.

According to D'Souza (2002) burnout affects not only work oriented behavior but intrudes into personal lives. It shows itself by significant decrease in energy, depression like symptoms, anger and prolonged minor illnesses. It may also take the form of increased marital and family conflicts and this may not spare even the personnel in student affairs departments. There is need for such staff to feel competent and effective in their work but when such feelings are deprived, burnout sets in (Lorden, 2008) oblivious of the ever increasing students' need for services from the Student Affairs Personnel (SAP). If such personnel cannot attend to their self care, they will not effectively provide quality care to their clients.

Lorden (2008), after studying the Indiana University SAP concluded that the attrition rate in the student affairs profession was high due to burnout. The researcher said that the SAP leave the profession every year because of job dissatisfaction, role ambiguity, role conflict, role orientation, stress, overload and perceived opportunities for goal attainment, professional development and career advancement. Lorden noted that there are limited opportunities for mobility within the student affairs because organizational structures in higher education are relatively flat. This means that many positions exist at entry level but the number reduces at each succeeding level

forming a pyramid like structure. The current study agreed with Lorden's when he said that the situation in student affairs departments in institutions of higher learning is marked with unclear career paths leading to professionals having multiple paths. Lorden noted that most entry level positions in student affairs are quite stressful, unstable, confusing and unpredictable. The Vice Chancellor's Committee Report (2000) which dealt with causes of strikes in public universities in Kenya reported that expectations for job performance in student affairs departments are always demanding and hours are long and erratic. It is a no wonder that Lussier (2006) described the student affairs professionals as people wallowing in unpredictable and continually interrupted professional and personal lives.

Blackhurst (2000) studied career satisfaction among the SAP in Universities in America and reported that majority of the SAP were not satisfied with the job environment. He therefore recommended further research on how age, race, gender, relationship status and institutional characteristics relate to burnout among such professionals. Blackhurst also argued that the strategies for avoiding burnout must involve taking steps to change the individual and the job environment. This means that burnout solutions must address the organizational structure of the student affairs profession as well as the personal and professional needs of individuals in the field. This therefore was the reason for carrying out a study on how occupational factors and individual characteristics are related to burnout levels among student affairs professionals in universities in Kenya.

In Kenya, public universities are established by Acts of Parliament and admit most of their students through the Joint Admissions Board (JAB) with a few vacancies being filled by Privately Sponsored Students (PSS). Some of these students are sometimes admitted for courses and to universities that were neither their first nor second choices. It is the duty of the SAP to ensure that such students adjust to the campus environment. In all universities in Kenya, the office of the Dean of Students is primarily concerned with students' welfare from entry to the university up to graduation. Admission to the university marks the beginning of one's career and hence requires one to make mental, physical and emotional adjustments. This Office maintains staff that is expected to help students to adjust to life in the university. The student population in universities is also diverse. There are those graduating from adolescence whose developmental demands are quite different from the mature students. Since the former are just from secondary school, their attitude towards the campus environment is also quite different from the mature students. It is the duty of the SAP to ensure that all these students settle down well. This therefore calls for staff working in student affairs departments to be well trained in basic principles of guidance and

counselling so that they can be able to respond appropriately to students' anxieties as manifested in different ways (Vice Chancellors' Committee report 2000). If this is lacking then such personnel might not enjoy their work giving way to workplace stress which with time ushers in Burnout.

According to Chepchieng, Kiboss, Sindabi, Kariuki and Mbugua (2006), the twenty first century students have more social, psychological and spiritual problems while on campus and such can only be solved if the campus environment is conducive to the students' social, emotional and personality developments. In trying to make the campus environment conducive the SAP provide counselling, chaplaincy, entertainment, orientation, career placement and welfare services to students. The Vice-Chancellors' Committee report of 2000 however indicated that an overall assessment of counselling services were inadequate in all public universities. The Counselling units suffer from insufficient staff, inadequate training, and lack of facilities given the ever increasing student population. This is likely to lead to stress which if not checked can culminate into burnout.

In most of today's advanced market economies, the public sector has to adjust to consumer's growing demands for quality service. People-oriented professionals often enter their profession with service oriented idealistic goals. They typically work under norms that expect them to continuously invest emotional, cognitive and even physical energy in service recipients. In this context, the above changes are likely to create a process of emotional exhaustion, mental weariness and physical fatigue. Looking at the SAP therefore, the demands for excessive work hours, the need for continuous retraining in the wake of accelerating pace of information technologies and the blurring of the line separating work and home life can easily lead to burnout. Research on Burnout has therefore its roots in care giving and service occupations in which the core of the job is the relationship between the provider and the recipient. The current study focused on a care-giving occupation where students' academic and social issues in universities are handled.

In today's world, jobs have become an all encompassing part of people's lives. People tend to spend more time at the workplace than anywhere else since jobs are their lifeline. It is therefore not surprising that many professionals experience burnout. Burnout in the workplace is increasingly a critical problem for workers, employers and societies. Researchers who study burnout have demonstrated its direct and indirect costs. While burnout has been studied

frequently in the West, there has been little research on the topic in Kenya. This however does not mean that burnout is not experienced among human service professionals in Kenya; it is there but with little research and therefore little is reported. Literature on burnout has dealt almost exclusively with the individual analysis of burnout; the potentialities of investigating organizational burnout have not systematically been explored (Sandberg, 2000). The current researcher however felt that burnout on an individual level of analysis has its organizational counterpart. It is with the above in mind that carrying out a study on the relationship between occupational factors, personal characteristics and burnout was important.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Among the student population in universities, there is a growing demand for counselling services. This is because of the upsurge of HIV/AIDS, psychologically related medical conditions, trauma, criminal behavior, marital and family dysfunctions which all affect the students' academic life. Personnel in the student affairs departments in universities are expected to give more in terms of time, effort, skill and flexibility. The Student Affairs Personnel come across such scenarios daily and this is likely to have an impact on their psychological wellbeing. The challenge of burnout can therefore no longer be ignored in institutions of higher learning and specifically by the SAP this explains the reason for this study. Secondly, the experience of burnout is unique to each individual and is also specific to the work context, in this case the Student Affairs Departments in Universities in Kenya. How each therefore experiences burnout varies. The Student Affairs Personnel also vary in the expectation they bring to their job in terms of the nature of their work and the likelihood of achieving success. There are therefore occupational factors and individual characteristics that can affect one's work output leading to burnout. Lastly, there is extensive literature on burnout among other human service providers like teachers and health care providers in Kenya and beyond but none among the SAP in universities in Kenya.

Establishing the relationship of occupational factors, individual characteristics and burnout levels of the SAP is therefore important to fill the research gap.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between Occupational factors, Individual characteristics and Burnout levels of personnel working in the student affairs departments in public and private universities in Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To establish the Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel in public and private universities in Kenya.
- ii. To determine the relationship between Occupational Factors (Workload, Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity) and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel.
- iii. To find out the relationship between Individual Characteristics (Age, Gender, Experience and Personality) and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel.
- iv. To determine the relationship between Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel and a combination of Individual characteristics and Occupational factors.
- v. To establish how Burnout among Student Affairs Personnel in Public and Private Universities can be mitigated.

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses were statistically analyzed and discussed:

HO₁: There is no statistically significant difference in Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel in Public and Private Universities in Kenya

HO₂: There is no statistically significant relationship between Occupational factors (Workload, Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity) and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel.

HO₃: There is no statistically significant relationship between Individual characteristics (Gender, Age, Experience and Personality) and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel.

HO₄: There is no statistically significant relationship between Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel and a combination of Individual characteristics and Occupational factors.

1.6 - Significance of the Study

It is hoped that if the study findings are adopted, they will provide information and create awareness on the relationship between occupational factors, individual characteristics and burnout levels among the SAP in public and private universities in Kenya. Establishing the burnout levels of the SAP is important so that suitable interventional strategies are designed. The findings of this study are expected to help stakeholders such as the university policy makers and Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology in understanding the burnout needs of personnel in student affairs departments and therefore come up with suitable mitigation measures. The

findings of the study are also useful in stress management and prevention programmes, development of counseling programmes to enhance job performance and generally improve student services in universities. Burnout if not checked, can seriously lead to practitioner ineffectiveness and therefore malpractices which in turn lead to client harm. Burnout can be damaging and deserves to be recognized as a problem that requires proper understanding, preventive and treatment strategies. The findings from this study give guidance in the development of a support system and relevant burnout mitigation models which can be adopted by the student affairs departments in institutions of higher learning.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out in selected public and private universities in Kenya. Both private and public universities were used because of differences in student population, work environments and staffing in the Student Affairs Department. Focus was on how individual characteristics and occupational factors relate with burnout levels of student affairs personnel. This study focused on three occupational factors namely; workload, role conflict and role ambiguity. Individual characteristics comprised of age, gender, working experience and personality. The burnout levels of the SAP were given in five main areas; normal, moderate, high, very high and dangerous levels.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The study findings need to be considered in the light of various limitations that the researcher faced while carrying out the study.

- i. Some respondents were quite hostile to the researcher. Some felt that it was a bother and others did not feel like being part of the study. The researcher interpreted such situations to some extent as symptoms of burnout and therefore was quite patient with such respondents. The researcher also gave permission to those who did not want to participate in the study not to fill the questionnaires.
- ii. Some deans of students declined to participate in interview schedules. In such circumstances, the researcher allowed them to fill the questionnaire while others delegated the interview schedules to the Assistant deans of students.
- iii. There was a concern that in some institutions the respondents might only express socially acceptable views and there might be no time to probe the respondent especially in cases of ambiguity. The researcher however overcame this by assuring them of confidentiality.
- iv. The study used questionnaires to review self-report measures. These questionnaires allow the researcher to measure the participants' feelings and beliefs in a quantifiable manner but

it is difficult to know if the participants are answering questions truthfully. Fraenkael and Wallen (2006) say that all self-report inventories are subject to response bias. Some of the respondents might not have been very objective for fear of portraying themselves negatively. This limitation was solved to some extent through the interview schedules.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study was conducted under the following assumptions:

- i. That the student affairs personnel in public and private universities were willing to participate in the study.
- ii. That the views given by the respondents were a true reflection of burnout in their specific universities.
- iii. That other intervening and extraneous variables not studied did not have significant influence on the study.
- iv. That the Student Affairs Personnel experience burnout.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms were operationalized and defined in the context of this study.

Burnout: According to this study it refers to student affairs personnel being physically, emotionally and mentally exhausted, having no interest in the work they once loved. It is a state of being unable to bring about any desired change.

Burnout Level: This is given in form of a score from the Maslach Burnout Inventory. The levels are normal, moderate, high, very high and dangerous.

Coping Mechanism: According to this study, it refers to an individual's set of resources, values and compliance to a particular environment with its own demands and constraints.

Counselling Model: This is a programme that can be used by individuals affected by burnout to curb or minimize the effects.

Experience: This refers to the length of time one has worked in the student affairs department. It was given in years.

Individual Characteristics: These are typical qualities of a person. In this study only gender, age, experience and personality were studied.

Mature student: This is a university student who resumes studies after a period of employment.

Occupational factors: This is the job environment/ job characteristics. They were studied in terms of workload, role ambiguity, and role conflict

Personality: Specific qualities that make up a person's character. They are character traits of an individual.

Role Conflict: Being faced with conflicting demands or professional conflicts on the job leading to compliance with one making the other impossible. It is considered together with value conflict.

Student Affairs Department: This is a department in the university which deals with students' social, financial, extracurricular, religious and psychological issues.

Students' Affairs Personnel: According to this study, they are professionals working in the University Student Affairs Department. They include the Dean of Students, Assistant Dean of Students, Counsellors, Sports Officers, Chaplains, Career Advisors and Administrators. Though different universities use different titles for the said personnel, this study will use the above titles for purposes of uniformity.

Work Overload: Work demands that exceed human capacity to carry out the job.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This study sought to establish whether individual and occupational characteristics have a relationship with burnout levels of student affairs personnel in public and private universities in Kenya. This chapter focuses on the burnout phenomenon in terms of its definition, its causes and effects. Studies carried out among different groups of professionals form the backbone of this chapter. A general global and African picture of burnout is given to form a basis for the necessity of the current topic. The theoretical framework and a conceptual framework for the study are presented.

2.2 Definition of Burnout

Various authors seem to agree on the definition of burnout. According to Cardenas (2007), burnout is a behavioral response of people who experience constant stress from working in occupations that require continued and intensive interaction with people. This definition agrees with Grunfeld (2000) who defines burnout as the result of constant or repeated emotional pressure associated with an intense involvement with people over long periods of time. He adds that it is the therapists' painful realization that they can no longer keep people in need and that they have nothing left to give. In a study carried out by Blood, Cohen and Blood (2007), they said that burnout is a product of an unfortunate interaction between overzealous helpers and over needy clients. What comes out clearly from such a definition is that the condition of burnout occurs most frequently in dedicated and committed workers, those who work too much, too long and too intensely. This therefore means that burnout is common among those who regard their own needs and wants as secondary and therefore feel the pressure to always give. It is argued by Blood *et al.* (2007) that when people keep giving, they tend to reach a stage when they have nothing to give because they are totally burnt out. Burnout therefore results from excessive striving to reach some unrealistic expectation imposed by oneself, others or the values of the society. Burnout is looked at as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that frequently affects individuals who do "people work" of some kind (Maslach, 2003). It is therefore a psychological term used to explain the experience of long-term exhaustion and diminished interest usually in the work context. Burnout is therefore a work related syndrome that stems from an individual's perception of a significant discrepancy between effort (input) and reward (output), this perception being influenced by individual, organizational and social factors. According to Maslach (2003), it is typically marked by withdrawal from and cynicism towards clients.

Burnout is often construed as the result of a chronic period of expending too much effort at work without appropriate periods of energy recovery. The experience of burnout emerges gradually within an individual and results in cumulative emotional and physical exhaustion. It is clarified by Skinner and Roche (2005) that burnout is not only a condition of the body but also the soul and it constitutes a loss of faith in the enterprise of helping. The above definitions are summed up by Gachutha (2009) stating that burnout is when one has diminished personal resources (low energy levels) that lead to diminished empathy (insecure attachments) and diminished awareness (personal and professional) which eventually result in diminished effectiveness.

2.3 Burnout in Industrialized Countries

The American Institute of Stress has indicated that job stress has reached epidemic proportions within all the industrialized nations (Saleh, Quick, Conaway, Sime & Hurwiz, 2007). In the United States for instance, workers get less time off (an average of 15 days plus holidays per year) than most industrialized nations. This therefore implies that with so much time spent on the job, unhappiness at work carries over to all other aspects of life. The sources of burnout in industrialized nations are the universal causes but burnout levels highly depend on the individual, community characteristics, and other demographic characteristics. The current study gave an input on this.

According to Saleh *et al.* (2007), apart from the universal causes of burnout, there are two big trends in the industrialized countries that cause burnout as well, the move to a 24-7 culture and the tightening bottom lines of companies. It is however worth noting that when people are available to work 24-7, the boundary between work and personal time dissolves and serious cases of workplace burnout can result. Globalization has also put pressure on everyone especially in the USA economy to increase productivity. This has created job insecurity because to make this work, people must work harder, faster and longer than before.

A study among 90 airline personnel in Japan reported that about 60% of them had been deliberately absent from duty one time or the other. Absence was found to moderate the relationship between emotional exhaustion and diminished personal accomplishment while supervisory support was found to moderate the relationship between emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Saleh *et al.*, 2007). Most workers in industrialized countries are encouraged to work more than the standard 40 hours a week. It is reported by about 40% of such workers that they work at least 50 hours a week if not more especially in the USA (Bluskygirl, 2007). The SAP in Kenya deal with students throughout – weekends included and in most universities

personnel in student affairs departments are expected to be on call even after working hours just in case of any urgent issue to attend to. This is likely to lead to 50 hours per week or 24-7 culture which can easily lead to burnout. Kenya is striving to emulate the industrialized nations in terms of development in all sectors, higher education included, but will this not lead to burnout as it is in industrialized nations? This study is an attempt to fill this gap.

One recent study carried out in the People's Republic of China found higher job burnout for Chinese managers with Type A personalities (Saleh *et al.*, 2007), but little else has been reported in research journals. The current study looked at personality type in relation to burnout; therefore it is an attempt to fill this gap. Singapore appears to be a prime country in South East Asia to study job stress and burnout due to the rapid transformation of the city-state from a British colony to a newly industrialized country. Singaporeans have had to adjust to both the positive and negative effects of the quickened pace of life in a modern, industrialized nation (Numerof, 2004). According to Numerof, as early as 1984, managers in Singapore showed a higher incidence of burnout symptoms than managers in the other highly industrialized countries such as the United States, Britain, Germany and Sweden.

2.4 Burnout in Africa

Africa is faced by three major problems; poverty, disease and ignorance and according to Olley (2003), these are the root causes of burnout in Africa. A study done at a University College Hospital in Nigeria reported that Nurses had higher scores on all measures of burnout when compared with other health care providers. The current study tended to agree with Olley who explains these findings by saying that in most hospitals in Africa the patient-nurse ratio is always high leading to overworking of those providing nursing care. If this is allowed to go on for some time, burnout sets in and in most cases it makes nurses to be cynical and depersonalized. Given the ever increasing student populations in universities in Kenya, this study was an attempt to establish whether the SAP were faced with a similar situation like the nurses. Emigration and burnout are cited by Jackson and Rothman (2005) as the main reasons for South Africa's shortage of experienced directors. Experienced directors were noted to be resigning from their respective jobs sooner than was in the past. The Institute of Directors suggested a formal mentorship programme with tangible objectives and mitigating the CEO burnout through an understudy process. This approach did not bare much fruit.

According to Fiadzo Golembiewsky, Luo, Bradbury and Rivera (2007) burnout progresses through phases. In a study that they carried out in Ghana, they concluded that poverty and disease had led to substantial incidences of advanced burnout especially in phases 6-8 (marked with

withdrawal from others, behaving differently, experiencing inner emptiness and feeling low). The current study borrows a lot from Fiadzo *et al.* study because it also looks at burnout in terms of burnout levels. This study used five major levels (normal, moderate, high, very high and dangerous).

The five levels of burnout have the following characteristics:-

1 Normal

- i. Feeling a compulsion to prove self
- ii. Neglecting own needs for the sake of the job

2 Moderate

- i. Experiencing inner conflicts and physical symptoms – conflicts with other people, headaches, loss of appetite, fatigue, insomnia, aches, pains
- ii. Revising one's beliefs – no time for friends, play and any form of leisure

3 High

- i. Denying emerging problems e.g. depersonalization and cynicism instead blame it on time pressure, and work - not recognizing change in behaviour
- ii. Withdrawing from others and experiencing resentment

4 Very High

- i. Becoming walled off – experience frustration, irritation, discouragement and sadness
- ii. Behaving differently and people get concerned

5 Dangerous

- i. Experiencing inner emptiness – nothing is motivating. To fill the gap one engages in destructive behaviour like drugs and compulsive pornography; loss of meaning in life
- ii. Feeling low – forgetfulness, confusion, poor concentration and depressed mood.

As individuals progress through these stages gradually, slowly they approach the dangerous level unless burnout is checked. At the dangerous level they have totally burnt out and have no enthusiasm to do anything new. If such a professional offers any kind of human service, s/he is likely to do more harm than good. This explains the reason for the current study.

2.5 Burnout situation in Kenya

Like Africa, human service professionals in Kenya also experience burnout. There are many studies on burnout among health care providers and teaching but none among the SAP in Kenya. One important fact about all these studies is that the burnout syndrome is real in Kenya and we

cannot evade it. In trying to improve living standards, majority of the human service providers find themselves burning out.

The Reuters and Alert Net (RAN) is an organization which samples information on a variety of topics. On 21st May 2010, they reported that the Kenya Government had won praise for a national door to door HIV testing that aims to test 80% of the population on HIV/AIDS by end of 2010. The once enthusiastic VCT Counsellors however were beginning to show signs of burnout. This is caused by work environments, respondents, Counsellors' frustrations and issues to deal with while in the field like couple discordance. This is actually a case of being keen on results without considering the care giver's health. In such a scenario burnout easily sets in.

A cross-cultural comparative study by Kalui (2013) investigated the phenomenon of burnout and its prevalence among athletic directors in the United States and the physical education and games/sports department chairpersons in the Kenya institutions of higher education, including public universities, polytechnic institutions, diploma colleges, primary teacher colleges, and the Harambee Institute of Technology. Results from Kalui's study indicated those individuals prone to burnout included; the younger workers, those who worked more hours, those with fewer years in their job as well as in the general field of work, and females. Such information is quite relevant to this study because it has established that burnout in Kenya is prevalent across populations. The same views are held by Muthoni (2011) who investigated prevalence of the burnout syndrome and its effects among academic staff at the Kenya Medical Training College, Nairobi campus and found out that burnout was quite prevalent by about 65% of the academic staff.

University education is on the increase in Kenya. Currently there are twenty two public universities in Kenya rising from one at independence and a similar number for chartered private universities. Though there is rapid expansion in universities, the provision of corresponding facilities and resources is inadequate (Vice Chancellor's Committee report, 2000). The Vice Chancellors' Committee Report also noted that majority of students undergo socio-psychological changes throughout their life in the university. They therefore always need the services of the SAP. However, these departments in most universities are marked with insufficient staff, some with inadequate training to meet the needs of students and lack of infrastructural facilities like office space. Such conditions are likely to cause stress amongst the SAP which in turn lead to inadequate service provision.

The SAP in universities are often required to spend considerable time in intense involvement with students. According to Maslach (2003), such staff-client interaction is often centered on the

client's current problem (psychological, social and/or physical) and is therefore charged with feelings of anger, embarrassment, fear or despair.

Working frequently with such people leads to emotional draining and this poses the risk of burnout. The next section lays a foundation on the likely causes of burnout.

2.6 Causes of Burnout in the Workplace

According to Pfifferling (2008), a major cause of burnout is when too many people depend heavily upon another for service provision. While it is important to provide support to people around, the current researcher felt that some people will suck up as much support as one can give and demand still more. This can be both tiresome and intensely disappointing since one never seems to be able to meet the needs of all people. It has been observed that the student affairs departments always serve students throughout. Interest therefore was in finding out whether this heavy leaning of students on the SAP causes any burnout.

According to Cardenas (2007), burnout can also spiral from managers or supervisors. If a manager's needs are not met, his/her ability to provide appropriate support for the people he/she supervises is likely to be compromised. He argues that if we cannot meet our needs, the goals of others become immaterial and unimportant. The researcher agrees with Leiter and Maslach (2001) who argued that the major cause of burnout is when there are conflicting demands from different groups of people and organizations. They add that there is always an obvious conflict between work and family since both really want as much as one's time and energy as possible. The student affairs department always has students having different needs, some social, others economic, spiritual or relationship issues; all these are conflicting demands which must be sorted out. The purpose of this study was to find out whether role conflict has any relationship with burnout levels of the SAP.

An imbalance between demands on the job and resources available to do the job can also cause burnout (Skinner & Roche, 2005). High demands produce emotional exhaustion which leads to a defensive coping strategy in which individuals attempt to distance themselves from the emotional stressor associated with the demanding workload. The result of this situation is that an employee feels a low level or even a total lack of commitment to work. The availability of resources is therefore extremely important because personal support rewards on the job well done, performance incentives, regular feedback and review can help curb burnout. The type of interaction with another person can also be a cause of burnout. A study carried out by Cordes and Doherty (2003) among health care workers revealed that these workers had frequent and intense

or emotionally charged interactions with others making them more susceptible to burnout. The researchers however add that burnout can affect workers of any kind as long as the interactions amongst each other are highly charged. Included here are taxi cab drivers, law enforcement personnel, air traffic controllers, musicians, teachers, medical technicians, paramedics and high technology professionals. Such findings therefore suggest that there are occupational factors that affect workers experience of burnout.

