

**LEVEL OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS: CAUSES, EFFECTS AND COPING  
STRATEGIES AMONG POLICE CONSTABLES  
IN KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA**

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**GDE/M/0931/9/10**

**A Thesis Presented to the Institute of Post Graduate Studies of Kabarak University in  
Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Education (Counseling Psychology)**

**OCTOBER2014**

## DECLARATION

I declare that this Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for award of degree in any other university.



16/10/2014

**Joyce Atieno Oweke**

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## RECOMMENDATION

### The Institute of Post Graduate Studies

The Thesis entitled “Level of Occupational Stress: Causes, Effects and Coping Strategies among Police Constables in Kisumu County, Kenya” and written by Joyce Atieno Oweke is presented to the Institute of Post Graduate Studies of Kabarak University. We have reviewed the Thesis and recommended it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education (Counseling Psychology).



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21/10/2014

Date

## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this Thesis to my children Lewis Odawa and Lee Ndeda for their invaluable love, support and encouragement during the study period and to my late father Boaz and my mother Mildred for their zeal for education that inspired me.

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## ABSTRACT

Stress is a major global health challenge affecting the well-being of service providers especially those working in the human service sectors like; police officers, teachers, health care providers and media specialists. This study was prompted by emerging information from studies that, stress is a silent killer that affects the health of service providers leading to; mental, physical, and emotional disorders. In Kenya and Kisumu County in particular studies on occupational stress among police constables are scanty. This study investigated the level of occupational stress, causes, effects and coping strategies among police constables in Kisumu County. The study adopted the Causal Comparative *ex-post facto* research design. The target population was 451 police constables and 12 Officers Commanding Stations in the four police divisions in Kisumu County. Stratified random sampling technique was used to sample 105 police constables and 4 Officers Commanding Station (OCS). The data was collected using a Police Constable Questionnaire and an Officer Commanding Station Interview Schedule. The instruments were validated by experts while reliability was estimated by use of Cronbach Alpha method for internal consistency. The questionnaire yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.88. Quantitative and qualitative data were obtained. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences for Windows (Version 20). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and Standard Deviation) and inferential statistical (Chi-Square and Pearson's Moment Correlation Coefficient) were used in data analysis. Findings were presented in statistical tables, frequency tables, cross tabulations, and graphics. The key findings of the study were that: police constables in Kisumu County were experiencing occupational stress. Working environment, work overload and work schedule were causes of occupational stress. The effects of occupational stress adversely affected the police constables. The stress mitigation strategies employed by the Police Constables were not effective. The study recommends that: Police service commission should develop a policy on stress management to guide the induction, operations and counselling of Police Constables on their day to day duties.

**Keywords; Level of Occupational stress, Coping strategies, Gender, Police Constables.**

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS**

AIDS	-	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
ANOVA	-	Analysis of Variance
AP	-	Administration Police
APA	-	America Psychiatric Association
CATS	-	Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress
COPE	-	Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Questionnaire
CISM	-	Critical Incident Stress Management
DSM	-	Diagnostic Statistical Manual
ILO	-	International Labour Organization
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	-	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
HSE	-	Health Safety Executive
KACE	-	Kenya Advance Certificate Education
KCPE	-	Kenya certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	-	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
OCS	-	Officer Commanding Station
PC	-	Police Constable
PSC	-	Police Service Commission
PTSD	-	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SLDF	-	Sabaot Lands Defense Force
UK	-	United Kingdom
US	-	United States
USA	-	United State of America
UN	-	United Nations
WHO	-	World Health Organization

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms are operationally defined as

**Burn-out:** Refers to extreme physical, mental and emotional exhaustion caused by prolonged and chronic stress

**Coping strategies:** Activities that help in containing or alleviating situations that are perceived as challenging or unfavourable.

**Demographic Variable:** Individual characteristics such as age, gender and level of educational of police constables that can influence stress process.

**Emotional focus:** Attempt made by an individual to cope with a stressful situation by means of escapism. This involves mental disengagement such as abusing of drugs and alcohol.

**Stress:** This is pressure or tension experienced by an individual. Usually such tensions arise out of an individual's interaction with the environment where stimuli-response is enlisted on the individual. In responding to a stressor an individual exhibits physiological responses to a potentially harmful external event.

**Occupational stress:** This is a type of strain or pressure that affects an individual due to the nature of the environmental factors related to the type of job one does. Occupational stress therefore, means experiences by an individual physically, emotionally or physiologically that lead to deviant behavior within one's place of work.

**Police Constable:** Refers to individuals who are employed on a full time basis by a law enforcement agency and whose permanent duties include the making of arrests, the performing of searches and seizures or the execution of criminal warrants and is responsible for the prevention or detection of crime or for the enforcement of the penal, traffic or highway laws.

**Problem focus:** The active role that an individual takes when dealing with a stressful situation. This requires the individual to do something in a constructive way.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background to the Study

People spend eight or more hours at the work place every day. The workplace environment is one of the key factors that affect people's physical and mental health. The workplace and work itself contributes to a person's identity and provides income (World Health Organization, 2005). However, circumstances under which people work can be poorly organized posing risks to workers. Risks associated with poor working conditions have not been adequately addressed even though research shows that work in poorly organized work places can have negative effects on the health of workers (Cox, Griffith & Gonzalez, 2000). WHO (2005), predicted that by 2020, stress associated with work place, also known as occupational stress, will be a major cause of ill health. Stress is rated as a silent killer among other illnesses such as: HIV/AIDS, heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

Stress in the work place is a worldwide issue. A report by the World Health Organization, (2005) revealed that the police service has failed to address the matter of stress among police officers. This failure has stifled natural efforts towards building a stronger human resource base which is invaluable for development in all its spheres in the police. Studies carried out in the United Kingdom Irish Prison Service, (2005) found that employees working in the police service especially the police constables reported high levels of stress and increased levels of stress related illness. On the other hand Gul, Serder and Kenan (2008); Mostert and Joubert (2005) conducted studies in the USA, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and France. The study findings have indicated that in terms of levels of occupational stress, police officers experience incidences of depression, neurotic disorders and stress. It is therefore likely that high levels of stress among police officers seem to be threatening and varying in terms of levels of job experience. A study in South Africa shows that the police profession was the most stressful (Govender, 2008). What is happening in the other countries is not different from Kenya. KSimani (2010) who carried out a study in Kenya among the police officers' found out that police officers stress is on the increase. There is need to establish causes of stress and its effects on police constables in Kenya and Kisumu County in particular. Melgosa (2004) defines stress



as a condition of being subject to external forces or pressures and can either be positive/pleasant (eustress) or negative/unpleasant (distress). Rees and Redfern (2000) assert that there is no universally accepted definition of the term stress. Ornelas and Kleiner (2003) argued that stress is the by-product of modern life that results from our efforts of trying to balance the demands of the workplace and family life. Occupational stress refers to stress experienced as a direct result of a person's occupation. Shift work, the paramilitary structure of many police departments, and lack of administrative support for individual officers, autocratic management styles, the inconsistent enforcement of rules, the excessive or unnecessary paperwork, workload, equipment deficiencies lack of resources, shortages of staff poor inter-personal relationships are factors most often cited as causes of occupational stress (Rothmann & Strijdom, 2002). However, in the developing countries in Africa, Kenya inclusive, similar sentiments of police officers exhibit stress related issues

Numerous studies have identified Police work as one of the most psychologically stressful and critical profession in the world (Govender, 2008; Kayal, 2004). Malach-Pines and Keinan, (2007) noted that due to the inherent nature of police work, this profession was likely to be one of the most stressful occupations in the world. Water and Ussery (2007) argued that hazards associated with the occupational stress as dangerous. They attributed stress to the nature of policing. The dangers and trauma associated with policing therefore differentiates police work from other occupations. The Health Service Executive (HSE) (2004) state that 500,000 million people in the UK experience work-related stress illness. Up to 5 million people feel extremely stressed by their work and work-related stress costs about £3.7 billion each year. 150,000 people have taken at least a month sick off due to work related stress and altogether 6.5 million sick days/offers have been taken during the year under stress related incidences. It is estimated that every day, 270,000 people take time off for stress related illnesses at a cost of £10.2 billion to the economy annually.

In Kenya, Police constables are charged with the responsibility of maintaining law and order hence preserving peace in the society. Kisumu County is a cosmopolitan town characterized by high crime rates, high population, upsurging in the number of slums, high unemployment rates

among others. Police constables in Kisumu County are constantly confronted with challenges from the public like drug and alcohol consumption. Violence meted to persons, political hooliganism during party electioneering and destruction of property. Responding and seeing gruesome road accidents scenes, cattle rustling and cross-border raids appear to be a life-long security challenge in Kisumu County (Government of Kenya, 2007).

According to the Kenya Police Annual Report (2010), there were 389 police officers who died in one year either in the line of duty or were killed by fellow officers. Some of these police officers had exhibited harsh and aggressive treatment to suspects, victims and members of public whom they were supposed to protect and serve. Some of the police officers have been arraigned in court for killing, allegations of involvement in robbery, car hijacking, aiding and abetting crime. Given the forgoing, a module on guidance and counseling, sociology and psychiatry has been introduced in the revised curriculum for training of Kenya police officers.

The police department also uses the service of a psychologist who provides welfare and counseling services to its officers specifically counseling (Government of Kenya, 2007). Police officers are given pre-service physical tests to determine their health status prior to employment, but still there was evidence suggesting that the officers developed stress disorders (Waters & Ussery, 2007). There is concern over cause of the rising number of incident where junior police officer are killing their seniors, colleagues, family members and committing suicide in Kenya. In light of this scenario, there was need for research to be done on causes of occupational stress among police officers in Kenya and Kisumu County. Study conducted on occupational stress and gender shows that there was no difference between male and female with regard to work related stress (Regan, 2008).

There is some suggestive evidence that age is a factor related to stress. Level of Education as a cause of police stress, has come under greater scrutiny recently perhaps because of the increasingly high demand for educational credentials and vetting amongst police officers (Maina, 2013). Research in this area remains scanty whereby some findings suggest a positive relationship between demographic variables and stress (Louw, 2009). Mostert and Joubert

(2005) argue that coping can be described as the person's attempts to prevent, reduce or eliminate negative experiences. Coping resources that are inadequate and ineffectual can strongly dispose a worker to stress. Occupational stress among police constable has received limited attention in Kenya in particular Kisumu County. This study was an attempt to investigate relationship between levels of occupational stress; causes, demographic variables, effects and coping strategies among police constables in Kisumu County.

## **1.2.Statement of the Problem**

Despite the training that the police constables have, the responsibilities and expectations loaded on them leave no doubt that they can easily get stressed as they perform their tasks and roles expected of them in their capacity. In Kenya, police officers go through a number of daily routine which exposes them to high risk incidences. These incidences include; exposure to violence, plain murders, carjacking-related shootings, and robbery with violence, property break-ins, abductions, muggings, and armed livestock raids. This has been compounded with outdated procedures, lack of adequate staff and equipment. Although, the Government has made efforts to address the problem of crime, factors contributing to increase in crime are still numerous. In recent years in Kenya, police constables have exhibited anger, aggression and use of excessive force towards civilians and their fellow colleagues as well as members of their families. This has been manifested through officers either killing or injuring their colleagues and committing suicide. The question of what causes these scenarios is of great concern. There was need to investigate the level of occupational stress: causes, effects and coping strategies among police constable in Kisumu County.

## **1.3.Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the level of occupational stress: causes, effects and coping strategies among police constable in Kisumu County, Kenya.

## **1.4.Objective of the Study**

The objectives of this study were:

- i) To identify causes of occupational stress in relation to level of occupational stress among police constables in Kisumu County.

- ii) To establish the relationship between selected demographic characteristics and levels of occupational stress among police constables in Kisumu County.
- iii) To establish relationship between the effects of occupational stress on police constables in Kisumu County.
- iv) To determine the coping strategies for occupational stress among police constables in Kisumu County.

### **1.5. Hypotheses of the Study**

This study aimed at testing the following hypotheses.

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between causes of occupational stress and level of occupational stress among police constables in Kisumu County.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between selected demographic characteristics and level of occupational stress among police constables in Kisumu County.
- Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between level of occupational stress and effects of occupational stress among police constables in Kisumu County.
- Ho<sub>4</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between level of occupational stress and coping strategies among police constables in Kisumu County.

### **1.6. Significance of the Study**

The researcher hopes that the results obtained from the study have shed light on issues affecting the performance of police constables. Results of this study may be used by the Police Service to develop, improve policies and practices that would enable the service to obtain appropriate information about the well-being of its officers for management purposes. It might encourage the Police Service should implement a system that ensures appropriate support is offered to all officers exposed to traumatic incidents. The findings of this study would be useful to administrators and policy makers who are concerned about gender equity in the work place. The findings would also contribute to the field of psychotherapy and counseling by developing more reflective and more proactive stand in dealing with stress among police officers. It is hoped that

the findings of the research might be a source of knowledge to scholars in related areas. In addition, it would form a basis on which other related researches could make reference.

### **1.7.Scope of the Study**

The study was conducted in Kisumu County, Kenya.

### **1.8.Limitations of the Study**

The results of this study were limited to the study areas. The major limitation of the study was the secrecy involved in the police force. The sensitivity of the police work made the police constables fear giving relevant information. This may lead to exaggeration or understatement responses. To be able to get the necessary information the questionnaire was anonymous and the researcher assured the respondents confidentiality on all the information given.

### **1.9.Assumption of the Study**

This study was based on the following assumptions:

- i. Police constables experience stress at their work place.
- ii. Police constables have coping mechanisms of managing stress.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1.Introduction**

The chapter presents a review of relevant literature in the area of occupational stress. The concept of stress, causes of occupational stress, relationship between demographic variables and occupational stress, effects of occupational stress and strategies used to cope with stress are covered. The fundamental administrative tasks performed by police officers were also covered to build the framework for discussing the emerging crime trends that contribute to occupational stress.

#### **2.2.Concept of Occupational Stress**

There are occasions, situations and experiences that upset people's equilibrium and sometimes cause serious consequences to persons' physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being and may require remedies. According to Willis (2005) society has coined a term to describe these occasions as stress. A considerable number of police constables may share the same job experience but police constables with varied levels of job experience react in a different way to it. In support of the fact that these situations are not conducive Selye (1984) who did his research in Australia, has it that the term 'stress' is borrowed from the word of mechanics and physics where stress is described as the physical pressure exerted upon, and between parts of a body. Furthermore, Willis (2005) adds that, historically, Dr. William Bradford Cannon who lived between 1871 -1945 in the U.S.A was the first clinician to identify the physical characteristics of the initial phase of stress. In every occupation that has a goal to be achieved, a deadline to be met, a superior to report to and to be supervised, normally is not stress free. It is a concern to the novice and experienced employees, employers and administrators alike.

Stress in the work place is a worldwide issue. A report by WHO (2005), revealed that the Police service in the world all over has been ineffective and has failed to address the matter of police stress. This failure however, has stifled natural efforts towards building a stronger human resource base which is invaluable for development in all its spheres in police service. Studies

carried out in the United Kingdom by Miller (2007), found out that employee working in law enforcement especially police officers reported high levels of stress and increased levels of stress related illness. On the other hand, Nahrgang, Morgeson and Hofmann (2011), conducted studies in USA, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and France and have indicated that in terms of levels of experience in the police, police officers with less than three years of experience face incidences of depression, neurotic disorders and stress more than experienced police officers with eight years. The study also revealed that old police officers suffer less stress as compared to young police officers. In a study conducted in American showed that stress among police officers emanates from their daily routine and tasks in the job descriptions. However, in the developing countries in Africa, Kenya inclusive, similar sentiments of police constables exhibiting stress related illness. A study in South Africa shows that police officers are experiencing a series of stress and stressful situations (Myendenki, 2008). What is happening in the United Kingdom and South Africa is not different from Kenya. Akololo (2011) who carried out a study in Kenya among the police officers found out that police officers stress is on the increase.

### **2.3. Emerging Crimes Trends**

The police function is the most important out of government operations. The daily, varied encounters between police officers and individuals, ranging from routine to traumatic experiences, represent the most visible and powerful interaction between the police and the public (Boyne, Martin & Walker, 2004). Occupational stress in the police service is an area that attracts global concern. Several overseas states have developed different promising strategies and techniques to minimize occupational stress in the police service even though the results have been minimal (Walker, 2004). Hence policing is a ripe area for research (Braga, 2006). In UK, Police Service reforms have been undertaken and yet the application of public management that focused on stress management have not been realized (Cabinet Office, 2004).

Reform efforts in Cape Verde, reveal that despite political stability and economic performance, there are reasons to fear an upsurge of violence, banditry and organized crime. The country's Island status has been both protective and a source of vulnerability. The major security challenge is transnational criminality, international alliances are therefore important (Handem,

2008). Its permanent structural difficulties: small size, the fact that its ten islands are widely dispersed; poverty and the states inability to meet its security needs on its own remain areas of concern. Diage (2008), noted that the challenges of security sector governance in Cape Verde include; ensuring the social reinsertion of citizens who have been repatriated from abroad, preventing and neutralizing emerging threats, drug trafficking, money laundering and the uncontrolled circulation of light weapons, introducing a more modern concept of security that focuses on its interdisciplinary and multidimensional nature, withdrawing state monopoly over the maintenance of internal security and implementing a system of internal security within the framework of the ongoing reforms of the criminal code and the code of criminal procedure. Carter and Carter (2009), point out that the success of such reforms depends upon the level of motivation of the security officers. Restructuring the security forces could improve their operational capacity and prevent improper use of force and of corruption in the police. Bryden (2008) posits that police structures have been poor hence hindering the police presence, this impacts negatively on their operational capacity.

In Tanzania, during the elections in 2005, levels of crime and fear of crime rose throughout the country. Simultaneously, levels of public trust and confidence in the Police Force continued to drop. Areas of particular concern included increased road accidents, corruption, fraud, violence, terrorism and drug trafficking (Mwema, 2008). The widening economic divide in the country is likely to create a breeding ground for crime. These trends highlight the limitations of the current Police Force and make evident the pressing need for reform. There are several problems limiting effective performance in the Tanzanian Police Force that have to do with human resources such as inadequate training. The police reform agenda was at its infancy stage, there was need for fast and swift changes (Were, Gakure, Kiraithe, 2012).The issue of ethical conduct of the police has received a great deal of focus from International, regional and national organs interested in promoting performance in the police sector. A consensus has been developed world-wide over the importance of reforming the police sector to strengthen performance and improve on service delivery (Weisdurd, 2003). Such reforms are crucial in protecting public resources, enhancing performance and strengthening government's role in orchestrating



development and providing necessary services at large (Muncie & Huges, 2008). The Kenya, like elsewhere in the developing countries, faces security challenges. These challenges emanates from unemployment among the youth, poverty, police collusion with criminals, drugs and peer influence, the growth of vigilantes and ethnic militias, corruption and political machinations in the police force, collapse of the family institution, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons attributed to conflicts in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region among others. Report on National Task Force on Kenya Police Reforms (2009) noted that police officers are overstretched by the numerous security matters they have to contend with. There are various types of crimes handed by Kenya police in their daily routine. Table 1 shows crimes handled by the Kenyan police (Omeja & Githigaro, 2010).

**Table 1: Crime Handled by Kenya Police**

<b>Typology</b>	<b>Manifestations</b>
1. Economic and Commercial Crimes	Banking fraud, money laundering, among others.
2. Transnational Crimes	Terrorism, cyber crimes, drugs trafficking, human trafficking, arms trafficking, illegal immigrants, money laundering.
3. Gender-based Violence	Rape, defilement, sexual assaults.
4. Traffic Offences	Accidents, breach of traffic rules and regulations.
5. Organized Crimes	Lawless devices and activities of unlawful ethnic militias and vigilante groups (e.g. extortion of public service vehicles and people living in certain residential suburbs compelled to pay protection fees, instigating and prosecuting ethnic clashes, and indulgence in political thuggery at the behest of some local politicians).
6. Resource Conflicts	Cattle rustling, conflicts over land and pastures, among others.
7. Ethnic Violence	Ethnic clashes and related destruction of life and property.
8. Robbery, General Stealing and Kidnappings	Violent robbery, street mugging, car-jacking, etc.

Source: Omeja & Githigaro, 2010

Report on National Task Force on Kenya Police Reforms (2009) argued that police officers are not debriefed or counselled after exposure to long-term deployment to potentially stressful stations or to locations which necessitate extended separation from their immediate families.

## **2.4. Causes of Occupational Stress in the Police Service**

Previous research indicates that stress results from interactions at work (Waters & Ussery, 2007). The amount of stress a person experiences at work results from the interplay of the work environment and the employee's coping resources (Malach-Pines & Keinan, 2007). However, Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright and Donald (2005) indicate that different occupations would have different basic stressors and people working in the same occupation experience different levels of stress due to the interplay of many factors. In many countries police work is often considered most stressful profession. In the last two decades, intensive researches have been carried out in USA and Europe concerning the causes and effects of police stress (Roberts & Levenson, 2001; Waters & Ussery, 2007).

### **2.4.1. Work Environment in the Police Service**

The police work in Western European, North American, South Africa and Kenya inclusive is considered to be more dangerous and stressful. The working environment for police officers is marked by increasing violence, high crime rates and execution of police officers on and off duty (Omeja & Githigaro, 2010). The environment in which police officers operate is an important factor to consider as the environment holds stressors. Killing of police officers in line of duties has raised concern. The first major cause of stress identified in police work is associated with the unique work environment; lack of resources and killing were among the top stressors. Other stressors often mentioned in the literature include making violent arrests, inadequate equipment, unpredictable incidents and gruesome scenes, exposure to traumatic events; murder, assaults, shootings dealing with crime victims and perpetrators and also the criminal justice system (Ellison, 2004; Mikkelsen & Burke, 2004).

