

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND JOB - BURNOUT AMONG STUDENT AFFAIRS PERSONNEL IN KENYAN UNIVERSITIES

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### Abstract

Job burnout is a state of mental, physical and emotional exhaustion resulting in job dissatisfaction, lowered productivity, absenteeism and high turnover at the workplace. Student Affairs Personnel (SAPs) in universities are required to spend considerable and intense time with students facing psychological, social and physical problems. Given that they work continuously in such situations, they are bound to be drained emotionally, mentally and physically. This study examined gender differences as a factor in the experience of workplace-burnout among personnel working in the Student Affairs Departments in public and private universities in Kenya. In this study, 79 female and 70 male respondents constituted the study sample. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was used as an instrument to assess the level of burnout differences of the SAPs in terms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. Results indicated that there was no significant difference in the levels of burnout among male and female respondents. Burnout awareness and mitigation should therefore help all the SAPs irrespective of gender. The assumption is that if one is aware of the burnout level then he/she can adopt relevant coping mechanisms. This study recommends that an effective burnout model be used to tackle the growing phenomenon of burnout among the SAPs in Kenyan Universities.

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### INTRODUCTION

Burnout in the workplace is increasingly a critical problem for workers, employers and societies (Maslach, 2003). Many researchers among them Maslach (ibid), Hakannen (2009) and Adekola (2009) studied job related burnout and demonstrated its direct and indirect costs. While burnout has been studied frequently in the West, there has been little research on the topic in Kenya (Adeli, 2013). According to Adeli (ibid), people-oriented professionals often enter their profession with service oriented idealistic goals and the SAPs are no exception. They typically work under norms that expect them to continuously invest emotional, cognitive and even physical energy in service recipients. Such a situation is likely to create a process of emotional exhaustion, mental weariness and physical fatigue – commonly referred to as burnout (Cardenas,

2007). Research on burnout has therefore its roots in care giving and service occupations in which the core of the job is the relationship between the provider and the recipient.

Cardenas (2007) defines burnout as a behavioral response of people who experience constant stress from working in occupations that require continued and intensive interaction with people. Maslach (op cit) on the other hand defines burnout as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and cynicism that frequently affects individuals who do “people work” of some kind. Burnout can therefore be described as a condition resulting from a continuous draining of a person's energy resources. Maslach (bid), Cadenas (op cit7) and Azadeh (2010) have published various articles on the burnout phenomenon dealing with specific professions like nurses, doctors and teachers. There are however few population-based studies that deal with the impact of work, gender and other life factors on burnout (Adekola, 2009). Information on burnout occurrence in the general working population is however fundamental for understanding the context in which the problem may appear and how to develop preventive strategies (Ahola, et al., 2008). According to Lindblom et al. (2006), the underlying reasons for gender differences in burnout have not been extensively studied.

Gender was taken to mean the fact of being male or female, in other words the sex of an individual. There have been many studies by researchers like Azadeh (op cit), Hakanen (2009) and Maslach (op cit) which examined why women were more susceptible to burnout than men but these studies do not offer consistent results. According to Hakanen (ibid) though the numbers of burnout cases among women was slightly higher than among men, the latter were more cynical than women who tended to suffer more from mental burnout. The researchers however concluded that biological gender alone is not a reasonable starting point in studying burnout. The findings of the study showed that burnout among women was due to the multiple roles that they play, interpersonal relations at work and home and how to reconcile the two while men's burnout was primarily caused by system-related factors. On the other hand, Azadeh (2010) argued that there is no evidence to support the general belief that women were at some greater risk of burnout than men. Pines, Aronson and Kafry (2001) explain that the failure to find consistent gender-related differences in burnout is because women and men often do not have the same work experiences given the sex discrimination, inequality of pay, role conflict and

advancement opportunities. The authors add that men and women do not share the same predictors and symptoms of work stress. Based on the above views therefore, what is important should be the social gender related practices and structures both at work and outside which are often very different for men and women.