According to Gillespie and Numerof (2004) burnout is related to three provider characteristics; age, marital status and years of experience in the present position. They add that communication too has a strong relationship to burnout as stated above. This view is expounded by Hakanen (2009) who says that burnout in the workplace is known to be caused by a weak community. A weak community in this case is one that has no good relationships, no respect for one another, public criticism, lack of supervisory feedback and work overload with too little time to do the ever growing work. In their study on job burnout among nurses working in psychiatric and medical units at two university hospitals in Isfahan, Yousefy and Ghassemi (2006) found out that a significant correlation was noted between age, years of experience and emotional exhaustion. Longer duration of service was accompanied by a higher degree of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization for the medical nurses. Many counsellors are exposed to counselling related activities in which they are expected to be empathically available to clients (Stebnicki, 2000). Rehabilitation counsellors for instance are compelled by ethical obligation to sometimes sacrifice their own needs for the needs of the clients. This is as stated in the Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counsellors, which in part reads: "*Rehabilitation Counsellors shall endeavor at all times to place their clients' interests above their own*" (APA, 1992). If this goes on for some time, Stebnicki (2000) says that it will greatly diminish the counsellor's ability and obligation to act in a manner that promotes the well-being of others. This leads to a state of emotional, mental and physical exhaustion. Such a kind of professional burnout may eventually manifest itself within the helping relationship (Lewis & Rock, 2003). The two authors further state that other likely causes of burnout include; lack of control or autonomy to decide and do or give some input, sparse rewards and recognition or inadequate salaries, subjective criteria for career advancement or absence of advancement opportunities, conflicting work ethics where the organizations' values do not match the employees' or lack of administrative support, role ambiguities and conflicts, personal problems and setting unrealistic goals for oneself or having them imposed on one. It is with this in mind that this study set out to establish the relationship between occupational factors and individual characteristics and burnout levels of student affairs personnel in public and private universities in Kenya.

A study by Grunfeld (2000) among Canadian oncology professionals reported that employees felt highly stressed when the workload was out of balance with the resources available to do their job. Some of the factors in the development of burnout were insufficient staff to respond to patient needs, conflicting demand on staff time, overly demanding workload and the disruption of home life due to an overly demanding job. Grunfeld therefore adds that due to the above many workers found the job stressful and some considered leaving or decreasing their work hours. According to Skinner and Roche (2005), factors that can lead to burnout include: lack of social and emotional support on the job, the inability to relate in a positive way to one's colleagues, failure to recognize a person's skills and abilities, lack of freedom to express one's opinions and ideas and inflexible working conditions. Job burnout therefore becomes a reaction to the relationship between the individual and the working environment. The factors discussed in this section help to give direction to the current study.

2.7 Symptoms of Burnout

The Gillespie and Numerof (2004) study states that burnout does not just happen overnight. It has its roots in stress. According to Grosch and Olsen (2004) burnout is often defined by its symptoms. The symptoms may be potential indicators of stress and burnout. Due to this, many people do not recognize that they have burnout until it reaches an advanced state. The researcher agrees with Gachutha (2006) who carried out a study on the role of supervision in the management of counsellor burnout in Kenya and stated that:

While it is difficult to delineate precise stages of burnout, the early phase is often mistaken for simple tiredness, low energy or boredom. It is only when burnout has reached an advanced stage where symptoms are prominent that it is recognized (p 42).

It is however necessary to sense when burnout is setting in so that one does not have to treat the symptoms when they have reached an advanced stage where they are easily noticeable. It is also important to note that though burnout symptoms are discussed in this section, what should be addressed in the treatment of burnout are the causes. This is so because when causes of burnout are treated, a permanent solution is arrived at unlike symptoms which only provide a temporal solution.

There are various classifications of the symptoms of burnout according to different scholars. The basic classifications however include: physiological, behavioral, cognitive, emotional and spiritual symptoms. There is also consensus among researchers of burnout that burnout

symptoms can be quite abnormal making caregivers to also develop abnormal coping mechanisms. Care givers are therefore at risk of burnout and identifying major symptoms becomes imperative. The physical symptoms include change in appetite, weight loss or gain, decreased immunity (person has frequent colds, flu, allergies and diarrhea), aches and pains (e.g. back pain, muscle pains and stomach aches), insomnia irritability, chronic tiredness, fatigue, decreased interest in sex, pounding heart, restlessness teeth grinding and sometimes rashes develop all over the body (Gachutha, 2009).

Behaviorally a person who has burnout displays most of the following symptoms; loss of enthusiasm, lateness, absenteeism and avoidance, accomplishing little, quick frustration and anger, becoming increasingly rigid, difficult in making decisions, closing out in-put, overeating or increased drug dependency, withdrawal, lack of effectiveness and incongruence (Gillespie & Numerof, 2004). It is worth noting that the behavioral symptoms go hand in hand with the emotional symptoms where an individual easily cries, is irritable, anxious, fearful, panics a lot and shows signs of being overwhelmed which can lead to depression. According to Gachutha (2009), burnout also shows itself in cognitive symptoms.

Cognitively a person has a whirling mind, frustration, nightmares and compulsive worrying. Such a person is quite cynical, becomes easily discouraged and is paranoid. Such a person experiences sadness, self-pity, confusion, guilt, unpreparedness for clients, inability to solve problems, low self-worth, forgetfulness, incompetence, and overloading oneself with work. Spiritually, burnout does not spare one either. Spiritual symptoms therefore include loss of faith, loss of meaning and direction, feeling of emptiness, doubt, apathy, estrangement, despair, alienation, a sense of futility, change in values, religious beliefs and affiliations. A person is devoid of joy, is exhausted always, is unforgiving, looks for 'magic' in what they do and always needing to 'prove self' - an indication of an individual having a sense of insecurity.

Though the symptoms are classified, it is worth noting that they easily combine making it difficult to put a line of demarcation. The researcher was therefore interested in establishing whether personnel working in student affairs departments in public and private universities in Kenya are aware of their burnout symptoms. The assumption here is that if one is aware of the symptoms then they will work towards a solution.

2.8 Relationship between Occupational Factors and Burnout Levels

According to the current study occupational factors are the characteristics related to one's job or the work environment. Workload, role conflict and role ambiguity are the three characteristics that were discussed and studied in this study.

In their study, Wilkerson and Bellini (2006) also identified role conflict, ambiguity and job overload as organizational factors commonly associated with burnout. Our jobs have become such an all encompassing part of our lives. We tend to spend more time at the workplace than anywhere else making jobs our lifeline. Though we rely on them for financial and emotional security, jobs can also be stressful. As a result many people feel unable to cope with the circumstances of their jobs. The relationship that people have with their work and the difficulties they face because of work related characteristics have been long recognized as a significant phenomenon of modern age that calls for greater attention (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). Conflict and role ambiguity plus workload are among the antecedents of work stress which have been most cited in research literature but despite the research findings there are always gaps because of the variability in workplace environments (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). The present study attempted to fill the research gap by studying the student affairs work environment.

2.8.1 Role Conflict and Burnout Levels

Role conflict is defined as the pressure to perform in two or more incompatible ways. Role conflict has been tied conclusively to occupational burnout in Western research (Perera, Diltz & Mason, 2008). It has also been demonstrated to be a factor in job dissatisfaction and propensity to leave the organization one works for.

Qualitative research on job demands have focused primarily on role conflict and role ambiguity (Maslach *et al.*, 2001) both of which show a moderate to high correlation with burnout. Role conflict occurs when conflicting demands at the job have to be met. It is a situation in which one is faced with ethical or professional conflicts. In role conflict the simultaneous occurrence of two conflicting demands leads to compliance with one making the other impossible. The SAP are sometimes faced with administrative demands as well as demands from students which might be in conflict. The administration for instance can decide that there will be no more trips in the last part of a semester to allow students to prepare for examinations. Though this might be a very good decision, students on the other hand might not accept it and therefore demand for a trip. The SAP might not know whom to side with.

Role conflict can also be considered as a mismatch between the requirements of the job and personal principles or values. Role conflict can therefore arise from an individual's values and those of the superior or organization thus leading to burnout. In role conflict pressure comes from a variety of directions among them administrators, lecturers, students and even sometimes parents. They can all have different and often conflicting expectations on how the SAP should function. Maslach *et al.* (2001) found that role conflict is associated with low job satisfaction, frustration, decreased trust and respect, low confidence in the organization, low morale and high degree of stress.

2.8.2 Role Ambiguity and Burnout Levels

Role ambiguity is the degree to which clear information is lacking regarding the expectation associated with a role (Young & Lambie, 2007). The lack of clear and specific information regarding work role requirements has also been linked repeatedly with burnout and low job satisfaction. Role ambiguity occurs when there is a lack of clarity about the job, which is a discrepancy between the information available to the employee and that which is required for successful job performance (Grosch & Olsen, 2004). Role ambiguity therefore exists when jobs have not been defined and expectations are also unclear. According to Nichter (2007), tolerance of ambiguity, or the conceptual opposite of the need for very clear and specific direction, is the tendency of some individuals to see ambiguous situations as desirable. Thus, those people with a high tolerance for ambiguity would be hypothesized to be less stressed by role conflict/role ambiguity than those with a low tolerance of ambiguity.

Wright and Thomas (2002) felt that this was another personality variable worth studying in an Asian context as many Asians are said to look for clear guidelines from authority figures. When such specific guidelines are lacking in the workplace, Asian managers might experience ambiguity as a negative feature of their jobs. According to Perera *et al.* (2008) qualitative study of burnout among school counselors articulated several challenges among them; limited human resources, lack of Para professional help, marginal support of administrators and limited monetary resources. Lack of understanding for instance of the role of student affairs personnel by students, administrators, parents and other significant people can raise stress and anxiety provoking situations amongst staff, especially the role of counsellors since this is a relatively new field in Kenya. The personnel in student affairs are caught up in multiple roles that can easily generate ambiguity. This study was able to establish the case in Kenyan public and private universities as will be discussed in later chapters.

2.8.3 Workload and Burnout Levels

This is where job demands exceed human limits (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). In this case the individual finds it difficult to complete an assigned task within a stipulated time. Workload can also refer to a situation in which one has excessive responsibilities which one feels unable to fulfill. In understaffed departments, a number of professionals are expected to fulfill a wide range of roles and functions, some of which they were never trained for. Personnel therefore can become over committed leading to burnout. Heavy caseloads also diminish the amount of available time to do follow up. This can make personnel feel that their efforts do not make a real difference in the lives of others therefore perpetuating burnout. The American School Counsellor Association (2009) defines the role of the SAP as that of addressing all students' academic, personal, social and career development by designing, implementing, evaluating and enhancing a comprehensive programme that promotes student success. These personnel handle numerous duties and can easily be overwhelmed by increasing job responsibilities. Young and Lambie (2007) noted that the heavy caseloads and lack of clinical supervision can easily inhibit personal wellness and contribute to burnout.

Both the Conservation of Resources (COR) and job demands–resources theories (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001b) could be used to explain the theoretical rationale of finding a positive link between workload and burnout. The theory of job demands–resources (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001b) refers to job demands as those physical, psychological, and organisational aspects of the job that require sustained physical, emotional, and cognitive effort. Job demands are therefore closely related to psychological and physiological strains, including burnout (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Workload has been found to be a major predictor of burnout in various studies specifically the meta-analytic study (Lee & Ashforth, 2004), a qualitative review of the burnout literature (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 2003) and a qualitative review of physicians' burnout (Prins, Gazendam-Donofrio, Tubben, van der Heijden, de Wiel, & Hoekstra-Weebers, 2007). It was therefore important to study how workload as a factor in student affairs departments is related to personnel's burnout levels.

2.9 Relationship between Individual Characteristics and Burnout Levels

The typical qualities of an individual make one individual different from another. This therefore implies that individuals can have different levels of burnout based on individual characteristics. In this study the individual characteristics which were studied included age, gender, years of experience and personality of the SAP. The study aimed at establishing the relationship these characteristics have with burnout levels of the said personnel.

2.9.1 Age and Burnout

Of all the demographic variables that have been studied, age is one that has been most consistently related to burnout (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). Maslach reports that among younger employees the level of burnout is higher than it is among those over 40 years old. Age here is confounded with work experience, so burnout appears to be more of a risk earlier in one's career and those who burn out early in their careers are likely to quit their jobs.

A review by Lussier (2006) which was concerned with human service work, burnout was reported to decrease with age. This means that as one aged, s/he learned to cope with the workplace stressors and was likely not to experience burnout. On the contrary, Ahola, Honkonen, Isometsa, Kalimo, Nykyri, Aromaa and Lonngvist (2006) found out that burnout levels were higher among the young workers and the aging workers as well but it was very minimal among the middle aged. In the current study, the SAP were classified as young if they were 29 years of age or below, mature if they range between 30 – 50 years and aging if they were more than 50 years of age. It has been argued that early career burnout is as a result of new employees having unrealistic expectations that cannot be fulfilled in a real working situation. People of different ages and experiences vary in the expectations they bring to their job. In some cases, the expectations are very high and may be realistic or unrealistic but whatever the case, they are a risk factor for burnout. Presumably high expectations lead people to work too hard and do too much within a short time thus leading to exhaustion. Burnout levels are higher during the aging years because the burnout condition develops gradually and therefore is seen clearly during the final stages of one's career if it was never addressed or solved (Lussier, 2006). The current study established the ages of the respondents to find out if age has any relationship with burnout levels of the SAP.

2.9.2 Gender and Burnout

Research studies on burnout for the most part have given only nominal attention to issues related to gender. Gender in this study is taken to mean the fact of being male or female, in other words the sex of an individual. There have been many studies which examined why women were more susceptible to burnout than men but these studies do not offer consistent results. Hakanen (2009) agreed with the above and elaborated that though the numbers of burnout cases among women was slightly higher than among men, men were more cynical than women who tended to suffer more from mental burnout. The researchers however concluded that biological gender alone is not a reasonable starting point in studying burnout. The finding of the study showed that burnout among women was due to the multiple roles that they play, interpersonal relations at work and

home and how to reconcile the two while men's burnout was primarily caused by system-related factors. On the other hand, Azadeh (2010) argued that there is no evidence to support the general belief that women were at some greater risk of burnout than men. The current researcher tends to think that what is important should be the social gender related practices and structures both at work and outside which are often very different for men and women. That is why this study investigated the relationship between gender and burnout levels of the SAP. Pines, Aronson and Kafry (2001) explain that the failure to find consistent gender-related differences in burnout is because women and men often do not have the same work experiences given the sex discrimination, inequality of pay, role conflict and advancement opportunities. The authors add that men and women do not share the same predictors and symptoms of work stress.

A study carried out by Jaracz, Gorna and Konieczna (2005) among nurses revealed that male nurses experienced a higher degree of emotional exhaustion. They concluded that the differences though statistically not significant may be attributed to the nurses' expectations from their job and their adjustment in their workplace. The researchers hold the view that male nurses have poorer coping ability as compared to their female counterparts who freely share their experiences. The current researcher agrees with the above and advises that more attention should be paid to similarities and dissimilarities in the development of burnout among men and women.

The prevalence of burnout in various sectors of employment was studied by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. Burnout was found to vary by sector of employment and occupation (Hakannen, 2009). According to the survey, the top five industries with highest incidence of burnout were predominantly among those which employed more women. The industries included; hotels and catering, banking, insurance, education and research. Exhaustion which was a common burnout symptom was more in women than men but was minimal in male dominated industries. Cynicism however was most prevalent in male dominated industries. Hakannen therefore concluded that compared with men, women suffered more from total burnout than their male counterparts. This study established whether burnout levels vary among the SAP based on gender.

Though differences between men's and women's burnout have gone undetected, it has been found that women suffer from exhaustion slightly more than men while cynicism is more common among men (Jaracz *et al.*, (2005). The researchers offer an explanation that women are better equipped for human relations and for sharing their negative emotions while men tend to suppress their emotions in order to live up to their roles, therefore making them more inclined to adopt

cynical attitudes as a mechanism for coping with stress. The researchers however recommended that there is need for further research to be carried out to establish whether burnout develops differently among men and women. This study was an attempt to fill the gap as far as gender and burnout are concerned.

2.9.3 Working Experience and Burnout

Experience here was taken to be the number of years one had worked in a particular job, in this study, the student affairs department. A study was carried out by Ahola, Honkonen, Aromaa and Lonnqvist (2008) among oncology nurses in a Canadian hospital. They found out that nurses with 6-10 years of experience exhibited more high-risk burnout and low compassion satisfaction than those who had worked for more than 10 years. The same researchers found that doctors with minimal clinical or practice experience had higher levels of burnout, although with increased years of practice these levels generally reduced. Years of experience and depersonalization were therefore associated. Depersonalization occurs when the strain resulting from the doctors' practice becomes overwhelming and leads to an unhealthy detachment while interacting with others. Higher burnout levels were high among Canadian physicians with less than 10 years of experience and less among those with 21 – 30 years of experience.

It is interesting to note that Ren and Hodge (2007) found that burnout increased again among those with more than 30 years of experience. According to Ren and Hodge (2007), depersonalization was due to professional and personal factors because of little or no targeted interventions at different career stages. He says that those with less experience normally come to the “reality shock” when their job expectations do not match the reality within the first years of employment. It is a no wonder that a study done by Friedman (2000) found that 30% of teachers abandon their jobs in the first year of teaching because of the “reality shock”. The above findings were important in serving as a guide in establishing the relationship between years of experience of the SAP in universities and their burnout levels. In the current study, 1-5 years was taken as less experience while 20 years and above were those with high experience.

2.9.4 Personality and Burnout

Personality has been defined as a pattern of enduring distinctive thoughts, emotions and behavior that characterize the way an individual adapts to the world (Santrock, 2003). Going by this definition it is apparent that personality influences the way individuals interact with particular environments. To investigate links between personality, stress and burnout, researchers have studied different constellations of characteristics of personality types. (Gachutha, 2009). In this

study personality was assessed according to two basic categories, A and B. According to Friedman (2000), type A personalities are individuals who are competitive, controlling, impatient, aggressive and hostile. They can easily burnout because they are quite reactive. Type B personalities are more relaxed, contemplative and less hurried, less frustrated and more tolerant of the behavior of others.

The role of personality factors in the etiology of burnout is complex and probably hardly explored (Jones, 2009). Several studies have reported a positive association of Type A behavior pattern and emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 2008). Certain personality types self selected individuals into specific occupations and that subsequently, the same individuals interact with stressful occupational environments that are conducive to the experience of burnout. There are also indications that individuals who are “feeling types” rather than “thinking types” are also more prone to burnout especially to cynicism. Similarly, people who display low levels of hardiness have higher burnout scores (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). It has been argued that low levels of hardiness, poor self-esteem, an external locus of control and an avoidant coping style typically constitute the profile of a stress-prone individual.

The above study agrees with Waple (2006) study of the Student Affairs in a Canadian university where she found that hardiness was associated with less demoralization and a greater sense of accomplishment. Resilience was also found to be an important characteristic in coping with negative circumstances. Resilience in fact correlated with hope, self efficiency control, competency and coping. People with a hardy personality (personality constellations associated with good health) have a strong sense of control over what happens to them and regard distressful situations as challenges and opportunities for learning. According to Waple (2006), hardy personalities have lower rates of illness. They found that personality plays an important role in the experience of job-related burnout because those individuals who are anxious, depressed and unable to deal with stressors are the same individuals who experience emotional exhaustion and depersonalization both at work and in their lives away from work. Locus of control was outlined by Jones (2009) as the extent to which people believe that they control the outcomes in their lives (internal locus of control) versus those outcomes being dependent on fate, luck or powerful others (external locus of control). Research has frequently demonstrated that “internals” tolerate burnout better. The current study looked at personality in terms of personality A and B.

2.10 Effects of Burnout

Burnout is known to have very serious effects (Salanova and Schaufeli, 2000). In a study of a sample of 202 Spanish hospital employees exposed to technology, they found that the higher the exposure to technology, the lower the burnout levels. When it came to Spanish teachers, out of the 160 teachers who suffered high burnout levels about 16 of them retired early due to burnout. A conclusion was therefore reached that more teachers suffered burnout because theirs is a human service profession unlike technology employees. Kyriacou (2001) reports that the causes of teacher burnout are teacher perceptions of poor student relationships, time pressure, role conflict, poor working conditions, lack of control and poor decision making due to the bureaucratic structures set.

According to Moore (2000), burnout affects both the organization and the individual. Teachers who suffered burnout had impaired health, reduced self confidence, low self esteem and damaged personal relationships. The researchers argue that the above effects spiral down to the organization in form of absenteeism by the teacher. Absenteeism was seen as a form of escape from a stressful and unpleasant work situation. According to Maslach *et al.* (2001) people who are experiencing burnout can have a negative impact on their colleagues both by causing greater personal conflict and disrupting job tasks. Thus, burnout can be contagious and perpetuate itself through informal interactions on the job. There is also some evidence that burnout has a negative spillover effect on people's life at home (Burke & Green glass, 2001).

A study by Maslach (2003) on the effects of burnout among psychotherapists in public and private agencies in the US revealed that those working in public agencies were more dissatisfied and prone to burnout than those in private places. The current study therefore has a lot to borrow from such a study. Gachutha (2006) added that rural mental health counsellors are subjected not only to the stress of working in a public setting but also face an unusual array of common stressful conditions that include ethical issues related to limits of competence and dual relationships, impact of a deteriorating economic base on the funding of mental services, geographical barriers to the delivery of social services and professional isolation.

Grassin and Magnani (2000) also carried out a study on psychiatric morbidity and burnout in the medical profession among Italian primary care physicians. They discovered that 27.5% suffered emotional exhaustion, 25.6% from depersonalization and 12.8% suffered from low personal accomplishment. Of all the ones who had some burnout 65.2% indicated that their condition had made them not to advance in their career, they had been rejected for promotions and this led to

more frustration. In a study carried out by Farber (2006) on the prevalence of burnout among psychologists and psychiatrists, the results indicated that 36% of psychiatrists reported moderate burnout levels and only 6.3% indicated high degree of burnout. The results also indicate that 30% of the psychologists reported experiencing high levels of both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. The current study used the findings above as a basis for further research in burnout among student affairs personnel in universities in Kenya.

Jaracz, Gorna and Konieczna (2005) evaluated professional burnout among nurses dealing with AIDS patients and found that a strong correlation existed between burnout and the desire to further their studies. About 77% suffered from depersonalization and were quite detached from others and this in turn led to loss of idealism. Research indicates that burnout affects the most competent, and committed people, those who are looked at as the best workers in an organization. A good comparison is presented in Jaracz *et al.* (2005) study and that carried out by Olley (2003). Olley investigated burnout among 260 health professionals working in a university hospital in Ibadan Nigeria. Results indicated that of the 260 professionals, 27.6% did not know how to drive, 15% had no knowledge of computers and 6% had tried business but failed making them more frustrated. The major reasons they gave for this was that they had no time. Jaracz *et al.* (2005) stated that personal achievement is affected by burnout rendering psychiatrists, social workers, physicians and psychologists helpless. According to Maslach *et al.* (2001) literature on prevalence of burnout in many human service professions is extensive; there is very limited research on prevalence of burnout in particular groups. She suggested that it is necessary for studies on burnout to focus on specific work settings, and this explains why the current study focused on SAP in universities in Kenya.