Malach-Pine and Keinan (2007) cited emotionally demanding situations such as informing relatives of sudden deaths, dealing with suicide, fatal accidents and criminal or sexual offences

against children as some of the stressors. Claire(2006) observed that dealing with annoying and dirty people for example drug addicts, drunkards, use of violence by officer, dangers associated with the violence and aggression against officers were causes of occupational stress. The criminal justice system itself was also reported as a source of stress among police officers. Police officers often perceive the judicial process as being too sympathetic and lenient on criminals and conversely, too insensitive to police concerns. Gul, Serder and Kenan (2008) noted that police officers who make violent arrests were more likely to feel stressed about their work environment. Although most of the mentioned researches bear relevance to Kenya Police, one cannot ignore the specific causes within which police officers have operated.

Omeja and Githigaro (2010) argued that Kenyan police officers are exposed to traumatic and violent work environment. They are in constant confrontation with drug and alcohol addicts, violent persons and political hooliganism during party electioneering. The officers on several occasions are forced to disperse the youths and organized gangs. Police officers in the Kenya are often victims and the main targets of violent criminals including outlawed groups for instance the ‘Mungiki’ menace has reached dangerous unprecedented proportions as well as “Inchikororo”, “Amachuma” and “Sungusungu”, “Taliban”“Jeshi la Mzee”, “Baghdad boys” “Angola Msumbiji” “Republican Revolutionary Council”, “SLDF” in other parts of Kenya. Police officers also deal with people who engage in oath taking, rituals, extortion and sharking. Officers work with inadequate resources and lack of adequate trained human resource. Operational preparedness of police officers is still weak and the quality of police operations has been undermined by lack of adequate staff and suitable working equipment that would enable them to function humanely and professionally (Report of National Task Force Reforms, 2009). Gershon (2000) argued that working under continuously stressful conditions leads to the dissatisfaction and exhaustion of police officers. The stressful conditions that law enforcement officers are exposed to can affect both their work-related and physiological wellbeing. Martinussen, Richardsen and Burke (2007) found that burnout was one of the effects of work related stress because of its exponential impact on professional relationships.

#### **2.4.2. Work Load in the Police Service**

Work overload refers to the relationship between the demands of the work and the time available to fulfill those demands. Numerous studies conducted on occupational stress have identified workload as a work-related stressor and workload of a police officer is high (Keinan & Malach-Pines, 2007). In a study conducted in Dutch, between 65% and 75% of the police officers reported that they were under strain as result of heavy workload. They complained about having too much to do within a short period of time (Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000). Studies conducted in Australia by Rollinson, (2005) showed a positive relationship between workload and burnout. Those with high workload reported psychological distress, job dissatisfaction and more physical symptoms. In a study conducted in South African, police officers performed tasks that did not make up the normal job description. They covered work for other employees where there were insufficient personnel (Botha & Pienaar, 2006). In a study conducted in Israel, work overload was one of the four stressors that appeared to be significantly affecting police officers work (Moon & Maxwell, 2004). Kenya has a police force of 40,000 police officers. The internationally acceptable police to civilian ratios are 1:450 (one police officer to four hundred fifty civilian); the situation in Kenya currently is 1:1150 (one police officer to one thousand, one hundred and fifty civilian). The community policing partnership initiative was expected to address the low police to population ratio in comparison to the United Nations recommended standard (Report on National Task Force on Police Reform 2009). Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2002) noted that too much work produces the greatest stress. The issue of insufficient staff and its effects has caused many police officers to experience stress in carrying out their responsibility.

Staff shortages with increasing workload raise concerns on police officers ability to cope and deliver adequate service, which in turn create a stressful environment within the police profession. Burke and Mikkelsen (2006) observed that work overload comes when police officers experience increased responsibilities. Water and Ussery (2008) pointed out that police work involves enforcing law, peace keeping, protecting of people and properties, and finally investigating and interrogating criminals. Police officers are expected to respond to situations that may arise when they are on duty. More over police officers have to maintain law and order

and consequently report to the higher authority. They also acknowledge that the police profession has become increasingly stressful having to meet many almost impossible deadlines and responsibilities. The nature of the police workload is demanding and is likely to be stressful. Agolla (2008) asserts that work overload creates stress and was associated with smoking, alcohol consumption, high cholesterol levels, increased heart rate, and low self-esteem.

### **2.4.3. Bureaucracy in the Police Service**

Bureaucracy in the police service was identified as a major cause of occupational stress among police officers. Mc Carty, Zhao and Garland (2007) defined bureaucracy as events that are precipitated by police administration that are bothersome to police officers. Esterhuysen and Heineken (2012) observed that in America, Europe and Africa, Police service structure was hierarchical, authoritarian and assertive. The Police service structure was similar to the structure of the military. The nature of bureaucracy is based on hierarchical structure where there are clear demarcated lines of authority: for instance Sergeant, lieutenant, captain and constables among others. The position of the constable is the lowest of the ranks. These authorities come along with orders and internal communications which are passed through delegating and re-delegating. Bureaucracies have rigid hierarchical power control structures, where the greatest degree of control resides at the top of the organization. Therefore police constables at the lowest level have the highest demands and the least amount of control hence suffer from the highest levels of occupational stress (Shane, 2008). Heineken and Van der Waag-Cowling, (2009) pointed out that the hierarchical nature of the police service was characterized by rigid rank, command system and strict disciplinary codes. Cowper (2000) argues that Police officers are also trained on classic Weberian bureaucracy principles which entail discipline and respect for the chain of command. They are indoctrinated to be conformist and authoritarian. Esterhuysen and Heineken (2012) raised concern about chains of command and rank structures as causative factors of stress.

He, Zhao and Lorvich (2002) assert that the nature of bureaucracy in the police structure tends to breed alienation among police officers. They are required to exercise considerable discretion

while being controlled tightly by their supervisors. He, Zhao and Lorvich (2002) points out that stress and burnout emerges as a result of tension that exists between the discretion given to officers and the seemingly tight, endless litany of rules held by the police service. Other specific stressors mentioned in literature include; excessive paperwork, enduring repetitive tasks, and red tape for any action to be taken out of the range of standard operating procedures, conflicting policies and legislation, too much procedure to follow and an inconsistent leadership style (He *et al.*, 2002). The authoritarian, centrally controlled concept of the military still persists in the minds of police officers.

#### **2.4.4. Work Schedules in the Police Service**

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2005) reports that approximately 3.2 million people perform shift work. In the United States there are approximately 860,000 police officers represented by 17,784 agencies. Despite the large size of this workforce and strain of this occupation, the police are understudied in terms of the impact of extended work hours, shift work, and fatigue on health and stress (Reaves, 2006). In developing countries in Africa, Kenya inclusive, working on shift and working overtime have become increasingly common. Relationship between work schedules and stress are only partly understood (Steenland, 2000). Caruso, Lusk and Gillespie (2004) pointed out that working on shift was a potential occupational stressor associated with health consequences such as increased risk of injuries, gastrointestinal symptoms, disruption of family and social lives, and mental disorder.

Salaam (2000) asserts that every organization in any county has negotiated arrangement on the number of working hours per day as well as working days per week. Police occupation demands a 24-hour of work necessitate scheduling. Police work consists of ordinary day working schedule as well as shift. Police officers are assigned duties on unusual shifts which constantly change. Police work schedules include second shift, night shift and rotating shift. Shift work requires an employee to work a variety of shifts from Monday to Friday, for example, working the day shift for a week, the afternoon shift for a week, night shift for a week, and then back to the day shift (Sutherland & Cooper, 2000). Research has also demonstrated that stress increases as the number and length of night shifts increase. There are evidences of negative effect on

physical, social and psychological aspects of an individual working rotating shift. Part of the shift-work problem is adjusting to changes in routines and cycles of activities (Daus, Sander, & Campbell, 2001).

Water and Ussery (2007) pointed out those Police officers are always on duty and the officers always keep vigilance, even when off duty. Although police officers are given time off, they are sometimes required to sacrifice those days off to attend court proceedings, meeting during free time as well as to volunteer on weekends. Sufficient time must be given to those individual who come from night shift. Sutherland and Copper (2002) says that burnout occurs if sufficient time is not given for recovery. In addition, a police officer may develop occupational stress especially when expected to work during free time. The police complain of sleep, fatigue, appetite loss and constipation. They also experience family and marital difficulties since the affects work productivity, health and interpersonal relationships.

Waters and Ussery (2007) observed that work schedule changes shifts around so that the burden of working in shift is spread out among officers. Whether the police service changes work shifts weekly or every other week, there are still serious health issues affecting officers. Just when officers start to get used to going to sleep at a certain time, they are forced to readjust to sleeping at a different time. Changing sleep patterns can add stress to officers' already stressful lives. The changes have both psychological and physical effects on officers. Unlike the average job, law enforcement officers often work for twelve hour shifts in a row. Miller (2007) pointed out that the human body was not designed to constantly stay awake during night time hours. Consequently, adjusting to abnormal work hours interrupts the cycle of sleeping, eating and working. The Police work in 12 hour shifts while the labour law provides for an 8 hour shift. In view of the shortage of man power heavy crime work and uncertain law and order duties, policemen have to work for 16 hours at a stretch.

Shane (2008) conducted studies in America and reported that police officers worked for a 6-day, 8-hr schedule, rotating shifts every 8 days in a counterclockwise direction. This work schedule resulted in a state of cumulative sleep deprivation for most officers that reduces performance

and safety. Police officers work during weekly holidays, forgoing their leave and the other gazetted holidays. Police officers working under rotating shifts suffer from sickness, absenteeism, and reduced sleep quality. It may result in fatigue, increased blood pressure and sleep deprivation. Shane (2008) argued that monotony and boredom are inevitable during night shift. Boredom raises and lowers physiological responses creating fatigue. Boredom may also impair judgment and slow down reaction time. With this in mind, the police service should seriously consider providing an optimal work shift plan for the sake of the health and psychological well-being of its personnel.

#### **2.4.5. Interpersonal Relationships in the Police Service**

Interpersonal relationships refer to both personal relationships like friends and family and job-related relationships such as patrol partners, shift supervisors, subordinates and colleagues. The lack of supportive relationships or poor relationships with peers, colleagues and the superiors are also potential causes of stress that leads to low trust and low interest in problem solving (Loo-See Beh, 2012). Keinan and Pines (2007) say that working conditions for police officers involve working on shift, working overtime, and working distances away from home. These often create an intense discord that can disrupt the obligations of an officer's home life. Lambert, Hogan, Camp and Ventura (2006) argue that work-family conflict occurs when the work domain and family domain are incompatible with each another. This may contribute to stress. Demorout, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli (2004) supported that police officers have difficulty in combining work with domestic obligations. Problems may arise from work spilling into the family or from family conflicts intruding in the work place.

Howard, Donofrio and Boles (2004) mentioned other factors associated with occupational stress which included inadequate guidance, lack of consultation and communication, lack of encouragement from superiors, feelings of isolation, discrimination and favoritism, in addition to lack of social support from relatives, colleagues and superiors. Shane (2008) observed that peer support, colleagues and supervisors within the police organizations may buffer or aggravate occupational stress. Peer support is especially salient to police officers because of the nature of their work which requires them to put their life in the hands of colleagues during



dangerous situation. Occupational stress may occur to police officer who perceives themselves as having a strong peer relation.

Cancino and Enriquez (2004) noted that peer influence is an exceptionally important social force. Shared work experiences allow officers to develop mutual understanding of work stressors that can serve as a protective factor. Peer support provides a defensive function which allows the officer to tolerate high levels of anger, hostility and abuse. Peers frequently become a source of hostility, stress, discrimination, and cynicism. Govender (2008) pointed out that peer bonds within law enforcement lead to extreme secrecy and solidarity among police officers. Furthermore, police officers who report their peers for use of excessive force, violence, or substance abuse may be either marginalized or subjected to retaliation from other police officers.

### **2.5. Relationship between Demographic Characteristics and Occupational Stress**

Jansen (2004) carried out a study on stress and demographic characteristics (age, gender, rank, education level) and found demographic characteristics had influence on the stress. These demographic characteristics moderate occupational stress. This explains why different individuals perceive the same stressors and at different times. Brough and Frame (2004) who studied occupational stress as perceived by Norwegian police officers noted that gender had extensive history. They reported that female police officers experienced few traumatic incidents on average at work compared to their male colleagues but still reported the highest rating on all occupational stress. Brown (2007) provided a comprehensive review of gender issues in policing and suggested that British police service remain replete in masculine characteristics. Further Gershon, Lin and Li (2002) conducted studies on whether gender, age and field of job specialization had an effect on police officers. They reported that police officers in the age group of thirty one (31) to forty four (44) reported higher levels of stress than police officer under thirty (30) while those forty five(45) and above are at increased risk of occupational stress compared to their younger colleagues. Gershon, Lin and Li (2002) raised concern about issues of health, performance and retention of the increasing number of aging workers.

### **2.5.1. Relationship between Gender of Police Officer and Occupational Stress**

A Police officer work is physically and emotionally draining resulting to high level of occupational stress. He, Zhao and Ren (2005) argue that women have been traditionally confined to the private sphere of the home and family, which resulted in their exclusion from public domains such as politics and paid work. The first appointment of female officers within police services occurred more than a hundred years ago. The tasks of these female officers consisted of carrying out domestic and administrative duties. Wendy (2008) argued that it was not until the 1960's that women were permitted to undertake policing tasks. The tendency to treat female police officers differently to their male counterparts is a worldwide phenomenon. Besides the exclusion of females from patrol duties, most police departments had certain discriminatory policies such as quotas to discourage the hiring of female officers

In America, the idea of appointing police women started growing in 1910 where Alice Stebbins-Wells was tasked with caring for young women who had run away from home and clashed with the judicial system. The first women in Britain who gave service to policing were a voluntary group of women who formed an organization during the first two years of World War I known as the National Union of Woman Workers. These women undertook patrols near military bases with the purpose of upholding public morals. These women however did not have power of arrest and had to summon the help of police men when it was necessary to arrest someone (Franklin, 2005).

It was in 1916 that a woman was first officially appointed in the position of Special Patrol but there still existed many objections towards such moves. Arguments that were used by those opposed to the use of women in police work included assertions that women were unfit for police work on account of their gender and physique as well as that all women wish to get married and have children which would negate their pursuit of a career. Consequently women who were appointed to the police service had their positions restricted to administrative tasks, in charge of offices, assisting where minor road accidents had occurred and the frisking of female prisoners and crime suspects. It was not permissible for women to do fieldwork or to work at the radio stations of the flying squad. In the event of a police woman being called out to a crime

scene, permission had to be gained for her to go out from a commissioned officer and when this was granted she would then be accompanied by a male colleague (Franklin, 2005; Rabe-Hamp, 2008).

Franklin (2005) contended that the first group of women to be trained was white in the year 1972, and in 1981 the first coloured women started their training. In 1980, the first Asian women began to train, and the year 1983 saw the first black women start to serve as police officers. Although women had been excluded from policing in the past, current changes throughout the world, and in particular Kenya, have started to rectify the lapse. In Europe, female policing followed a similar trend. Initially women were used as either clerks or social workers with lower salaries than men. The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 created a need for more women in policing as male police officers were diverted to the army. In developing countries in Africa, Kenya inclusive mirrors some of the features of female participation in policing in North America and Europe.

The South Africa Police Service officially started recruiting and employing female officers for policing in the late 1960, similar to Kenya. In South Africa, deeply entrenched stereotypes against women in police services are still prevalent. It exists in practices such as not allowing female officers to patrol areas without a male police officer and assigning them to clerical, administrative or counseling work (Wendy, 2008). In Kenya, the numbers of police women have increased steadily. It is an official policy that any advertised posts are filled by a third of the gender in order to promote representation (Kenya Government, 2010). The concern of effects of occupation stress among female police officers should be given more attention now that female police officers are joining the police service. However, the percentage of female in policing compared to their male counterparts was is relatively low. The issues regarding stress and the effect of a male dominated career come to the fore (Griffin, Armstrong & Hepburn, 2005).

In studies conducted by Bezuidenhout and Theron (2000) female police officers were not treated with the same respect as male police officers. Franklin (2005) observed that male and

female police officers performed the same tasks although male police officers were generally reluctant to do patrol work in a high-risk area with a female partner, preferring male partners despite females being willing to work in collaboration with males in high risk areas. They reported that the nature of policing has an emotionally blunting effect on the female. Doing patrol work with the opposite gender was the causative factor for stress. Carlson, Anson and Thomas(2003) claims that male officers resent the presence of female co-workers in the male dominated career because females are perceived as possessing limited physical strength in responding to emergencies and may not be reliable backups in dangerous encounters.

Desmaris and Alksnis (2005) pointed out that gender may act as a moderator to stress. Males are accustomed to dominating females and often do not regard themselves as figures of authority while on the other hand females are not used to exercising authority over males. Wendy (2008) noted that traditionally, females should be located in jobs where they have less decision-making power than males. Within the police service, women are often regarded as inadequate officers and are often regarded as a liability in dangerous situations. Morrison (2005) observed that gender had impacted on occupational stress with females experiencing crime-related stressors less intensely and frequently than their male counterparts. According to Cooper and Bright (2001), males are four times more likely to die of coronary heart disease than the female police officers. Males have an average life expectancy of eight years shorter than female. More males take alcohol, and smoke cigarettes compared to the females. Symptoms such as depression are more likely to be diagnosed in female than male.

Griffin (2006) contended that the level of occupational stress experienced by the male and female police officers had little differences between the genders. Well, Colbert and slate (2006) pointed out that females police reported physical symptoms of stress while their male counterpart reported experiencing burnout. Males are accustomed to suppressing their emotions when experiencing occupational stress. Agolla (2008) asserts that most of the times, it is difficult for some male police officers to seek professional help from their friends when they experience work-family conflict and negative coping among themselves, because they think they will be viewed as weak. This denial to seek help could be as a result of the perception of

the police officer feeling that such help will only reveal to their colleagues their weakness to withstand challenges that go with the job, hence the officers easily fall victim to stress. Mikkelsen and Burke (2004) argue that female police officers are more likely to use emotionally focused coping strategies compared to male police officers who use problem focused coping strategies. Wendy (2008) says that most studies done on police stress and gender focus on male or female officers separately.

### **2.5.2. Relationship between Age of Police Officer and Occupational Stress**

Stress experienced among American police officers may be demonstrated in the average age of death. The average death age of police officer is 66 years while in the general population is 75 years. Age runs parallel with the number of years the officers have been in service. Police officers may experience less stress as they progress through the ranks and as they move to stations where they experience more autonomy. Older police officers experience more stress as result of impending redundancy, early retirement, absence of any potential career advancement and opportunities of personal development. In a study conducted in Rome, an increased rate of ischemic heart disease was found in officers less than 50 years. A strong prevalence of other stress related diseases found in the same cohorts were colon cancer, bladder cancer, non-Hodgkin Lymphoma and Melanoma bladder cancers (Violanti, 2005)

Violanti (2005) examined levels of stress at the following four stages of the police officer in service namely alarm stage (0-5 years), disenchantment stage (6-13 years), personalization stage (14-20 years) and introspection stage (20 years and over). The study found that a significant curvilinear relationship existed between stress and police career stages. Stress increases significantly during the alarm and disenchantment stages and decreases significantly during the personalization and introspection stages. Luow (2007) pointed out that most police officers spent their entire careers in a single agency. Promotions in police officers were closed and infrequent. The promotion process tends to be slow which may discourage officers and sap their energy and enthusiasm. Warr (2007) pointed out that young police officers were stressed by recurrent daily hassle, experience greater personnel conflict between identities and future pathway. Patterson, (2003) asserts that age was negatively correlated with occupational stress

because older officers possess higher ranks and have more adaptive coping mechanisms. In Kenya, police officers are recruited at the age of 18 years as trainee constable and deployed as police constables which are the lower rank in the police service (Report of National Task Force on Police Reform 2009).

### **2.5.3 Relationship between Education Level and Occupational Stress**

Education-level as a moderator of police stress has come under greater scrutiny recently because of the increasingly higher demands for educational credentials amongst police candidates (Roberg & Bonn, 2004). Kenya Police Reforms, focus on transformation of the Police Forces into a professional, efficient and effective police services. The reform emphasized on professionalism and community policing which focused on education and training. These reforms were expected to bring changes in the police service for example; hiring practices to become competitive; merit-based, entry requirements raised and greater transparency and accountability demanded (National Task Force on Police Reforms, 2009). Police constables were given more autonomy in decision-making and were encouraged to find solutions to problems within their own reach or environment. Educational levels of police officers differ from countries since the recruitment and selection vary considerably. In United States, selection criteria are broad in that they includes high school, particular size, weight, good sense of sight. In Netherlands selections criteria are based on psychological criteria which include particular levels of intelligence, certain skill and personality characteristics (Schauleli & Peerers, 2000).

