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**HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' STRESS IN RELATION
TO THEIR JOB EXPERIENCE IN SCHOOLS: A CASE OF
SOUTHERN NYANZA REGION-KENYA**

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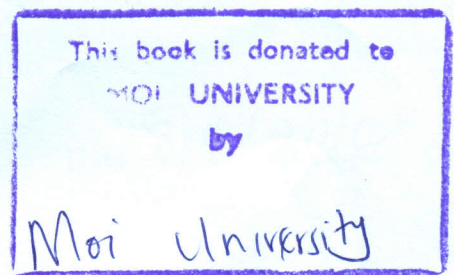
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the high school principals' stress in relation to their job experience in schools in Southern Nyanza Region of Kenya and to suggest possible remedies to assist them professionally to continue in their jobs. The objectives of this study were: to investigate the sources of stress among high school principals in relation to their job experience in schools in Southern Nyanza Region, Kenya; to assess the high school principals' stress patterns in relation to their job experience in schools in Southern Nyanza Region, Kenya; to determine the effects of stress on high school principals' in relation to their job experience in schools in Southern Nyanza Region, Kenya and to establish the extent to which the high school principals are stressed in relation to their job experience in schools in Southern Nyanza Region, Kenya. The following research hypothesis was generated to further conceptualize the aim of the study. H_{01} There is no statistically significant relationship between Sources of Stress and the High School Principals' job Experience in School. The research questions were: In which ways do the High School Principals' stress patterns relate to their job experience in school? What are the effects of stress on the High School Principals' in relation to their job experience in schools? To what extent are the High School Principals stressed in relation to their job experience in schools? The study was guided by Role Performance and Demand theory by Hebb (1972). It employed descriptive survey design. Target population was 254 high school principals from six districts in Southern Nyanza Region. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 77 principals and schools categorized as district, provincial public and private; mixed day/boarding and boarding girls/ boys. A pilot study of 21 principals and schools was conducted to establish the reliability of the instrument using a test re – test method while the face validity was established by giving the instrument to the experts in the department of educational management and policy studies of Moi University. Data was collected using both closed and open ended questionnaires with the principal's background information, a 29 – item instrument known as the *High School Principals' Stress Index (HSPSI)* together with an interview schedule. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, means, tables and graphs. A parametric statistical tool, Karl Pearson's Correlation of Coefficient was used to test the hypothesis which might not have been well handled by descriptive statistics for it solves problems which involves determining the relationship between two variables like the relationship between Role Based Stress and High School Principals' job Experience in Schools. The hypothesis testing procedure was based on $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance. Data was analyzed using (SPSS Version 18) computer programme. The findings of the study revealed that the sources of stress: Role Based, Task Based, Conflict Mediating and Boundary Spanning had a correlation and dependable relationship with High School Principals' job Experience in schools. Sixty three point six percent rated stress pattern to be very high, effects of stress made sixty seven point four percent High school principals to quit principal- ship while forty nine point four percent expressed various stress related health problems and percent had very stressful extent of stress. This study recommends that High School Principals be helped by Principals or Employee Stress Assistance Program (PSAP/ESAP). It is the researchers hope that this study will benefit both novice and experienced principals to cope and continue in service in this region and beyond.