2.11 Counselling Intervention for Burnout

In a study carried out among Counsellors in Kenya, Gachutha (2006) pointed out that 77.7% of the Counsellors suggested that a burnout inventory is important and that measurement is critical in the treatment of burnout. There are several measures which can be operationalized to minimize burnout (Halbesleben, 2006). The strategies are divided into intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational strategies. In the current study the argument is that the most crucial component of a burnout coping technique begins at the individual level in which the SAP should be aware of and sensitive to their own antecedents and manifestations of burnout. They need to notice their own unique reactions which signal the onset of burnout states, and then they can expect to develop appropriate and effective interventions to alleviate burnout. Under the interpersonal

strategies, Halbesleben (2006) suggests creation of support groups, networking, support from supervisors and good preparation and orientation for a job. Developing effective team working with clear group and individual objectives, and allowing individuals to meet regularly and value skills of individual members is an effective primary intervention.

On the other hand, Stock-Ward and Jovorek (2003) suggest that interagency councils in which professionals from a variety of human service professions come together around a common service delivery can help minimize burnout. The authors suggested that the teams can address factors necessary to promote the wellbeing of team members such as ensuring that work is distributed evenly, giving practical and emotional support and developing a culture of recognition of burnout problems that can be tackled sooner than later. In USA, primary care team working has been shown to improve staff motivation and healthcare delivery.

Employee Assistance Programmes are also important in minimizing burnout. Among the employees in a telephone call centre there was evidence that when first line management demonstrated a concern for staff welfare, there was emotional wellbeing of employees (Deary, Stephen, Iverson, Roderick, Walsh and Janet, 2002). Where team leaders were seen as willing to listen to work related problems of their staff and showed the ability to assist and support them, the level of emotional exhaustion was lower. Strong social support from supervisors was identified in other studies as an important resource in reducing burnout. Where there was a perception that management was focusing on quantity rather than quality, burnout levels were high.

2.12 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the following theories:

- i. Maslach's Multidimensional Theory
- ii. Holland's Theory of Career Choice

2.12.1 Maslach's Multidimensional Theory

One of the theories that guided this study was the Maslach's Multidimensional Theory of Burnout proposed by Maslach in 1976 and revised severally over the years (Maslach, 2003). The multidimensional theory conceptualizes burnout in terms of its three core components; emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion according to Maslach is a feeling of being emotionally over-extended and depleted of one's emotional resources. The major sources of this exhaustion are work overload and personal conflict at work. This leads to workers feeling drained and used up without any source of replenishment and paves way for depersonalization. This is a negative, cynical or excessively

detached response to other people which often includes a loss of idealism. Maslach *et al.* (2001) say that it develops in response to the overload of emotional exhaustion and is self protective at first – an emotional buffer of detached concern but the risk is that the detachment can turn into dehumanization. The depersonalization component represents the interpersonal dimension of burnout.

Abraham (2000) on the contrary says that cynicism in itself is an end product of burnout. It does not lead to anything else. Once someone is cynical then he/she has burned out. He says that cynicism in itself gauges several distinct attitudes like hostility, rejection, unconcern and distancing oneself. Reduced personal accomplishment refers to a decline in feelings of competence and productivity at work. According to Foschi (2000) lowered sense of self-efficacy has been linked to depression and an inability to cope with the demands of the job and it can be exacerbated by a lack of social support and of opportunities to develop professionally. Workers may result in a self-imposed verdict of failure. This component represents the self-evaluation dimension of burnout. Sandberg (2000) however wonders whether this dimension of burnout reflect one's belief in one's knowledge and skills as competence is often conceptualized or whether it is related to self-assessed job performance or performance expectations.

In 1996, Maslach conceptualized this theory in a model of burnout shown in Figure 1. The model not only describes the causes of burnout but the effects as well. Burnout as conceptualized by this model is multidimensional. A construct is multidimensional when it refers to several distinct but related dimensions that are viewed as a single construct. In this case, emotional exhaustion, cynicism and reduced personal accomplishment are all linked to the burnout construct as shown in the burnout model in figure 1.

Lack of Resources

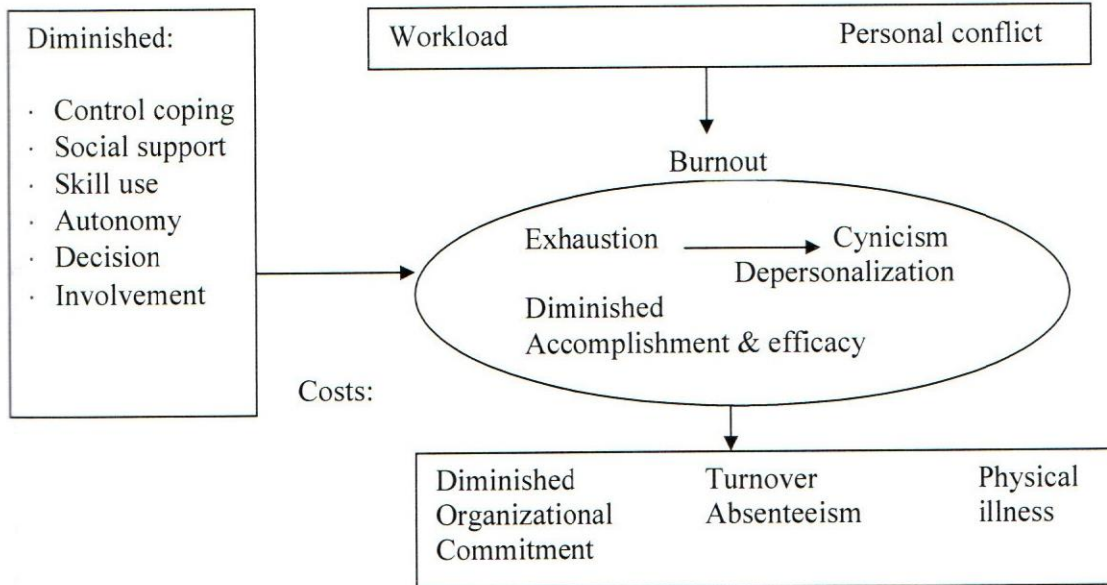


Figure 1: Burnout Model

Source: Cooper (2008)

According to this model burnout is an individual stress experience embedded in a context of complex social relationships and it involves the person's conception of self and others. Burnout is likely to set in if resources are lacking in a work place and also if personal and workload demands are quite high. This model therefore states that if there are role stressors and stressful interpersonal contacts with clients, coworkers or supervisors in student affairs department then burnout will set in. According to this model, there is a relationship between occupational factors, individual characteristic and burnout which will start manifesting themselves gradually from emotional exhaustion, to depersonalization and later reduced personal accomplishment. By the time a person manifests reduced personal accomplishment, such a person burnt out long time ago.

This framework relies on the idea that a person's degree of job burnout is based on the degree of match or mismatch of the person with his/her environment (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). The person is less likely to experience burnout when s/he experiences a better match with the work environment. This theory therefore links the degree of fit to burnout and degree of burnout to work outcomes. Aspects of the work environment and characteristics of the individual can therefore both function as sources of burnout. Congruence of career interests and work environment are significantly related to job satisfaction (Maslach, *et al.*, 2001). Maslach's model is very elaborate but the missing link in this model which the current study tried to fill was that

this model only considers occupational factors and little is said about individual characteristics. This therefore necessitated borrowing from Holland's theory of career choice to complement it.

2.12.2 Holland's Theory of Career Choices

Holland's Theory of 1969 is a popular career choice theory which has been revised severally and continues to be used in work places. It states that people are attracted to careers because of their personality and a matching environment (Jones, 2009). This theory integrates both the individual and situational factors in the study of burnout. Behavior is therefore explained in terms of the interaction of an individual with the environment. Career satisfaction depends on compatibility between one's personality and the work environment. Career choice is an expression of personality extended into the world of work. People who therefore choose to work in an environment similar to their personality type are more likely to be successful and satisfied. Holland's Theory explains further that:

- People with the same personality tend to work together. When such people work together, they tend to create a work environment that fits their type and do many things comfortably together. It will therefore be easier for social people (e.g. counsellors) to share an office than a social person and a realistic one (e.g. a counsellor and an engineer).
- People are not passive recipients of environmental influence but actively seek potentially compatible environments. They will therefore search for environments where they can use their skills, abilities and express their values and attitudes. This view is supported by the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory by Hobfoll (2008). The basic tenets of the COR theory are that people have basic motivation to obtain, retain and protect that which they value from the environment of work. Things that people value are called resources. According to this theory burnout occurs when people are threatened by resource loss, lose resources or fail to regain resources following resource investment. This will make them search for another environment where they can start all over again.
- Peer influence, social, parental and genetic factors combine to make people prefer certain jobs over others. The theory therefore matches personality traits to the job.

Holland says that people are in six personality types which have matching work environments: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional. A social personality for instance will therefore search for a social environment. Holland created a hexagonal model that shows the relationship between personality types and environment.

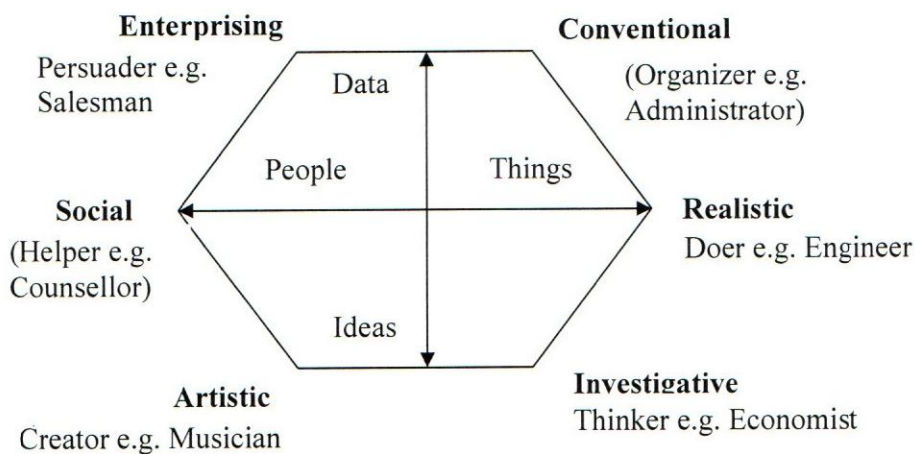


Figure 2: Personality Types and Matching Work Environments

Source: Jones (2009)

According to the Hexagon, people fit in matching environments. This study borrowed a lot from Holland's theory because the argument is that once one discovers his/her personality then the environment can be made to match. The Dean of Students department has all the environments indicated on the Hexagon. If for instance an artistic personality is deployed as a Counsellor in the Dean of Students department, to help such a person not to burnout, he/she can be given an opportunity to exercise the artistic abilities in counselling. S/he can be encouraged to counsel through music (music therapy) or art (art therapy) and such a person will enjoy what s/he is doing. An enterprising personality can benefit the Dean of Students department by being allowed to popularize the department through the persuasion skills they possess. The department can benefit from a conventional personality by allowing the person to organize activities because they possess administrative and organizational skills. In a nutshell, the Dean of Students department can have all the six environments where all the personnel can find fulfillment without burning out (Moritzen, 2001).

Holland's Theory helps one shape one's existing job so that one can maximize on fulfillment. By one identifying particular interests, one can quickly uncover those areas in one's job that cause dissatisfaction and therefore burnout. This helps one develop his/her career in the right direction leading to long term fulfillment. This theory was quite instrumental in the current study because it helped in finding out whether student affairs personnel are in the right careers based on their personalities. For those who felt that they were not in their right careers, the theory was also used to help them identify those areas that cause them dissatisfaction and therefore address them so that they can enjoy their job. This was done during the interview discussions. Though quite relevant

to the current study, Holland's theory however does not take into consideration other individual characteristics. The conceptual framework below filled this gap.

2.13 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presented in this section was based on theories examined in previous sub-sections and the objectives of the study. The framework gives an explanation of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The intervening variables form a link between the dependent and independent variables to clarify the study.

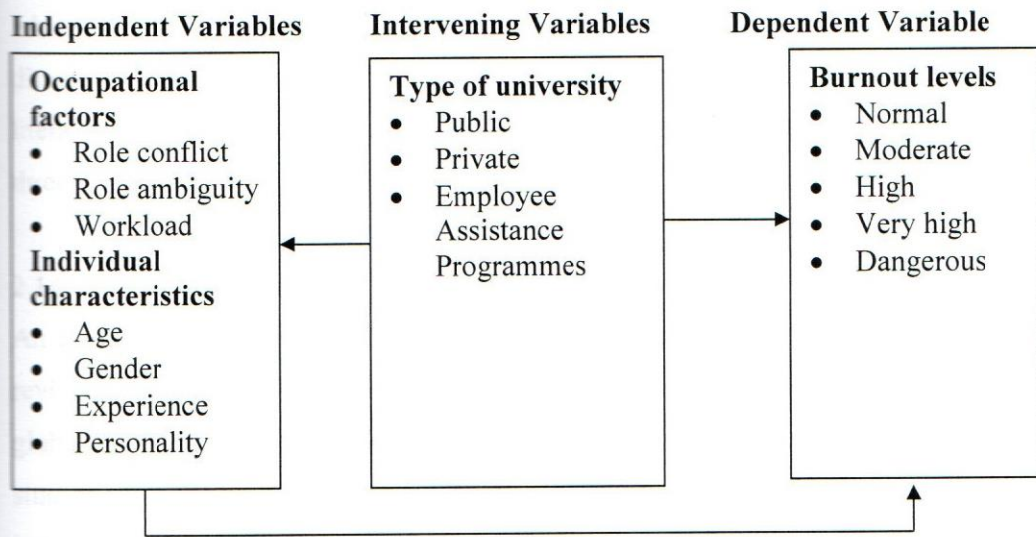


Figure 3: Relationship between Occupational Factors, Individual Characteristics and Burnout Levels

There are many variables which have been related to workplace burnout. Figure 3 proposes a framework of research which outlines the major antecedents of workplace burnout as falling in two categories, individual and organizational. The framework used in this study focuses on the variables related in determining the burnout levels of student affairs personnel in public and private universities in Kenya. It should however be noted that relationship is not always causation though at times it denotes so.

The second panel indicates the intervening variables. The type of university that is whether that university is private or public and the various approaches used to assist employees are intervening variables that can have great influence on both independent and dependent variables. The intervening variables facilitate a better understanding of the relationship between the individual characteristics, occupational factors, and burnout levels of student affairs personnel.

There are however other extraneous variables that can lead to burnout but were not tested in this study. Student population in each university and an individual's home and social environment for instance are extraneous variables that can influence burnout but were not tested. This study dealt with the most basic factors that are common to everybody. To control extraneous variables in the sample, random sampling for participating universities was done.

From Figure 3, the first panel is composed of independent variables which include both occupational factors and individual characteristics. The independent variables are believed to have an effect on dependent variables. The third panel is composed of the dependent variable which was burnout and it is given in its five levels as shown. It should be noted that the directional paths (arrows) in Figure 3 indicate a relational process between variables. A review of literature normally reveals that research has consistently demonstrated a relationship between the three variables.

2.14 Chapter Summary

An elaborate review of literature was done in this chapter. The objectives of the study guided the review of literature. What came out clearly from the literature reviewed was that burnout is a global issue affecting all workers in human service professions. Literature from various earlier studies also established that burnout affects service provision and does not only affect the individual but the client and the organization as a whole.

Knowledge gaps were identified therefore giving reason for the current study. From the literature reviewed theoretical and conceptual frameworks were developed giving a guide to the whole study as described in chapter three which basically dealt with the methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents research procedures and methods that the researcher employed which include: the research design, geographical location of the study, the study population, the sampling procedure and sample size. It also discusses the data collection instruments, their validity and reliability and describes how data was analyzed.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used a causal – Comparative research design. According to Fraenkael and Wallen (2002) a causal – comparative design investigates relationships among variables without trying to influence those variables. It examines the extent to which differences in one variable are related to differences in one or more variables being studied. In the current study the relationship between occupational factors, individual characteristics and burnout levels of the Student Affairs Personnel were examined. The study attempted to establish the extent to which differences in, for example, individual characteristics like gender, age, experience and personality are related to differences in burnout levels of the SAP in public and private universities in Kenya. It is worth noting that a causal – comparative design seeks to identify variables that are worth exploration through future experimental research and provide guidance for the same (Fraenkael & Wallen, 2002). A Causal - comparative study like the current one cannot determine the causes of relationships among variables but can just suggest them because it is a retrospective study and no manipulation of variables can be done.

3.3 Location of the Study

Since there is no university that can be a direct replica of another, the study was conducted in randomly selected public and private universities in Kenya. These universities are distributed in various counties in the country among them; Nairobi, Nakuru, Nandi, Meru, Uasin Gishu, Kisumu, Kakamega, Kajiado, Kiambu, Kericho, Narok and Tharaka Nithi counties (Appendix E). Though they are not evenly distributed in every county but they form a good representation.

3.4 Study Population

The targeted population was drawn from public and private universities in Kenya. Six public and six private universities were involved in the study. The first inclusion criterion was that the university had to be chartered. Apart from these universities being chartered, they had to have a high population of students taking varied degree programmes and a functional student affairs

department. Personnel working in the student affairs departments in the universities constituted the sample. The inclusion criteria were personnel directly involved with students on a daily basis to provide psychological, spiritual, careers or recreational services.

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The participating universities were randomly selected using the simple random sampling method. This ensured that each and every university had an equal and independent chance of being selected. Two universities (one public and one private) were randomly selected for pilot testing. These two were not included in the actual study. The remaining universities were again randomly sampled for participation. After getting the participating universities the researcher used purposive sampling to get the sample required for the study. Purposive sampling was used because student affairs departments in all universities had very few personnel who have the required characteristics for selection to participate in the study.

For one to be selected for the study they must have been involved with student issues on a daily basis. Such personnel are involved in providing guidance and counseling services, spiritual guidance and recreational services to students on a daily basis. The Deans of Students, Assistant Deans of Students, Counsellors/Psychologists, Chaplains, Sports Officers, Administrators and Career Placement Officers from the main campuses of the universities therefore constituted the sample. It should be noted that different universities have different titles for these personnel but for purposes of this study and for uniformity, the above titles were used. A total of 179 personnel qualified to participate in this study.

3.6 Instrumentation

The researcher used two approaches to collect data, a questionnaire and interview schedules.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires can be used effectively to determine knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behavior of an individual (Kothari, 2006). Empirical research on burnout has successfully utilized questionnaires and burnout self-test in data collection (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). In this study each SAP was given a questionnaire to fill. The questionnaire was adopted from the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) which has been a widely used tool to measure workplace burnout. The scale that has had the strongest psychometric properties and continues to be used most widely by researchers is the MBI developed by Christine Maslach and named after her (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). The MBI was then modified to fit the current study. The Burnout Questionnaire for

Student Affairs Personnel (BQSAP) was in 6 sections namely: A – Demographic data; B – Personality test; C – Burnout inventory test; D – Causes of burnout; E – Effects of burnout; F – Recommendations.

3.6.2 Interview Schedules

Interview schedules (DIS) were used to supplement quantitative analysis. Interviews were carried out with the Deans of Students only. Broadly there are two types of interviews; open-ended and closed ended. In this study the open ended interviews were conducted. The purpose of an open ended interview was to access the broad perspective of the person being interviewed. Information from the DIS was analyzed qualitatively.

3.6.3 Validity of the Research Instruments

Validity is the degree to which an instrument measures the variable it is supposed to measure (Kothari, 2006). It is the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the specific inferences the researcher makes based on the data that was collected to ensure content and face validity. Validity establishes whether the results of assessment provide useful information about the variables being studied. Construct validity and Content validity established the level to which the study objectives are represented and the extent to which a test measures a particular construct. The researcher ensured that both the BQSAP and DIS cover all the study objectives. Expert judgment from personnel in the department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations, the Faculty of Education and Community Studies and the Graduate school of Egerton University were instrumental in establishing this. This study adopted the Maslach Burnout Inventory therefore Criterion validity was measured by the MBI.

3.6.4 Reliability of the Research Instruments

The reliability of an instrument is the degree of consistency with which a research instrument measures whatever it is intended to measure and yields consistent results (Fraenkael & Wallen, 2002). Pilot testing was carried out as earlier stated in one public and one private university in Kenya and 26 respondents were involved. The Cronbach alpha coefficient is a common measure for internal consistency and it provides an overall reliability coefficient for a set of variables (Fraenkael & Wallen, 2002). It was used to determine the internal consistency of an instrument. This approach is important in calculating the reliability of items that are not scored right versus wrong (Allen & Yen, 2002). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is deemed appropriate to test reliability in likert scaled type of questionnaires as well as structured interviews (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Only one administration of the instrument was done.

A reliability coefficient 0.745 was arrived at after calculation. According to Fraenkael and Wallen (2002) a reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is considered acceptable in most social science research situations. The instrument was therefore considered sufficiently reliable and valid for the study.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

After the proposal was approved by the Department of Psychology Counselling and Educational Foundations and the Faculty of Education and Community Studies, the researcher forwarded it to the Graduate School of Egerton University for Further Review. After ensuring that all the necessary amendments had been made, the researcher was given an approval letter from the Graduate School of Egerton University (Appendix C). The letter was then taken to the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST) for a research permit. This body is currently referred to as the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).

After getting a research permit (Appendix D), the researcher sought permission from each university to be allowed to conduct the study. The actual data collection exercise started in the month of March 2012. The researcher trained research assistants (one in each university) who helped in the distribution and collection of the questionnaires. In all the institutions the sampled population was given questionnaires to fill. It was hoped that the questionnaires were to be collected immediately to ensure high returns but this was not the case because not all personnel were present when the researcher or the assistants visited the institutions. The researcher booked appointments with the various Deans of Students for the interview schedules though getting them was also not quite easy given their busy schedules.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

The return rate was quite good because out of the 179 questionnaires distributed, 149 were returned (representing 83% of the total questionnaires distributed). Completed questionnaires were coded, entered and analysed using SPSS V.19. Normality tests were carried out on the data to decide whether to use parametric or non-parametric statistical techniques. Frequencies, means and standard deviation were used to summarize the data. The t-test and ANOVA were used to compare variation in mean burnout levels across individual characteristics (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2008). The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient as a measure of the strength of a linear association between two variables (occupational factors and burnout levels) was also used to indicate a positive or negative association. Multiple linear regression was done to significant linear relationship between burnout level, individual characteristics and occupational factors with

type of institution as an intervening variable. The level of significance was set at $\alpha=.05$ which is the most commonly used level in Behavioural Science Studies (Allen & Yen, 2002). The responses obtained during interview schedules supplemented quantitative analysis and was analysed qualitatively by treating data nomothetically (looking for general traits). A detail of how data was analysed is presented in Chapter four.