In Kenya, the academic level has improved over the last 10 years from KCPE level to KCSE level. Minimum requirement to join the Kenya Police force is a mean grade of C under the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. Some police officers joined the police force with an A level education, diploma or Bachelor's degree or postgraduate degrees. Attraction of University graduates into the police has been a major challenge. Out of a combined police service of 73,956 officers, only 1% are University graduates. With respect to education, it is found that officers with more education are more likely to report more organizational work events and greater stress (Report of National Task Force on Police Reform, 2009). Dantzker's (1999) studied the effect education has on police performance and stress. He found that the

police officers with degree education were better in terms of policing. However, the officer with the Bachelor's degree actually reported a higher level of perceived stressfulness. The officer with Master's degree perceived a lower level of stress. Police officers with no college education were three times more likely to have complaints filed against them for excessive force and abuse than the highly educated. Research in this area remains mixed up, with some findings suggesting a positive relationship and others no relationship between education-level and stress (Chen, Su, Wang & Feng, 2006). The police shall remain in the mind of Kenyans; a place for those with low education whose employment options are limited. In Kenya, so far there is little research carried out on educational level among police officers. Thus considering the educational background of the police officer, it was worth investigating the relationship between stress and educational level.

## **2.6.Effects of Occupational Stress among Police Constables**

Malach-Pines and Keinan (2007) conducted studies among American Army. The US soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan studies indicated that, (27%) of soldiers suffered anxiety, depression, post-combat stress and other problems namely mental health. They further pointed out that in 2007, 121 soldiers committed suicide which shows an increase of (20%) over 2006 in suicide cases reported among serving combatants (<http://www.yahoo.com/news>). Manzoni and Eisner (2006) studied on stress and its effect on police officers. Their findings were not conclusive on effects of stress. Effects of occupational stress cannot be ignored and therefore there was need for research. Kenya Police Annual Crime Report (2010) observed that anger, aggression and use of excessive force among police officers is increasing and further brought to the fore by media attention. There are various types of stress that can be encountered by police officers in their daily duties. Stress manifests itself in four distinct changes: body signs and physical health, emotions and feelings, behaviour and thoughts (Willis, 2005). The changes were illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2: Changes that Depict Stress**

<b>Changes</b>	<b>Symptoms of Stress</b>
<b>Body Functions and Physical Health</b>	Backache, Muscle tension, Nervous, stomach, Breathing problems, Frequent urination, Fatigue, Dizziness, Difficult breathing, Dry mouth, Tight muscles, Pounding heart.
<b>Emotions and Feelings</b>	Irritability, Tension, Excessive tiredness, Trouble sleeping Inability, Concentrate, Anger, Worries
<b>Behaviour</b>	Drug use, Drinking alcohol, Eating (too much or too little, Want sex (more or less).
<b>Thinking Process</b>	Hard to remember things, Hard to concentrate, Looking at the dark side of life, Hopelessness, Helplessness

\*Source: Willis J.B (2005). Cracking the Stress Problem. Thailand. The Stanborough Press Ltd.

Barclays Bank Magazine, (2006) enumerates the Classical Symptoms of stress as less physical energy, emotional tiredness, lowered physical immunity, reduced efficiency at work and reduced business optimism. According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, the signs of stress include feeling depressed, edgy, guilty, tired, having headaches, stomach aches, trouble sleeping, laughing or crying for no reason, blaming other people for bad things that happen to you, only seeing the down side of a situation, feeling like the things you used to enjoy are not fun or are a burden, resenting other people or your responsibilities. These body states if not checked, can culminate into stress. The signs and symptoms outlined by the American Academy of Family Physicians; Barclays Bank Magazine, (2006); and Willis (2005) shows there are no single characteristic describing stress hence police constables can have multiple sufferings; emotionally, physically, behavioural and cognitively without knowing the main cause of the suffering is work related stress. Police officers work stress reactions are always classified as physiological, psychological and behavioural reactions (Bartol & Bartol, 2004)



### **2.6.1. Physiological Effects**

Occupational stress is widely accepted to have positive and negative effects on individuals. Acceptable levels of stress help to improve the individual's performance whilst excessive amounts of stress can lead to decreased performances (Stevenson & Harper, 2006). Studies estimate that 85% of all physical illnesses are stress related (Sagara, 2012). Awake Magazine (2010), notes that physical exhaustion may present in the form of headache, shaking, inability to think clearly and relax, lack of natural communication, anger resulting in explosive talk, vulnerability to common cold, cancer autoimmune diseases and experience of gastrointestinal problems. Stress can cause chronic fatigue, risk of stroke, worsen an asthma attack, proneness to accidents and athletic injuries. Willis (2005) states that, stress ages the immune system by boosting one of its chemical regulators known as interleukin 6 the increase of which is related to age and age-related conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and osteoporosis.

According to Regan (2008), the costs of stress can be very high for organizations. This include; physical illness, increase in health care costs, loss of productivity and creativity and probability of making more mistakes at work. High levels of stress may result into; administered job performance, rapid deterioration of relationships with family, friends, co-workers and strangers, increased arguments, isolation from social activities, absenteeism, conflicts with co-workers, domestic and work place violence and over-reactions to little provocations or nuisances of life. The wider costs of stress include; low tolerance of frustration, regressive behaviour, lowering of aggression threshold and morbid aggression, alcohol and drug abuse and diseases related to stress (Willis, 2005). Sagara (2012) contends that stress adversely affects reproduction because a person suffering from a stressed libido experiences sexual dysfunction which can lead to diminished sexual desire and inability to achieve orgasm. Various studies contended that stress may contribute to the development of negative, unhealthy and unproductive escapist individual and organizational behaviours such as desire to reduce tension by drinking, smoking, self-medicating with drugs, using sleeping pills or tranquilizers to relax, sleeping too much, over eating or under eating, withdrawing from activities, promiscuity and destructive life style. These behaviours contribute to death, disabilities, depression and can cause suicide.

### 2.6.2. Psychological Effects

Mental illnesses linked to stress include schizophrenia, claustrophobia, agoraphobia and depression. Persons suffering from these conditions are likely to be hospitalized or attempt suicide (Willis, 2005). Agolla (2008), further contends that, psychological stress causes bodily illness called psychosomatic while excessive stress causes a myriad of negativities such as emotional exhaustion, despair, apathy, feeling trapped, anorexia nervosa, obsessive disorder, sexual abuse, memory problems, trouble thinking clearly, feeling out of control and suicide. Emotional stress leads to lack of enthusiasm, feeling of loss of control as well as experiences of an unexplainable grief. It results in loss of productivity and creativity, fuels negativity and cynicism with quickness to get angry, lack of sleep, blame and detachment from others. Prolonged chronic stress results into a psychological consequence called burnout. Burnout occurs when the body's defensive coping mechanism is exhausted leading to reduced productivity and energy, leaving the victim feeling increasingly hopeless, powerless, cynical and resentful. It can eventually threaten ones job, relationship with others and may lead to death. The consequences of burnout on high emotional exhaustion, high depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment, compromised quality of work, impaired judgment, narrowed attention, negative experience and unpleasant emotional development(Maslach, Schaufeli&Leiter 2002). The consequences of stress and burnout are outlined in Table 3.

**Table 3: Effect of Stress and Burn Out**

<b>Stress</b>	<b>Burnout</b>
Characterized by over engagement.	Characterized by disengagement.
Emotions are overactive.	Emotions are blunted.
Produces urgency and hyperactivity.	Produces hopelessness and helplessness.
Loss of energy.	Loss of motivation, ideals and hope.
Leads to anxiety disorders.	Leads to detachment and depression.
Primary damage is physical.	Primary damage is emotional.
May kill one prematurely	May make life seem not worth living.

\*Source: Stress Management. At [http://En.wikipedia. Org/wiki/stress](http://En.wikipedia.Org/wiki/stress) – Management – Burnout

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and suicide among police officers have received the most attention among scholars. This problem comes about when officers are exposed to actual or potential lethal harm, or witness physical harm or death. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is characterized by the following behaviors re-experiencing the traumatic event, avoiding activities that relate to the event, reduced responsiveness to others and/or disassociation, increased arousal, guilt, and anxiety survivor guilt, repetitive nightmares, inability to tolerate noises, sadness and depression, loss of sexual interests, increased startle reaction, denial, fear of being involved in similar incidents, and placing blame onto the law enforcement agency (Comer, 2007).Rawl (2010) was of the opinion that stress depends on the nature of the traumatic incident; the coping style or ego strength of the person; similar prior experience in which the person mastered the stressful event; the degree of warning prior to the traumatic event; physical and psychological proximity to the traumatic event, loss of life; and social support. Police officers have limited access to psychological and psychiatric treatment within the forces. There are few psychiatrists and psychotherapists employed by Kenya Police Service. In a study conducted on psychological burnout among psychologists in the SAPS, Vander Walt (2001) found that psychologists were traumatized when working with police officers. The turnover rate for psychotherapists was high with a few staying for more than five years in service.

According to Mbutia (2008), the costs of occupational stress can be very high for organizations. The Police officer can suffer financially due to consequences of stress acquired on line of duty which the employers do not pay for. The consequences can be physical, behavioural or emotional, which causes; physical illness, increase in health care costs, loss of productivity and creativity and probability of making more mistakes on the line of duty as police officers. The services of chaplains or counselors are often only sought when officers stress levels have reached a critical stage, even bordering on suicide, when earlier detection of symptoms could have prompted a more timely intervention. The need for counseling has been recognized as a vital component in maintaining the overall well-being, morale and performance of police officers. It is yet to be institutionalized in the day-to-day management of police welfare (Report on National Task Force on Police, 2009).Many studies have been carried on

occupational stress among police officers in the Western countries but very few studies have been carried out in Kenya in particular Kisumu County.

### **2.7.Coping Strategies among Police Constables**

Coping strategies in the police service are an area that attracts global concern. Several overseas states have developed different strategies and techniques to improve the health of police officers even though the results have been minimal (Walker, 2004). Hence policing coping strategies is a ripe area for research (Braga, 2006). Since the 1970s, UK governments have placed significant emphasis on improving service delivery of the police service through putting stress management intervention strategies to cope with occupational stress. Sears (2000) examined occupational stress and coping strategies among police officers in the United Kingdom. It was found that police officers used various coping strategies to cope with work load. 60% of the police officers work at night and during weekends on average three times in a month. It was further found that almost a third of police officers were unable to take holiday entitlements for various reasons. He observed that most of the police officers used negative coping strategies such as excessive beer drinking and drug abuse.

Pienaar and Rothmann (2003) studied coping strategies within the South Africa Police Service. They found that the police officers were not coping well with their environment. The police officers reported high levels of illness, suicide or post-traumatic stress symptoms; high levels of substance abuse. They found four main forms of coping strategies used: approach coping (which entails coming up with strategies to cope in times of stress or by concentrating efforts to solve the cause of strain); avoidance of problems (by turning to alcohol in times of strain or pretending that events did not occur); seeking emotional support from friends, family and professional health care workers, and, finally, turning to religion. It was found that on a national level, turning to religion was rated highest in terms of coping mechanisms. Other studies conducted by Pargament (2001) found that police officers turned to religion, in order to deal with the stress associated with the occupation. Pienaar and Rothmann (2005) recommended that further research be conducted on the effectiveness of these coping strategies.

In Kenya, a module on guidance and counseling, sociology and psychiatry has been introduced in the revised curriculum for the training of Kenya Regular Police and Administration Police to address the issue of stress among police service (Ombati, 2011). The police department also uses the service of a psychologist who provides a number of welfare and counseling services to its officers. To help officers cope with the unique stresses inherent in police work, training in human resource and general stress management (Government of Kenya, 2011). Little research has been done regarding the coping strategies used by police constables in Kenya especially in Kisumu County. The Kenya Police Service presents a unique environment to study coping strategies because the police officers in question are dealing with one of the highest crime levels in the world and police officers are seemingly not coping well (Were *et.al*, 2012).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) stated that occupational stress takes place when work demands exceed the person's adaptive resources. Therefore stress refers to the temporary adaptation process that is accompanied by mental and physical symptoms and is caused by a disturbance in the equilibrium between job demands and the ability of the worker to respond to the demands. When work demands are too high to cope with, stress reactions are likely to occur. The term coping is referred to perceptual, cognitive or behavioural responses that are used in managing, avoiding or controlling situations that could be regarded as difficult. Coping as a term could be used to refer to the strategies used. As a strategy, coping refers to the different methods that a person may use in managing his or her circumstances. Non-coping is defined as efforts that have failed to cope, accompanied by various physical and psychosocial disturbances, which result in increased stress. Non-coping also results in higher levels of depression and anxiety.

Coping can be grouped into two categories namely problem focused and emotion-focused. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) identified Problem-focused as the first coping strategies. It involves the attempts to understand, define the problem and looking for ways to manage and solve the problem. Problem focused strategies are also considered as approaching coping strategies. A Police officer has to experience and process intense, unpleasant threatening information that cause intense arousal. A Police officer interprets an event as highly stressful, threatening and uncontrollable (Haarr & Morash, 2005).

### 2.7.1. Problem Focus Strategies

According to Carver, Scheier, and Weintraub (1989) describes problem-focused strategies as follows;

- i) **Active coping.** This consists of the process of taking steps towards the removal or alleviation of the stressor and its effects. It includes initiating direct action, increasing one's efforts to do something about the situation (Sanderson, 2004). Carver (1997) operationalized active coping by using statements like "I've been concentration my effort on doing something about the situation". "I've been taking action by trying to making the situation better".
- ii) **Planning.** This refers to thinking about how to cope with the stressor. This includes thinking hard about what steps to take to deal with stressors or challenge (Sanderson 2004). Carver (1997) operationalized active coping in statement like "I've been trying to come with a strategy about what to do". "I've been thing about what steps to take".
- iii) **Seeking instrumental support.** This refers to consulting or approaching another person for advice in order to solve the threatening or challenging situation. Carver *et al.*, (1989) operationalized seeking instrumental support in a statement such as "I've been trying to advice or help from other people about what to do". "I've been getting help and advice from other people".

### 2.7.2. Emotional Focus Strategies

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggested that emotional focused strategy was the second type of coping. To be emotional in police work reflects a tendency of weakness, feminist, unwanted and undesirable characteristic in an occupation that is traditionally seen as masculine. Louw (2008) says that emotions are regarded as unwanted influences that deflect police officer from objectivity and professionalism. Police officers are expected to repress emotional displays and they are taught to conform to the norm of solidarity, teamwork, toughness when confronted with pain and fear.

Kleinke (2002) argues that individuals engaged in emotional focus coping when a problem or challenge appears beyond their control. Emotional focus strategies can also be considered as

avoidance strategies when police officers coping strategies consist of thoughts that serve to distract, filter out, physically distancing himself or herself from the source of stress. Anshel (2000) pointed out that Emotional focused strategies may help police officers in the short term to mentally escape from unpleasant after effects of stressful event. These actions in turn serve to reduce stress. In this study police officers may avoid an individual, ignore cases reported earlier and engage in maladaptive strategies such as abusing drugs, and alcohol consumption to cope with stress. Carver *et al.*, (1989) and carver, 1997 operationalized emotional focused as follows.

i) **Seeking emotional support.** This involves reaching out to others for moral support, sympathy and understanding. Carver *et al.*, (1989) operationalized seeking emotional support in statements like “I’ve been getting emotional support from others. I’ve been trying to get comfort from others”.

ii) **Positive reinterpretation and growth.** This is aimed at managing stress emotions rather than the stressors themselves by reinterpretation. Carver *et al.*, (1989) operationalized positive reinterpretations with statements. “I’ve been trying to see it in different light to make more positive”. “I’ve been looking for something for something good in what is happening”.

iii) **Denial.** This is the refusal to believe that the stressor exists or trying to act as though the stressor isn’t real. Carver *et al.*, (1989) operationalized denial in statement such as, “I’ve been saying to myself this isn’t real”. “I’ve been refusing to believe that it has happened”.

iv) **Acceptance.** The acceptance of a stressor as real and engaging in an attempt to deal with the situation. Carver *et al.*, (1989) operationalized acceptances coping in statement such as “I’ve been learning to live with it”.

v) **Turning to religion.** This entails focusing on religion to facilitate emotional support, positive reinterpretation Carver *et al.*, (1989) operationalized turning to religion in statements such as “I’ve been trying to find comfort in my religion” or “spiritual or I’ve been praying or mediating”.

### 2.7.3. Maladaptive Coping Strategies

Anshel (2000) argues that the coping strategies a person uses will depend on the person's appraisal of the situation. Some studies have suggested that cognitive appraisal of a situation can be associated with coping strategies. According to Folkman and Lazarus (1985), when a person believes that the situation cannot be changed, emotion-focused coping is the most likely coping strategy used. It has been recognized that coping strategies of police officers are limited. Studies conducted in US and Britain reveals that police officers tend to use maladaptive emotion-focused behaviour for the immediate reduction of stress (Ortego, Brenner & Leather, 2007). Carver *et al.*, (1989) also highlighted on maladaptive coping strategies that are less used:

i) **Focusing on and ventilating emotions.** Including focusing on a stressful situation and expressing feelings about it. Carver *et al.*, (1989) operationalized venting emotional by the following statement. "I've been saying things to let my unpleasant feeling and I've been expressing it".

ii) **Behavioural disengagement.** Involves ignoring and avoiding stressors and becoming more helpless and powerless. Carver *et al.*, (1989) operationalizes behavior disengagement through statements like "I've been giving up trying to deal with".

iii) **Mental Disengagement.** The excessiveness of sleeping or daydreaming to escape from stressors.

iv) **Alcohol-disengagement.** The use of substances to manage stress. Carver *et al.*, (1989) operationalized alcohol disengagement through statement like "I've been using alcohol and drugs to make myself feel better".

Police officers tend to use maladaptive emotion-focused behaviour for the immediate reduction of stress. Maladaptive coping strategies include the following: denying, focusing upon and venting of emotions for example anger and aggressive outburst, excessive alcohol, drug use, and mentally disengaging from the experience by day dreaming, sleep or self-destruction behavior. Excessive intake of alcohol was use in an attempt to reduce stress and improve psychological well-being among police officers (Rothmann & Rensburg, 2002). Alcohol or the use of drugs may be used to cope with stress but it is an ineffective measure (Anshel, 2000). There was need



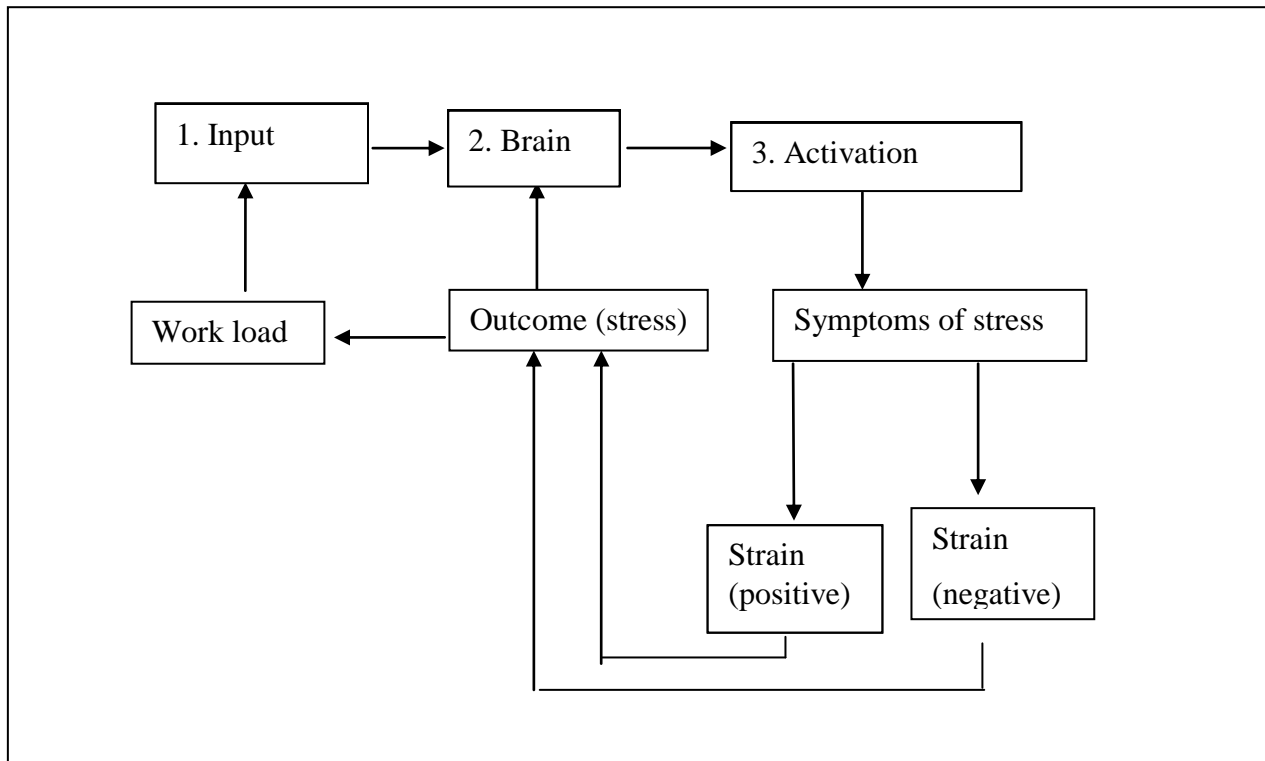
to gain insight into police stress and to implement initiatives to reduce occupational stress and to facilitate coping strategies among police constables.

## **2.8.Theoretical Framework**

There are many theories that explain factors causing stress. The theoretical approaches are interlinked and have a bearing on occupational stress. Dollard, Winefield and Dollard (2004) says that no single theory adequately explain the cause of stress. This means that stress can be as a result of one or combination of the various theories. These theories include.