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

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

Though there are minimal differences between men's and women's burnout, it has been found that women suffer from exhaustion slightly more than men while cynicism is more common among men (Jaracz et al., (2005). The researchers offer an explanation that women are better equipped for human relations and for sharing their negative emotions while men tend to suppress their emotions in order to live up to their roles, therefore making them more inclined to adopt cynical attitudes as a mechanism for coping with stress. However, the researchers recommended that there is need for further research to be carried out to establish whether burnout develops differently among men and women. This explains the reason for the current study.

The position occupied by student affairs departments within institutions of higher learning shows that nurturing is part of the foundation of student affairs practice (Rentz, 2004). Student affairs began with the intent of monitoring, guiding, and controlling the out-of-class time activities of college students (Hamrick, Evans, & Schuh, 2002). Today, student affairs offices and programs continue to serve more of a familial role in the lives of college students by investing time, staff, and material resources into assisting with identity development, self-discovery, and other emotional concerns (Magolda, 2003). In all universities in Kenya, the office of the Dean of Students is primarily concerned with students' welfare from entry to the university up to graduation. Admission to the university marks the beginning of one's career and hence requires one to make mental, physical and emotional adjustments (Adeli, 2013). According to Adeli, the Dean of students' Office maintains staffs that are expected to help students adjust to life in the university. This therefore calls for such staffs to be well trained in basic principles of guidance and counseling so that they can be able to respond appropriately to students' anxieties as manifested in different ways. After studying the Indiana University SAPs, Lorden (2008) concluded that the attrition rate in the student affairs department was high due to burnout. The researcher said that the SAP leave the profession every year because of job dissatisfaction, role ambiguity, role conflict, role orientation, stress, overload and perceived opportunities for goal attainment, professional development and career advancement. Lorden noted that there are limited opportunities for mobility within the student affairs because organizational structures in higher education are relatively flat. This means that many positions exist at entry level but the number reduces at each succeeding level forming a pyramid like structure. We agree with Lorden's study when he argues that the situation in student affairs departments in institutions of higher learning is marked with unclear career paths leading to professionals having multiple paths. Lorden noted that most entry level positions in student affairs are quite stressful, unstable, confusing and unpredictable. As a result of this, Magolda (2003) says that sometimes the work of the SAPs has been regarded as less important thereby pushing student affairs to the periphery as evidenced by the limited number of upward mobility in student affairs. It is however quite evident that the SAPs provide key and lasting services to their institutions.

University education is on the increase in Kenya. Currently there are twenty two public universities in Kenya and a similar number for chartered private universities (Adeli, 2013). Though there is rapid expansion in universities, the provision of corresponding facilities and resources especially in public universities is inadequate (Vice Chancellor's Committee report, 2000). The Vice Chancellors' Committee Report noted that majority of students undergo socio-psychological changes throughout their life in the university. They therefore always need the services of the SAPs. However, these departments in most universities are marked with insufficient staff, some with inadequate training to meet the needs of students Worst still there is lack of infrastructural facilities like office space. Such conditions are likely to cause stress amongst the SAPs which in turn may lead to inadequate service provision.

As enrollment at universities across the country continues to grow rapidly, so do the responsibilities of the SAPs who work within those institutions. SAPs are responsible for the co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences of students at the universities. Among the student population in universities, there is a growing demand for counseling services. This is because of the upsurge of HIV/AIDS, psychologically related medical conditions, trauma, criminal behavior, marital and family dysfunctions which all affect the students' academic life (Adeli, 2013). Adeli (ibid) underlines that the SAPs in universities are expected to give more in terms of time, effort, skill and flexibility. If they come across such scenarios daily their psychological wellbeing is likely to be affected.

Wen-Chih (2004) studied job satisfaction among the SAPs and reported that their duties include many different tasks, from academic advisement to accommodation. The personal and professional demands associated with their duties also vary widely. Some SAPs are required to work essentially on a regular eight-hour work day, while others are required to be available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Wen-Chih (ibid) observes that, oftentimes, SAPs embrace a "yes I can, yes I will" frame of mind and work ethic. This involves not delegating, becoming a mentor for all students and colleagues in need, not using the word "no" as often as they should, or feeling that a sense of accomplishment is synonymous with exhaustion and fatigue. Indeed, Yakaboski and Donalioo (2010) claim, the reason may be explained by the nature of the student affairs work. Working in the student affairs department is predominantly a

task-orientated job because among the student affairs, emphasis is placed on organizing and developing activities and getting jobs accomplished in order to contribute towards students' learning and personal development.