3.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed various procedures that aided in the data collection exercise. Details of the causal – comparative research design which was used in this study are presented. The sample was drawn from the student affairs personnel in public and private universities in Kenya. The study adopted the MBI and interview schedules as the main research instruments. Procedures of the data collection processes, validity and reliability are all presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study and discussion of the findings. Data was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics aided by SPSS version 19 for windows. In reporting the statistical results, each objective of the study and the hypothesis were stated followed by the relevant descriptive and inferential statistics and finally the appropriate interpretations are presented. All hypotheses tests were performed at $\alpha=.05$ level of significance. Acceptance or rejection of the null hypotheses was based on the calculated test statistics and the value of the probability of significance (p value). Acceptance of the null hypothesis occurred only when $p \geq .05$ and it was rejected when $p \leq .05$. The results in this section were presented in form of tables and figures. Each section in this chapter corresponds to one objective and a related hypothesis of the study. In most sections in this chapter, the objective was stated followed by the results. The hypothesis was then stated followed by the statistical analysis which determined whether the hypothesis was accepted or rejected. In some sections results from the interview schedules were presented as excerpts. A discussion wraps up each section of this chapter. The objectives of the study were as follows:

- i. To establish the Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel in Public and private Universities in Kenya.
- ii. To determine the Relationship between Occupational factors (Workload, Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity) and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel.
- iii. To find out the Relationship between Individual characteristics (Age, Gender, Experience and Personality) and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel.
- iv. To determine the Relationship between Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel and a combination of Individual characteristics and Occupational factors.
- v. To establish how Burnout among Student Affairs Personnel in Public and Private Universities can be mitigated.

The following hypotheses were statistically analyzed and discussed:

HO₁: There is no statistically significant difference in Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel in Public and Private Universities in Kenya

HO₂: There is no statistically significant Relationship between Occupational factors (Workload, Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity) and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel.

HO₃: There is no statistically significant relationship between Individual characteristics (Gender, Age, Experience and Personality) and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel.

HO₄: There is no statistically significant Relationship between Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel and a combination of Individual characteristics and Occupational factors.

Each section of this chapter also presented data gathered from the interview schedules with the Deans of Students. This component of the study sought to gain more insight into the variables being studied. Participants were mostly the Deans of students and where the Dean was unavailable the Assistant Dean of Students availed the information. Out of the targeted 12 Deans of Students, 9 participated in face to face interviews.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the sample

Socio-Demographic characteristics play an important role in giving a summary of the nature of respondents who participated in the current study. Personal attributes and in particular demographic variables have largely been regarded as moderating and explaining variables in any study (Lorden, 2008). Table 1 gives a summary of the demographic characteristics.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Student Affairs Personnel

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percent	Cumulative Percentage
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	70.0	47.0	47.0	47.0
Female	79.0	53.0	53.0	100.0
Total	149.0	100.0	100.0	
<u>Age</u>				
≤ 29	21.0	14.1	14.1	14.1
30 – 40	82.0	55.0	55.0	69.1
≥ 50	46.0	30.9	30.9	100.0
Total	149.0	100.0	100.0	
<u>Type of institution</u>				
Public	86.0	57.7	57.7	57.7
Private	63.0	42.3	42.3	100.0
Total	149.0	100.0	100.0	
<u>Experience</u>				
1 – 5 years	76.0	51.0	51.0	51.0
6 – 10 years	39.0	26.2	26.2	77.2
11 – 20 years	25.0	16.8	16.8	94.0
> 20 years	9.0	6.0	6.0	100.0
Total	149.0	100.0	100.0	

N=149

As indicated in table 1 out of the 149 respondents who completed the questionnaire, 79(53%) were female while 70(47%) were male. Of the 79 female respondents, 45 were from public universities and 34 from private universities representing 57% and 43% respectively. In both the private and public universities there were more females working in the Student Affairs Departments than males. Majority of the respondents 82(55%) were aged between 31-49 years old, followed by those aged between 50 years and above while the minority group were those who were 29 years and below having a total percentage of 21%. Slightly more than half 76(51%) had worked in Student Affairs Department for between 1-5 years. There were no significant differences in distribution of respondents by gender, age-group and duration of working in student affairs department in private and public universities.

4.3 Burnout levels of Student Affairs Personnel in Public and Private Universities

The first objective was instrumental in establishing differences in Burnout Levels of the SAP in public and private universities.

Objective 1: To establish the Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel in Public and Private universities in Kenya.

The first objective established the burnout levels of the SAP in public and private universities in Kenya. The purpose of section C in the questionnaire was to establish the burnout levels of the SAP. There were five burnout levels with those scoring less than 19 having normal burnout, 20-34 moderate, 35-49 high, 50-64 very high, while those with a score of 65 and above having dangerous burnout levels (Mind tools, 2010). Table 2 presents the results.

Table 2: Type of Institution and Burnout Levels

		Burnout levels					Total
		Normal	Moderate	High	Very High	Dangerous	
Type of institution	Public	2	28	47	7	2	86
	Private	0	24	31	8	0	63
Total		2	52	78	15	2	149

N=149

As indicated in Table 2, majority of the SAP were found to have moderate and high burnout levels. This means that most of their scores ranged from 20-49 on the burnout inventory scale. The results above also indicated that only 17 SAP suffered from very high and dangerous burnout levels and a very small number (2) had normal levels of burnout. Figure 4 clearly gives the above comparison.

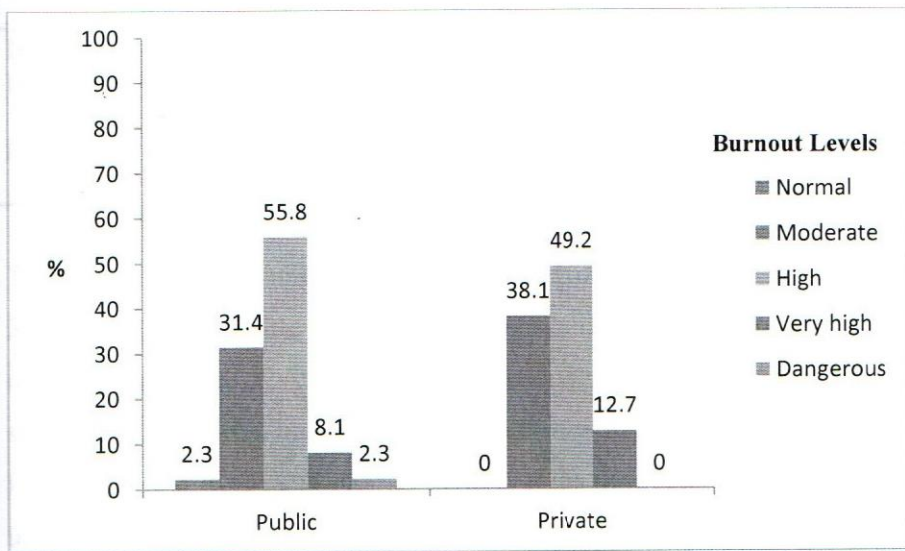


Figure 4: Burnout levels of student Affairs Personnel

From figure 4, it was noted that all the SAP suffered from some level of burnout irrespective of the institution. Majority of the personnel suffered from high burnout levels.

In Public institutions, more than half of the SAP (55.8%) were classified as having high level of burnout compared to 49.2% in private institutions. Whereas 2.3% of the SAP in public institutions indicated suffering from dangerous levels of burnout, there was none from the private institutions. On the contrary, all the SAP in private institutions suffered from moderate, high, or very high burnout with none having the normal burnout levels. This actually implied that all the SAP in both public and private institutions suffered from some level of burnout.

4.3.1 Significance of the Relationship in Burnout Levels of the SAP in Universities

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant difference in Burnout levels between Student Affairs Personnel in Public and Private Universities in Kenya.

The above hypothesis was subjected to a t-test. The objective of the test was to establish whether significant differences occurred in the means of burnout levels of the SAP in both Public and Private Universities. The results of the test are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: t-test Results for Burnout Levels among SAP in Public and Private Universities

Institution	Burnout (Mean± SD)	t-value	P-value
Public	35.4±9.5	1.033	0.303
Private	33.8±9.5		

The mean burnout levels for both private and public universities were not so different (35.4 and 33.8). Results in Table 3 indicate that the burnout level did not differ significantly by type of institution ($t=1.033$, $P=0.303$). Hence the hypothesis that was stated as; there is no statistically significant difference in burnout levels between Student Affairs Personnel in Public and Private Universities in Kenya was accepted. This implied that staff in both public and private universities experienced burnout and should be treated equally when it comes to mitigation of burnout. On the basis of the type of institution it is therefore concluded that there was no significant difference in burnout levels of the SAP.

The findings of this study agree with Lorden (2008) study of the SAP in Indiana University which concluded that the attrition rate in the student affairs profession was high due to burnout. Though the current study did not look at the attrition rate but it agreed with Lorden's study on the basis of burnout being prevalent among the SAP. The Vice Chancellor's Committee Report (2000) agreed with Lorden and added that expectations for job performance in student affairs departments are always demanding and hours are long and erratic leading to burnout.

These findings however disagreed with Gachutha (2006) who reported that professionals in public institutions experience higher levels of burnout than those in private institutions. According to Gachutha, rural mental health counselors were subjected to the stress of working in a public setting with an unusual array of common stressful conditions. Maslach (2003) studied the effects of burnout among psychotherapists in public and private agencies in the US and like Gachutha (2006), found out that those working in public agencies were more dissatisfied and prone to burnout than those in private places. The current study however established that personnel in both public as well as private universities suffered from burnout. A percentage of 55.8% for personnel in public universities with high burnout levels and 49.2% for private are both quite high. The t-test indicated that the burnout level did not differ significantly by type of institution making this study to accept the hypothesis and conclude that burnout is prevalent in both public and private universities in Kenya. The differences if any could be because of other factors like locality, type of respondents or time span. The study therefore concluded that both staff in private as well as

public institutions experience burnout and mitigation measures should address all the SAP irrespective of the type of institution.

4.3.2 Prevalence of Burnout in the Student Affairs Departments

From the interview schedules, the Deans of Students, were asked whether burnout was prevalent in their departments. All the respondents actually agreed that burnout indeed occurred in their departments. The starting point here is that according to the Deans of students, staff in student affairs departments in both public and private universities experienced burnout. The levels might vary but burnout occurred in the departments. The following excerpts explain this further.

Excerpt 1

Yes there is burnout in our department. This is because of the numbers. What do you do with the high numbers and given that these days our institution operates on a trimester basis. We honestly cannot avoid burning out.

Excerpt 2

Though burnout is there it is not much, it is manageable. Probably I should look at it as more of stress than burnout though none between the two is good for staff.

Excerpt 3

Burnout is very prevalent and it has really affected my staff. I must say that all of us in this department are literally burning out because of deadlines, workload, student population and the like. Staff just burnout and you do not know whether you are dealing with people or ashes.

From the excerpts above it is quite clear that burnout was prevalent in both Public and Private Universities in Kenya. These qualitative results agreed with a study by Maslach (2003) which observed that intense staff – client interaction is often centered on the client’s psychological, social or physical problems. Such interactions are often charged with feelings of anger, embarrassment, fear or despair. Working frequently with such clients poses the risk of burnout. Maslach therefore concluded that intense staff interaction led to burnout irrespective of whether one is in a private or public institution.

4.3.3 Causes of Burnout

To lay a foundation for the second objective, in section D of the questionnaire the respondents gave various causes of Burnout in their institutions. The interviews with the Deans of students also shed more light on this. Since this was not a substantive hypothesis, data was analysed qualitatively. Results from this section simply gave a background of the burnout situation among the SAP. This section therefore aided in the clearer understanding of the study objectives because

it is difficult to talk about burnout without touching on its causes and effects. Table 4 gives a summary of the causes of burnout in the student affairs departments.

Table 4: Causes of Burnout in Student Affairs Departments

<i>Cause</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Inadequate staff	3	13.6
Working Hours	1	4.5
Too much work	7	32.1
Crisis Management	1	4.5
Frustrations	2	9.1
No upward mobility	2	9.1
No Support	1	4.5
Lack of skills	3	13.6
Lack of Resources	1	4.5
Student Truancy	1	4.5
Total	22	100.0

The results in table 4 are clearly presented in the pie chat in figure 5 which brings out a clear comparison of the causes of burnout among the SAP.

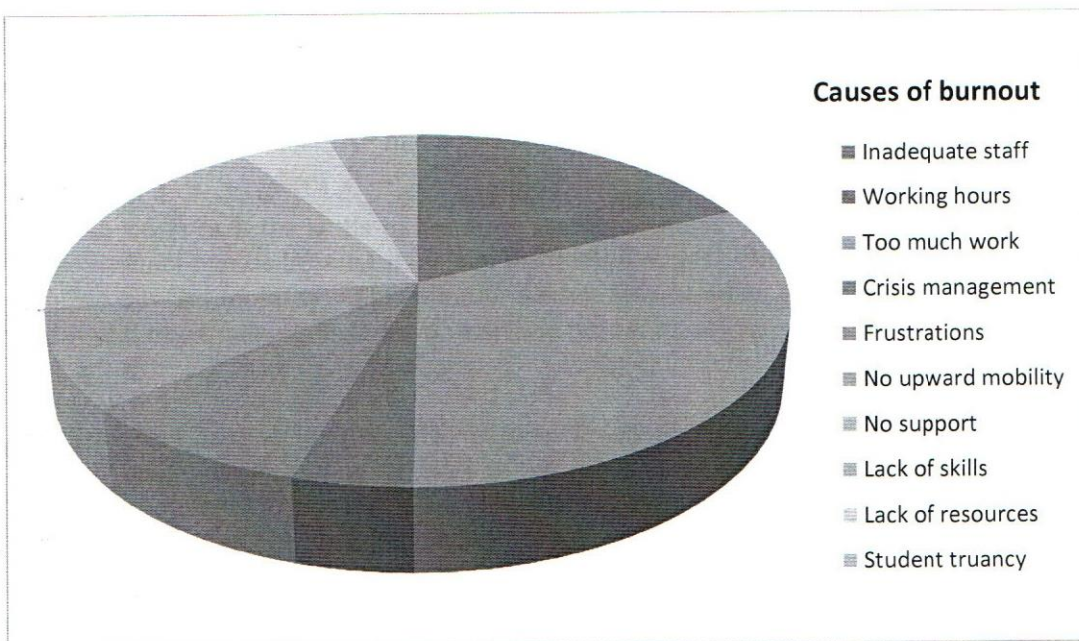


Figure 5: Causes of burnout among Student Affairs Personnel

From figure 5, the highest percentage of the SAP(32.1%) felt that too much work was the major cause of burnout followed by inadequate staff and personnel feeling that they lack the skills to do the job (each at 13.6%).

Excerpts from the Deans of Students supported the above findings. Some of the causes emanated from the nature of work in the department as elaborated in excerpt 1 and 2.

Excerpt 1

Our department engages in high pressure jobs making us do crisis management most of the time and this wears us down.

Excerpt 2

Insufficient staff, long working hours, large clientele, lack of basic resources and sometimes role confusion because of insufficient staff. Some staff even lack the basic skills to do the assigned job. Our university has a lot of bureaucracy leading to delays and frustrations. Who cannot burn out given such? In fact my staff have really tried.

Excerpt 3 on the contrary gave workload as a major cause of burnout. Workload here is discussed in terms of many different duties that the SAP needed to accomplish.

Excerpt 3

Students on campus know the student affairs as the only place to get help. Too many students rely on the meager staff and resources in the department. Personnel in my department are therefore jacks of all trades; they do everything that their customers (the students) put on the table- you know how students behave. In fact students feel that the Dean of Students' place has all the answers so they keep coming to us for answers to everything, I mean everything. The Dean of students place is always the first stop in times of problems. You will never see such students unless things go wrong for them then they come rushing.

Though some causes were as a result of workload or the nature of the work in the department, some respondents felt that the SAP had a role to play in their own burnout as given in excerpt 4.

Excerpt 4

Some staffs lack the skills of handling students. Some on the other hand are given jobs they cannot handle because they lack the qualifications. Others are just frustrated because of no upward mobility. This burnout disease is a complex issue. Some of us work both day and night making us to have very little time for family.

Excerpt 5

Ours is a Christian institution so burnout levels are high among my staff whenever we have truancy cases among students or when a student goes against the core values of our institution. We are very keen on even how our students dress. When disciplinary issues are there, we are also involved and this emotionally drains us.

The excerpts agree with Pfiffering (2008) who said that burnout occurs when too many people lean too heavily upon an individual. The vice chancellor's committee report of 2000 also found

that staff working for long erratic hours can also be very demanding and can lead to burnout. As given in excerpt 3. The above causes were viewed to affect the SAP in various ways as discussed in the following section.

4.3.4 Effects of Burnout in Student Affairs Departments

The participating Deans were asked to discuss the effects of burnout on their staff and depersonalization featured as a major effect. Depersonalization here was taken to mean that the SAP show no concern for their clients (in this case the students) and this was noted quite easily in their conversations with students. One respondent said, *‘I have noted a don’t care attitude in my staff when they are burning out’*. Another respondent talking about depersonalization said, *“You just get it from the way they handle students. They are rough and harsh to them”*.

The effects of burnout in student affairs departments in both public and private universities are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5: Effects of Burnout in Student Affairs Departments

<i>Cause</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Low production	1	5.6
Moody	3	16.7
Complain a lot	2	11.1
Absenteeism	3	16.7
Too Emotional	1	5.6
Make mistakes/Accidents	2	11.1
Poor decision making	1	5.6
Depersonalization	4	22.0
No interest in job	1	5.6
Total	18	100.0

A better view of the above percentages is given in figure 6 with depersonalization, mood swings and absenteeism standing out as the greatest effects experienced by the SAP as a result of burnout.

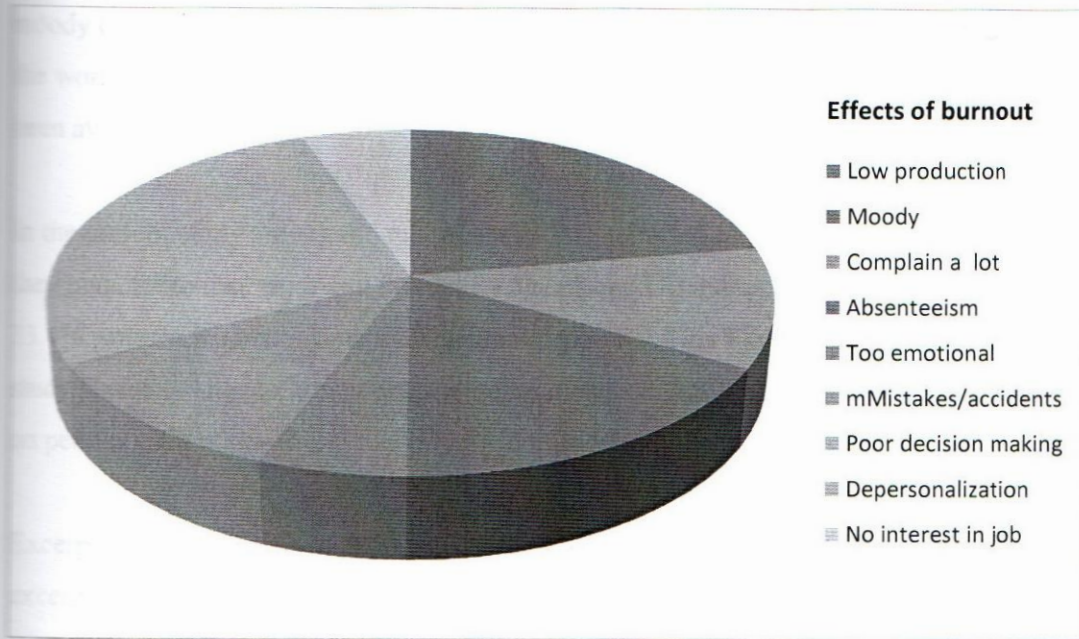


Figure 6: Effects of Burnout

The major effect of burnout was depersonalization. Whereas 22% of the SAP were depersonalized only 5.6% felt that burnout led to low job production or made them too emotional with poor decision making skills. Worse still, burnout resulted in making the SAP have no interest in the job they once loved. This study agreed with Moore (2000) given that both studies established that burnout affects both the organization and the individual. The study found the SAP both in public and private universities to be affected. This tends to disagree with a study by Gachutha (2006) where she found psychologists in public agencies in Kenya to be more dissatisfied and prone to burnout than those in private agencies.

According to Moore (2000), burnout affects both the organization and the individual. Teachers who suffered burnout according to Moore's study had impaired health, reduced self confidence, low self esteem and damaged personal relationships. The researcher argued that the above effects spiraled down to the organization in form of absenteeism by the teacher. Absenteeism was seen as a form of escape from a stressful and unpleasant work situation. Maslach *et al.* (2001) agreed with the current study and Moore's findings by adding that people who are experiencing burnout can have a negative impact on their colleagues both by causing greater personal conflict and disrupting job tasks. Thus, burnout can be contagious and perpetuate itself through informal interactions on the job. Given the effects of burnout, it therefore means that the higher the burnout level the higher the effects that were experienced by the SAP. This study established that burnout indeed affected the SAP because 22% reported being depersonalized, 16.7% became

moody quite often, another 16.7% absented themselves among other effects like lack of interest in the work they once loved, and having many complaints and sometimes accidents that would have been avoided if one was keen.

In the current study among the recommendations reported to help reduce burnout, 11.4% said that they plan not to mix work and family, 26.8% planned to interact more with friends and family and 33.4% planned for better time management practices. This like in Burke and Green glass's (2001) study seems to suggest that there was some evidence that burnout had a negative spillover effect on people's life at home.

Excerpts from the Dean of Student's interviews also tended to agree with the above results. The excerpts bring out the idea that it was not only the individual who was affected by burnout but the organization as well.

Excerpt 1

Whenever my staff burn out like during this period of admission, you just notice it in their work output. The output is low and the staffs themselves appear gloomy throughout making it even more difficult for you to ask anything. Some of them appear tired even as early as 8a.m. and such keep complaining throughout the day. Such never see anything good in the department. Working with such members is very difficult. You would rather give them an off day to be far from you. It is however worse when I burn out, I only notice it at times when I realize that nobody has come to my office the whole day. Staffs literally avoid me.

Excerpt 2

Burnout affects my staff by making them wear long frustrated faces which sometimes scare off their clients. You will just notice that they are burning out when you hear charged conversations or when they ask for sick off or look for any excuse to be away. Some would want to go for the funeral ceremony of every village mate who dies.

A serious effect of burnout is on poor decision making practices and poor interpersonal relationships as is noted in excerpt 3 and 4.

Excerpt 3

Oh! Burnout is bad. Staffs make very stupid mistakes and they do not notice at all. At one time a member made a very stupid decision that it almost sparked off a strike on campus. I had to give that staff some off to rest because a whole week prior to the day, the member had been too busy with students. The decision would have sparked off fire and caused many of us our jobs. Burnout is bad. It is a disease and it is worse when it affects half of the staff. The problem is that it can be contagious.

Excerpt 4

When they are burning out it is the time when everything and everyone –even me becomes bad. Such staff can just stay away and switch off their phones. They develop a don't care attitude. They just sit and gossip yet they know that there is work to be done. They wait for you to tell them so that they react, at such times they are very reactive. I have sometimes heard some during such times complain that I'm frustrating them. You know blame is a cause of all problems we have. They hardly take responsibility when they are burning out instead they become 'blame specialists'.

Another effect of burnout is the fact that the attrition rate for high cadre staff is very high.

Such staffs prefer to teach instead of serving in the Dean's office so whenever they get a teaching opportunity, they gladly leave the department. It is clear from the excerpts that burnout affects the SAP in various ways. The above findings gave a good background to the second objective of this study which sought to establish the relationship between burnout levels and occupational factors.

4.4 Occupational Factors and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel

This section dealt with the second objective. Occupational factors were defined by three concepts, namely; Workload, Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity. Section D of the questionnaire was instrumental in establishing the burnout levels of the SAP in relation to occupational factors. In this section, Strongly Agree as an answer indicated prevalence of the influence of occupational factors whereas Strongly Disagree implied absence of the same.

Objective 2: To determine the relationship between Occupational Factors (Workload, Role conflict and Role ambiguity) and Burnout levels of Student Affairs Personnel.