### **2.8.1. Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress**

The study adopted Levine and Ursin, (1991): The Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress. This theory explains stress in four states: stress stimuli, stress experience, general stress response, and experience of stress. The Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress (CATS) defines stress as negative stimuli subjective to reports of an experience (humans only), a general non-specific increase in arousal (activation and the feedback to the brain from this response). The theory is relevant to the study because it illustrates the stress reaction chain among humans. Police constables are exposed to excessive workload, tight schedule, poor working conditions and interpersonal relationships. Depending on the nature and weight of the work, the brain registers, interprets and evaluates the load causing the body to react accordingly. If the work is manageable (positive), the body maintains normalcy but if the work is beyond the scope of the police constables the body reacts negatively triggering stress. Levine and Ursin (1991, depicted the theory which addresses the flow of stress as shown in Figure 1.



\*Source: Levine and Ursin, (1991). Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress. Family Health Option at <http://www.familyhealth.com/CATS-Theory>

**Figure 1: The Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress - Flow of Stimuli**

The flow of stress is explained as

**a. Input**

This is the source of stress. It can be the work environment, bureaucracy schedule, work load and interpersonal relationship that the police officers perform. Whether a stimulus is pleasant or threatening depends on the individual appraisal of the situation from the input level (Levine and Ursin, 1991).

**b. The Brain**

This is referred to as the stress experience. All the stimuli are evaluated or filtered by the brain, and that psychological, emotional loads are the most frequently reported stress stimuli (Levine and Ursin, 1991). Given that a particular stimulus, or set of stimuli, is perceived (appraised) as threatening or negative, humans report this as stress. Animals are restricted to report that this is

something they want to avoid. For humans, this particular experience or feeling is easy to measure by interview or questionnaires. Particular importance to the study was the level of stress experienced by the police constables and how they cope with it.

### **c. The Stress Response**

The general response to stress stimuli is a non-specific alarm response, eliciting a general increase in wakefulness and brain arousal, and specific responses to deal with the reasons for the alarm. This increase in arousal is referred to as activation. This study was interested to know what activates stress for police constables and how they respond to it. The increase in arousal manifests itself in many or most organ systems, with individual and situational variance in strength, reciprocal relations, and time parameters (Eriksen, & Ursin, 1999).

### **d. Feedback from the Stress Response**

The brain can be trained to respond and handle certain things positively that produce positive stimuli rather than the negative stimuli that activate stress. When the response is positive, it goes back to the brain and activates other positive responses. Positive response motivates the police constable in his/her performance but negative response strains the police constable hence produces stress.

## **2.8.2 Cognitive Theory of Stress and Coping**

The cognitive theory of stress and coping provides a theoretical paradigm that views stress and coping as both relational and process oriented (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This theoretical perspective defines stress as a relationship between individuals and their environments. First, stress and coping are viewed as manifestations of dynamic and evaluative interplays between individuals and their environments. Secondly, the cognitive theory of stress and coping suggests that stress and coping are bidirectional processes in that individuals are both agents and objects of environmental change. The theory relies on an assumption that individuals engage in a cognitive appraisal of the environmental condition leading to an evaluation of perceived threats. The cognitive processes include coping mechanisms such as an attempt to moderate the environment or an internal attempt to regulate the emotional distress caused by the stressor.

According to the cognitive theory of stress and coping, two processes, cognitive appraisal and coping influence the relationship between environmental stressors and adaptation outcomes. Folk man and Lazarus (1984) explained that people engage in two types of appraisal when faced with external demands namely primary appraisal and secondary appraisal. Primary appraisals are considerations people make concerning the potential threats carried by situation Judgments. Secondary appraisals refer to process where individuals' indicates how well they are able to deal with threats (Mirowsky & Ross (2003). Lazarus believes that that appraisal occurs at two different points in the stress experience, when the situation is perceived as being stressful and when the same type of response to the stress is consciously chosen. Primary appraisal asks is this situation stressful and if yes secondary appraisal asks what can I do about stressful situation. He further states that if the individual considers a particular situation as potential threatening and he or she lacks resources to cope effectively with it, then he or she will experience stress. Appraised resources include tangible, psychological, and social resources available to ameliorate stressful circumstances. Psychological resources include the sense of personal control and environmental mastery. Social resources include family relationships that provide instrumental, informational, or emotional support.

According to Sulskly and Smith (2005), secondary appraisal involves the process described as self-efficacy in which questions are asked to oneself such as what choice do I have. Can I implement those particular options? A positive appraisal with a potential stressor greatly reduces the experience of stress. The person makes three forms of stressful appraisals of harm or loss, threat or challenge. Harm or loss is perceived when the damage has already been done. Threat perception occurs when there is a potential for harm or loss while the first two appraisals trigger negative emotions like fear and anger. Challenge triggers positive emotions such as excitement or interest (Lazarus, 1993). In addition to harm or loss, threat and challenge appraisals in secondary appraisal, the person also evaluates what can be done to overcome difficulty or appraisal. The person also evaluates what can be done to overcome difficulty or enhance benefit. Various coping options in the light of available resources such as physical, social, and psychological well-being are evaluated during this process. These resources take

many forms like cognitive skills, social support for meeting emotional needs, physical fitness to meet high energy levels and toughness.

This theory was based on a premise that stress depends on the meaning placed on the event by different individuals. This may result in variation and subjectivity in the perception of an event. Cognitive appraisal not only determines the stressfulness of an event but also determine the coping strategies that are used to handle that stressful event (Chung, *et al.*, 2001). Finally, the theory of cognitive stress and coping defines coping as efforts to manage the demands imposed by environmental stressors. Coping is described as having two functions: first, emotion-focused coping regulates distress; second, problem-focused coping manages the distressing circumstances. In summary the cognitive theory of stress and coping posits that stress is a relationship in which individuals appraise their environments as presenting demands that exceed their available resources and are deleterious to their well-being. Specific to this investigation, the stress relationship often reflects an imbalance between environmental demands and resources available to meet those demands.

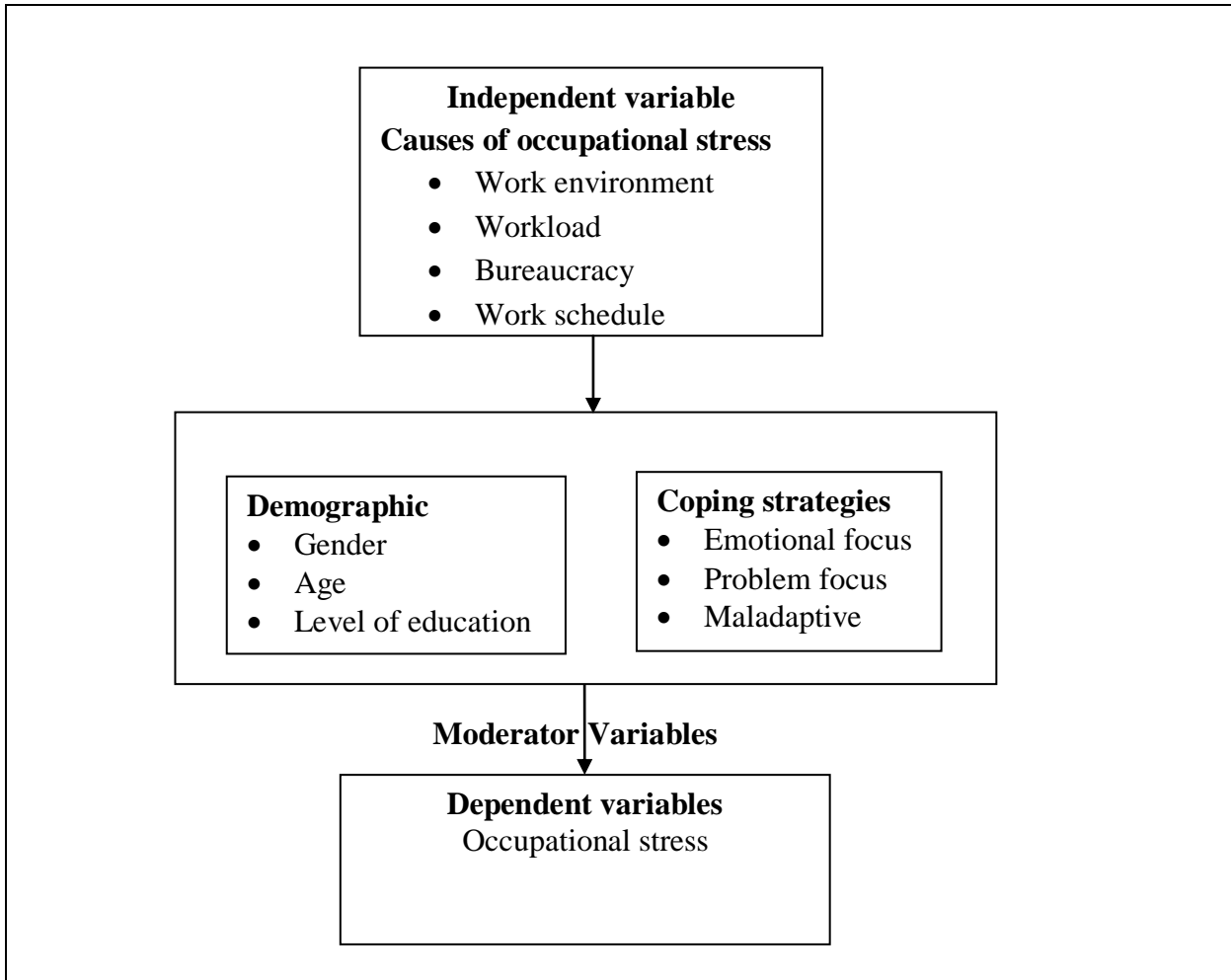
First, cognitive appraisals are essential in the manifestation of a stress relationship. Specifically, individuals evaluate the challenges posed by their environmental demands and the availability of their resources including the sense of personal control and support to meet these challenges. Secondly, in the face of these challenges individuals display coping processes including efforts to manage their emotional distress and modify their environments. Cognitive appraisal was a subjective qualitative process that takes place within a police officer realm of training, education and general life experience set against the boundaries of their personal ability to cope with the problem.

The transaction that takes place between the person and his or her environment initiates coping processes to either deal with the situation directly for example to solve the problem or seek assistance to manage the emotional state that arises for instance fight, flight or withdrawal. There was no room for debate or discussion regarding direct orders so secondary appraisal was minimized leaving the officer with little choice but to forge ahead, perhaps against their will and

with fewer options to resolve the situation. When an officer enters a situation with little or no experience, guidance or training, they are left to appraise the work environment as threatening. The police officer was bound to develop low efficacy which leads to stress. These theories conceptualize stress as a complex process that consists of three major components, namely sources of stress that are encountered in the work environment, the perception and appraisal of a particular stressor by an employee and the emotional reactions that are evoked when a stressor is appraised as threatening. Therefore, this study would use these theories to investigate causes of occupational stress among police constables.

## **2.9. Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework below was developed from the reviewed related literature. The independent variable was causes of occupational stress while the dependent variable was occupational stress and the moderator variables were demographic characteristics and coping strategies. From the conceptual framework, Police officers are exposed to causes of occupational stress before and they must recognize the stimuli as negative and appraise the environment as harmful. The evaluative process will determine whether the situation is stressful or not. The interplay of causes of stress such as: work environment, work load, work schedule and interpersonal relationship bear a heavy physiological and psychological effect on police constables irrespective of age, gender and level of education. In situations where an employee is unable to cope with the demands and conditions of work, pressure triggers the onset of stress leading to physiological and psychological complications. This study sought to investigate levels of occupational stress; causes, effects and coping strategies among police constables. The relationship among the variables involved in occupational stress is diagrammatically presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Interaction of Factors Causing Stress**

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1.Introduction**

This chapter deals with the procedures that were followed in carrying out the study. It details and systematizes the various steps that were followed in the entire research. It includes the research design, the location of the study, the population, sampling procedure and sample size, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, and data analysis.

#### **3.2.Research Design**

The study adopted *ex-post-facto* research design. This design is the most appropriate in a study where the independent variable cannot be directly manipulated since its manifestations have already occurred (Kerlinger, 2000). Further this design is appropriate in an after the fact analysis of an outcome or the dependent variable, as well as in comparative studies (Kathuri& Pals, 1993; Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). This study investigated the level of occupational stress, causes, effects and coping strategies among police constables in Kisumu County.

#### **3.3.Location of the Study**

The research was conducted in Kisumu County which is one of the devolved counties in Kenya. Kisumu County was chosen because of it being a cosmopolitan city. It is characterized by insecurity especially Kisumu city and its environs. According to police annual statistics report (2010), Kisumu County has recorded increase in crime rate which continues to challenge police capacity and resources. The county comprises of Muhoroni, Kisumu East, Kisumu West, Seme, Kisumu Central Nyakach and Nyando constituencies. According to Kenya National Census (2009), Kisumu has a population of 968,909 and land area of 2085.9km<sup>2</sup>. Kisumu County is divided into four police divisions namely Kisumu, Nyando, Nyakach, and Maseno. The county borders Siaya County to the West, Vihiga to North, Nandi to the North East. Its neighbor to the South is Nyamira and Homabay to the South West. The county has shoreline occupying Northern Western and a part of the Southern shores of the Winam Gulf (See Appendix E).



### 3.4. Population of the Study

The target population for the study was police constables and Officers Commanding Stations in Kisumu County, Kenya. Kisumu County has 4 police divisions' with 439 Police Constables and 12 Officers Commanding Station as shown on Table 4.

**Table 4: Distribution of OCS and Police Constables in Kisumu County**

<b>Police Officer</b>	<b>Number</b>
Officers Commanding Stations (OCSs)	12
Male Police Constables	393
Female Police Constables	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>451</b>

#### 3.4.1. Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

A research sample is a specific unit or section of the population that we take to study basically because it is practically difficult to study the entire population. A research sample is expected to mirror the population from which it comes (Trochim, 2005). Orodho (2004) maintains that in any education and social sciences studies, the sample should be selected in such a way that one is assured that such sub-groups in the population will be represented in the sample in proportion to the numbers in the population itself.

Stratified random sampling was necessary because the stratum was able to capture both the OCS and police constables. Kathuri and Pals (1993) and Kothari (2004) stated that when a researcher is interested in certain or specified information, only respondents with such characteristics should be selected. Tortu, Rass and Loom (2004) reinforced this position by adding that a part from stratified random sampling, purposive sampling is necessary where a sample show good evidence of providing the researcher with the needed information.

**Table 5: Distribution of OCS and Police Constable in the Sample**

<b>Police Officer</b>	<b>Number</b>
Officers Commanding Stations (OCSs)	4
Male Police Constables	94
Female Police Constables	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>

Table 4 indicates that there are 12 Officers Commanding Station and police constables in the sample. The sample size of the officers Commanding Station and police constables were proportionally calculated based on 24% which is considered a number to be statistically representative enough (Kombo & Tromp, 2006; Best & Khan, 2006). Therefore, from Table 5, a sample size of 105 police constables and Four OCS were sampled for the study.

### **3.5. Instrumentation**

The required data was collected by the use of Police Constable's Questionnaire and Interview Schedule for Officers Commanding Station. The sets of questions in the questionnaire were designed to help investigate level of occupational stress: causes, effect of occupational stress and coping strategies. The closed ended and open ended questionnaire scored in Likert scale on a 1 to 5 point scale was analyzed. The questionnaire also featured the list of items whereby the respondents had to choose responses. The questionnaire used in the study was designed for self-administration because the work of police involves a lot of movement in and out of office. Questionnaire was divided into four sections (see Appendix B). Each section had statements with clear instructions on how to fill in.

Section A: This consisted of items eliciting information from respondents about demographic information. Section B: This consisted of items requesting information about causes and level of occupational stress among police. The questions were adapted from Police Stress Questionnaire (McCreary & Thompson, 2006). Some questions were removed completely for instance: Having to handle a large crowd/mass demonstration; Seeing criminals go free; Lack of opportunity for further advancement; Experiencing negative attitudes towards the organization; Other officers

poorly motivated; Being assigned more responsibility; having to make critical on-the-spot decisions; Having to attend domestic violence incidences. Some questions were rephrased to suit the stress experience by police constables under study. For example working overtime was rephrased to I have been working during day off, when on leave and doing community work; excessive administrative duties was rephrased to I have to neglect some task because I have to too much to do; staff shortage was rephrased to I am assigned to do someone else work because of shortage of staff; bureaucratic red tape was rephrased to I feel that there is too much procedure to followed to get something done. Section C: This consisted of items seeking information on the effects of occupational stress. 7 items were adapted from Cartwright & Cooper (1997) questionnaire. The following questions were removed Feeling blue or depressed; having High blood pressure; having Diarrhoea; Sudden feelings of panic or fear; Feeling nervous or fidgety; Having crying spells; having a change in appetite; Eczema/skin rashes; having inability to find pleasure in anything.

Section D: This consisted of items soliciting information on coping strategies used by police constables. 7 items on coping strategies were adapted from Brief COPE Questionnaire (Carver, Scheier & Weintraub, 1989). The following questions were removed: I have taken additional action to try to get rid of the problem; I get used to the idea that it happened; I refuse to believe it has happened; I force myself to wait for the right time to do something. Some of the questions were rephrased to suit the study for instance; I talk to someone about how I feel was rephrased to I have been asking people with similar experiences for advice and help about what to do; I pray more than usual was rephrased to I have been seeking God's help and finding comfort in religion. The respondents in each case were requested to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed to each items. The items in the questionnaire were based on five point likert scale. The scoring of the instruments was as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) - 5, Agree (A) - 4, Undecided (U) - 3, Disagree (D) - 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) -1. Responses of Disagree (D) were combined with responses of Strongly Disagree (SD) to get disagree (D) to facilitate data analysis This was the case for all positive worded items while the reverse was the case for all negative worded items. A score less than three showed the level of disagreement while that greater than three showed the level of agreement.

Interview schedules were conducted with officers commanding stations where more information was generated on the causes, effects of occupational stress and coping strategies among police constables. The interview was open ended semi structure questions (See Appendix C). These were meant to counter check the data from the questionnaire. They were analyzed thematically through summaries. Interviews were conducted at the convenience of the interviewees and usually took little longer period to conduct than the questionnaire but the researcher tried to limit the session to quarter to three-quarter of an hour. Generally the respondents were cooperative. The interview covered 4 Officers Commanding Station manning the four police stations.

### **3.6.Pilot Study**

The pilot study was conducted in Kisii County. The County was randomly selected from counties that were not participating in the study. The questionnaire was administered to 21 police constables. Pilot study was analyzed to check on appropriateness of the statistical analysis methods, the data was useful in checking clarity of questions in the questionnaire.

#### **3.6.1. Validity of the Instruments**

Validity refers to the degree of accuracy and meaningfulness of inference based on research result. Content validity refers to the degree to which the content of the items are reflected in the content domain of interest (Miller, 2003). Validity refers to the degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores entailed by proposed use of test. Best and Khan (2005) suggest that the validity of the instruments means asking the right questions framed in the least ambiguous way and based on the objectives. Validity of the research instrument was based on the three overarching form of validity: content validity also known as logical validity refer to the extent to which a measure represents all facets of a given social construct (Wilson, Pan & Schumsky, 2012). Face validity which is the extent to which a test is subjectively viewed as covering the concept it purports to measure. It refers to transparency or relevance of the test as they appear to the test participants (Holden, 2010). Construct validity refers to the validity of inference that observations or measure the construct being

### 3.6.2. Reliability of Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define reliability as the degree to which research instruments yield consistent data or results after repeated trials. The researcher uses test and retest technique in order to test the reliability of the research instruments. Research instruments were retested on a sample of 21 respondents in Kisii County who were not used in the final analysis. In this case, 21 respondents were retested a second time two weeks later, and their consistency between the two sets of the scores were computed using Cronbach's alpha method. The reliability analysis is used to test consistency of the respondent's answers to all items of the independent and dependent variables in the questionnaire, whether the items are highly correlated with one another or not (Hamidum, 2009). Reliability of the research instruments was enhanced through training of the research assistants on the use of the research instruments.

The original PSI questionnaire had 20 items. McCearcy (2004) subjected PSI questionnaire to Cronbach's alpha test and found correlation coefficients: Work load (0.92), schedule (0.92) bureaucracy (0.90) work environments (0.89) and relationships (0.85). Duru (2007) subjected the COPE to a Cronbach's alpha test and found correlation coefficients: Problem-focused coping (0.86), emotional focused (0.93), and maladjusted focused (0.87).

In this study Cronbach's alpha was used to estimate the reliability of the instruments as show in Table 6. Cronbach's alpha measures the average of measurable items and its correlation and if the result is generally above 0.5 or 50%, it is considered to be reliable (Pieghambari, 2007). The reliability coefficient (Alpha) of 0.90 an indicator of that the research instruments were adequate in content, reliable and valid to measure the opinion of the respondents. According to Cronbach (1946), a reliability coefficient above 0.70 is considered good indicator of internal consistency reliability that was used in the study. Cronbach's alpha can be written as function of the number of test items and the average inter-correlation among the items. The formula for the standardized Cronbach's alpha is:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{C}}{\bar{V} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{C}}$$

Where N is equal to the number of items, C bar is the average inter-item covariance among items and V bar equals the average variance. It can be seen from the formula that if the number of items is increased, Cronbach's alpha increases. Additionally, if the average inter-items correlation is low, alpha will be low. As the average inter-item correlation increases, Cronbach's alpha increases as well (holding the number of items constant).