The impact of the various workplace conditions of SAPs is not fully understood and many questions regarding stress, burnout, and wellness among the SAPs unfortunately remain unanswered. Secondly, the experience of burnout is unique to each individual and is also specific to the work context, in this case the Student Affairs Departments in Universities in Kenya. How each therefore experiences burnout varies. The SAPs also vary in the expectation they bring to their job in terms of the nature of their work and the likelihood of achieving success. According to Adeli (2013), SAPs who do too much for too long are at high-risk for professional burnout. Adeli says that high levels of stress are apparent among SAPs and negatively affect various aspects of their personal and professional lives. Clearly, burnout is a complex phenomenon, however, it is one which must be understood if SAPs are to avoid or reduce it. In Kenya, information about the stress and burnout associated with the work experiences of SAPs is just beginning to emerge (Adeli 2013). The challenge of burnout can therefore no longer be ignored in institutions of higher learning and specifically by the SAPs.

Burnout progresses through various levels. This study adopted the Mandi (2010) and Carter (2012) approaches which discuss five levels of burnout having the following characteristics:-

### **1 Normal**

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

### **2 Moderate**

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

### **3 High**

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

#### **4 Very High**

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

#### **5 Dangerous**

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

As individuals progress through these stages gradually, slowly they approach the dangerous level unless burnout is checked. At the dangerous level they have totally burnt out and have no enthusiasm to do anything new. If such an individual offers any kind of human service, s/he is likely to do more harm than good. This paper established the various burnout levels experienced by both men and women and how this affects them.

### **RESEARCH APPROACH**

The main purpose in this paper was to establish the relationship between gender and job-burnout among personnel working in the Student Affairs Departments in Kenyan Universities. The objective was to establish the relationship between Gender and Burnout Levels of Student Affairs Personnel in Kenyan Universities. The researchers used a causal comparative research design. According to Fraenkael and Wallen, (2006), a causal comparative design investigates relationships among variables without trying to influence those variables. This paper established the extent to which gender differences were related to differences in burnout levels of the Student Affairs Personnel in public and private universities in Kenya.

#### **Study population**

The targeted population was drawn from public and private universities in Kenya. The inclusion criteria were that the universities had to be chartered, they had to have a high population of students taking varied degree programs and a functional student affairs department. The participating universities were randomly selected using the simple random sampling method. This ensured that each and every university had an equal and independent chance of being selected. Two universities (one public and one private) were randomly selected for pilot testing.

These two were not included in the actual study. The remaining twenty eight universities were again randomly sampled for participation. Six public and six private universities were therefore involved in the study. Purposive sampling was used to get the sample required for the study from the participating universities. Personnel working in the student affairs departments in both public and private universities constituted the sample. The inclusion criterion was personnel directly involved with students on a daily basis to provide psychological, spiritual, careers or recreational services. Purposive sampling was used to identify the personnel who had the required characteristics for the study. Purposive sampling was used because student affairs departments in all universities had very few personnel who had the required characteristics. The Deans of Students, Assistant Deans of Students, Counselors/Psychologists, Chaplains, Sports Officers, Administrators and Career Placement Officers therefore constituted the sample. It should be noted that different universities had different titles for these personnel but for purposes of this study and for uniformity, the above titles were used. A total of 179 personnel qualified to participate in this study. Though with some variations but there were roughly fifteen personnel from each of the twelve participating universities.

### **Data collection procedures**

This was a causal comparative study that made use of the questionnaire and an interview schedule as the main tools for data collection.