To address the above objective so as to bring out a clear situation as it was among the SAP, each occupational factor was discussed on its own before being analyzed together statistically.

4.4.1 Workload and Burnout Levels of the SAP

This section sought to establish the relationship between workload in the Student Affairs Department and the personnel's Burnout Levels. From section D of the questionnaire workload was measured by five parameters as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Workload and Burnout Levels Cross Tabulation

Workload Parameters	Burnout Level					Total
	Normal	Moderate	High	Very High	Dangerous	
Long Hours	0	0	0	6	2	8
Pressure and deadlines	0	2	8	20	0	30
Insufficient time & Resources	0	0	2	4	0	6
Too many students	1	4	32	26	5	68
Intense Involvement	0	1	22	13	1	37
Total	(0.6%)1	(4.71%)7	(42.96%)64	(46.35%)69	(5.39)8	149

As indicated in Table 6, out of a total of 149 SAP, 51.7% experience very high to dangerous levels of burnout as a result of workload in the department. Majority of the SAP gave a reason for their burnout to be pressure and deadlines, too many students leaning on them for help and intense involvement in departmental issues. The number of those who had normal to moderate burnout levels was only 8, indicating that majority suffered from very high to dangerous burnout levels. Differences in the workload parameters are clearly presented in figure 7.

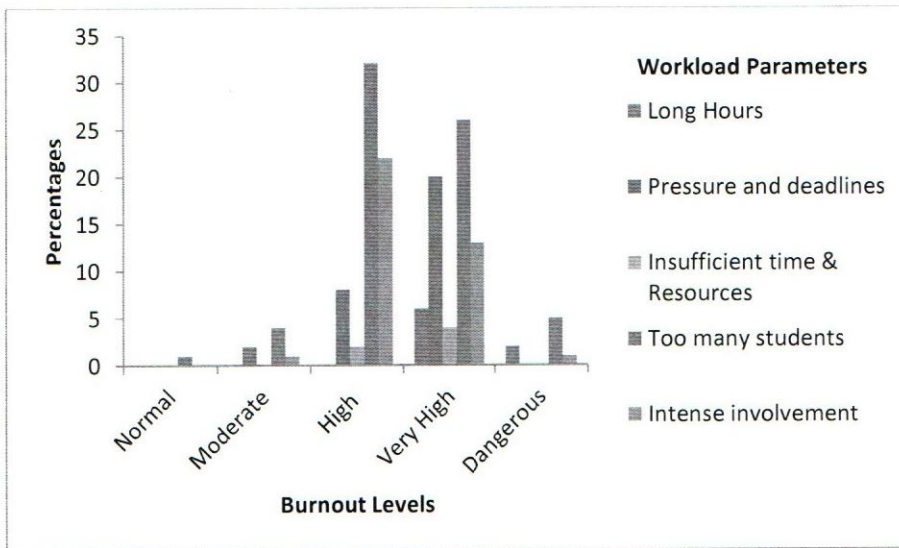


Figure 7: Workload Parameters and Burnout levels

Given that all the SAP experienced some kind of burnout, it is clear from figure 7 that in whichever category of burnout levels one found themselves in, too many students, intense involvement with students as well as pressure and deadlines were the workload parameters that contributed to burnout. The personnel who had normal burnout still reported that too many students lean on them making them burnout. Whereas all the workload parameters contributed to very high burnout levels, the SAP who experienced dangerous burnout as a result of workload

reported that long hours, too many students and intense involvement with students were the major causes of their burnout experience.

4.4.2 Role Conflict and Burnout Levels of the SAP

Role conflict is the pressure experienced when one performs in two or more ways that seem incompatible. It was measured by conflicting demands, no respect at workplace, many stressors, incompatible requests and lack of support. The results of the relationship between role conflict and the SAP's burnout levels are as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Role Conflict and Burnout Levels

Burnout levels	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Normal	35	23.5	23.5
Moderate	46	30.9	54.4
High	24	16.1	70.5
Very High	34	22.8	93.3
Dangerous	10	6.7	100.0
Total	149	100.0	

N=149

It is clear that from Table 7, majority of the SAP had moderate burnout levels (30.9%) as a result of role conflict followed by those having normal burnout (23.5%). The pie chart below gives a clear visual picture of the above. Those who experienced dangerous and very high levels total up to 34.5%. This percentage is quite high and should not be ignored because the individual, department and the whole institution at large can be affected in various ways.

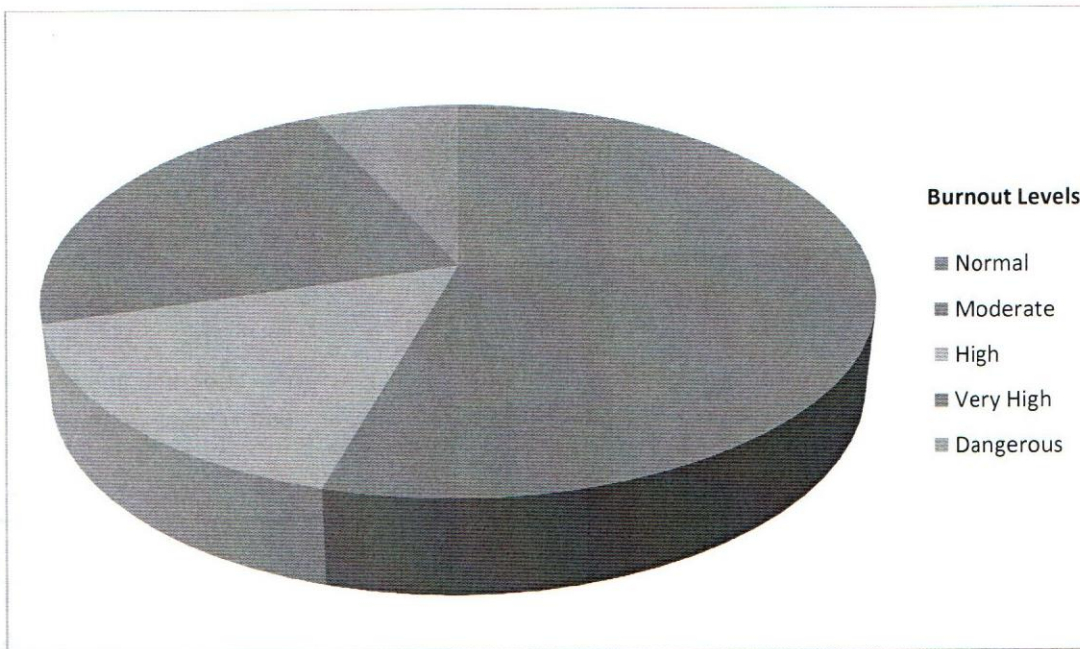


Figure 8: Role Conflict and Burnout Levels of the SAP

Figure 8 indicates that majority of the SAP experienced moderate burnout levels closely followed by those having normal and high burnout levels due to role conflict. This means that if proper interventional measures are put in place it is possible to manage the burnout levels of majority of the staff in the student affairs department. If however, it is not managed; majority of the staff can slide into having very high or dangerous levels. When roles keep conflicting, confusion, demotivation and depersonalization can be inevitable. This in turn can lead to exhaustion and diminished personal and institutional efficacy or interest.

4.4.3 Role Ambiguity and Burnout Levels of the SAP

Role ambiguity is a situation whereby the SAP find their roles being difficult to be understood or explained because of involving many different aspects. There were various parameters used to measure role ambiguity as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Role Ambiguity and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel

Role Ambiguity Parameters	Burnout Levels					Total
	Normal	Moderate	High	Very High	Dangerous	
No autonomy	7	19	1	0	0	27
No specific role	0	38	24	1	0	63
No reward	0	2	7	1	0	10
Confusing demands	1	7	24	4	1	37
Too long in same office	0	3	8	1	0	12
Total	8	69	64	7	1	149

Table 8 indicates that 14% felt that their jobs were marred with role ambiguity meaning that they did not have specific roles they played in the department despite the fact that their appointment letters clearly gave their job descriptions. The reason given for such a situation was staff shortages making the SAP to perform their duties and fill up gaps for the missing staff as well. The causes for role ambiguity included the fact that staff felt that they did not have autonomy to make decisions, confusing demands, no specific roles and being in the same office doing the same job for too long making the job to be mechanical or seem to have no challenges.

4.4.4 Statistical Significance of Occupational Factors and Burnout levels of the SAP

HO₂: There is no statistically significant relationship between Occupational factors (Workload, Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity) and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel.

This hypothesis was subjected to the Pearson Product – Moment correlation coefficient. The Pearson's correlation coefficient is a measure of linear association among variables. Being a good measure of association between variables, it therefore aided in describing of relationships (in this case Burnout and Occupational factors).

Table 9: Pearson Correlation Results between Occupational factors and Burnout

Factor	Burnout	Workload	Ambiguity	Role conflict
Burnout	—			
Workload	0.515 p<0.001	—		
Ambiguity	0.738 p<0.001	0.651 p<0.001	—	
Role conflict	0.620 p<0.001	0.617 p<0.001	0.746 p<0.001	—

N=149 P<0.05

**** Results are significant at P≤0.01**

The study sought to find out whether there was a significant statistical relationship between occupational factors and the burnout levels of the Student Affairs Personnel. The Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficient indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between occupational factors score and burnout levels ($r=0.709$, $P<0.05$). This implies that the higher the score on the occupational factors (agreement) the higher the burnout level. Basing on these results, the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between occupational factors and burnout levels of student affairs personnel was rejected. From the above findings, occupational factors tend to influence the SAP's burnout levels and as such any interventional approach should take note of occupational factors. Having established that all occupational factors had a significant relationship with the burnout levels of the SAP, the following four sections discuss each occupational factor and compare the current results with those of earlier studies.

4.4.5 Workload

From Table 7, workload was found to be positively impacting burnout ($r= 0.515$, $P<0.05$). This implies that as workload increased burnout also increased. Employees experienced heavy workload for many reasons, including tight deadlines, layoffs that cause staff shortages and unplanned institutional activities that have created more work for the same staff. It can be difficult to manage a staff that is overworked. Even the most dedicated employees often reach their breaking points. Employees exposed to a heavy workload can sometimes become disgruntled with their work. This is especially true if the job is repetitive without offering any kind of variety. This is a state of being burned out by a job, and it can lead to some significant effects such as low morale, high turnover and potential violence in the workplace. Frustrated employees may find themselves lashing out at each other, which can create an uncomfortable and unproductive workplace. Six specific areas of mismatch that can lead to burnout were identified by Maslach *et al.* (2001). These areas include; workload, control, reward, community, fairness and values. This study has also found workload to be a major factor in burnout. In the Maslach burnout model workload encompasses physical and emotional demands as well as the type of work and the skills required.

A study on nurses by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli (2000), revealed that job demands and job resources contributed to stressful working conditions. The study revealed that burnout had negative impacts on life and job satisfaction. The results are similar to the present study in which 82% of the SAP either strongly agreed that too many students lean on them and that they spend too much time in intense involvement with students. In a similar study on nurses

in public hospitals, Aiken, Clarke, Sloane, Lake and Cheney (2008) revealed that the nurses ranked the care environments as poor leading to high levels of burnout. The present study however investigated specific aspects of the job environment and it is worth noting that whereas the SAP in both public and private universities complained of heavy workload, the causes are very different. For those in public universities the workload was as a result of student numbers while those in private universities the workload was a result of multitasking because of staff shortages.

From both the qualitative and quantitative data it emerged that lack of/or insufficient personnel also led to workload problems. The Deans of students experienced difficulties related to staffing and allocation of work, with serious staff shortages posing as a major challenge. They felt the daily workload was overwhelming and all they could focus on was meeting their daily targets. This scenario in both public and private universities left the SAP drained as was indicated in section E of the questionnaire which dealt with effects of burnout.

4.4.6 Role Conflict

Role conflict as an occupational factor was also found to be significant (0.620 $P < 0.05$). This implied that the more one's roles conflicted the higher the burnout levels. This therefore implied that Role conflict played a significant role in the SAP's burnout levels and mitigation measures ought to consider this. According to Hobfoll (2002), various role conflicts can cause burnout. This however depends on the perceiver's assessment of available resources to cope with the threat. Stress only leads to strain when a threat to self is perceived to exist in conjunction with insufficient coping resources. The basic tenet of the COR theory is that people strive to acquire, maintain, and protect resources, and perceive potential or actual loss of resources, or lack of an expected gain in resources, to be stressful (Hobfoll, 2002). Resources according to this theory include objects, conditions, personal characteristics, and energies. Loss of these resources, or the threat of such a loss, may cause the experience of stress leading to burnout. Employees experiencing role conflict may come to believe that they cannot successfully perform the job. Consequently, they may be forced to invest additional resources into their work role for fear of losing their job status. This additional investment of resources into the work role represents a loss of resources that could lead to negative states including dissatisfaction and psychological strain.

Like Hobfoll (2002) this study suggested that personal characteristics and social relations could act as resources and buffer against burnout resulting from role conflict.

This study also asserts that perceptions of organizational support (a situational factor) have the potential to deter feelings of burnout and also mitigate the effects of role conflict on burnout.

4.4.7 Role Ambiguity

Role ambiguity was found to positively influence burnout in that the more ambiguities one experienced at the workplace the higher the burnout levels. Role ambiguity parameters were subjected to the Pearson Product Moment for correlation and the test found role ambiguity to be significant ($r= 0.738$, $P<0.05$). Though the level of significance for the study was 0.05, role ambiguity was found to be highly significant even at 0.01 level of significance. A conclusion was therefore arrived at that indeed role ambiguity had a significant relationship to the burnout levels of the SAP in both public and private universities in Kenya.

There was a significant positive correlation between Workload, Ambiguity, Role conflict and the Burnout levels of the SAP ($r=0.515$, 0.738 and 0.620 , $p<0.05$). This implied that occupational factors play a major role in the burnout levels of SAP. Therefore according to the second hypothesis, should an institution plan to mitigate for burnout, workload, role ambiguity and role conflict are the first factors to be addressed.

A similar situation applied to both private and public institution. This therefore implied that whether one is working in a public or a private university, the occupational factors still had an effect on the personnel's burnout levels. Like in the first hypothesis burnout here was not determined by the type of institution but more on the working environment. This suggested that interventional and mitigation measures can be drawn for all the SAP irrespective of the type of institution.

It was acknowledged by both researcher and study participants that a degree of role conflict, role ambiguity and workload was inevitable in complex organizations like universities. It is not possible to eradicate these role stressors completely. Perhaps they can be contained at levels which are tolerable and which do not add to greater job burnout. These findings seem to agree with Bryant and Constantine's (2006) study who found out that organizational stressors cannot be eradicated and so they carried out an intervention study in which role clarification was offered to managers. Role ambiguity was reduced; although at least initially, these managers did not report experiencing less stress and they suggested that further studies along this line were needed, this gives the reason for the current study.

4.4.8 Respondents' Views on Occupational factors and Burnout Levels of the SAP

Interviews from the Deans also showed that Occupational factors had an influence on the SAP's burnout levels. The respondents were asked whether there were any occupational characteristics

that had a direct relationship with burnout. Like in the inferential analysis, an overwhelming response of 81.8% was in agreement while only 18.2 % disagreed. Occupational factors were found to be positively related to burnout as shown in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 1

Role ambiguity is present in our department because of less staff and crisis management. Staff therefore find themselves handling any assignment given to them. Students also approach any available member of staff whenever they have needs and they expect to be served. All they want is a solution to their issue irrespective of who the member of staff is.

Excerpt 2

There are so many different jobs to be done in our department yet we lack basic resources like office space. The administration has also just grouped us together as personnel in student affairs. Though each one of us has defined roles, it is difficult to stick to your roles because of the crises in the department. I think it is high time the administration looked at each one of us as a professional in their own right.

Excerpt 3

Some members feel threatened that one is taking up their jobs and all this is because of lack of human and structural resources. Some members also find themselves serving more students because sometimes students tend to love one member of staff more than others. This makes others to feel threatened. Other staff members naturally love doing jobs not designated to them. When they do this some members feel threatened and this brings problems.

From the qualitative results an overwhelming response of 81.8% was in agreement that occupational characteristics have a direct relationship with burnout. A study by Tunc and Kutanis (2009), analyzed the correlation between burnout, role conflict and role ambiguity using the MBI and results demonstrated a strong relationship between ambiguity, role conflict and burnout. The present study examined the relationship between occupational factors and burnout level of the SAP and Consistent with other studies (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006; Wilkerson, 2009; Wilkerson & Bellini, 2006), role conflict was a significant predictor of job satisfaction. The multiple demands placed on the SAP appear to create pressure to make decisions on what services to provide or how to provide all of them with finite resources and time. In this study Role ambiguity was also a significant predictor of satisfaction with work since it appeared that there was still much ambiguity surrounding the role of the SAP which therefore created more pressure and influenced job satisfaction. Other studies have reported a correlation between role ambiguity and job satisfaction (Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Coll & Freeman, 1997). Several studies (Lyckho 2001; Perera *et al.*, 2008; Pèrusee *et al.*, 2004), have specifically identified the role of the principle (in this case the Dean of students) as critical in establishing the specific roles of the SAP.

This study also found that time spent on some activities with students, specifically percentage of time spent on counseling, was a predictor of satisfaction with work, the job in general, and promotion. Other studies have found similar results; Baggerly and Osborn (2006), reported that time spent on appropriate and inappropriate duties predicted career satisfaction. In a study among high school counsellors, Culbreth *et al.*(2005) and Kolodinsky *et al.*(2009) ,suggested that differences in perception of ideal and actual roles, perhaps viewed as what the institution recommends and what is actually expected of high school counselors, were predictive of job satisfaction and role stress.

It is worth noting that in this study in some institutions, the issue of role conflict and ambiguity did not exist. The only occupational factor that was seen to exist in such institutions was the issue of workload with some staffs feeling more overworked than others. It is this feeling that some Deans had noted that it brought conflicts among staff. One respondent said that though occupational factors did not have a direct relationship with burnout because each staff did what they were required to do, but charged conversations between staff had hinted that some staffs still burnout, otherwise why the charged conversations and sometimes the cynicism? According to the respondent, some staffs felt that some were liked by the Dean more than others and still this brought conflicts.

4.5 Relationship between Individual Characteristics and Burnout Levels of the SAP

Psychologically, it is true that typical qualities of an individual make one individual different from another. This therefore implies that individuals can have different levels of burnout based on individual characteristics. The present study analyzed gender, age, years of experience and personality as individual characteristics of the SAP. This section discussed the third objective which dealt with individual characteristics of the SAP.

Objective three: To find out the Relationship between Individual characteristics (Age, Gender, Experience and Personality) and Burnout Levels of the SAP.

Given that individual characteristics are quite different, each of the following sections discussed a different individual characteristic after which a general conclusion was given.

4.5.1 Gender and Burnout Levels of the SAP

The study established that in both public and private universities, there were more females working in student affairs departments than males. Among the 149 respondents who completed the questionnaire, 79(53%) were female while 70(47%) were males as indicated in Table 10.

Table 10: Gender Distribution of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	70	47.0	47.0	47.0
	Female	79	53.0	53.0	100.0
	Total	149	100.0	100.0	

N=149

As earlier discussed, 47% respondents were males while 53% were females. The two groups experienced burnout in all its levels as shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Gender and Burnout Levels Cross Tabulation

Gender	Burnout Level										Total	
	Normal		Moderate		High		Very High		Dangerous			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	5	3.40	31	20.8	27	18.1	6	4.02	1	0.67	70	47
Female	3	2.01	38	25.5	37	24.8	1	0.67	0	0.00	79	53
Total	8	5.43	69	46.3	64	42.9	7	4.70	1	0.67	149	100

N=149

Cross tabulation in table 11 indicated that more females than males suffered from moderate to high levels of burnout. On the contrary, 4.69% of the males suffered from very high to dangerous levels as compared to 0.67% of the females. More females however were found to experience normal to high burnout levels than their male counterparts, though the figures do not differ significantly.

This indicated that males tended to suffer more from serious levels of burnout than females. The burnout levels for females ranged from normal to high levels. Whereas 0.67% males suffered from dangerous burnout, there was no female in this category. A deeper analysis of the respondents who had high to dangerous burnout levels revealed that there were differences in the causes of burnout as indicated in figure 9. It is worth noting that whereas an equal percentage (30%) of both males and females felt misunderstood and unappreciated at their place of work, more females (49%) than males (40%) felt that they did not have time to plan their work. Another notable difference was that more females (46%) felt frustrated at their place of work compared to 33% males this was even explained further by 57% females feeling drained as compared to 46%

of their male counterparts. On the contrary, more males (19%) felt that they were in the wrong organization and 43% felt that they were achieving less as compared to 10% and 39% respectively of their female counterparts. Figure 9 explains this further.

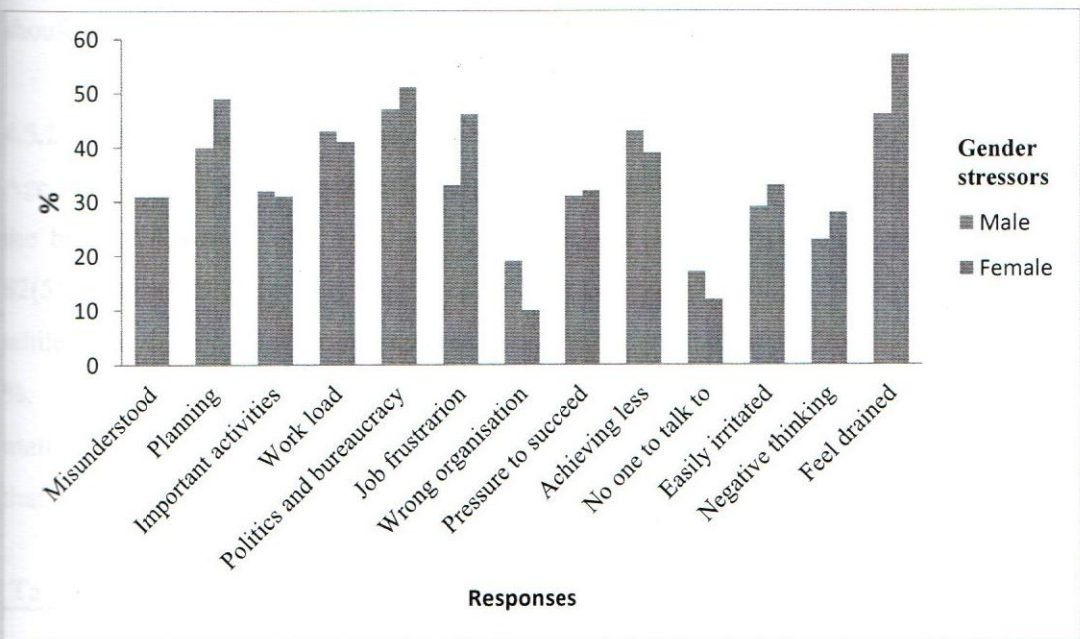


Figure 9: Gender Differences in Burnout Levels

A critical view of the bar graph in figure 9 revealed a slightly different picture from the one given in table 11 that females tend to burnout more than males. It seems both experience burnout but for different reasons. According to figure 9, stressors in males included;

- Workload
- Wrong organisation
- Achieving less
- No one to talk to
- Important activities

On the contrary females had the following as their stressors;

- Institutional Politics
- Poor Planning
- Job frustrations
- Pressure to succeed
- Easily irritated
- Negative thinking
- Feeling drained
- Feeling misunderstood

These results bring out the idea that though both males and females are likely to burn out, the causes are very different for each of them. Whereas male causes tend to indicate the achievement aspect, the female causes seem to touch on interpersonal relationships. Mitigation measures should therefore put this into consideration.