**Table 6: Reliability Coefficient of the Research Instruments**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Number of items</b>	<b>Reliability <math>\alpha</math></b>
<b>PSI</b>		
Work environment	6	0.92
Workload	6	0.91
Bureaucracy	5	0.90
Work schedule	4	0.85
Interpersonal relationship	4	0.75
<b>COPE</b>		
Emotional coping	2	0.89
Problem coping	3	0.92
Maladjusted coping	2	0.88
<b>Average</b>		<b>0.877</b>

### **3.7. Data Collection Procedure**

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the National Council for Science and Technology. The researcher presented research proposal to the commission and a cover letter for the school of graduate studies, Kabarak University. Further, permission was obtained from the District Commissioner to be allowed to carry out the research in their districts. The sampled

police stations were visited and Officers Commanding Stations (OCS) were informed about the study.

### **3.8. Data Analysis Procedure**

The data obtained was processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 20.0 for Windows. The instruments were scored on a five-point Likert scale, and the responses were assigned scores between 1 and 5, which were used to determine the measure of the attributes. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analysis. Descriptive statistics: frequency tables, percentages means and standard deviations were generated to explain various attributes of the variables under study, while inferential statistics (Chi-Square test, and Pearson's Correlation) was used to test hypotheses.

### **3.9. Ethical Considerations**

The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the participants in order for them to make informed decisions on whether to participate in the study or not. The police constables were informed that the data would be used for intended research purpose only. To ensure anonymity, the police constables were not required to write their names on the questionnaire. The identities of police constables were concealed and the study findings were not reported in the basis of individual to ensure confidentiality. Only police constables who signed informed consent forms were eligible to participate in the study. Furthermore the respondents were made aware that participation was voluntary and if they decided not to complete the questionnaire, they would not suffer any adverse consequences.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### **4.1.Introduction**

This chapter presents research findings, interpretation of data, and discussion. All hypotheses tests were performed at a significance level of 0.05. Acceptance or rejection of the Null Hypothesis was based on the calculated test statistics and the value of the probability of significance ( $p$  value). The Null Hypothesis was accepted if  $p \geq 0.05$ , and it was rejected if  $p < 0.05$ . The chapter further gives a discussion of findings and a comparison with similar studies done. The results are presented and discussed in the order of the stated objectives, followed by the testing of hypotheses.

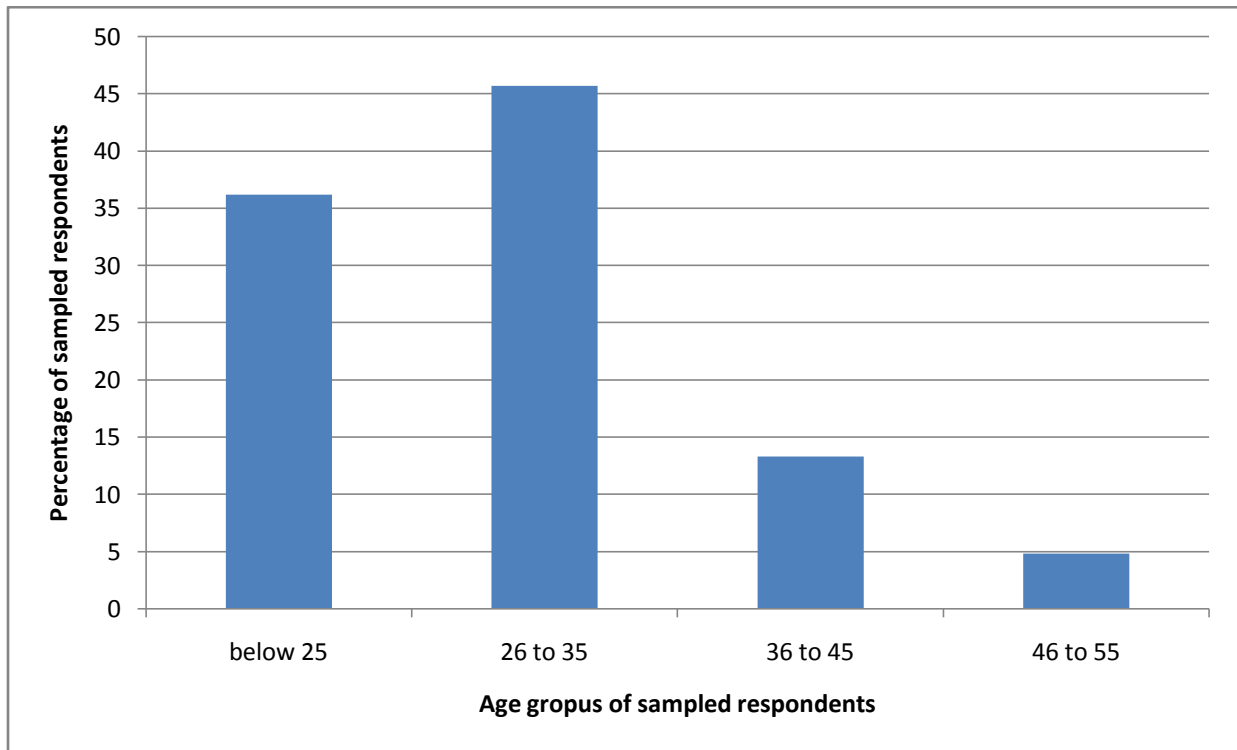
#### **4.2.Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

This section gives a summary of the distribution of respondents in the demographic characteristics. This includes gender, age, and levels of education among police constables. Descriptive statistics were used to describe and analyze the data.

The police constables who constituted sample for this study were 89.5% male and 10.5% female. There is a great gender disparity in the Kenya Police Service today. A study conducted by Griffin *et al.*, (2005) explained that police environment was an exceedingly masculinized organization where the essential skills for the occupation are assumed to be masculine in nature. In Kenya, it is an official policy that any advertised posts are filled by a third of either gender in order to promote representation. However, the representation of female police constables compared to male police constables was still relatively low. It is most likely the females tend to shy away from joining the police service due to the rough and tough police subculture.

The study sought to find out the distribution of respondents in terms of age. The respondents were asked to tick the appropriate age group they belong to. The research findings on age of the police constables are presented in Figure 3.

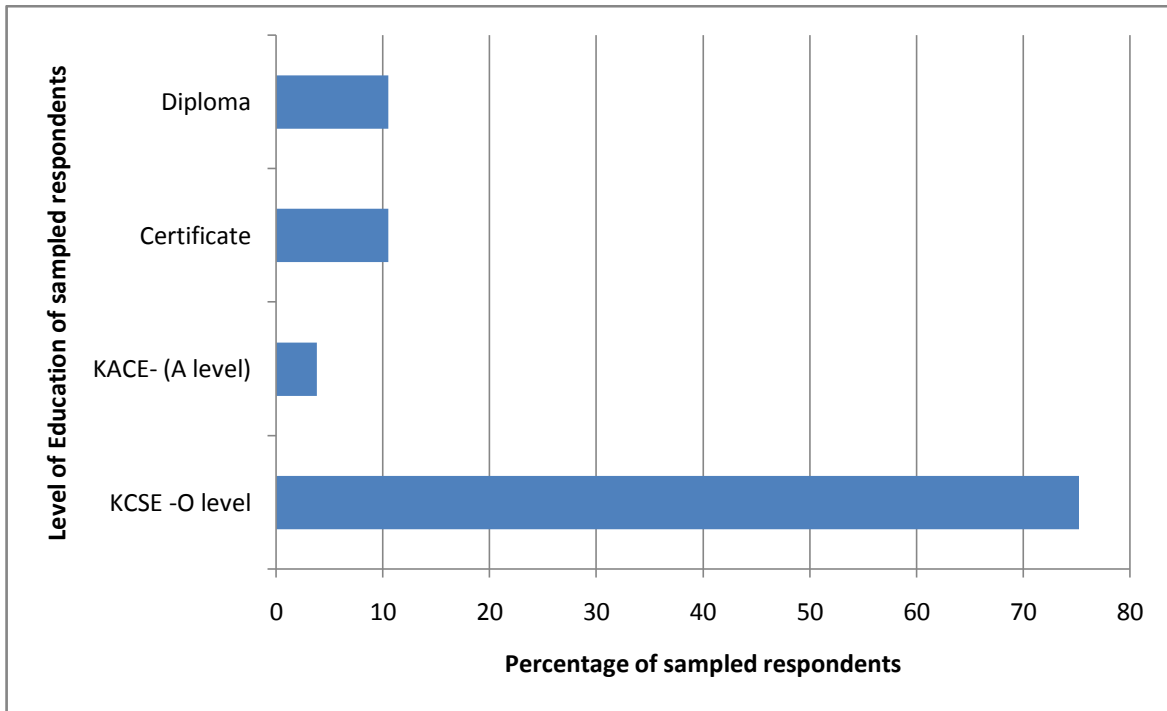




**Figure 3: Distribution of Respondents by Age**

Research finding on age of police constables presented in Figure 3 shows that majority (44.7%) of respondents lie between ages 26-36 years old, 36.2% were below 25 years old while 13.3% were between ages 36 and 45 and 4.8% were between 46-55 years old. The mean age of respondents was 29.9 years (SD = 7.463). This implied that most of the police constables were in their middle age. This also indicates that age was an important variable in terms of gaining entry into the police service as constable. Guideline on recruitment of police constables (2012) explained that between 18 to 30 years was minimum age required for one to join police service.

The study further sought to find out the distribution of respondents in terms of level of education. The respondents were asked to tick the appropriate level of education. The research findings on level of education of the police constables are presented in Figure 4.



**Figure 4: Distribution of Respondent by Level of Education**

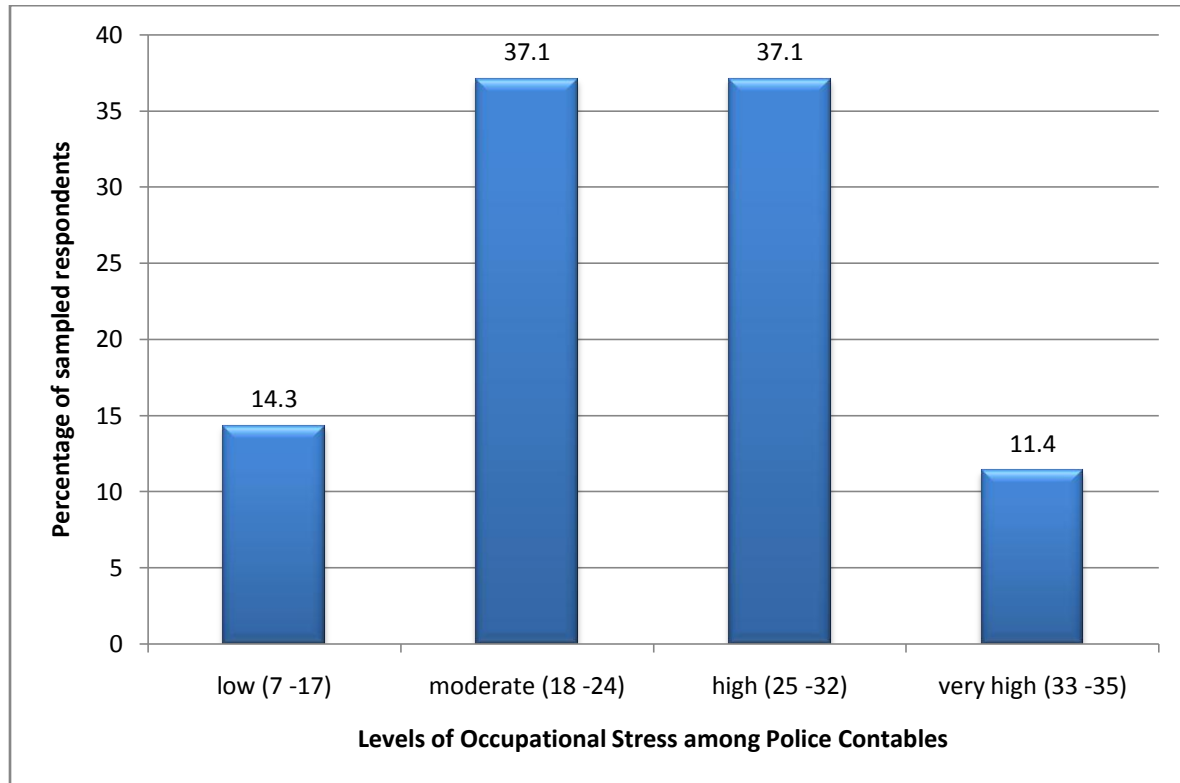
The research findings pertaining to academic qualification presented in Figure 4. shows that majority (75.2%) of respondents indicated that they had KCSE (O level) level of education, while 10.5% had obtained Certificate, 10.5% were diploma holders and 3.8% possessed KACE- (A Level) level of education. This implied that most of the police constables had KCSE (O level) level of education. It is most likely that people who are highly educated do not opt to be employed as police constables in Kenya.

#### **4.3.Causes of Occupational Stress in Relation to Level of Occupational Stress among Police Constables in Kisumu County**

The first objective of this study was to identify causes of occupational stress in relation to the level of occupational stress among police constables. The data was first computed by adding the scores of 25 items on causes of occupational stress to determine the level of occupational stress. Every level had different scoring criterion that was used to produce a range of total scores. The total score ranged from 7 and 35. Using the total score, the levels of occupational stress were classified into four levels as shown below:

- From score 33 - 35 indicated Very High level of occupational stress,
- From 25 -32 was High level of occupational stress,
- From 18 - 24 represented moderate of level of occupational stress
- From 7-17 indicated low level of occupational stress

These levels of occupational stress were as shown in Figure 5.



**Figure 5: Level of Occupational Stress among Police Constables**

The findings revealed that majority (37.1%) of respondents were experiencing moderate to high level of occupational stress. Up to 14.3% of respondent were experiencing low level of occupational stress, while 11.4% of the respondents were experiencing very high level of occupational stress. A Previous study conducted by Deb, Chattererjee, Srivatava (2005) among the West Bengal Police Officers reported 42% and 12% of the West Bengal Police Officers were suffering from moderate to high level of stress respectively. The findings were much higher for moderate and lower for high level of occupational stress. This was also in tandem with a study conducted by Deb, Chakraborty, Srivastava(2008) among West Bengal police

officers. Their findings indicated that 79.4% of the traffic constables were experiencing moderate level of occupational stress and 2.9% high level of occupational stress.

This was an indication that the police constables were experiencing high to moderate level of stress. The reasons attributed to this finding were that police working conditions were associated with shifts without breaks, having poor interpersonal relationship, following strict bureaucracy and excessive work overload among others. Their nature of work remains unchanged as a result, they may experience moderate to high level of stress (Anitha, 2007). The findings also showed that some police constables were experiencing moderate level of occupational stress.

Secondly, the study determined the causes of occupational stress among police constables. The Police Stress Inventory (PSI) was used to measure the occupational stress among the respondents. The questionnaire consists of 25 items on causes of occupational stress. The subscale of the measure included; work environment, workload, bureaucracy, work schedule and interpersonal relationship.

To facilitate the analysis, the instrument used to analyze data was measured on 5 point Likert scale using Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). However, in this study the responses for Strongly Agree (SA) were combined with those for Agree (A) to get Agree. Responses for Disagree (D) were combined with those for Strongly Disagree (SD) to get disagree (D) to facilitate data analysis. The police constables were asked to rate their responses in terms of agreement or disagreement of the stressors they experienced in the sub scale. Findings for each of the subcategories were presented in percentages.

#### **4.3.1. Work Environment**

The study sought to identify specific stressors associated with work environment that caused occupational stress among police constables. Respondents were asked to rate in terms of agreed, not sure and disagreed. The results are presented in Tables 7. Respondents were asked to rate in terms of agreed, not sure and disagreed, the stress they experienced at work environment.

**Table 7: Police Responses on Work Environment Stressors**

<b>Stressor</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Inadequate Equipment	95.3%	1.0%	3.7%	100 %
Traumatic Incidents	92.4%	1.0%	6.6%	100 %
Physical Danger	98.0%	1.0%	1.0%	100 %
Lack of Training	54.5%	10.9%	34.6%	100 %
Dealing With Court Systems	78.1%	6.7%	15.2%	100 %
Imagination of Killing	72.3%	4.8%	22.9%	100 %

The research findings on lack of equipment and facilities as a cause of occupational stress among police constables are presented in Table 7. The result shows that majority (95.3%) of respondents agreed that inadequate equipment and facilities were the causes of occupational stress, while 3.7 % disagreed and 1% were undecided. An interview with officers commanding stations revealed that police service lacked adequate equipment, tools and kits to efficiently work leading to stress among the officers.

This implies that police constables are experiencing occupational stress as result of lack of equipment and facilities. Report of National Task Force on Police Reform (2009) reviewed the state of preparedness of the Kenya police to effectively combat crime and emerging security challenges. The Report of National Task Force on Police Reform (2009) concluded that the police were ill prepared due to both lack of adequately trained human personnel and lack of suitable equipment. Their ineffectiveness was inhibited by lack of transportation means for undertaking policing work, lack adequate protective clothing, hand gloves, the necessary tape for sealing crime scenes amongst others. Other types of equipment essential to effective police performance were also found to be out-dated. This included computers, communication systems and evidence-gathering tools such as photographic equipment, operational aircraft and maritime equipment.

The study further established that police involvements in traumatic incidents was a cause of occupational stress among police constables indicated that: Majority (92.4 %) of respondents

agreed while 6.6% disagreed and 1% were undecided. In the interview, officers commanding stations agreed that police constables are frequently exposed to traumatic incidents such as horrible accident scenes, murder scenes, exposed to post mortem and cases of shooting. The results concur with the findings by Wendy, (2008) which revealed that police officers were exposed to traumatic incidents including encounters with corpse (84.8%), violence (84.8%), dragging of a corpse (74.2%), taking a life in the line of duty (75.8%), participation in raid involving armed and dangerous gangsters (85%), conflagration scene (death or injured) (85%), responding to a scene involving the accidental injury (80), responding to social depressing situation (75%). Similarly, in another study on exposure to traumatic incidents by Buchanan and Stevens (2001) the findings indicated that 88.7% of police officers reported experiencing one or more job-related traumatic events during their careers, with most officers reporting multiple exposures. The most frequent events reported were assaults (60.5 %), motor vehicle accidents (40.1 %), and witnessing a tragic death (31 %).

This implied that exposure to traumatic incidents was likely to cause occupational stress. The police constables show signs of PTSD. Individuals met diagnostic criteria for PTSD when exposed to traumatic incidents ranging between 33% and 50 %. A traumatic experience was part of the diagnosis of PTSD (APA, 1994). Symptoms of PTSD include the inability to repress memories of traumatic events, constant thoughts about the events, and inability to concentrate, sleeping troubles, avoidance of similar situations, and freezing up in similar situations (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

It was also established from the study that exposure to unnecessary physical dangers was a cause of occupational stress. The results show that majority of the respondent (98%) while 1% disagreed and 1% was undecided. Officers Commanding Stations (90%) revealed that police constables are exposed to dangers such as dealing with criminals, organized criminals group and gangs, cattle rustling, proliferation of small arms and light weapons especially from war torn countries. In addition, they are also involved in quelling intertribal and clan clashes manifested in retaliatory attacks by armed militias. The study was consistent with other research studies. Regan (2008) found that 73.8% of the police officers were exposed to unnecessary danger.

The research findings on training of police constables as a cause of occupational stress among police constables are presented on Table 7. The results shows that 54.5% respondents agreed that lack of training was a cause of occupational stress while 34.6% disagreed and 10.9% were not sure. It was possible that police constable had obtained necessary training from the police training colleges that was required to perform their tasks. All officers commanding station (100%) revealed that police constables undergo mandatory training. The training entails religiously adhering to orders; follow procedure, to adhere to the rank and hierarchical structure of their organization. It was likely that police constables training focused on the technical, tactical, and physical aspects of performance and largely neglects the role of psychological factors such as stress. It is most probably that police training put emphasis on the skills of firearms and training in lethal weapons. However, less emphasis is placed on how to deal with the dangers of stress accumulation and negative coping mechanisms.

The study also revealed court systems was a cause of occupational stress among police constables. The results show that majority (78.1%) of the respondents agreed, while 15.2% disagreed and 6.7% were undecided. All Officers commanding Stations (100%) revealed that police constables were critical in the criminal justice system that includes investigating, and presenting suspects to the court with supporting evidence for prosecution. The criminal justice system is faced with many challenges. One of the challenges has to do with aspects of the new constitution promulgated on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2010 and specifically on Article 49 subsection f (i) on the chapter on the Bill of Rights. This clause enumerates and guarantees the rights of an arrested person. Under the constitutional dispensation, a police officer is required to take a suspect to court within 24 hours of being arrested. Officers argue that 24 hours is insufficient to prepare and produce evidence for court prosecution. The implication of this is that, at times, suspects hurriedly charged to court can be set free by a lack of evidence.

The study established that killing or being killed in the line of duty among police constables was a cause of occupational stress among police constables. Majority (72.3%) of the respondents agreed, while 22.9 % disagreed and 4.3 % were undecided. All officers commanding stations (100%) revealed that police constables are occasionally killing or are killed in line of duty. The

findings of this study was consistent with the study carried out by Bruce (2002) who reported that between 1991 and 2001, 2455 police officers were reported killed of whom 918 were killed on duty and 1537 were killed off duty. Mutiga (2012) reports that in Kenya, 106 police officers had been killed within three months and policemen are killed every week. Legget (2003) argues that stressors such as a fellow officer being killed in the line of duty, or police officers killing someone in the line of duty tend to happen infrequently and they happen to a relatively small percentage.