#### **i. Questionnaire**

The Burnout Questionnaire for Student Affairs Personnel (BQSAP) was adopted from the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and then modified to fit the current study. Modification of the MBI involved slightly changing the questions to fit the SAPs. For instance, instead of a question reading *as so many people lean on me* it read *so many students lean on me* in the BQSAP. The inventory is a self-report survey that uses a Likert scale. Respondents were to indicate how frequently they felt frustrated by their jobs. Pilot testing of the instrument was carried out in one public and one private university to establish the reliability and validity of the instruments using the Cronbach alpha coefficient which is a common measure for internal consistency. It provides an overall reliability coefficient for a set of variables (Fraenkael & Wallen, 2002). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is deemed appropriate to test reliability in Likert scaled type of questionnaires as well as structured interviews (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Only one



administration of the instrument was done. A reliability coefficient 0.745 was arrived at after calculation. The instrument was therefore considered sufficiently reliable and valid for the study.

## **ii. Interviews**

The Dean's Interview Schedule (DIS) was carried out with the Deans of Students only. The purpose of the semi-structured interview was to access the broad perspective of the burnout situation in the respective institutions. The key themes that the interview covered were burnout prevalence among the SAPs, Burnout effects on gender and the relationship between gender and burnout. Information from the DIS was analyzed qualitatively.

## **Ethical Considerations**

After getting a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), the researchers sought permission to conduct the study from each of the twelve sampled universities. Actual research commenced after permission from each university was granted.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics aided by SPSS version 19. The major themes were set according to the objectives of the study. Out of a sample of 179(N) purposively sampled respondents, 149(n) participated in the study. Findings of the study are presented in form of major themes and discussed in the following sections.

### **Demographic Characteristics of the sample**

Out of the 149 respondents who completed the questionnaire, 53% were female while 47% were male indicating that there were more females working in Student Affairs Departments than males. The female population in public universities was 30% against 23% from private universities while the male population was 29% in public universities against 18% in private. There were no significant differences in distribution of respondents by gender in student affairs departments in private and public universities in Kenya.

### **Prevalence of Burnout in the Student Affairs Departments**

This section presents the general picture of the burnout situation in selected public and private universities in Kenya. The findings reveal that in Public universities more SAPs (26%) experienced high burnout levels but in private universities, majority (25%) experienced moderate levels. Private universities had a higher percentage of SAPs experiencing dangerous levels of burnout as compared to the public institutions (3% vs. 2%). Whereas a small percentage of 1% of the SAPs in public institutions indicated suffering from very dangerous levels of burnout, there was none from the private institutions. Generally, most SAPs in both public and private universities experienced moderate (46%) or high (43%), burnout levels with 5% of the sample having the normal burnout levels and an equal percentage having very high burnout. This actually implies that all the SAPs in both public and private institutions experienced some level of burnout. Of great concern is that the percentage of those experiencing normal burnout is quite low (5%) unlike those having moderate, high and very high levels as shown in Table 1.

### **Prevalence of burnout in the student affairs departments**

From the interview schedules, the Deans of Students, were asked whether burnout was prevalent in their departments. All the respondents (100%) agreed that the SAPs in their departments experienced burnout. The levels might vary but burnout occurred in the Student Affairs departments in both public and private universities in Kenya. Some of the responses are as given below:

#### **Excerpt 1**

Yes there is burnout in our department. This is because of the numbers. What do you do with the high numbers and given that these days our institution operates on a trimester basis. We honestly cannot avoid burning out (Respondent DIS 004).

#### **Excerpt 2**

Burnout is very prevalent and it has really affected my staff. I must say that all of us in this department are literally burning out because of deadlines, workload, student population and the like. Staff just burnout and you do not know whether you are dealing with people or ashes (Respondent DIS 007).

Given that 100% of the respondents acknowledged the prevalence of burnout as exemplified in some of the excerpts above, it is quite clear that burnout was prevalent in both Public and Private Universities in Kenya. These qualitative results agreed with a study by Maslach (2003) which observed that intense staff-client interaction is often centered on the client's psychological, social or physical problems. Such interactions are often charged with feelings of anger, embarrassment, fear or despair. Working frequently with such clients poses the risk of burnout.

### Gender and Burnout levels

Causes of burnout were discussed to lay a foundation in discussing gender related differences in burnout. Key among them were: Inadequate staff (13%), Long working hours (12%), Too much work (18%), Crisis management (30%) among others. Majority of the SAPs felt that their burnout was majorly institutionally caused. Gender distribution in relation to burnout levels is as shown in table below.