4.5.2 Age and Burnout Levels of the SAP

Age was another individual characteristic that this study sought to establish its relationship with the burnout levels of the SAP. The study results indicated that majority of the respondents 82(55%) were aged between 30-49 years old, followed by those aged between 50 years and above while the minority group were those who were 29 years and below having a total percentage of 21%. If we were to consider those below 29 years to be the youthful workers, 30-49 to be the mature while those who were 50years and above to be the aging, then we will comfortably say that most student affairs departments have the mature and aging workers.

Table 12: Age Distribution Percentages

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid < 29	21	14.1	14.1	14.1
30-49	82	55.0	55.0	69.1
> 50	46	30.9	30.9	100.0
Total	149	100.0	100.0	

N=149

Table 12 shows that 55% of the SAP were aged between 30-49 years. In this study this represented the Mature group of workers. Table 13 highlights more differences in their burnout levels based on age.

Table 13: Age and Burnout Levels Cross Tabulation

Age	Burnout level					Total
	Normal	Moderate	High	Very High	Dangerous	
<29	0	10	9	2	0	21
30-49	7	41	30	3	1	82
>50	1	18	25	2	0	46
Total	8	69	64	7	1	149

N=149

Table 13 shows that mature personnel were the majority and also suffered from high burnout levels. Only 1 person aged between 30-49 years suffered from dangerous burnout. Majority of this cohort (41) had moderate burnout levels while 30 of them had high levels. Of the total population 69 of them had moderate burnout levels while 64 of them had high levels. While only 8 respondents had normal burnout, an almost equal number (7) suffered from very high levels. The descriptive results above actually indicate that all the SAP experienced some level of burnout irrespective of age. It is interesting to note that none of the youthful workers had normal burnout yet some of them experienced very high burnout levels. This could be because of the high expectations this group came with to their workplace. The 30 – 49 group as well as the aging personnel tended to suffer more from moderate to high levels. These according to studies are the most productive age. According to the Erick Erickson’s psychosocial stages, this category falls in the adulthood stage. During this stage individuals must take an active interest in helping and guiding young people. They enjoy people coming to them for help; they are like a well, always giving to all people. If they enjoy their work they become nurturing, responsible, dependable, protective and supportive. However, if burnout sets in they can become static, immobilized, authoritarian, resistant to change and uncaring. This then is one group to be taken care of so that they do not burn out. This information is further illustrated in figure 10.

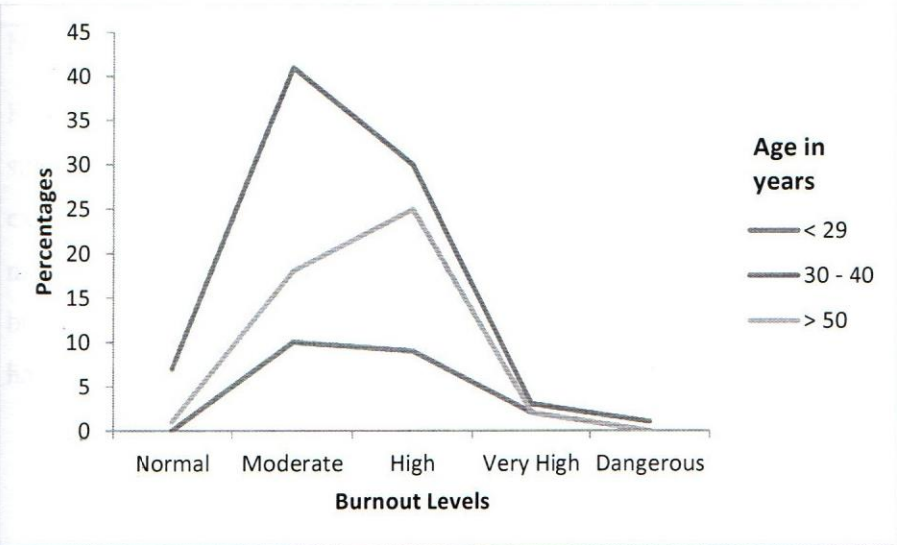


Figure 10: Age and Burnout Levels

Whereas the younger personnel (<29years) did not suffer from dangerous levels of burnout, the aging personnel suffered from it. The three groups tended to have almost similar figures of very high burnout levels with the line graphs almost interacting. It is also worth noting that the three

categories of personnel presented almost similar shapes of the line graphs with each rising from the normal level, having a maximum at moderate or high levels then numbers gradually dropped in each category. The line graph therefore does not show great variations in terms of age. This similarity implies that a suitable burnout model can be designed and should be used by all ages or groups because their trend of burning out is similar.

4.5.3 Working Experience and Burnout Levels

Majority (76 representing 51%) of the SAP had worked for less than six years in the student affairs department. Only 6.7% had worked for more than 20years in the department (Table 14).

Table 14: Working Experience and Burnout Levels Crosstabulation

Experience in Years	Burnout level					Total
	Normal	Moderate	High	Very high	Dangerous	
1-5	5	40	27	3	1	76
6-10	2	16	18	3	0	39
11-20	0	11	14	0	0	25
>20	1	2	5	1	0	9
Total	8	69	64	7	1	149

N=149

From Table 14, it is noted that only 1 respondent who had worked for less than 5 years suffered from dangerous Burnout. Majority of those who had worked for less than 5 years experienced moderate burnout levels. For those who had worked for 6 and above years, majority of them experienced high burnout levels and none experienced dangerous levels of burnout. On the contrary, dangerous levels of burnout were only experienced among those who had worked for less than 5 years. These results are further presented in figure 11.

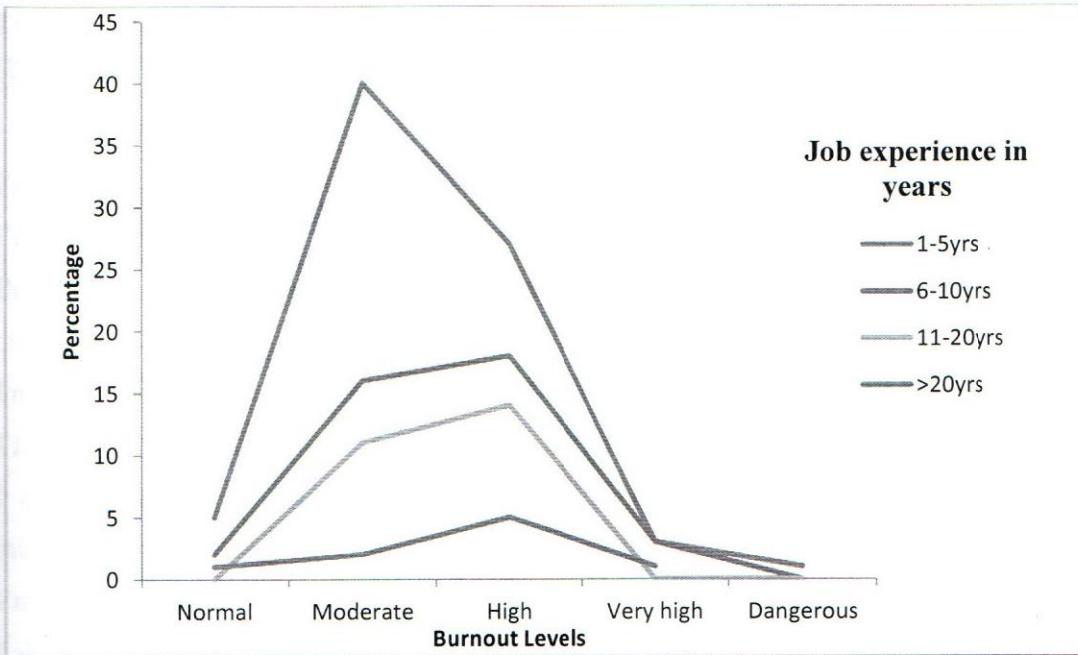


Figure 11: Working Experience and Burnout Levels

The line graph in figure 11 indicates that majority of the personnel have a working experience of less than five years in the student affairs department. Majority of these personnel also suffered from moderate burnout levels. The same group also experience very high and dangerous levels. An interaction on very high level occurred among those whose experience was less than five years and those of 6-10 years. Interest here is the fact that majority of the SAP had worked for less than 5 years yet again when one's age is compared with experience, majority were aged between 30 -40 years. This seem to suggest that the attrition rate is high among the SAP.

4.5.4 Personality and Burnout levels

The study had a set of questions to test for personality A and B. This is the most basic test that can be carried out in relation to the work place. Results were as indicated in Table 15.

Table 15: Personality Traits

Statement	Public (%)	Private (%)	χ^2	P-value
I'm casual about appointments	26(63.4)	15(36.6)	0.752	0.386
I'm a competitive person	60(52.6)	54(47.4)	5.145	0.023
I'm not a good listener because I complete sentences for others	9(52.9)	8(47.1)	0.179	0.672
I never feel rushed even under pressure	41(46.6)	47(53.4)	10.905	0.001
I'm always impatient	23(79.3)	6(20.7)	6.879	0.009
I always do many things at a time and I'm always thinking of what to do next	54(58.1)	39(41.9)	0.072	0.912
I'm a deliberate slow talker	23(65.7)	12(34.3)	1.199	0.274
I always want my good work recognized by others	57(65.5)	30(34.5)	5.211	0.022
I like eating, walking and doing all my activities fast	43(59.7)	29(40.3)	0.229	0.632
I tend to get along well with all colleagues	77(58.3)	55(41.7)	0.179	0.672
I like expressing my feelings and I'm not flexible	73(57.9)	53(42.1)	0.016	0.899
I have very few interest outside work	38(60.3)	25(39.7)	0.302	0.583
I'm always eager to get things done	79(59.4)	54(40.6)	1.433	0.231
I like it when I'm in control	70(63.6)	40(36.4)	6.032	0.014
I'm an ambitious person	73(56.2)	57(43.8)	5.551	0.062

Majority of the personality traits did not differ significantly by type of institution except for; I'm a competitive person ($p=0.023$), I never feel rushed even under pressure ($p=0.001$), I'm always impatient ($p=0.009$), I always want my good work recognized by others ($p=0.022$) and I like it when I'm in control ($p=0.014$) as shown in Table 15, light variations were however noted when individual personality traits were analyzed. This therefore implies that competitiveness, work pressure, recognition, patience and being in control were crucial in the mitigation of burnout. It is worth noting that all the five factors also contributed to occupational factors influencing burnout levels of SAP as earlier discussed in section 4.4 which looked at occupational factors and burnout levels of the SAP. The above result on the relationship between individual characteristics and burnout levels of the SAP were subjected to inferential statistics which forms the presentation of the next section.

4.6 Significance of Individual characteristics and Burnout Levels of the SAP

This section analyzed statistically the relationship between individual characteristics and burnout levels of the SAP. The hypothesis that was analyzed was stated as follows;

HO₃: There is no statistically significant relationship between Individual characteristics (Gender, Age, Experience and Personality) and Burnout Levels of the Student Affairs Personnel.

Individual characteristics were analyzed using different statistical methods because of the variability in individual characteristics.

4.6.1 Significance of Gender and Burnout Levels of the SAP

The gender mean scores were subjected to a t-test to establish whether there were any significant differences in burnout levels based on gender. Results are as indicated in Table 16.

Table 16: Gender and Burnout Levels

	Mean Burnout level	t-value	P-value
Male	36.1(SD 10.7)	1.650	0.101
Female	33.5 (SD 8.1)		

t-value=1.650 P>0.05

The independent sample t-test indicated no statistical significant difference in mean burnout levels by gender ($t=1.650$, $p=0.101$). This means that both males and females burnt out in similar ways and therefore in developing a burnout model for the SAP, gender is not really an important aspect and one model can therefore be used for both males and females. According to Jaracz *et al.* (2005) though differences between men's and women's burnout have gone undetected, it has been found that women suffer from exhaustion slightly more than men while cynicism is more common among men. Responses on the effects of burnout revealed that 43% males were found to be cynical against 22% females while 65% females confirmed being emotionally exhausted against 28% males. According to Hakanen (2009), women were better equipped for human relations and for sharing their negative emotions while men tended to suppress their emotions in order to live up to their roles, therefore making men to be more inclined to adopt cynical attitudes as a mechanism for coping with stress.

This study agreed with Azadeh (2010) and explained that what was important were the social gender related practices and structures both at work and outside which were often very different for men and women. The differences though statistically not significant may be attributed to the expectations from their job and their adjustment in their workplace and as such more attention should be paid to similarities and dissimilarities in the development of burnout as well as coping strategies among men and women. The qualitative findings of the current study tended to agree with the above since 55.6% of the respondents all agreed that men tended to burn out faster than females.

4.6.2 Respondents' Views on Relationship between Gender and Burnout Levels

Majority of the Deans (55.6%) were of the view that males tended to burn out more than the females. There were a variety of reasons given for this. One respondent said *"As far as I'm concerned males tend to burn out faster than females because of their interaction patterns. Females socialize more than men so they seek help and they do not burn out as fast as males."* (Excerpt 2) Another respondent felt men burn out more because of their male ego. There were however 22.2% who felt that women burnt out faster than men and an equal percentage were not sure of which gender burns out faster. The above results tend to disagree with the statistical analysis which found that there was no statistically significant difference between gender and burnout levels. From the interview discussion therefore it is quite clear that it is important to note that each gender has its own significant levels of burnout as brought out clearly in the following excerpts.

Excerpt 1

I tend to think that both gender burnout equally though if I were to be more specific females tend to burn out more because of the multiplicity of their roles. They are also quite irritable when they are burning out.

Excerpt 2

As far as I'm concerned males tend to burn out faster than females because of their interaction patterns. Females socialize more and tend to seek help making them not to burn out as fast. Men hardly share their issues because of the male ego. When the male staff burn out, they are very bad to everybody unlike females.

Excerpt 3

Though I have not been observant but I think females burn out more because of the various things they do, they are mothers, wives, employees, and sometimes students and business women. This is actually too much for them and they burn out totally because of such. Their male counterparts cannot handle all that.

The varied views from the interview schedules tended to affirm the argument by Azadeh' (2010). Azadeh like in the views from the excerpts argued that there was no evidence to support the general belief that women were at some greater risk of burnout than men. The finding of the study showed that burnout among women was due to the multiple roles that they play, interpersonal relations at work and home and how to reconcile the two while men's burnout was primarily caused by system-related factors. This study however concluded that biological gender alone is not a reasonable starting point in studying burnout. Other factors should also be studied in relation to gender and burnout.

4.6.3 Statistical Significance of the SAP's Age Differences and Burnout Levels

One way ANOVA was used to test the statistical relationship between the ages of Student Affairs Personnel and their burnout levels. The results of this test are indicated in Table 17.

Table 17: Significance Levels of Age and Burnout Levels

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	472.040	2	236.020	2.683	0.072
Within Groups	12843.222	146	87.967		
Total	13315.262	148			
F=2.683		P>0.05			

The One way ANOVA test indicated that there was no significant variation in burnout levels of the student affairs personnel by age (F=2.683, P=0.072). This implied that age had no effect or relationship to burnout levels of the SAP.

In this study, the students' affairs personnel were classified as youthful if they were 29 and below years of age, mature if they range between 30–50 years, and aging if they were more than 50 years of age. It is also worth noting that in terms of employment by age both public and private universities had similarities because majority of the employees were the mature (55%), followed by the aging (39.9%) while the young employees only comprised of 14.1%. These findings seem to agree with Maslach's *et al.* (2001) study where an explanation was given for the small number youthful employees in student affairs departments. According to Maslach, among youthful employees the level of burnout was higher than it was among those over 40 years old making them quit employment more often. This is because they get into employment with very high

expectations and when such expectations are not met within the first three years they start burning out and looking for alternative employment. The current study established the ages of the respondents to find out if age had any relationship with burnout levels of student affairs personnel. The study therefore established that there was no significant variation in burnout levels of student affairs personnel in terms of age. According to Maslach *et al.* (2001) age does not have a significant impact on burnout levels unless it is confounded with work experience. The qualitative results however had a slightly different view because all the participating Deans said that one's age had a relationship to burnout levels as discussed in the next section.

4.6.4 Respondents' Views on Age and Burnout Levels of the SAP

A discussion with the deans on age and burnout brought out varied ideas with some of them presented in the following excerpts.

Excerpt 1

The younger employees tend to burnout faster than mature ones. This is because the mature ones are more experienced and able to cope but the younger ones get frustrated very easily and give up. They are also always on the run to make wealth and are likely to burnout faster. They carry the office to home and the home to office. It is a crazy group to work with but I find them very handy in the department.

Excerpt 2

The younger team work so hard to make a name and they also learn on the job, this process can lead to burnout. The younger staffs are like the students whom they serve. They are therefore accessed by students very easily on phone making them be occupied all the time and this can make them to burn out. The older ones have over the years understood their clientele so they know how to handle them and it is not easy for them to burn out.

Excerpt 3

I have noted that the younger staff burnout faster and quit. A whole week of orientation when they are newly posted is important. This should be followed by regular personal and career development activities if they have to be retained.

The qualitative results however seem to agree with Ahola, Honkonen, Isometsa, Kalimo, Nykyri, Aromaa and Lonngvist (2006). The results reveal that age has an influence on burnout levels and should not be ignored. According to Ahola, *et al.* (2006), it has been argued that early career burnout is as a result of youthful employees having unrealistic expectations that cannot be fulfilled in a real working situation. In figure 10 there is a sharp rise from normal to moderate burnout and this could be as a result of the above explanation. The line graph also agrees with reviews where burnout has been reported to decrease with age (Lussier, 2006). Burnout levels have again been found to be higher during the aging years because the burnout condition develops

gradually and therefore is seen clearly during the final stages of one's career if it was never addressed or solved (Lussier, 2006).

4.6.5 Significance of Relationship between Working Experience and Burnout Levels

The working experience percentages were subjected to the one way ANOVA. The results indicated that there was no significant variation in burnout levels of the student affairs personnel by working experience (F=1.326, P=0.268) as in table 18.

Table 18: Significance Level of Working Experience and Burnout Levels

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	355.643	3	118.548	1.326	.268
Within Groups	12959.619	145	89.377		
Total	13315.262	148			

N = 149 F = 1.326 P > 0.05

Based on the above test results, there was no statistically significant relationship between one's experience and burnout levels. Working experience therefore does not contribute to any differences in burnout levels. The descriptive results however should not be ignored. Like in age, burnout appears to be more of a risk earlier in one's career and those who burn out early in their careers are likely to quit their jobs (Friedman, 2000). Experience here was taken to be the number of years one had worked in a particular job, in this study, the student affairs department. Putting both public and private universities together, majority of the personnel in student affairs departments were fairly new since they had only worked there for five years or less.

A chi-square (χ^2) test was also carried out to check the significance of correlation between working experience and the burnout levels of the SAP. Like in the ANOVA test, no significant correlation was observed (χ^2 value = 6.882, p-value = 0.297). Both statistical tests indicate no significant correlation between working experience and SAP's burnout levels.

This study agrees with a study done by Friedman (2000) who found that 30% of teachers employed each year abandoned their jobs in the first year of teaching because of the "reality shock". He says that those with less experience normally come to the "reality shock" when their

job expectations do not match the reality within the first years of employment making them burn out and quickly leave the job. Friedman's study is supported by Lorden (2008) who noted that most entry level positions in student affairs are quite stressful, unstable, confusing and unpredictable. In the current study, the SAP tend to systematically reduce in number as years increase with the smallest number (10) being those who had worked there for over 20 years. This is a 6.7% compared to 51% of the newly employed cohort. Though the study did not establish the attrition rate and where the personnel go after leaving the department, but according to a study in the students' affairs department of Indiana University, Lorden (2008) concluded that the attrition rate in the student affairs profession was high due to burnout. The researcher said that student affairs professionals leave the profession every year because of job dissatisfaction, role ambiguity, role conflict, role orientation, stress, overload and perceived opportunities for goal attainment, professional development and career advancement. Lorden noted that there are limited opportunities for mobility within the student affairs because organizational structures in higher education are relatively flat. This means that many positions exist at entry level but the number reduces at each succeeding level forming a pyramid like structure.

The study agreed with that of Lorden (2008) where he reported that the situation in student affairs departments in institutions of higher learning was marked with unclear career paths leading to professionals having multiple paths. In the current study, 19.4% have had a feeling of being in the wrong profession and 32.9% felt that they have worked in the students' affairs department for too long. This therefore indicated that if they got another opportunity, they would actually leave the department.

Ahola, Honkonen, Aromaa and Lonnqvist (2008) found that oncology nurses in a Canadian hospital with 6-10 years of experience exhibited more high-risk burnout and low compassion satisfaction than those who had worked for more than 10 years. The same researchers found that doctors with minimal clinical or practice experience had higher levels of burnout, although with increased years of practice these levels generally reduced. Years of experience and depersonalization were associated. Depersonalization occurs when the strain resulting from the doctors' practice becomes overwhelming and leads to an unhealthy detachment while interacting with others. Higher burnout levels were high among Canadian physicians with less than 10 years of experience and less among those with 21 – 30 years of experience. It is interesting to note that Lee and Lovell found that burnout increased again among those with more than 30 years of experience. An explanation is offered by Ren and Hodge (2007) for the above study by saying

that depersonalization was due to professional and personal factors because of little or no targeted interventions at different career stages.

Excerpts from the Deans' interviews tended to argue that working experience had a role to play in the SAP'S burnout levels as discussed in the next section.

4.6.6 Respondents' Views on Experience and Burnout levels of the SAP

Results of the discussion on experience indicated that majority of the employees who burned out were the new employees (These are employees who are less than 10 years in their employment).

Like with age the discussion revealed that 55.6 % of the respondents felt that new employees burnout faster while 22.2% felt that the mature as well as the aged similarly burn out. One respondent said, "*new employees work too hard, afraid that things might go wrong so they burnout faster,*" and another respondent gave an explanation to this by saying that "*i think with more experience people learn to cope better*"

Excerpt 1

New employees work too hard, afraid that things might go wrong so they burn out faster. You do not easily notice when long serving employees burn out. New employees are normally fearful and would want to please both the employer and clients.

Excerpt 2

I think with more experience people learn to cope but since I'm new I might not comment much on this.

Excerpt 3 on the other hand tend to disagree with excerpt 1 and 2 and brings in a new idea.

Excerpt 3

Long serving employees complain about salary and they seem more frustrated and depersonalized than new employees who are normally eager to prove their worth.

Excerpt 4

Burnout affects all irrespective of experience. The experienced and less experienced are all prone to burnout. One time you see the experienced like me burning out and another time it is the less experienced. Burnout is just burnout and it is with us. We cannot pretend about it. We all burn out at one time or the other. When your time comes, just burn out but do not become ashes because the university will spit you.

Majority of the Deans interviewed preferred part time teaching though they also complained about time for such being limited. This implies that though they SAP would like to engage in another activity, they had too much work to give them any extra time. An extra activity can easily be a source of burnout as well. This however can vary from one individual to another.

4.6.7 Significance test for Personality and Burnout Levels of the SAP

This section established the statistical significance between the Personality types of the SAP and their Burnout levels. The personalities of the SAP were divided into two basic categories; Personality A and Personality B. Table 19 gives the results.