### 4.3.2. Work Load

The study sought to identify specific stressors associated with work load causing occupational stress among police constables. Respondents were asked to rate in terms of agreed, Undecided and disagreed. The results were presented in Percentages. The research findings on workload among police constables are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: Exposure to Workload**

<b>Stressors</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Work Frequent Changes	86.6%	4.8 %	8.6%	100 %
Going to Court	79.0%	6.7%	14.3%	100 %
Too Much Work	82.8%	4.8 %	11.4%	100 %
Doing Someone Else's Work	92.3%	1.0 %	6.7%	100 %
Excessive Paper Work	69.5%	8.6 %	21.9%	100 %

The results show that a majority of (92.3%) the respondents agree that their workload includes doing someone else's work while 6.7% disagreed and 1% was undecided. The results show that a majority (86.6%) of the respondents agreed that their work frequently changes from boring to demanding as a cause of occupational stress, while 8.6% disagreed and 4.8 % were undecided. The study established that (82.8 %) of the respondents agreed that too much work among the police constables was a cause of occupational stress while 11.4% disagreed and 4.8% were undecided. On the other hand (79%) of the respondents agreed that going to court and working after working hours among police constables was a cause of occupational stress , while 14.4%



disagreed and 6.7% were undecided. Another (69.5%) of the respondents agreed that having excessive paper work among police constables was a cause of occupational stress while 21.9% disagreed and 8.6% were undecided.

This implied that there is a relationship between work load stressors and level of occupational stress. Officers Commanding Stations (90%) revealed that police constable workload is high. Most of the Police constables testify in court case which disrupts their normal schedules. This involves documentation. This result is consistent with the studies done by Sundaram and Kumaran (2012) on occupational stress and coping stress among police constable. The same result was reported in a study done by Rothmann and Pienaar (2003) among South African police service. This implied that workload stressors were the causes of occupational stress among police constables.

The high scores found in this study could be explained by the fact that police constables could be under pressure to volunteer to work for longer hours due to shortage of staff. These findings are confirmed and supported by Kenya Police Strategic plan (2003-2007) in a report which revealed that in Kenya the police force had a ratio of 1:1150 which compare poorly to the UN recommend standards of 1:450. D'Aarborn, Duignan, Duncan and Goodwill (2007) argued that understaffing leads to overload on officers hence they feel hurried, have too many task to do, and find them constantly working overtime. This situation persistently wears out and stresses officers.

#### **4.4.3. Police Bureaucracy**

The study sought to identify specific stressors associated with police bureaucracy causing occupational stress among police constables. Respondents were asked to rate in terms of agreed, not sure and disagreed the stressors they experienced. The results were presented in percentages. The research findings on bureaucracy among police constables are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9: Police Responses on Bureaucracy**

<b>Stressors</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Rigid, Inappropriate Rules and Policies	84.8%	9.5%	5.7%	100 %
Inconsistent Leadership Style(S)	89.5%	2.9%	7.6 %	100 %
Constant Changes In Policy and Legislation	86.7%	6.6%	6.7 %	100 %
Too Much Procedure to Be Followed	95.1%	1.0%	3.9%	100 %
Follow Chain of Command	94.3%	1.9%	3.8%	100 %

The study established that majority (95.1%) of the respondents agreed that following too much procedure for something to be done was a cause of occupational stress, while 3.9% disagreed and 1% was undecided. On the other hand (94.3 %) of the respondents agreed that following chain of command among police constables was a cause occupational stress while 3.9% disagreed, and 9.5% were undecided. Another (89.5%) of the respondents agreed that inconsistent leadership styles was a cause of occupational stress while 7.6% disagreed while 9% were undecided. On constant changes in policy and legislation among police constables as a cause of occupational stress among the study establish that 86.7% of the respondents agreed while 6.7% disagreed and 6.6% undecided. Onrigid, inappropriate rules and policies among police constables as a cause of occupational stress among police constables was presented on Table 8. The result indicated that 84.8% of the respondents agreed while 9.5 % were undecided and 5.7 % disagreed. Out of all the officers commanding stations (100%) reported that police work environment was characterized by rigid authority, impersonality and authoritarian command system. Police constables follow tightly controlled chain of command and they are subjected to strict discipline.

This was an indication that police constables were experiencing occupational stress as a result of following too much procedure, chain of command, constant changes in policy and legislation and inconsistent leadership styles. It was most likely that police constables were working in a large, hierarchical, bureaucratic organization where police constables have little control over their work which could be very stressful. Inconsistent leadership style often results in high

turnover, high absenteeism, and low morale among their subordinates. Heinecken and Van der Waag-Cowling (2009) explains that police officers were rigorously trained on the classic Weberian bureaucratic principles of discipline and respect for the chain of command. They were indoctrinated to be conformist, authoritarian and bureaucrats.

#### 4.4.4. Police Work Schedules

The study sought to identify specific stressors associated with police work schedule as a cause of occupational stress among police constables. Respondents were asked to rate in terms of agreed, undecided and disagreed, the stressors they experienced. The results were presented in Table 10.

**Table 10: Police Responses on Work Schedule**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Working on Shift	80.9%	2.9%	16.2%	100 %
Working Overtime	94.3%	1.0%	4.7%	100 %
Missing Meals and Sleep	72.4%	4.8%	22.8%	100 %
The Process of Quick Changes Over	61.9%	12.3%	25.8%	100 %

The research finding on the work schedule among the police constables presented in Table 10 shows that majority (94.3 %) of the respondents agreed that fatigue was caused by working overtime as a cause of occupational stress while 4.7% disagreed and 1% were Undecided. The study revealed that working on shift was a cause of occupational stress among police constables. It was established that that (80.9%) of the respondents agreed while 16.2% disagreed and 2.9% were undecided. On the other hand missing meals and sleep because of working on shift was a cause of occupational stress. The result indicates that (72.4%) of the respondents agreed that while 22.8% disagreed and 4.8 % were undecided. Another (61.9%) of the respondents agreed that the process of quick changes of shift was a cause of occupational stress among police constables while 25.8% disagreed and 12.3% were undecided.

Officers Commanding Stations (90%) revealed that occupational stress was caused by shift work routine and overtime that normally goes beyond twelve hours. Officers Commanding Station revealed that majority of the police constables miss social events, inability to plan and it makes the police constable have difficulty in maintaining close and meaningful relationships. It is notable that the findings of this study were similar to those of other studies. These results are supported by the results of a study undertaken by Sundaramand Kumaran (2012) on occupational stress among female police constables. The findings of this study differed from a study conducted by Rothmann and Pienaar (2003) among South African police service which showed that Shift-work had an average intensity with a low frequency.

This was an indication that the work schedule of the police constable could be a cause occupational stress among police constables. Stressors associated with fatigue caused by working overtime and working on shift was highest scored by the police constables. Possible explanation for this result could be the police constables work for a number of consecutive days while on shift before they could have their days off. The high score found in fatigue, missing meals and sleep could be possible symptoms of PTSD and depression. Mostert and Joubert (2005) explain that when there is heavy workload with inadequate resources, police officers will obviously experience fatigue. Another contributing factor could be that majority of the police constables were young and had few years of experience and were exposed to stressful work environment.

#### **4.4.5. Interpersonal Relationships**

The study sought to identify specific stressors associated with interpersonal relationship causing occupational stress among police constables. Respondents were asked to rate in terms of agreed, not sure and disagreed. The results are presented in Table 11.

**Table 11: Police Responses on Interpersonal Relationships**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Poor Relationships with Peers	55.2%	8.6%	36.2%	100 %
Conflicts with Peers	62.8%	10.5%	26.7%	100 %
Conforming with Peer Pressure	68.5%	7.8%	23.7%	100 %
Lack of Enough Time with Family	95.2%	1.9 %	2.9%	100 %
Lack of Support from Friends	69.5%	4.8%	25.7%	100 %

The research finding on the interpersonal relationship among police constables is shown in Table 11. The respondents were asked whether lack of enough quality time with family members was a cause of occupational stress among police constables. The results indicated that a majority (95.2%) of the respondents agreed while 2.9% were undecided and 1.9% disagreed. The study established that lack of support and understanding from family was a cause of occupational stress among police constables. The research established that (69.5%) agreed while 25.7% disagreed and 4.8% were undecided. The study revealed that conforming to pressure from peers was a cause of occupational stress among police constables. The findings showed that (68.5%) of the respondents agreed while 23.7 % disagreed and 7.8 % were undecided. All the officers commanding stations (100%) revealed that police constables had difficulties in balancing family role and work. Most of the Police constables do not stay with their families due to frequent transfers and lack of adequate housing facilities. Police constables do not generally complain about psychological issues nor discuss emotional reaction and feelings with superiors, colleagues and family members.

The findings of this study were consistent with the study conducted by Bano (2011) but the results differed from the findings of Lord (2005) and Stephen (2006) who found that police officers employed family support to cope with stress. Police officers rely more on family members due to confinement to confidentiality and non-disclosure clause that form part of police contracts. It was reported that social support plays a mediating role during stressful situations. According to Winefield and Winefield (2003), social support reduces the effects of

burnout by removing some of the predisposing conditions that lead to the development of burnout. It protects police officers from succumbing to full-blown burnout. Lord (2005) says that due to depersonalization, police officers tend to withdrawal from family members, friends and supervisors. The following hypothesis was stated to test for statistically significant relationship among variables.

**Hypothesis one: There is no Statistically Significant Relationship between Causes of Occupational Stress and Level of Occupational Stress among Police Constables in Kisumu County.**

The selected variables on causes of occupational stress were classified into five areas: work environment, workload, bureaucracy, work schedule and interpersonal relationship. A series of chi square tests were conducted to find out whether there was statistically significant relationship between selected variables on causes of occupational stress and level of occupational stress.

**Table 12: Relationship between Causes of Occupational Stress and Level of Stress**

Causes of Occupation Stress	Level of Occupation Stress	Critical Value
	$\chi^2$	$\chi^2$
<b>Work Environment</b>		
Inadequate Equipments	105.629	24.943
Traumatic Incidence	76.143	24.943
Exposure to Physical Danger	102.657	24.943
Lack of Training	41.333	24.943
Imagination of Killing	49.905	24.943
<b>Workload</b>		
Work Frequent Changes	58.314	24.943
Going to Court	88.667	24.943
Too Much Work	68.571	24.943
Doing Someone Else's Work	76.528	24.943
Excessive Paper Work	49.238	24.943
<b>Bureaucracy</b>		
Rigid, Inappropriate Rules	89.904	24.943
Inconsistent Leadership Style(S)	108.571	24.943
Constant Changes in Policy	97.048	24.943
Procedure to Be Followed	139.714	24.943
Chain Of Command	117.143	24.943
<b>Work Schedule</b>		
Working on Shift	88.095	24.943
Working Overtime	88.667	24.943
Work Disruption	55.524	24.943
Quick Changes Over	88.667	24.943
<b>Interpersonal Relationship</b>		
Poor Relationships with Peers	28.571	24.943
Conflicts with Peers	24.381	24.943
Conforming with Peer Pressure	45.333	24.943
Lack of Enough Time with Family	161.048	24.943
Lack of Support from Friends	73.616	24.943

Chi-Square tests yielded results shown in Table 12. The results revealed that the chi- square values for selected variables on causes of occupational stress were greater than the critical value

of 24.943 at three degrees of freedom tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The results on Table 12 revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between the work environment stressors and the levels of occupational stress. The results showed Chi-Square value for inadequate equipment ( $102.657 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ), exposure to physical danger ( $102.657 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ), traumatic incidents ( $76.143 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ).

The study further established that there was statistically significant relationship between exposure to workload stressors and levels of occupational stress. Chi-Square test yielded going to court ( $\chi^2 = 88.667 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ) and neglecting work ( $\chi^2 = 76.528 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ).

The study established that there was statistically significant relationship between exposure to bureaucracy stressors and levels of occupational stress. The results showed Chi-Square value for Procedure ( $\chi^2 = 139.714 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ), Chain of commands ( $\chi^2 = 117.143 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ), inappropriate rules ( $\chi^2 = 108.571 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ) and Inconsistent leadership style ( $\chi^2 = 97.048 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ).

The study further established that there was there was statistically significant relationship between exposure to work schedule stressors and levels of occupational stress. The results revealed Chi-Square value for working overtime ( $\chi^2 = 88.667 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ) and working on shift ( $\chi^2 = 88.095 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ).

It was also established from the study that there was a statistically significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and levels of occupational stress. The results showed Chi-Square value for lack of enough time with family ( $\chi^2 = 161.048 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ) and lack of support from friends ( $\chi^2 = 73.616 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ). The null hypotheses that state that there is no significant relationship between the selected variables on the level of occupational stress among police constables was therefore rejected for selected variables. Based on the results the null hypothesis was rejected and the conclusion made was that there was statistically significant relationship between selected causes and levels of occupational stress. This means that the presence of these causes led to increased levels of occupational stress among police constables



This implies that work environment, workload, bureaucracy and interpersonal relationship, caused high levels of occupational stress. Melgosa defined stress as a condition of being subject to external forces or pressure and can be either positive or negative (Melgosa, 2004). Police constables attributed cause of occupational stress to inadequate equipment, exposure to unnecessary physical dangers, doing someone else's work, following too many procedures, following chain of command, inconsistent leadership style and lack of support and understanding from family members. This trend was noted to be similar to those studies done by Agolla, (2009); Taylor and Bennell, (2006) who identified the sources of occupational stress for police officers. The first category arise from the nature of the occupation; shift work, role conflict, and constant threat to the officer's safety, alternating periods of boredom and excitement, the responsibility of protecting others, continued exposure to traumatic incidents, the need to keep composed even if provoked and the limited opportunities.

The second category stems from the police service itself. These include administrative actions, policies developed without input from officers, poor equipment, and lack of off duty, poor supervision and lack of support from administrators, lack of recognition, training, career opportunities and excessive paperwork. The third category stems from the criminal justice system and society. This includes Police officers lack of consideration when scheduling court appearance. Levine and Ursin (1991) supported this on their Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress (CATS). They stated that whether a stimulus is pleasant or threatening, it depends on the individual appraisal of the situation from the input level.

#### **4.5. Relationship between Demographic Characteristics and Level of Occupational Stress in Kisumu County**

The second objective of the research was to determine whether there was a relationship between demographic characteristics and occupational stress. Data was first analyzed using descriptive statistics to enable the researcher to describe and summarize the data. To facilitate the analysis, the instrument used to analyze data was measured on 5 point Likert scale with Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). However, in this study the responses of Strongly Agree (SA) were combined with Agree (A) to get Agree.

Responses of Disagree (D) were combined with responses of Strongly Disagree (SD) to get disagree (D) so as to facilitate data analysis. The mean was the preferred measure of central tendency used because it provided the average value of the data set. Standard deviation was considered because of the most stable measure of variability and illuminated the amount of spread in data. Chi-Square was used to test the relationships.

**Hypotheses Two: There is no Statistically Significant Relationship between Selected Demographic Characteristics and Level of Occupational Stress among Police Constables.**

The selected demographic variables were gender, age and level of education among police constables. A series of Chi-square tests were conducted to find out whether there was statistically significant relationship between selected variables on demographic variables and level of occupational stress.

**4.5. Relationship between Gender and Level of Occupational Stress**

The study sought to determine the relationship between the gender and level of occupational stress. The results are presented in Table 13.

**Table 13: Gender of Police Constables**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Male	94	24.35
Female	11	22.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	

The results on Table 13 show the difference between the gender of the police constable and level of occupational stress. Majority (M=24.35) of the respondents were male compared to the female (M= 22.45). This implies gender was a factor in influencing the level of occupational stress. However the percentage of the male experiencing occupational stress was on the increase.

**Table 14: Gender and Level of Occupational Stress**

Level of Occupational Stress Observed	N	%	Expected N	Residual
Low (25 -37.5)	15	14.3	26.3	-11.3
Moderate (38 -62.5)	39	37.1	26.3	12.8
High (63 -87.5)	39	37.1	26.3	12.8
Very high (88 -125)	12	11.5	26.3	-14.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>		

The results presented in Tables 14 show that a majority (37.1%) of the respondents were experiencing high and moderate levels of occupational stress compared to 14.3% who experience low levels of occupation stress and 11.5% very high level of occupational stress. This implies that males were experiencing high to moderate level of occupational stress. Further Chi-Square test was done to determine the relationship between gender and the level of occupational stress. The result was presented in Table 15.

**Table 15: Relationship between Gender and Level of Occupational Stress**

Test Statistics	Gender	Level of Occupational Stress
Chi- Square	65.610	24.943
df	3	3
Sig	.000	.000

$$\chi^2 = 65.610 (p < 0.05)$$

The results in Table 15 showed that there was a relationship which was found between the two variables. The results showed Chi- Square value ( $\chi^2 = 65.610$ ) was greater than critical value of 24.943 at 3 degrees of freedom tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance ( $65.610 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ). Therefore, the study rejected the null hypothesis which means that there was no relationship between gender of the police constable and level of occupational stress was rejected. This indicated that there was significant relationship between gender of the police constable and level of occupational stress. The results concurred with findings of the research conducted by Louw (2007). His findings revealed that there is a positive relationship between the gender and levels

of stress ( $\chi^2 = 1.843$ ,  $df = 5$   $p = 0.066 > 0.05$ ). The female police officers were experiencing more stress compared to the male police officers. This could be attributed to the fact that, police work environment was an exceeding masculinized organization where male police are expected to be tough and to suppress their emotions especially fear, vulnerability, and injury.

#### 4.5.1. Relationship between Age and Levels of Occupational Stress

The study sought to determine the relationship between the age of police constables and the level of occupational stress with respect to the age. The results are presented in Table 16.

**Table 16: Age of Police Constables**

Age group	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
below 25	38	26.3	11.8
26- 35	48	26.3	21.8
36-45	14	26.3	-12.3
46-55	5	26.3	-21.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>		

The result on Table 16 presents the age groups of police constables. The results indicated that majority (48) of the respondents were age group (26-35) years old while (38) were below 25 year old and 14 were between (36-45) years old. This implies that the police constables were young and were in their middle age.

**Table 17: Age and Level of Occupational Stress**

Level	Observed N	%	Expected N	Residual
Low (25 -37.5)	15	14.3%	26.3	-11.3
Moderate (38 -62.5)	39	37.1%	26.3	12.8
High (63 -87.5)	39	37.1%	26.3	12.8
Very high (88 -125)	12	11.5%	26.3	-14.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>		

The results presented in Tables 17 show that majority (37.1%) of the respondents were experiencing high and moderate levels of occupational stress compared to 14.3% of respondents who were experiencing low levels of occupational stress. This implies that Police constables were experiencing high and moderate level of occupational stress.

**Table 18: Relationship between Age and Level of Occupational Stress**

Test Statistics	Age	Level of occupational stress
Chi- Square	46.200	24.943
<i>df</i>	3	3
Sig	.000	.000

$\chi^2 = 46.200$ ;  $\chi^2 = 24.943$  , Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

The results on Table 18 showed that Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2 = 46.200$ ) was greater than critical value of 24.943 at 3 degrees of freedom tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance ( $46.200 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ). leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses that there is no statistically significant relationship between age of the police constable and level of occupational stress and conclusion made that there was a statistically significant relationship between age of the police constable and level of occupational stress. Stress is appraised differently by differently by different individual based on their background. Young police constables may experience high level of occupational stress when dealing with unsatisfactory work environment and excessive workload in their work assignment. Whereas the older police constables may find such work normal and routine and they may have adapted coping mechanism for coping with stress. Violanti, (2005); Kirkcaldy, Brown and Cooper (1998) explained that older police officers experience more stress as result of impending redundancy, early retirement, absences of any potential career advancement, opportunities of personal development, other responsibilities in society and family.

#### **4.5.2. Relationship between the Level of Education and Level of Occupational Stress**

The study sought to investigate the relationship between the level of education and the level of occupational stress among police constables. The results were expected to negate or confirm that the level of education indeed led to increased level of occupational stress among police

constables. A cross tabulation of findings indicating the relationship between level of education and level of occupational stress is shown in Table 19.

**Table 19: Level of Education and Level of Occupational Stress**

<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Low (25-37.5)</b>	<b>Moderate (38-62.5)</b>	<b>High (63-87.5)</b>	<b>Very high (88-125)</b>	<b>Total</b>
KCSE -O level	24.05	13	28	28	10	79
KACE- (A level)	31.50	0	0	3	1	4
Certificate	24.36	2	6	2	1	11
Diploma	22.18		5	6	0	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>105</b>

The result on Table 19 presents the differences between level of education and level of occupational stress. The results indicated that mean value of 31.50 was high for respondents who had KACE (A Level) level of education. They were experiencing high level of occupational stress (63-87.5) and very high level of occupational stress (88-125) compared to those respondents who had obtained certificate (M = 24.36) who were experiencing low level of occupational stress (25-37.5) and moderate level of occupational stress (38-62.5). KCSE (O-Level) holders (M = 24.05) were experiencing moderate level of occupational stress (38-62.5) and high level of occupational stress (63-87.5).