### Gender and Burnout Levels

Gender	Burnout Levels					Total
	Normal	Moderate	High	Very High	Dangerous	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	3	21	18	4	1	47
Female	2	26	25	1	0	53
<b>Total</b>	5	46	43	5	1	<b>100</b>

**n=149**

Results in the table above indicate that more women respondents than men experienced moderate to high levels of burnout. Whereas only 23 % of the men suffered from high to dangerous levels of burnout, the percentage was slightly higher for women (26%) giving a difference of 3%. On the contrary, more men (4%) experienced very high burnout levels than women (1%). Though 1% men respondents suffered from dangerous burnout, there was no female counterpart in this category. The percentage of the SAPs having normal burnout levels was very small (5%) indicating that almost all the SAPs burn out at some point. Results therefore indicate that both men and women working in the Student Affairs Departments in Kenyan universities burn out in one way or another.

From the interview discussions on gender and burnout, majority of the Deans of Students (66%) were of the view that men tend to burnout more than women. There were a variety of reasons given for this. One respondent said:

*As far as I'm concerned males tend to burn out faster than females because of their interaction patterns. Women socialize more and tend to seek help making them not to burn out as fast. Men hardly share their issues because of the male ego. When the male staff burn out, they are very bad to everybody unlike women who can take in some opinion, men do not and instead they blame other people (Respondent DIS 001).*

There was however 22% who felt women burnout faster than men. An excerpt from one of the Deans of Students clearly brought out the argument:

*Though I have not been observant but I think females burn out more because of the various things they do; they are mothers, wives, employees, and sometimes students and business women. Some of my female employees carry things to sell while on duty just to make ends meet. This is actually too much for them and they burn out totally because of such involvement both at work and when they reach home. Their male counterparts cannot handle all that (Respondent DIS 008)*

Only 12% of the respondents were not sure which gender burns out faster and as far as they were concerned both males and females suffer from the effects of burnout. The differences were in the coping mechanisms. Given the varied responses from the interview schedules, the results tend to agree with the statistical analysis which found that there was no statistically significant difference between gender and burnout levels of the SAPs in public and private universities in Kenya.

Descriptive data analysis results showed that both women and men SAPs in Kenyan universities experienced some level of burnout. Women tended to experience reduced personal accomplishment more than their male counterparts who tended to be more cynical as a result of burnout. These results are a negation of the findings of Adekola's (2009) study but they agree with those of Kalimo et al. (1997) which discovered that both sexes differ significantly in the ways they cope with stress. Women have a wider range of relationship than men and they tend

to use these networks to build up strength with which they cope with burnout. In today's world, employment has become an all encompassing part of people's lives. Since jobs have become people's lifeline, they spend more time at the workplace than anywhere else (Adeli, 2013). Such employment conditions in the country tend to force most women to work full time in addition to the normal workload of housework and childcare (Adekola, 2009).

### **Gender and effects of Burnout**

Burnout was found to have various effects on the SAPs. Whereas an equal percentage (30%) of both men and women respondents felt misunderstood and unappreciated at their place of work, more women (49%) than men (40%) felt that they do not have time to plan their personal work. More women (62%) also viewed personal and career development as stressful given their multiple roles as compared to 16% men. Another notable difference was that more women respondents (46%) felt frustrated at their place of work compared to 33% men and this was explained further by 57% women feeling drained as compared to 43% of their male counterparts. On the contrary, more men (49%) felt that they were in the wrong organization and 43% felt that they were achieving less as compared to 10% and 39% of the female counterparts respectively. Generally, more than 50% women respondents felt emotionally and physically drained. Some of the effects of burnout on women included physical and emotional draining, job frustration, negative thinking, irritability and feeling misunderstood. According to the respondents this was caused by institutional politics and bureaucracy, workload and poor planning. On the other hand the common effects of burnout on the men included; a feeling that they were achieving less than they should, a feeling of being in the wrong organization and that they were missing out on important activities.