Table 19: Differences between Personality Type and Burnout Levels

Personality	Mean burnout (SD)	t-value	p-value
A	34.9 (SD 9.4)	0.347	0.729
B	34.3 (SD 9.7)		
t=0.347		P>0.05	

To establish whether differences in personality type had any relationship to burnout levels of the SAP, data was subjected to a t-test for analysis. Personnel were classified into two basic personality categories (A or B) based on their responses. There was no difference in the mean burnout levels between personality A and B ($t=0.347$, $p=0.729$). A correlation test was also run for personality and burnout and the results showed no significant correlation between burnout and personality ($r = 0.233$, $p = 0.504$).

According to this study therefore, there was no significant relationship between personality and the burnout levels of the SAP. Similarly, there was no significant difference between one's personality and the burnout levels. This implies that both personalities (A and B) were likely to/or not to burnout. Personality therefore did not play a significant role in the occurrence and effects of burnout among the SAP in both public and private universities in Kenya.

This study looked at personality by classifying all the SAP into personality A or B. One was considered to be personality A if s/he answered in the positive 8 and above of the 15 personality questions given and B, if s/he answered in the negative 8 and above. The findings revealed that when the means of the two personalities are compared by using a t-test, there was no difference in the mean burnout levels between personality A and B ($t=0.347$, $p=0.72$). Qualitative results looked at personality in terms of outgoing, quiet and perfectionist personalities. Of the respondents, 50% felt that the quiet personalities burnout faster than those who were outgoing.

The descriptive results of this study, unlike the inferential results, agree with earlier studies which have reported a positive association of Type A behavior pattern and burnout (Schaufeli &

Enzmann, 2008). Type A personalities which are marked with being competitive, a time-pressured lifestyle, hostile and an excessive need for control are likely not to cope with burnout. The current study did not find personality affecting burnout levels of the SAP except when individual personality aspects are assessed.

The inferential results therefore disagreed with the findings by Waple (2006) of the SAP in a Canadian university where she found that personality B was associated with less demoralization and a greater sense of accomplishment and states that this can only happen if specific personality traits are analysed. Resilience was also found to be an important characteristic in coping with burnout. Resilience in fact correlated with hope, self efficiency, control, competency and coping. They found that personality plays an important role in the experience of job-related burnout because those individuals who are anxious, depressed and unable to deal with stressors are the same individuals who experience emotional exhaustion and depersonalization both at work and in their lives away from work. The current study agreed with Were (2011) who stated that there is a worrying extent of mismatching of jobs with employees personalities and this leads to burnout in the long run. In this case the burnout was not as a result of personality but as a result of a mismatch of personality and the work environment. The same view is given by John Holland's career choice theory which forms the framework for this study. Excerpts from the interview schedules however give varied views as discussed in the following section.

4.6.8 Respondents' Views on Personality and Burnout levels of the SAP

The respondents looked at personality in terms of outgoing, quiet and perfectionist personalities. Of the respondents, 50% felt that the quiet personalities burnout faster than those who are outgoing. Reasons given for burnout among the quiet personalities included being quietly emotional not sharing issues with anybody. The perfectionists were said to burn out fast (20%) because of energy loss and have to be re-energized always. On the contrary, 30% of the respondents felt that the outgoing personalities are not likely to burn out faster than the others. Reasons for this included the fact that they have friends to turn to, they know how to cope and that they draw their energy from outside. A summary of the responses are given in the excerpts below.

Excerpt 1

I tend to think the outgoing personalities do not burnout because they have friends but the introverted burnout quite fast. They are quiet personalities and you will have no idea that they are burning out until you hear that they are contemplating suicide or have decided to quit the job.

Excerpt 2

I have some perfectionists in this department and I think they are good candidates for burnout. They normally get frustrated by so many things in this place; today it is the tidiness, tomorrow it is noise, the next day it is this and that. Perfectionism can be a disorder and I have learnt to keep re-energizing them because they are good workers but they find it difficult to work with others.

Excerpt 3 however disagrees with excerpt 1 and 2 and brings out quite a different idea about some personalities influencing others whenever they burn out.

Excerpt 3

Outgoing personalities tend to burnout very fast but they do not die alone. The danger is that they influence others. There are some who are quite emotional and whenever there is a problem instead of accepting responsibility they give up very easily. The only solution is to understand them and allow them to work. They however make the department very lively in their extroversion. One has to learn to work with both personalities because each has their strengths which you need to focus on. Whereas extroverts draw their energy from outside and others around them, introverts get their strength from within themselves and would prefer to be on their own most of the time.

The excerpts agree with the inferential test results that there is no difference between personalities in relation to burnout levels. Irrespective of whichever personality, the SAP burn out and mitigation measures ought to put in place measures that will help all the SAP.

4.6.9 Statistical Significance of all Individual Characteristics and Burnout Levels of the SAP

The individual characteristics discussed in this section were gender, age, working experience and personality. Results on gender indicated that gender had no statistical significance on the burnout levels of the SAP ($t=1.650$, $p=0.101$). Similarly, when age was analyzed using the one way ANOVA test, results revealed that there was no relationship between the SAP's age and their burnout levels ($F=2.683$, $P=0.072$). The results also indicated that there was no significant variation in burnout levels of the SAP by working experience ($F=1.326$, $P=0.268$). The t-test aided to establish whether significant differences were there between personality A and B. The results established that no significant differences were noted ($t=0.347$, $p=0.729$). A correlation test between personality and burnout also indicated no significant correlation ($r=0.233$, $p=0.504$). All the results in this section indicated that no relationship existed between the age, gender, working experience and personalities of the SAP and their burnout levels. Hence these statistical findings indicate acceptance of the hypothesis which stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between individual characteristics and burnout levels of the SAP.

4.7 Occupational Factors, Individual characteristics and Burnout Levels of the SAP

Objective 4: To establish the Burnout Levels of the SAP based on a combination of Individual Characteristics and Occupational factors.

From the three hypotheses discussed above no significant relationship existed between type of institution, and individual characteristics except occupational factors. In the fourth objective therefore, interest was on testing all these independent variables together to be able to establish whether together they can have a relationship with the SAP's burnout levels.

4.7.1 Statistical Significance between Individual Characteristics, Occupational factors and Burnout Levels of the SAP

HO₄: There is no statistically significant relationship between Burnout Levels of the SAP and a combination of Individual Characteristics and Occupational factors.

A model summary test was carried out to establish whether such a combination was valid or not and whether it was necessary for any statistical test to be done or not. The test results were found to be valid because the scores were more than 50% as indicated in table 20. If the results were less than 50% then there could have been no need to proceed with any inferential test.

Table 20: Model Summary

Model	Model Summary			Std. Error of the Estimate
	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	
1	.726 ^a	.527	.511	6.634

The intention of the model summary was to establish how much the independent variables explain or predict the dependent variable. The coefficient of multiple correlations normally indicates the strength of the correlation between the combination of the predictor variable and the criterion. The model indicated that occupational factors and individual characteristics explain 52.7% variation in the burnout levels. An ANOVA test was therefore carried out to establish the significance and the results are as given in Table 21.

Table 21: Analysis Of Variance

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6908.927	4	1727.232	38.824	.001
Residual	6406.335	144	44.488		
Total	13315.262	148			

The ANOVA results are significant ($p < 0.001$) indicating that the value of R (variation) in the population is different from zero and as such a significant relationship exists. Hence we proceed to multiple linear regression.

Table 22: Multiple Linear Regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	p	95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	19.289	3.599		5.360	.000	12.175	26.404
Gender	-2.226	1.137	-.117	-1.957	.052	-4.475	.022
Age	-.959	1.020	-.066	-.940	.349	-2.975	1.057
Type of institution	-1.815	1.115	-.095	-1.628	.106	-4.018	.389
Duration working	.580	.708	.057	.819	.414	-.820	1.981
Occupational factors	.583	.049	.704	11.953	.001	.487	.680

a. Dependent Variable: Burnout

N=149, p-value = < 0.05

Multiple linear regression analysis indicated that combining individual characteristics and occupational factors with type of institution as an intervening variable, a significant linear relationship exists between burnout levels of student affairs personnel and occupational factors. The results were found to be significant even at the 0.01 level of significance. Occupational factors had the highest value of standardized coefficient ($B=0.583, p=0.001$) meaning that they positively made the largest unique contribution to burnout levels of the SAP.

These findings lead to a rejection of the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between burnout levels of the SAP and a combination of individual characteristics and occupational factors. Based on the above findings a conclusion was arrived at that combinations of individual characteristics and occupational factors have a significant relationship with the SAP's burnout levels. More significantly, the higher the occupational factors the higher the burnout levels of the SAP.

Occupational factors have been found to have a significant relationship with the SAP's burnout levels. These results as discussed earlier agree with other studies like that of Wilkerson and Bellini (2006) who found occupational factors to have an influence on job Satisfaction. Though individual characteristics were not found to have any significant relationship with the SAP's burnout levels as discussed in objective 3, they should not be ignored because in the linear regression analysis, working experience indeed featured as a factor positively related to the SAP's burnout.

4.8 Mitigation Measures for Burnout among the SAP

Objective 5: To establish How Burnout among the SAP in Public and Private Universities can be Mitigated.

This section discussed various methods employed by individuals, Deans of Students and the Universities to minimize the SAP's burnout levels. The section also presents the views of the SAP on the effectiveness of the methods currently being employed in their institutions.

4.8.1 Effective Mitigation Methods Being Applied

Given the variability in mitigation measures this section is presented descriptively. In generating data for this section, respondents were first asked if their institutions try to minimize Burnout and if so whether the methods used were effective or not. More than half of the respondents reported that methods applied by their institutions in minimizing burnout were effective 90 (60.4). The reasons for the effectiveness of the methods were as given in figure 12.

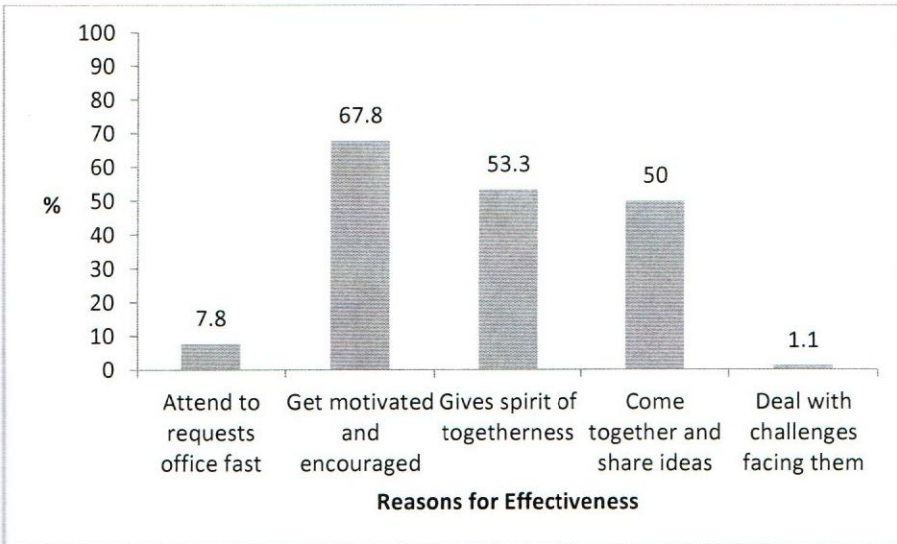


Figure 12: Effectiveness of Methods Used

It should be noted that respondents gave more than one answer to the above question. Majority of the SAP reported that the methods were effective, (67.8%) felt that such methods motivated them making them get encouraged to keep working in the Student Affairs Department despite the heavy workload. This made the personnel to address easily the challenges facing them. The methods used also led to a spirit of togetherness. Despite the fact that majority of the SAP found the mitigation measures effective, still 47% reported that the methods were not effective and the reasons were as given in figure 13.

4.8.2 Ineffective Mitigation Methods Being Used

There were about 47% of the SAP who felt that the methods applied in their institutions to minimize burnout were not effective because of the reasons given in figure 13. Most of the reasons given for the ineffectiveness of the methods were linked more to the workplace environment.

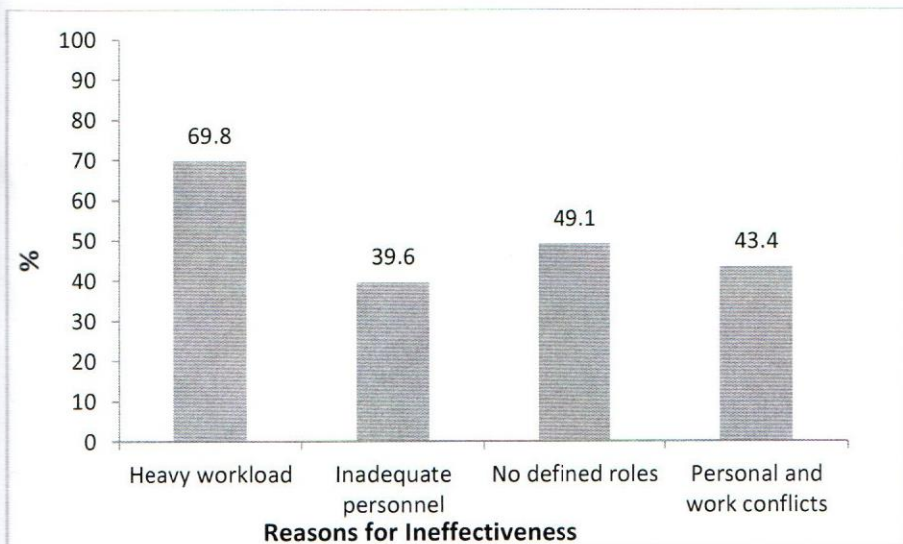


Figure 13: Ineffectiveness of Methods Used

The percentage for the ineffectiveness of the methods used to minimize burnout was quite high and cannot be ignored. This study established that indeed not all methods applied were effective and therefore in section F of the questionnaire participants were requested to suggest ways to mitigate burnout among Student Affairs Personnel as discussed in the next section.

4.8.3 Institutional based Recommendations to Minimize Burnout

The SAP made several recommendations on how to minimize and mitigate burnout in their departments. The SAP were responding to a question which asked them to state how the institution can help them to deal with burnout. A summary of the responses was as presented in figure 14.

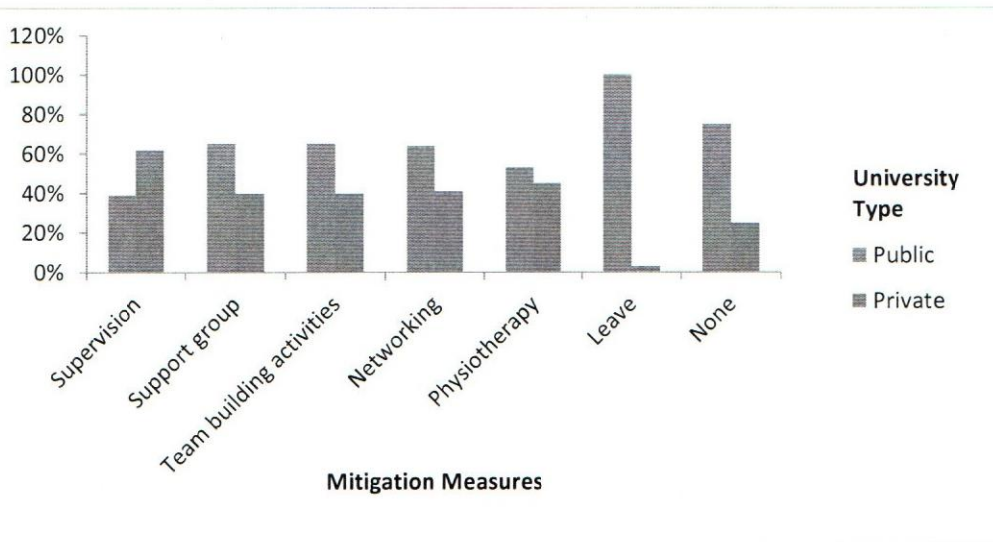


Figure 14: How to Minimize Burnout

Several recommendations were suggested to help minimize burnout. It is worth noting that though the percentages varied in public and private universities, the SAP had similar suggestions. This therefore means that a similar model for burnout can be developed and it will work in both public and private universities in Kenya, An interesting issue from figure 14 is that whereas majority of the SAP in public universities suggested leave as a mitigation measure, less than 10% of the SAP in private universities recommended it, they instead were in favour of supervision. This is an area worth investing in to establish why that was so. The SAP generally recommended supervision, support groups, leave, team building activities and networking as some of the methods they felt would help reduce burnout. Looking at all the five methods suggested, they touch on the interpersonal dimension implying that any mitigation measures ought to be keen on the interpersonal strategies. A summary of the same is given in Table 23.

Table 23: Institutional Recommendations to Minimize Burnout

Recommendation	Frequency (%)
Team building	63(42.3)
Practical methods	12(8.1)
Paid supervision	49(32.9)
Student admin interaction	48(32.2)
Job specification	40(26.8)
More staff	42(28.2)
Social groups	54(36.2)
Networking	45(30.2)
Off-days	27(18.1)
Consultation	34(22.8)
Workshops/retreats	24(16.1)
Clear policy	18(12.1)
Promotions	73(49)
Rewards	29(19.5)
Outings	12(8.1)

Close to half of the respondents 70 (47%) reported team building activities as a method used to minimize burnout by their institution. 58 (38.9%) reported supervision while 48 (32.2%) reported networking as indicated in table 29. Coupled with the above, respondents were asked to come up with their own individual plans to minimize burnout. Several methods were suggested as discussed in the following section.

4.8.4 Individual Plans to Minimize Burnout

It was interesting to note that majority of the SAP planned to manage their time well. This indicated that their burnout could be as a result of poor time management habits. Networking among other suggestions was also proposed as one way of helping the SAP to deal with burnout. Table 24 gives a summary of the above findings.

Table 24: Individual Plans for Burnout Minimization

Plan	Frequency (%)
Cases	8(5.4)
Delegation	24(16.1)
Teambuilding	42(28.2)
Assertiveness	11(7.4)
Prayers	22(14.8)
Rest	39(26.2)
Watch movies	7(4.7)
Studies	11(7.4)
Technology	5(3.4)
Exercise	28(18.8)
Good time management	50(33.6)
Referral	11(7.4)
Counselling	34(22.8)
Networking	56(37.6)
Friends	40(26.8)
No mixing of work and family issues	17(11.4)
Strive to meet performance contract	3(2)
Intervarsity entertainment	13(8.7)

In this study various suggestions were put forth to mitigate burnout. The suggestions agreed with Halbelsleben (2006) who suggested and categorized various burnout minimization strategies into three categories namely; intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational. The study findings also agree with a study by Ward and Jovorek (2003) where a suggestion of interagency professionals was put forward to curb or minimize burnout. Burnout is real and looking at the suggestions presented in this section, mitigation measures are necessary.

4.8.5 Respondents' Views on Burnout Mitigation

The above results were in agreement with the excerpts from the Dean's interviews.

Excerpt 1

I personally feel that regular meetings with staff just to vent out are very important. Others can be activities like retreats, regular personal development talks and stress management activities. Though we try but it is difficult to get all staff together.

Excerpt 2

Any activity including sports, physical exercises, good diet and team building activities are important. We have gone out and had team building activities and I have seen that it leads to cohesiveness in my department.

Excerpt 3

The best method is what we call the Dean's 'baraza' where members once in a month are allowed to vent out without getting annoyed. They hit at anybody including me then we address the issues one by one. This is a form of debriefing and it has really worked for us in this department.

Meetings seem to play a bigger role in burnout minimization. This however needs to be treated carefully because some meetings can turn out to be quite charged. Halbeslen (2006) suggested intrapersonal, interpersonal organizational and inter-organizational strategies to minimize burnout. Table 25 on the other hand seems to suggest more of organizational strategies. This appears to be a one-sided kind of mitigation strategy and like Halbeslen suggests, burnout can only be minimized if the individual, the organization and others are involved.

Table: 25: Activities Used to Minimize Burnout

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Meetings	6	32.3
Exercises	2	11.8
Diet	1	5.9
Retreats	1	5.9
Sports	1	5.9
Supervision	1	5.9
Team building	3	17.7
Set Deadlines	1	5.9
Total	19	100.0

Table 25 indicates that majority of the Deans used meetings of whatever kind to minimize burnout. Among other activities done were retreats, supervision, and team building activities and setting deadlines for some job to be done. The concern here is whether those deadlines can also be a source of burnout. Unlike in this study where meetings are preferred to minimize burnout, Deary *et al.* (2002), fully supported teamwork as the best way to minimize burnout.

4.9 Future Plans to Minimize Burnout in Student Affairs Departments

Since 100% of the respondents agreed that burnout was evident among their staff, they also agreed that burnout needs to be minimized. Some of the Deans had already put some mitigation measures in place (Like Employee Assistance Programmes) while others had plans for the same. Minimization of burnout according to the plans was to be done at both individual as well as departmental level. A summary of the suggestions is as given in table 26.

Table 26: Activities planned to minimize burnout

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Diet	1	3.8
Exercises	2	7.7
Talks on burnout awareness	1	3.8
Better facilities	1	3.8
Seminars	2	7.7
Appreciate staff	4	15.8
Vehicle for department	1	3.8
Support from management	1	3.8
Total	22	100.0

Table 36 agrees with Ren and Hodge (2007) who argued that burnout affects the individual and the organization. Given that, any plans to minimize it must address both. Excerpts from the Deans explain this further.

Excerpt 1

This session has really shed light on the serious effects of burnout. I hope to create an awareness of burnout among my staff. I'm now more enlightened. I will then let them take responsibility of the various methods they can personally use to minimize burnout like exercises, eating healthy, and sharing their issues whenever they feel pressured by work. On my part I plan to listen to them, appreciate them whenever necessary, take them for retreats and have more seminars for skills enhancement.

Excerpt 2

I hope to notice and appreciate my staff. Though I do it but probably constant consultation with them will work. On their own, I will encourage them to have more relaxation moments, watch or participate in field games or do some work that they enjoy. It works because though I'm a dean but I also enjoy sports and traveling with students, cheering them as they compete and even being in the gym with them just helps me relax and even known them more, this revives me a lot. They should also not carry office work back home. Those who can do some part time teaching should be encouraged to do so but again the load should not be too much, probably just one course and with small numbers.

Excerpt 3 on the other hand brought out the idea that each university should play a pivotal role in helping the SAP to minimize their burnout levels. This view was based on the fact that the SAP's burnout was as a result of their working in the institution. This therefore calls for the university to take responsibility of the SAP's welfare.

Excerpt 3

We are university employees and I might look mean but the university should strongly come in and help us. The management should hire more staff; give us better facilities because even office space alone can be a motivation. They can also think of giving the Student Affairs a vehicle to offer quick services during emergencies. Some of my staffs have been mark timing in one salary scale for too long; I do not know what the management can do concerning such. For some salary is such a motivating factor. Management should also consider having regular supervisions for my staff especially my counselors. This is because the cases that my counselors handle are emotionally draining and are likely to cause them burnout. The university should look for ways to appreciate that we play a very important role in this institution. The best they can do for us is not always to blame us when things go wrong but they should appreciate us also. We are the backbone of this institution.

4.9.1 Recommendations to the Institution for Minimization of Burnout

The respondents said that the Student Affairs Departments in all institutions of higher learning are actually the nerve centre of each institution. All student issues both academic, social and economic land in this department. The respondents felt that given the weight that this department carries, it is important for each university to fully support it. Majority of the respondents agreed that indeed the institutions support them but there is need to go a notch higher especially in equipping the departments. It is worth noting that in institutions which were well equipped both structurally as well as in terms of human service, there were less incidences of burnout. Majority of the Deans interviewed felt that if the following can be put in place, burnout might be minimized; part time teaching (10.4%), upward mobility (17.2), process imprests fast (10.4%) and training and re-training of staff (10.4%).