The findings imply that police constables who had KACE (A level) were highly stressed. This could be attributed to the fact that they might have served the police service for long and they have not been promoted to the next rank. This could be as result of limited career advancements, lack of alternative employment opportunities and a closed occupational system that prohibits lateral movement for upward mobility. Police constables possessing diplomas were experiencing moderate to high levels of occupational stress. Majority of police constables in this study were holders of KCSE or O-level of education. They were experiencing moderate to high level of occupational stress. It was most likely that completion of four years of secondary school was a precondition for joining the police service. It is possible that police

constables feel inadequate as their grades at entry level are so low that they cannot be considered for promotion despite hard work. Chi-Square was used to test whether or not there is a relationship between level of education and level of occupational stress. The result is presented in Table 20.

**Table 20: Relationship between Level of Education and Level of Occupational Stress**

Test Statistics	Level of Education	Level of Occupational Stress
Chi- Square	142.581	24.943
df	3	3
Sig	.000	.000

**$\chi^2 = 142.581$ , Significance at .05**

Results on Table 20 showed that the Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2 = 142.581$ ) was greater than critical value of 24.943 at 3 degrees of freedom tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance ( $142.581 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ) leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between levels of education and level of occupational stress. Therefore, police constables with high level of education were experiencing high levels of occupational stress. Based on the above Chi-Square test, the null hypothesis was rejected and a conclusion made that there was a statistically significant relationship between the level of education and level of occupational stress.

The results differ from those reported in a study carried out by Louw (2007) on dynamic individual vigour and burnout in the police service. He concluded that all officers experience more or less the same stress level irrespective of their educational qualification. The paramilitary model of the organization is also the source of stress for highly educated officers. One possible explanation for this finding could be the recent trend in police service that requires new officers' entry to police service with Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) with minimum mean grade of C plain. In conclusion, based on the above tests on age, gender and level of education, the null hypothesis was rejected and a conclusion made that there was a

statistically significant relationship between selected demographic variables and level of occupational stress.

#### **4.6. Effects of Occupational Stress on Police Constables in Kisumu County**

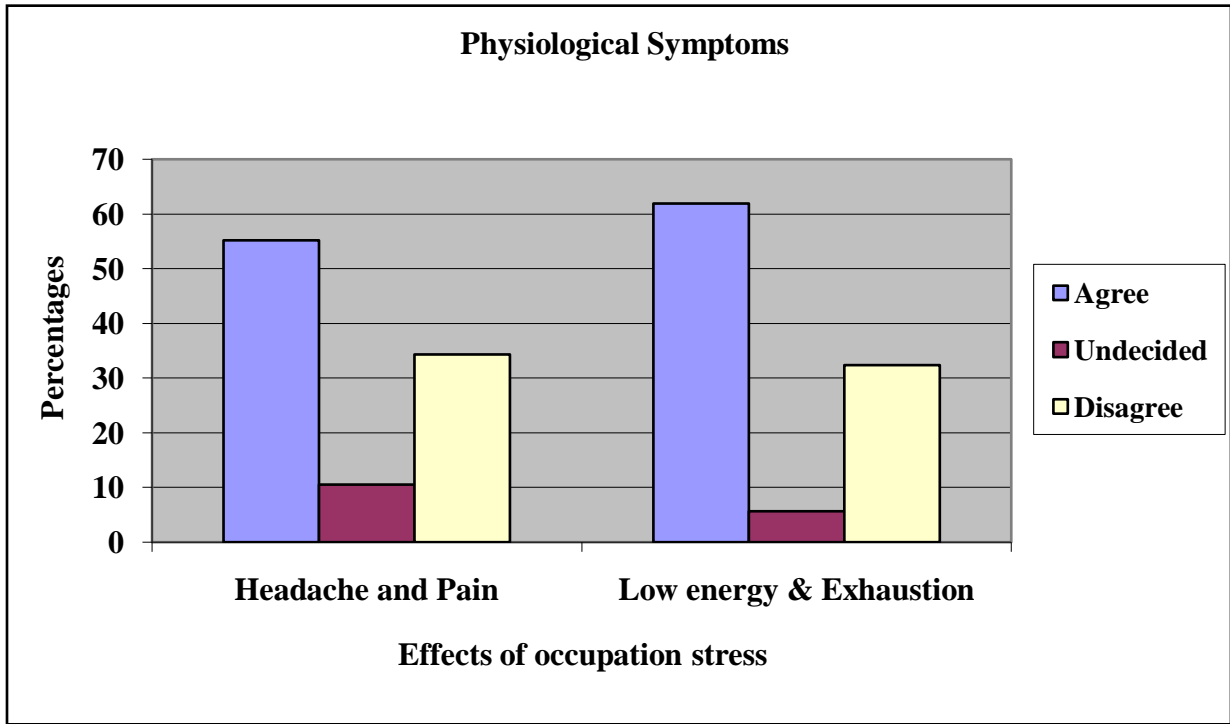
The third objective of the research was to determine the effects of occupational stress and level of occupational stress on police constables in Kisumu County. Items in the questionnaires sought to establish the effects of occupational stress on police constables. There was need to investigate this dimension since the effects of occupational stress is vital component in maintaining the overall well-being, morale and performance of police officers. Data was first analyzed using descriptive statistics to enable the researcher to describe and summarize the data.

To facilitate the analysis, the instrument used to analyze data was measured on 5 point Likert scale with Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). However, in this study the responses of Strongly Agree (SA) were combined with Agree (A) to get Agree. Responses of Disagree (D) were combined with responses of Strongly Disagree (SD) to get disagree (D) for ease of data analysis. Pearson's Product Moment Co-efficient Correlation and Chi- square were also used to test the relationships. The effects of occupational stress were classified into physiological effects and psychological effects of stress.

##### **4.6.1. Physiological Effects of Occupational Stress**

The responses of police constables on effects of occupational stress specifically on levels of occupational stress and physiological effects were as shown in Figure 6 and 7.

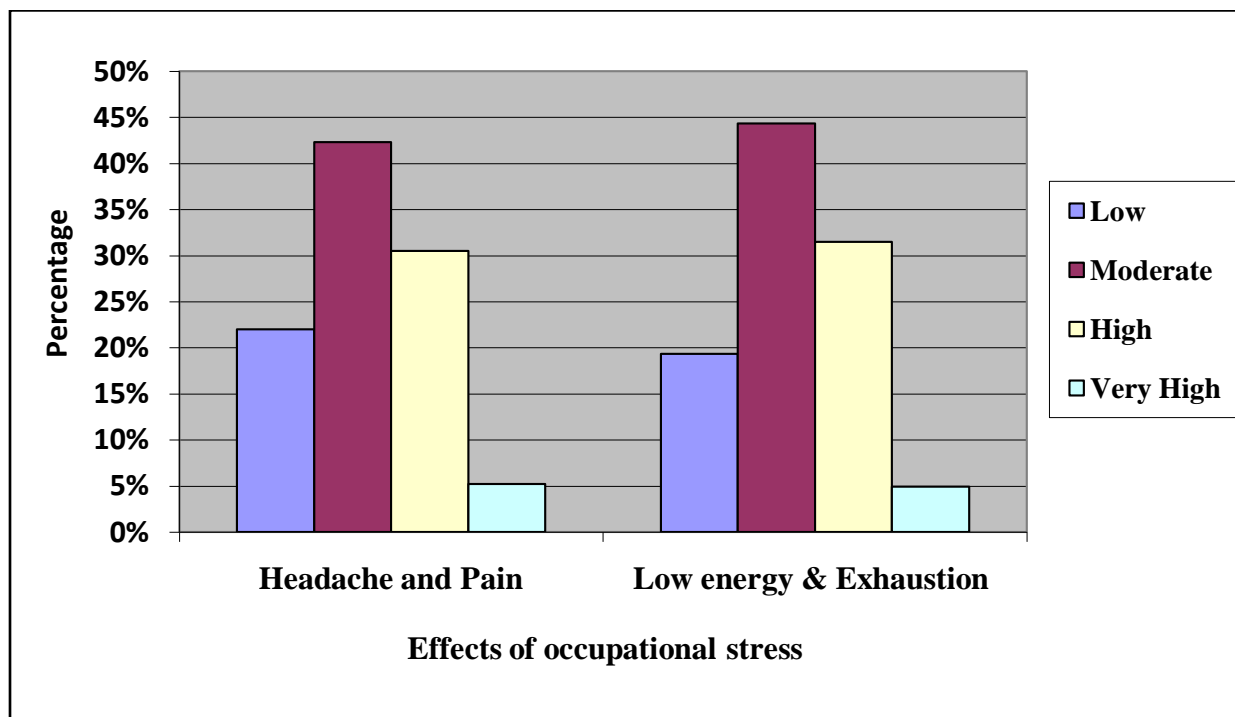




**Figure 6: Respondents Experiencing Physiological Effects**

The results on Figure 6 shows respondents were experiencing physiological effects of occupational stress. Majority (67%) of the respondents agreed that they feel low in energy, exhausted and tired though they had plenty of sleep while feeling tense, having pain in the neck or shoulder and suffering from migraine headaches or having difficulty in breathing (55.2%) was also another physiological symptom of stress that feature among the police constable.

## Relationship between Physiological Effects and Level of Occupational Stress

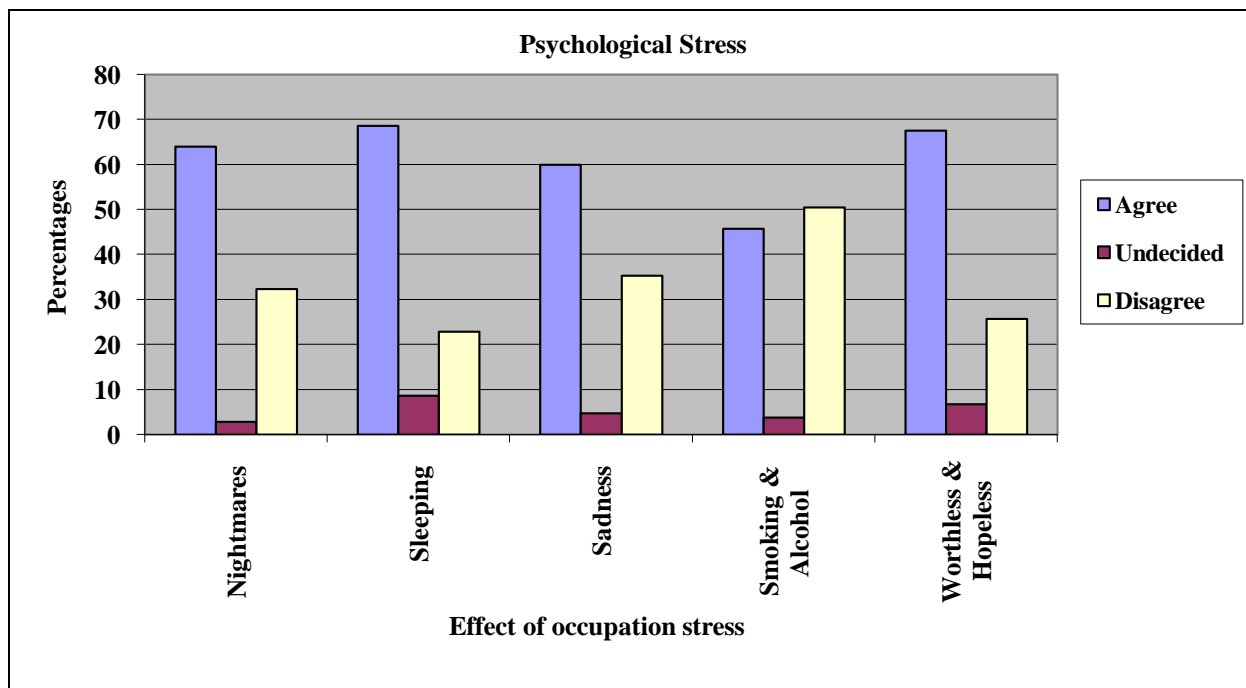


**Figure 7: Respondents Reporting Different Level of Physiological Effects**

Results on Figure 7 shows respondents were experiencing moderate to high level of occupational stress. Majority (44.3%) of the respondents were being either moderately stressed or highly stressed (31.5%). Further, Chi-square test was done to determine the relationship between and level of occupational stress and physiological effects of occupational stress. The results showed that the observed Chi-square value ( $\chi^2 = 285$ ) was greater than critical value of 24.943 at 3 degrees of freedom tested at 0.05 level of significance ( $285 > 24.943, df = 3$ ). This implied that there was relationship between physiological effects and level of occupational stress.

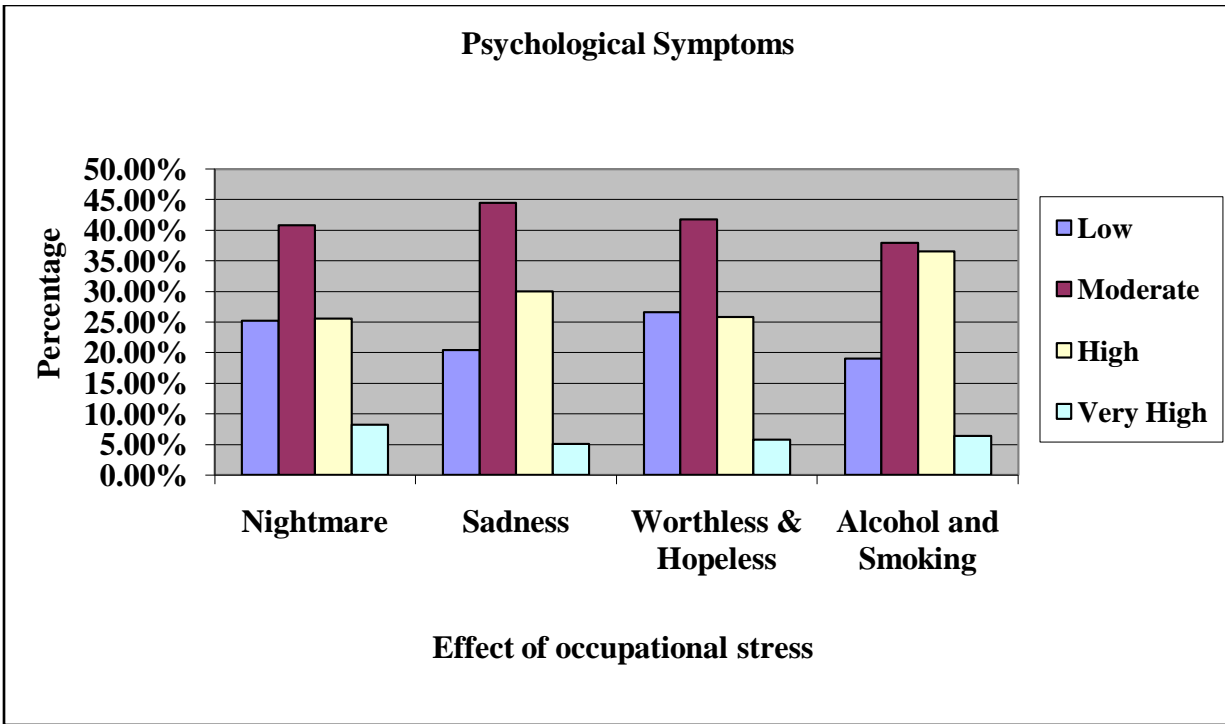
### 4.6.2. Psychological Effects of Occupational Stress

The responses of police constables on effects of occupational stress specifically on psychological effects and the level of occupational stress were as shown in Figure 8 and 9.



**Figure 8: Respondents Experiencing Psychological Effects**

The results on figure 8 show that the respondents were experiencing psychological effect of occupational stress. The results shows that having trouble in getting to sleep at night (68.6%) appeared to be the most significant psychological stress among police constables while feeling worthlessness and hopelessness (67.6%) was also another psychological symptom of stress that feature among the police constable.



**Figure 9: Respondents Experiencing Different Levels of Psychological Effects**

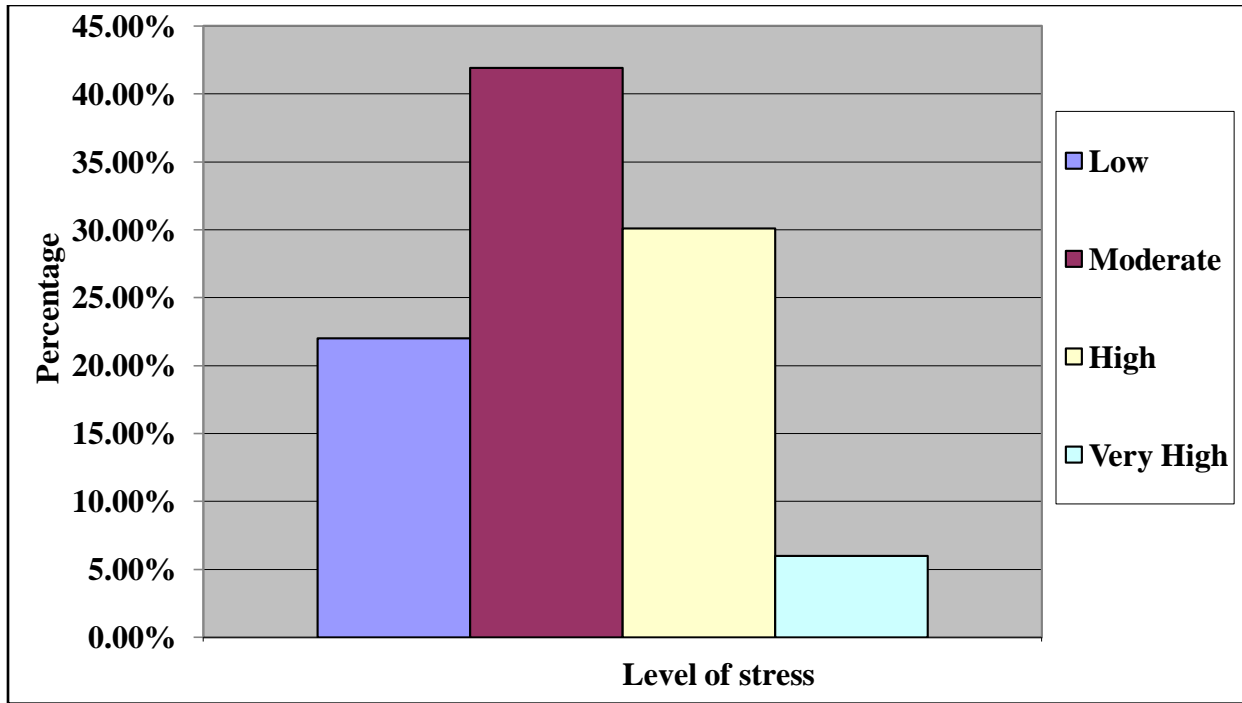
Results on Figure 9 shows respondents were experiencing moderate to high level of occupational stress. Majority of the respondents agreed that they were experiencing moderate of level of occupational stress. Majority (44.4%) of the respondents reported that they were moderately stressed. The higher proportion (36.6%) of respondents reported being highly stressed. Further, Chi-Square test was done to determine relationship between level of occupational stress and psychological effects of occupational stress. The result showed that the observed Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2 = 282$ ) was greater than critical value 24.943 at 3 degrees of freedom tested at alpha 0.05 level of significance ( $282 > 24.943$ ,  $df = 3$ ).

All Officers Commanding Stations (100%), revealed that most of police constables complain of having headache, feel depressed, have trouble getting to sleep, breakdown of relationship at work and at home, resulting in absenteeism from work. Some of them are involved in aggression behaviour towards their fellow colleagues some of them engage in smoking, drug taking, and alcohol consumption. Most police constables rarely seek treatment or counseling

services. The above symptoms indicate clearly that police constables are experiencing high stressful work environment which require urgent response and counter measures. The finding of this study was consistent with other studies of Malach-Pine (2007); Water and Ussery (2007); Agolla (2009). According to Willis (2005), stress is linked to a wide range of illnesses that affect the physical, behavioural and emotional states of an individual. In line with this, police constables listed several physical, behavioural and emotional ways in which stress affected them which included: feeling sad for no apparent reason, feeling low in energy and tired even though they had plenty sleep, having trouble in getting asleep at night, feeling tense, experiencing pain in the neck or shoulder and suffering from migraine headaches, having difficulty in breathing, feeling helplessness and hopelessness, having repetitive nightmare and drinking alcohol and smoking. Water and Ussery (2007) argued that police culture leads officers to believe that they have superhuman abilities and with no weakness when actually they are particularly vulnerable due to their need for constant vigilance.

**Hypothesis Three: There is no Statistically Significant Relationship between Level of Occupational Stress and Effects of Occupational Stress in Kisumu County.**

The study sought to determine the relationship between the effect of occupational stress and level of occupational stress. The physiological effects and psychological effects scores were computed to get overall effects of occupational stress score. The mean stress score was 66.6 (SD=7), indicating a moderate level of occupational stress. The result on level of occupational stress is shown in Figure 10.



**Figure 10: Percentage of Respondents Reporting Different Level of Stress**

The results on Figure 10 shows that majority (41.9%) of the respondent reported being moderately stressed while 30.1% reported being highly stressed and lowest proportion 6% reported being very highly stressed.