The gender mean scores were subjected to a t-test and the results indicated no statistical significant difference in mean burnout levels by gender ( $t=1.650$ ,  $p=0.101$ ). Jaracz, *et al.* (2005) carried out a study among nurses and the results revealed that female nurses experienced a higher degree of emotional exhaustion while the male counterparts were excessively detached from other people (a condition commonly referred to as cynicism). They concluded that the differences though statistically not significant may be attributed to the nurses' expectations from their job and their adjustment in the workplace. The researchers held the view that male nurses

had poorer coping ability as compared to their female counterparts who freely shared their experiences.

Hakannen (2009) study on the prevalence of burnout in various sectors of employment revealed that higher levels of burnout were predominantly among those sectors which employed more women. Azadeh (2010) on the other hand argued that there was no evidence to support the general belief that women were at some greater risk of burnout than men. Of the responses on the effects of burnout in the current study, 43% men were found to be cynical against 22% women while 65% women respondents confirmed being emotionally exhausted against 28% men. More women respondents (42%) than men (20%) were found to be anxious about their jobs, health, relationships and the home environment all because of burnout. They may try to fulfill a “superwoman” ideal and get over-stressed from the responsibilities of work, children, and home.

One respondent in the interview discussion said that women easily burn out faster than men. The explanation is as given in the following excerpt;

*one of my employees told me that the job is making her loose on friends, family and leisure and this is making her worried” Another one said “ I feel tired”, my batteries are dead and I have trouble concentrating. I feel that if I lost this job I will not quickly get another one but I cannot cope! (Respondent DIS 011).*

Based on the effects of burnout one might be tempted to conclude that women were more at risk than the men but women tend to ventilate better making them be less affected (Jaraczet *al.*, 2005). According to the researchers, women are better equipped for human relations and for sharing their negative emotions while men tend to suppress their emotions in order to live up to their roles, therefore making them more inclined to adopt cynical attitudes as a mechanism for coping with burnout. Results of study bring out the idea that the gender related practices and structures both at work and outside are often very different for men and women and should be considered in studying gender and burnout. The differences though statistically not significant may be attributed to the expectations from their job and their adjustment in their workplace.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings of this paper indicate that there is no significant difference between men and women SAPs when it comes to burnout. These results challenge the commonly held belief that women employees are more likely to experience burnout than male employees, revealing instead that women are slightly more emotionally exhausted than men while men are more depersonalized and cynical than women. Burnout awareness and mitigation should therefore target all the SAPs irrespective of their gender. The assumption is that if one is aware of the burnout level then he/she can adopt relevant coping mechanisms and therefore offer quality service to the clients(in this case students).

All SAPs in public and private universities burn out. The differences between them are only the burnout levels. This implies that similar mitigation measures should be used in the universities irrespective of the type. More women respondents indicated experiencing moderate and high burnout levels and this was because they had other responsibilities towards their families (children, husband and housework). In addition, they were found to care too much about their clients and want everything to be perfect which eventually stressed them out.

The t-test results revealed that there was no significant statistical significance in the burnout levels between men and women respondents. This implies that both men and women burn out in similar ways and therefore both gender should be considered in developing a model to minimize burnout among the SAPs. A conclusion is therefore arrived at that all SAPs in universities in Kenya burnout irrespective of gender.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The percentage of the SAPs having normal burnout levels was very small (5%) indicating that almost all the SAPs burn out at some point. Mitigation measures therefore need to reduce the percentage of the SAPs having moderate to high burnout levels by helping them just to have normal burnout level which is easy to manage. If this is not done then majority of the SAPs will slide into very high and dangerous levels which are not good for the individual and the institution as well.

2. Regular career and personal development forums and early identification of causes and symptoms of burnout should be done to keep burnout at the normal level. Based on the findings of this study, more attention should be paid to similarities and dissimilarities in the development of burnout among men and women.
3. The adoption of relevant burnout models to help minimize or mitigate burnout among the SAPs is recommended. It is worth noting that if the SAPs burn out the whole student body suffers.
4. We recommend further research on gender and burnout because though gender differences have gone unnoticed, causes and effects of burnout seem to vary for men and women.

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