Some of the respondents suggested a kind of sabbatical leave for staff. One of them said, "*Have the student affairs staff go for an exchange program to another university for between one to three months. This will rejuvenate them as well as allow them to learn and even exchange ideas. This can even make them appreciate their work place*". A summary of the responses are in Table 27.

Table 27 Recommendations to Universities

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i> (%)
Support from university	1	3.4
Involve department in decision making	1	3.4
Allow part time teaching	3	10.4
Allow for individual development	1	3.4
Upward mobility	5	17.2
Avoid crisis management	1	3.4
Equip the department	1	3.4
Process imprests fast	3	10.4
Total	29	100.0

The study findings agreed with a study by Janet (2002) among employees working in a telephone station. Like in this study Janet's study suggested that there was emotional wellbeing of employees when there was a strong social support and positive supervision from the employer. Emphasis should therefore be laid upon quality rather than quantity of work as Halbesleben (2006) suggests. The interview schedule excerpts seem to agree with the above views as discussed in the following section.

4.9.2 Respondents' Views on Recommendations to the University to Minimize Burnout

Excerpt 1

The university should fully support the department since it is the nerve center of every university. The department should be equipped since we work all through sometimes weekends and after 5pm when offices are closed. The university should also process imp rests fast because this is a real disease in our university. I think bureaucracies should be stopped and crisis management should be avoided. Here you are, you plan for a trip with students quite early, at the last minute you are told that the imp rest has not been signed or the money is not there and such like excuses. When students go on rampage because of that, you end up being blamed. Now in such a case, is it the university or the student affairs department to be blamed? If you keep working under such circumstances don't you burn out?

Excerpt 2

Qualified staff from my department should officially be allowed some teaching time. Staff should also be employed and promoted without tribalism, nepotism and the likes. The

departmental contribution to the university should be measured against individual development.

Excerpt 3 and 4 bring in another view which featured a lot during the interview discussions. This excerpt brought out the idea that the SAP is willing to exchange ideas with others in similar institutions.

Excerpt 3

It will be nice for the deans of students to go for a one month up to three months exchange program to another university. This will help them learn more from others. Exchange programs for staff will open the staff's eyes and can stop what I can crudely call inbreeding.

Excerpt 4

The university should facilitate a yearly conference specifically for student affairs. At least one can meet and discuss with like minded people. We have a national one for the counselors but some of my staffs have never attended a conference. The conference can involve students, parents, the SAP and other stake holders. Such a conference can bridge the gap of misunderstanding between the players. It will also help in a better understanding of the workings of the student affairs department.

Excerpts 5 and 6 touch on the employment and training procedures of universities

Excerpt 5

All staff should have some counseling knowledge to know how to deal with their clients. The university should organize such short courses for our staff. Staffs should also be given proper orientation before being assigned duties.

Excerpt 6

Employ the right staff with right qualifications because the student Affairs is not a dumping ground.

4.9.3 Intervention for Burnout

This study dealt with the relationship between occupational factors, individual characteristics and burnout levels of the SAP. Having established that indeed burnout existed among the said personnel, this section gives a few proposals of what the SAP can do to minimize burnout in their departments based on the study findings. In a study carried out among Counsellors in Kenya Gachutha (2006) pointed out that 77.7% of the Counsellors suggested that a burnout inventory is important and that measurement is critical in the treatment of burnout. The current study adopted the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) as a measurement tool to create burnout awareness among student affairs personnel. Since individual and workplace conditions keep changing, one of the suggestions in burnout minimization is creating awareness. If the SAP were encouraged probably once every month to take a burnout inventory, they will be able to deal with burnout since theirs is a human service department and burnout is inevitable in such departments. This study also agrees with Halbesleben (2006) who suggested several measures which can be operationalized to

minimize burnout. The strategies are divided into intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational strategies. The argument is that the most crucial component of a burnout coping technique begins at the individual level in which SAP should be aware of and sensitive to their own manifestations of burnout. They need to notice their own unique reactions which signal the onset of burnout states, and then they can expect to develop appropriate and effective interventions to alleviate burnout. Under the interpersonal strategies, the researcher suggests creation of support groups, networking, support from supervisors and good preparation and orientation for a job. Stock-Ward and Jovorek (2003), also suggest that interagency councils in which professionals from a variety of human service professions come together around a common service delivery can help minimize burnout.

Like in a study by Stockward and Jovorek(2003), the findings in this study agreed that developing effective team working with clear group and individual objectives, and allowing individuals to meet regularly and value skills of individual members is an effective primary intervention. The scholars suggest that the teams can address factors necessary to promote the wellbeing of team members such as ensuring that work was distributed evenly, giving practical and emotional support and developing a culture of recognition of burnout problems that can be tackled sooner than later.

The current study also agreed with recommendations by Schaufeli and Backker (2001) on various ways of minimizing burnout. Schaufeli's study like in this study suggests Employee Assistance Programmes, stress management training, and individual problem based coping, appraisal based coping and social support.

4.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter the results of the study findings have been presented and discussed. The results have been presented following both descriptive and inferential analysis of data. The interview schedule results have also been discussed in form of excerpts. It is worth noting that the results have actually given a basis as to whether the hypotheses should be rejected or not. Some hypotheses have been rejected while others have not. The results revealed that occupational factors had the greatest influence on the burnout levels of the SAP. The type of university, age, gender, experience and personality did not have significant relationships with the SAP's burnout levels. The chapter also discussed various methods that can be applied by both the institution and the individual to mitigate burnout. It therefore came out clearly that the SAP, the Student Affairs Department as a whole and the universities all have a role in the management of burnout.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary and conclusions of the findings. It also reports the implications and makes recommendations arising from the findings of the study. The overall purpose of the study was to establish the relationship between occupational factors, individual characteristics and burnout levels of students' affairs personnel in public and private universities in Kenya. The sample comprised of 149 respondents drawn from the student affairs departments in public and private universities. In the study, there were 79 females and 70 males. Of the total population, 82 were aged between 31-49 years, while 76 of them had worked in the student affairs department for between 1-5 years. Data was collected using self reported questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The resulting data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively as discussed earlier in chapter 4. The analyses of the results give a basis upon which the current chapter is presented.

5.2 Summary of findings

The study established that there was a relationship between occupational factors, individual characteristics and burnout levels of the SAP. The findings were summarized in relation to the objectives of the study as follows:

- i. Burnout existed in all levels in student affairs departments in both public and private universities in Kenya.
- ii. The higher the score on the occupational factors (agreement) the higher the burnout level. This indicated that there is a direct relationship between occupational factors and burnout levels of the SAP.
- iii. Individual characteristics (age, gender, working experience and personality) had no statistical relationship with burnout levels though from the qualitative results, working experience and personality play a role in the SAP's burnout levels.
- iv. A combination of occupational factors and individual characteristics indicated that occupational factors had the highest value of standardized coefficient ($B=0.583$ $p=0.001$) meaning that it positively made the largest unique contribution to burnout levels of the SAP.
- v. Team building activities, supervision, networking, staff motivation, delegation, an exchange programme for the SAP, student affairs conferences, retreats and letters of commendation were some of the methods suggested to minimize burnout among the SAP.

5.3 Conclusions

The study sought to establish the relationship of occupational factors, individual characteristics and burnout levels among the Student Affairs Personnel in public and private universities in Kenya. The following conclusions were arrived at based on each of the stated objectives.

- i. This study concluded that Burnout was prevalent in both Public and Private Universities. All the SAP experienced some level of burnout ranging from the normal to the dangerous levels. It should be addressed at individual, collective and institutional levels.
- ii. This study reached a conclusion that there was a problem of Burnout based on various Occupational factors in the Student Affairs Departments. Several work and non-work-related factors including heavy workload, conflicts in terms of roles one plays, lack of a clear job description and low morale were positively associated with various syndromes of burnout. Burnout is a reality in the Student Affairs Department given the heavy leaning of students on the department and because the department tends to handle crisis issues most times.
- iii. A conclusion was reached that individual characteristics on their own do not statistically have a direct relationship with Burnout but because of uniqueness in human beings they should not be ignored.
- iv. Occupational factors (Role conflict, Role ambiguity and Work load) were all found to have an effect on the SAP's burnout levels. A general conclusion was therefore arrived at that there is a relationship between occupational factors, individual characteristics and burnout levels of the SAP in public and private universities in Kenya. This however does not mean that the other factors studied do not have any influence but comparatively their influence was minimal. Specific results for each variable however vary as discussed.
- v. Descriptive results indicated that very little was done to mitigate Burnout in both Public and Private Universities in Kenya; not even creation of Burnout awareness. This means that the SAP were not aware of their burnout symptoms and therefore did very little to manage their own burnout.

5.4 Recommendations

The findings of the study suggested direct implications to policy makers. It is clearly indicative of the findings that Burnout exists among the SAP in both Public and Private Universities. It emerged from the study that Occupational factors and some personal characteristics influence the Burnout levels of the SAP. The following recommendations are made based on the study objectives and the findings; they touch on the intrapersonal, interpersonal and institutional aspects:

i. Recommendations for Policy Makers

- Policy makers can recommend exchange programmes for the SAP. An exchange programme of about 3 months for the SAP can help them learn from others as well as refresh themselves and sometimes even appreciate their places of work when they personally experience what others go through.
- Paid supervision for Student Affairs Personnel. This can be done by the university collaborating with a professional counselling body so that their personnel receive supervision once a month or through establishing of Employee Assistance Programmes in each university.
- Staff motivation – the Deans together with the Administration should look at how their staff can be motivated. This should not necessarily be in monetary terms even simple letters of commendation can work.
- Improve the human and structural facilities because as reported in this study where these were lacking, the burnout levels were higher but where they were sufficient, burnout levels seemed minimal.

ii. Recommendations for the Student Affairs Personnel

- Individually, the SAP should work towards Self care and self awareness, Self efficacy and Personal development.
- They should also take the initiative to seek help, manage time and work towards personal accomplishment.

iii. Recommendations for the Dean of Students

- For all new employees, apart from orientation, personality inventories can be taken to find out the kind of environment they can fit in as they work in the student affairs department, this will minimize burnout. Holland Personality model should be handy in job assignment of personnel in Student Affairs Departments. This model proposes that one's personality should be matched with the job environment to minimize burnout.
- The dean should design stress management programmes for staff. There is need to also include training of personnel in order to increase their level of tolerance for ambiguous and conflicting situations at the work place.

- Personal and Career Development forums at least once a month should be organized by the dean. This will ensure that the personnel keep expanding their scope of knowledge and minimize burnout.
- The dean should plan for team building activities, retreats and conferences to allow the staff to ventilate and bond.
- The dean should encourage SAP to develop effective team working with clear group and individual objectives as an effective primary intervention.
- Development of an integrated Burnout Model which can take care of all occupational factors and individual characteristics of the SAP. This study proposed such a model to help address burnout issues of all the SAP as discussed below.

5.4.1 A Proposed Integrated Model for Burnout Mitigation

Based on the theoretical framework and the study findings a proposed integrated model for burnout minimization is given in figure 15.

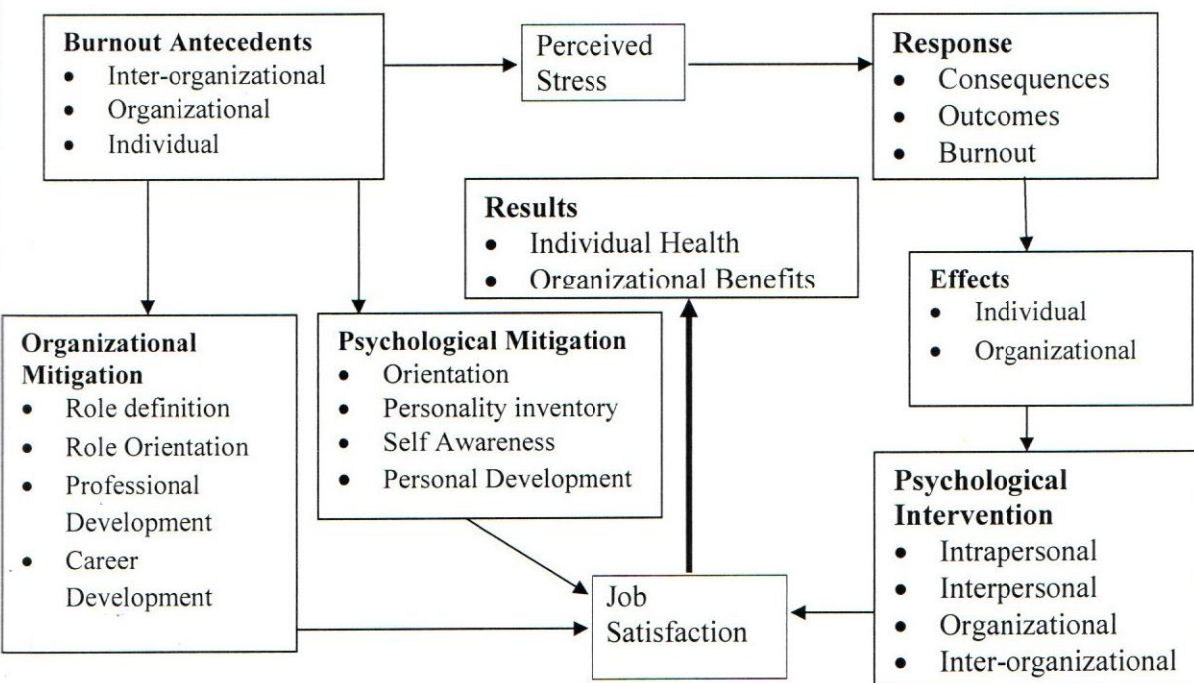


Figure 15: An Integrated Burnout Model

The proposed model acknowledges that there are unique institutional and individual characteristics though some of these characteristics are similar across institutions. Such antecedents can lead individuals to experience stress and eventually burnout. Continued stress, if not handled, leads to various consequences including burnout (Maslach *et al.*, 2002). The model

suggests that when burnout sets in different psychological interventions (Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Organizational and Inter-organizational) should be used to help the SAP enjoy working in the student affairs department. When this is done, both the individual and the organization benefit.

The model however suggests a shorter process which can still lead to individual and institutional satisfaction. The shorter method suggests that immediately staffs are employed, they should be taken through orientation. This will enable staff to settle down fast. The model also suggests that taking personality inventories, giving regular self awareness talks and personal development forums will help individuals understand themselves and each other. This will lead to a harmonious working environment and therefore both stress and burnout will be mitigated. The model also acknowledges that though burnout is inevitable in the student affairs departments, this model will help minimize it and save the institutions of monies spend on sickness resulting from burnout.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the study findings, the following are some of the suggestions for further research.

- i. A longitudinal study to establish moments on the university calendar when burnout levels are high so as to work towards preparing of the staff well, way before the stressful period. One might quickly think that it is always during examination period that burnout is high but this might not be the case. From the interview schedules some respondents talked of the period just after students report while others said that burnout was high halfway into the semester. Others talked of burnout during exams. With universities operating on a tri-semester basis it would be wise to establish the best methods of preparing the SAP.
- ii. A longitudinal study can be carried out in order to track work experience changes over time and establish the attrition rate. Most of the SAP had worked in Student Affairs Department for less than five years. Such a study will shed light on why this is so.
- iii. The study was a general study dealing with all cadres of the SAP. Another in-depth study should be carried out to look at specific groups like the counsellors, administrators, clerks, among others. This will help establish unique and specific needs that benefit that particular group.
- iv. A similar study can be carried out in other student service departments like health services, hostel, admission, student finance, exams and among the lecturers so that a holistic model for curbing burnout in universities can be developed. This approach should incorporate individual as well as Occupational factors in the mitigation and management of burnout.

- v. It is important for a study to be carried out to establish whether the student affairs personnel engage in any other counselling activities outside their place of work and if so, to what extent. This will help to identify the sources of burnout.
- vi. There is need for further research in the area of burnout in Kenya. Both quantitative and qualitative studies need to be carried out to help bring out the main problem in occupational factors that could be causing burnout.
- vii. This study has suggested an integrated model as an appropriate mitigation measure for burnout given its integrative approach. This model should be tested and compared with other mitigation methods like Supervision and preferably in an experimental study to compare results.
- viii. Further study in this area on a different population for instance from middle level colleges is suggested. This will broaden knowledge on burnout in learning institutions.

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APPENDIX A

BURNOUT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS PERSONNEL (BQSAP)

Dear Respondent,

I'm a Doctoral student gathering information on burnout among student affairs personnel in both public and private universities in Kenya. Your rich contribution will greatly help in the improvement of these departments and give a guide on how to deal with burnout in student affairs departments in institutions of higher learning. Please note that all information is for study purposes and will be treated confidentially. Please spare some time and fill this questionnaire.

Thank you

Name: Sign:

Instructions:

- Please respond to all questions
- For questions with blank spaces (-----) fill in the blanks. For the questions with put a tick (✓) in your favorable response.
- **Please note that all information will be handled with utmost confidentiality.**

SECTION A. PERSONAL DATA

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Age: ≤ 29 years
 31 – 49 years
 ≥ 50 years
3. Institution: _____
4. How long have you worked in student affairs department?
 1 – 5 years
 6 – 10 years
 11 – 20 years
 > 20 years

SECTION B: PERSONALITY

Tick your most favorable response

No.	Statements	Answers	
		Yes	No
1.	I'm casual about appointments		
2.	I'm a competitive person		
3.	I'm not a good listener because I complete sentences for others		
4.	I never feel rushed even under pressure		
5.	I'm always impatient		
6.	I always do many things at a time and I'm always thinking of what to do next		
7.	I'm a deliberate slow talker		
8.	I always want my good work recognized by others		
9.	I like eating, walking and doing all my activities fast		
10.	I tend to get along well with all colleagues		
11.	I like expressing my feelings and I'm not flexible		
12.	I have very few interest outside work		
13.	I'm always eager to get things done		
14.	I like it when I'm in control		
15.	I'm an ambitious person		

SECTION C: BURNOUT PREVALENCE

Instructions: Tick whatever best describes you

No.	State how often you feel this way	Answers				
		Not at all	Rarely	Some-times	Ofte n	Very Often
16.	Do you feel run down and drained of physical or emotional energy?					
17.	Do you feel that you are prone to negative thinking about your job?					
18.	Do you find that you are harder or less sympathetic with people than perhaps they deserve?					
19.	Do you find yourself, getting easily irritated by small problems or by your co-workers and team?					
20.	Do you feel misunderstood or unappreciated by your co-workers?					
21.	Do you feel that you have no one to talk to at the work place?					
22.	Do you feel that you are achieving less than you should?					
23.	Do you feel under an unpleasant level of pressure to succeed?					
24.	Do you feel that you are not getting what you want out of your job?					
25.	Do you feel that you are in the wrong organization or the wrong profession?					
26.	Are you becoming frustrated with parts of your job?					
27.	Do you feel that organizational politics or bureaucracy frustrate your ability to do a good job?					
28.	Do you feel that there is more work to do					

No.	State how often you feel this way	Answers				
		Not at all	Rarely	Some-times	Ofte n	Very Often
	than you practically have the ability to do?					
29.	Do you feel that you do not have time to do many of the things that are important to doing a good quality job?					
30.	Do you find that you do not have time to plan as much as you would like to?					

SECTION D: CAUSES OF BURNOUT

Instructions: Tick (✓) the choice in the column that corresponds to your feeling. The choices are:

- SA** - **Strongly Agree**
- A** - **Agree**
- U** - **Undecided**
- D** - **Disagree**
- SD** - **Strongly Disagree**

	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
31.	I work for long hours even on weekends and this affects me					
32.	My work is characterized by intense pressure and deadlines					
33.	I do not have sufficient time and resources to do my job					
34.	Too many students lean on me for services					
35.	I spend considerable time in intense involvement with students					
36.	There are always conflicting demands from different students and this affects me					

	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
37.	There is no respect for one another in our place of work					
38.	I have no support from my seniors					
39.	I have no one to help me even when I am stressed and yet I have too many stressors in my life					
40.	There are at times too many conflicts in our office					
41.	I have worked at this office for too long and sometimes I work so much but nobody rewards me					
42.	Demands from clients are so confusing and not clear					
43.	I am never given the chance to give some input concerning the student affairs department					
44.	There is lack of clarity about what I should do in my place of work					
45.	There are moments I feel I have no autonomy to make decisions at my place of work					

SECTION E: EFFECTS OF BURNOUT

	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
46.	Efforts to make progress at my job are fruitless					
47.	I am tired of trying other alternatives to my job					
48.	I no longer have enough time to attend to my family or personal needs					
49.	My job has made me not trust my colleagues any more					
50.	I worry about losing my job					
51.	Recently I have not been as healthy as usual because of my job					

	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
52.	I am not confident in my delivery of services as I used to					
53.	My job has made me have a low self esteem					
54.	I do not feel guilty at all when I absent myself from work or report late					
55.	I am dissatisfied with parts of my job					
56.	I have no enthusiasm to advance my career					
57.	My job has no opportunities for promotion and this frustrates me					
58.	I am no longer a competent and productive worker					
59.	I have become too mechanical in the performance of my duties					
60.	I am proud of my work and I enjoy doing it					

SECTION F:

Fill in the blank spaces provided. You can use an extra sheet of paper if you need to.

61(a) Below are some of the methods used to minimize Burnout. Tick the ones used by your institution.

Supervision

Support groups

Team building activities

Networking

Others (specify) _____

None of the above

62(b) Do you find the methods applied by your institution effective? Why?

63(c) What recommendations can you suggest that can be adopted by your institution to minimize burnout.

64(d) As an individual what plans do you have to minimize burnout?

Thank you for your participation

APPENDIX B

DEAN OF STUDENTS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (DIS)

I'm a Doctoral student gathering information on burnout among student affairs personnel in both public and private universities in Kenya. The information you provide will greatly help in the improvement of these departments. Could you please spare a few minutes for this interview?

1. How many staff do you have?
2. Is burnout prevalent in your department?
3. What are some of the causes of burnout among members of your department?
4. In your opinion, does burnout affect members of your department? If so how?
5. In your opinion is there a relationship between gender and burnout? If so, explain?
6. Does the number of years one has worked in student affairs have any relationship with burnout?
7. Do you think one's age has a relationship to burnout levels?
8. Do you have incidences of role conflict, role ambiguity, and workload in your department?
9. What activities do members of your department get involved in to minimize burnout?
10. What plans do you have to minimize burnout in your department?
11. Is there anything else concerning burnout that you would like to share?
12. Would you wish to change your job if given an opportunity? Please explain further.

Thank you for sparing your time.

APPENDIX C

APPROVAL LETTER FROM EGERTON UNIVERSITY

EGERTON

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254-51-2217631
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UNIVERSITY

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Email: eugradschool@wananchi.com
www.egerton.ac.ke

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, GRADUATE SCHOOL

ED16/0284/10

19th March, 2012

Ref:.....

Date:.....

M/s Scholastic N. Adeli
Department of Psychology, Counselling and Education Foundations
Egerton University
P.O. Box 536
EGERTON.

Dear M/s. Adeli,

RE: CORRECTED PROPOSAL

This is to acknowledge receipt of two copies of your corrected proposal entitled
“**Relationship between Occupational Factors, Individual Characteristics and
Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel in Public and Private Universities in
Kenya.**”

You are now at liberty to commence your fieldwork.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely



✓ **Prof. M.A. Okiror**
DIRECTOR, BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

c.c. Supervisors

APPENDIX E

MAP OF KENYA SHOWING THE GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE STUDY