The relationship between physiological effects of occupational stress and psychological effects was examined using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The results on Pearson product moment correlation coefficient indicated that there was a medium, positive statistically significant correlation between the two variables ( $r = 0.40$ ,  $n = 104$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), with high levels of physiological effects moderately correlated with high levels of psychological effects. When level of occupational stress was correlated with effects of occupational stress, the results showed that there was a small, positive statistically significant correlation between the two variables,  $r = 0.02$ ,  $n = 104$ ,  $p = 0.00$  thus the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between level of occupational and effects of occupational stress was rejected. Therefore, there was relationship between level of occupational stress and effects of occupational stress. The study was consistent to studies done by Mkumbo, (2014). He found

positive statistically significant correlation between the level of occupational and job satisfaction ( $r = 0.02$ ,  $n = 104$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ). Similarly, Willis (2005) and Robbins & Judge (2007) observed that stress is linked to wide range of illnesses which affect the body signs and physical, emotions and feelings, behaviour and thoughts of police constables. The same sentiment is echoed by Mullins (2007) who reported that stress is brought about through work intensification and conflicts between family and work. Stress is related to disease and ill health.

#### 4.7. Coping Strategies for Occupational Stress

The fourth objective of the research was to determine the coping strategies for occupational stress and level of occupational stress among police constables in Kisumu County. The police constables were asked to rate their coping strategies using the five point Likert scale. The responses to each item were classified as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). However, in this study the responses of Strongly Agree (SA) were combined with Agree (A) to get Agree. Responses of Disagree (D) were combined with responses of Strongly Disagree (SD) to get disagree (D) to facilitate data analysis. The descriptive statistics derived were as shown in Table 21. Pearson’s Moment Coefficient Correlation was used to determine the relationship between coping strategies and level of occupational stress.

**Table 21: Mean and Standard Deviation of Coping Strategies among Police Constable**

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Making Plan of Action	1.88	1.05	.10
Coming up with Strategies	1.91	.99	.09
Turning to Religion	1.28	.67	.06
Getting Emotional Support	1.62	.66	.06
Similar Experience	1.65	.72	.07
Engaging on Activities	1.87	1.13	.11
Emotional Distress	1.89	.059	.10

Results on Table 21 show the means and standard deviations of coping strategies among police constables on the level of occupational stress. The results shows that turning to other activities such as reading, sleeping, going to movies or watching TV to take their minds off things ( $M=1.87$ ,  $S.D = 1.13$ ) and feeling a lot of emotional distress and expressing to let unpleasant feeling escape ( $M = 1.89$   $S.D = .059$ ) appeared to be the significant maladaptive coping strategies with average mean of  $M= 1.88$ ,  $S.D=.059$  while coming up with strategies ( $M = 1.91$ ,  $S.D = .99$ ) and making plan of action  $M = 1.8$   $S.D = 1.03$  was another problem focused strategies with average mean of  $M = 1.81$   $S.D = 0.92$  used by police constables. Asking people with similar experience for advice  $M = 1.65$ ,  $S.D = .72$  Turning to religion  $M = 1.28$   $S.D = .67$  was the least emotional focused strategies  $M = 1.62$ ,  $S.D = .65$  used by the police constables to cope with occupational stress. An interview with officers commanding station revealed that there was no intervention programs put in place in their stations. There were no trained counselors, psychiatrists and social workers to handle issues related to stress.

The difference between the mean score on the problem focused coping (mean) and dysfunctional coping (mean) was minimal. Therefore police constables are likely to equally engage in problem focused and dysfunctional coping strategies when levels of occupational stress are high. These findings show that significant proportion of police constables experience high level of occupational stress and employ variety of strategies. The study was consistent with studies done by Haar and Morash (2005) and (Pienaar & Rothmann, 2003). They reported that police officers cope with stress mainly by using approach coping which entails coming up with strategies to cope with stress or by concentrating efforts to solve the cause of strain, avoidance of problems by turning to alcohol or pretending that events did not occur, seeking emotional support from friends, family, health care workers, and finally turning to religion. However, this results differed from the study conducted by Govender (2008), who reported problem focused coping ( $M=2.76$ ), emotional focused coping ( $M=2.86$ ) and dysfunctional coping ( $M=1.86$ ). This was higher than the finding of this study.

The reason for this may be the fact that a majority (89.5%) of the respondents in the study were male and working in an environment that may not encourage the expression of emotions.



Govender (2008) argue that police training and socialization encourages the police officers to use problem focused strategies as means to cope with uncontrollable and unpredictable issues in the work place. Willis (2005) explains this when he stated that there are many ways of mitigating stress which differ with the kind of stress. The body hormones move to heightened level as the body adapts to crisis leading to resistance every time stress triggers the body. The body reacts to each stress situation differently and one mechanism might not be effective in the long run.

**Hypothesis 4: There is no Statistically Significant Relationship between Level of Occupational Stress and Coping Strategies among Police Constables in Kisumu County.**

The study sought to determine the relationship between the level of occupational stress and coping strategies. This hypothesis was tested by Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient. This hypothesis was tested by correlating the scores of levels of occupational stress and coping strategies. The results of this test are shown in Table 22.

**Table 22: Relationship between Level of Occupational Stress and Coping Strategies**

Variables	Coping strategies	Level of occupational stress	
Coping strategies	Pearson Correlation	1.000	0.508*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	105	105
Level of occupational Stress	Pearson Correlation	0.508*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	105	105

A Pearson Correlation computation yielded a coefficient  $r = 0.508$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , which meant that there was a positive relationship as shown in Table 22. The decision was to reject the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between coping strategies and level of occupational stress among police constables. This means an increase in level of occupational stress will lead to an increase in coping strategies and a decrease in level of level of stress will lead to decrease in coping strategies. According to Levine and Ursin, (1991), when the body is stressed, a non-specific alarm response is generated in the body which elicit a

general increase in wakefulness and brain arousal that searches and produces specific responses to deal with the reasons for the alarm. Different people develop different strategies to mitigate effects of stress. This stage is called the resistance phase and is characterized by ego defense and problem solving behaviours (Melgosa, 2004).

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1.Summary**

This chapter gives a summary of the research findings, the objectives that were attained, the implications that the study is likely to have on the discipline of counseling psychology, and the recommendations towards improvement of police service. Finally, the various gaps identified in the study that may require further investigation are indicated. The study was guided by the following objectives: To determine the level of occupational stress among police constables, identify causes of occupational stress among police constables, investigate relationship between demographic variables and the level of occupational stress, determine effects of occupational stress on police constables and establish the coping strategies used by police constables. The study was conducted among police constables in Kisumu County. Stratified random sampling design was used to obtain a desired sample size. The Kisumu County was stratified based on the police division and gender of the police constables. Statistical analysis was employed to draw inferences according to stated objectives.

#### **5.2.Summary of the Research Findings**

This section provides a summary of the research findings based on the stated objectives:-

- i) The level of occupational stress reported was high (mean) to moderate (mean) level of occupational stress among police constables in Kisumu County. Work environment, work load, bureaucracy, work schedule and interpersonal relationships were a major cause of occupational stress among police constables in Kisumu County. The police constables reported that they worked with inadequate equipment and exposed to physical danger. Along these line police constables had too much to do. They were doing some else work. The police constables had too much procedure and chain of command to be followed. The police constables were working on shifts. Majority of the police constables mentioned that they lacked enough quality time with their family.
- ii) There was a statistically significant relationship between level of occupational stress and age of the police constables.

- iii) The level of occupational stress significantly contributed to the effects of occupational stress among police constables. In line with these police constables listed several physiological and psychological effects of occupational stress.
- iv) The level of occupational stress significantly influenced the coping strategies used by the Police constables in Kisumu County. The police constables used maladaptive coping strategies to cope with stress.

### **5.3. Conclusions**

The following conclusions were made on the basis of the findings:-

- i) Police constables in Kisumu County experienced high to moderate level of occupational stress. The study concluded that work environment, work load, bureaucracy, work schedule and interpersonal relationship were the causes of occupational stress.
- ii) Demographic characteristics such as gender, age, and the level of education contributed to the level of occupational stress.
- iii) The study concluded that there was a relationship between the level of occupation stress and the effect of occupational stress.
- iv) The study concluded that there was a relationship between the level of stress and coping strategies used by police constables.

### **5.4. Recommendations**

Based on the research findings, the study makes the following recommendations.

- i) The findings of the study revealed that police constables were experiencing high to moderate level of occupational stress. In view of this finding it was recommended that all the police training institutions should review their programmes to ensure that they include mandatory basic training in guidance and counselling. The study established that work environment, work load, bureaucracy, interpersonal relationship was a cause of occupational stress. The study recommends that the government should mobilize resources to facilitate and support policing programs. The government should employ more police constables to reduce work load. The OCS should develop leave schedule for the entire officers under them.

- ii) The study established that gender, age and level of education of the police constables influenced level of occupational stress. The police service should review policy on promotion in order to ensure that promotion to the next level grade is timely.
- iii) The study established that outcomes associated with occupational stress adversely affect the police constables. The study recommends that Police Service should outsource services of professional counselors, psychologist, chaplaincy and psychiatrists in the police stations to address the issues related to police occupational stress.
- iv) The study revealed that police constables employed maladaptive coping strategies to cope with occupational stress. Police Service should entrench Critical Incident Stress Management and peer support programs in police preventive intervention programs.

### **5.5.Suggestions for Further Research**

Based on observations during the study, the researcher recommends further research in the following areas:

- i) This study be replicated with large representation of female police constables and be conducted in other counties.
- ii) Since maladaptive coping strategies seems to be the most commonly used coping strategy, further research should look into religious coping styles and occupational stress. Specifically, studies should look at the different forms of religious coping styles such as problem-focused and emotion-focused.
- iii) Further studies should investigate factors related to trauma, coping, and dispositional traits among police officers.
- iv) Police officers are given pre-service physical tests to determine their health status prior to employment, still there is evidence suggesting that the officers after joining the service develop stress disorders. There is need for future research in this area.

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## **APPENDIX A: INTRODUCTORY LETTER**

Dear Respondent,

I am a student at Kabarak University undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy in Education (Counseling Psychology). A part of the course, students are required to carry out research. The purpose of this study is to investigate Occupational Stress: Causes, Effects and Coping Strategies among police constables in Kisumu County. I would appreciate if you could take part in this research.

The information it provides will be of great value to me in completing my research. Your responses will be strictly private and confidential. Your name will not appear on the questionnaire so your participation will be completely anonymous. The questionnaire is divided into section A, B, C and D. It is important that you attempt all questions. The questionnaire should take around 15 minutes to complete.

I would like to thank you in advance for your support and cooperation in completing the questionnaire. Your help will be appreciated. If you have any queries regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me at the above mobile number.

Yours sincerely,

**Joyce Oweke**

**APPENDIX B: POLICE CONSTABLES QUESTIONNAIRE**

**SECTION A -Demographic Characteristics**

**Instructions:** Please read each question carefully and tick (√) the appropriate box.

1. What is your sex? a) Male   
b) Female

2. What age group do you fall into?

- i) Below 25   
ii) 26- 35   
iii) 36-45   
iv) 46-55   
v) 56-65

3. What is your level of education?

- i) KCSE (O LEVEL)   
ii) KACE (A LEVEL)   
iii) Certificate   
iv) Diploma   
v) Degree

vi) Others specify.....

4. In your opinion, do you think the position of police constable is a source of occupational stress?

Yes [ ] No [ ] b. If yes, state the major factors that contribute to stress among police constables .....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**SECTION B-Causes of Occupational Stress**

**Instructions:** The following tables contains Work Environment, Work Load, Bureaucracy, Work schedule and Interpersonal relations related issues that can cause occupational stress. Tick (✓) the appropriate cell based on the level of stress it causes to you. The choices are as follows: - SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agree, U- Undecided, D- Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree.

**a) Work environment**

Serial	Work environment	SA	A	U	D	SD
5	Inadequate equipment and facilities for my job					
6	I have received adequate training that I need to handle my work well					
7	Having to deal with court systems					
8	Work environments expose officers to physical danger					
9	Traumatic events at work have been a source of pressure (motor vehicle accidents, deaths and violence)					
10	A Fellow officer killed in the line of duty					

**b) Work Load Stressors.**

Serial	Work load	SA	A	U	D	SD
11	My work frequent changes from boring to demanding activities					
12	I have to work during days off; leaves (e.g., to go to court, do community work, etc.)					
13	I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do.					
14	I am required to do someone else's work because of shortage of staff					
15	I am assigned excessive paperwork to handle					

**c) Bureaucracy**

Serial	Bureaucracy	SA	A	U	D	SD
16	My organization has rigid, inappropriate rules and policies					
17	My organization has inconsistent leadership style					
18	I am informed of constant changes in policy and legislation					
19	I feel that there is too much procedure to be followed to get something done					
20	I am required to follow chain of command					

**d) Work Schedule Stressors**

Serial	Work Schedule	SA	A	U	D	SD
21	I am required to work on shift without breaks					
22	Working over-time makes me feel fatigued					
23	Working on shift disrupt my eating and sleeping pattern					
24	The process of quick changes over increases absenteeism					

**e) Interpersonal Relationships Stressors**

Serial	Interpersonal Relationship	SA	A	U	D	SD
21	I have positive relationships with my peer					
22	I find myself in conflicts with my peer that has escalated into anger, hostility and discrimination.					
23	Feelings of having to conform to pressure from peers					
24	I am concerned about not having enough quality time with family due to my work.					
25	I lack support and understanding from my family					

26 List other factors that can contribute to occupational stress and are not captured

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 .....

**Section C -Effects of Occupational Stress**

**Instructions:** The following are effects of occupational stress. .Please tick the answer that best describes what you have experiences the in the past 4 weeks.The choices are as follows: - SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agree, U- Undecided, D- Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree.

<b>Serial</b>	<b>Effects of occupational stress</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
27	I feeling sad for no apparent reason					
28	I feel low in energy, exhausted and tired even though I have plenty of sleep.					
29	I have trouble in getting to sleep at night because I worry about work					
30	I feel tense, experience pain in the neck or shoulder and suffer from migraine headaches or having difficulty in breathing					
31	I feel worthlessness and hopelessness					
32	I have repetitive nightmare of dangerous job related situation					
33	I drink alcohol or smoke cigarette to relax					

34. List other effects occupational stress and are not captured

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**Section D –Coping Strategies**

**Instructions:**The following are a list of coping strategies.Please tick the answer that best describes what you generally do and feel when you experience stressful events.The choices are as follows: - SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agree, U- Undecided, D- Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree.

Serial	Coping Strategies	SA	A	U	D	SD
35	I have made a plan of action and followed it					
36	have tried to come up with a strategy about what to do					
37	I have been seeking God’s help and finding comfort in religion					
38	I have been getting emotional support from relatives and friends					
39	I have been asking people with similar experiences for advice and help about what to do					
40	I have been turning to other activities such as reading, sleeping, going to movies or watching TV to take my mind off things.					
41	Feels a lot of emotional distress and I find myself expressing to let my unpleasant feeling escape.					

42. Suggest other stress reduction strategies that the police service should put in place to mitigate the effects of stress among police constables

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**APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR OFFICERS COMMANDING STATION**

- 1 Date of interview .....
- 2 Location of the interview  
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.....
- 3 How many police stations are there in the division?.....
- 4 How many police constables do have in the police division?.....
- 5 In your view, what are some of the challenges facing police constables in police division?  
.....
- 6. Do you think police constables in the experience stress at the work place? Yes [ ] No [ ].  
**If no, skip to Q 8**
- 7. If yes, what do you think are factors contributing to stress?  
.....  
.....
- 8. Briefly in explain in relation to stress how on the following areas contributes
  - a) Work environment.....
  - b) Workload.....  
.....  
.....
  - c) Bureaucracy.....  
.....  
.....
  - c) Work schedule.....  
.....  
.....
  - d) Interpersonal relationship.....  
.....  
.....

9. Based on your line of duty in your police division does the police constables stress factors affects his/her work? Yes [ ] No [ ].

**If no, skip to Q 11**

10. If yes, state briefly how.....

11. State some of the coping strategies used by the police constables to reduce stress.....

.....

12. State some of the tactics police constable uses?.....

.....

13. Has the police service designed any programmes and support services towards aiding police constables in reduction of stress at the work place? Yes [ ] No [ ]

**If no, skip to Q 15**

14. If yes, state. If no, why?.....

.....

15 Suggest three other ways that can help police constables in reducing stress

.....

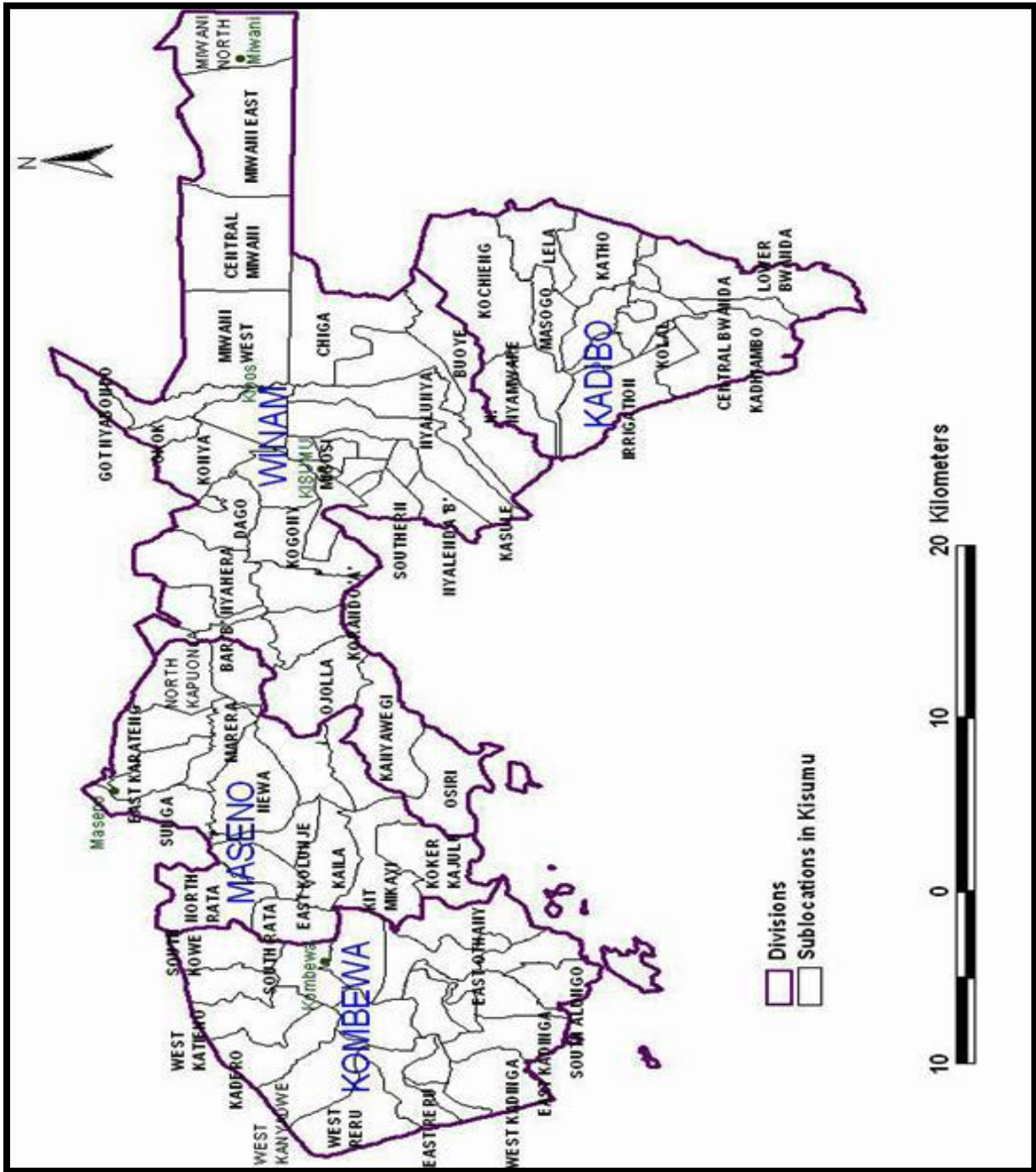
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# APPENDIX D: MAP FOR KISUMU COUNTY



## APPENDIX E: RESEARCH AUTHORISATION

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



### NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 22411349  
254-020-310571, 2213123, 2219420  
Fax: 254-020-318245, 318249  
when replying please quote  
[secretary@ncst.go.ke](mailto:secretary@ncst.go.ke)

P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA  
Website: [www.ncst.go.ke](http://www.ncst.go.ke)

Our Ref:

NCST/RCD/14/012/1375

Date:

5<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Joyce Atieno Oweke  
Kabarak University  
P.O.Box 3270-200100  
Nakuru.

#### RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Occupational Stress; causes, effects and coping strategies among police constables in Kisumu County, Kenya.*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kisumu County** for a period ending **31<sup>st</sup> January, 2013.**

You are advised to report to the **District Commissioners and the District Education Officers, Kisumu County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

  
DR M.K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.  
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

The District Commissioners  
The District Education Officers  
Kisumu County.

*"The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development".*

**APPENDIX F: RESEARCH PERMIT**

PAGE 2	PAGE 3
<b>THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:</b> Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution Joyce Atieno Gweke of (Address) Kabarak University P.O.Box 3270-200100, Nakuru. has been permitted to conduct research in	Research Permit No. <i>NCST/RCD/14/012/1375</i> Date of issue <i>1<sup>st</sup> October, 2012</i> Fee received <i>KSH. 2,000</i>
Location District County	
<i>Kisumu</i>	
on the topic: <i>Occupational stress; causes, effects and coping strategies among police constables in Kisumu County, Kenya.</i>	
for a period ending: <i>31<sup>st</sup> January, 2013.</i>	<i>[Signature]</i> Secretary National Council for Science & Technology