

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected from the study and discusses the interpretation and implications of the results. Stress was treated as a dependant variable in this study. The purpose of the study was to identify the level among stress of secondary school administrators in Petaling Jaya. The ten work situations or stressors that created administrative stress were analysed. Comparisons were made between or among various groups of administrators to see whether there was any difference in terms of the levels of stress.

4.1 The Levels of Work Stress

Table 7 shows the self-reported work stress levels among administrators of secondary schools in Petaling Jaya.

Table 7: Frequency and Percentage for Levels of Self-Reported Work Stress

Level	Frequency (N=50)	Percentage (%)
Not stressful at all	0	0
Mildly stressful	30	60
Stressful	17	34
Extremely Stressful	3	6

Table 7 indicated that none of the respondents reported that their jobs caused no stress, 60% of the respondents reported mild stress, 34% found their job stressful and 6% experienced extreme stress. This result indicates that 40% of secondary school administrators in Petaling Jaya self-reported their jobs were stressful or extremely stressful. A majority experienced a moderate level of stress and only a few experienced extremely high level of stress – but this was not throughout the year – stress level fluctuated.

Petaling Jaya is an urban district in the state of Selangor, and borders Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of the country. In fact, Petaling Jaya first started out as a satellite town of the city of Kuala Lumpur, to provide housing for the city's large working population. It had since evolved into a substantial sized city of some standing. Also, the majority of Kuala Lumpur's working population still resided in Petaling Jaya. The schools in Petaling Jaya therefore, generally catered to children from the middle and upper-class families. The parents had a high expectation of high quality education and administration from schools. It was probably the reason for the high self-reported stress experienced by administrators of these schools.

Table 8 shows the level of stress that respondents indicated for each stressor. The 1 to 5 Likert-type scale was reorganized to match the four self-report stress categories. They were:

- 1 - Low Stress
- 2 - Moderate Stress
- 3 - High Stress
- 4 - Extreme Stress

Table 8: Level of Stress Reported for Each Stressor (N = 50)

No	Stressors (ASI items)	Frequency of Stress Level (Percentage %)			
		Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
1	Frequent interruption by phone calls	10 (20)	9 (18)	26 (52)	5 (10)
2	Supervising and coordinating many people	7 (14)	11 (22)	23 (46)	9 (18)
3	Feeling staff don't understand goals and expectations	14 (28)	12 (24)	16 (32)	8 (16)
4	Feeling not full qualified to handle job	33 (66)	9 (18)	4 (8)	4 (8)
5	Lack of relevant information to carry out job	23 (46)	9 (18)	13 (26)	5 (10)
6	Not being able to satisfy conflicting demands of those who have authority over me	16 (32)	14 (28)	11 (22)	9 (18)
7	Resolving student conflict	16 (32)	15 (30)	9 (18)	10 (20)
8	Feeling superiors don't expect enough of me	19 (38)	13 (26)	12 (24)	6 (12)
9	Frequent interruption from staff	20 (40)	9 (18)	15 (30)	6 (12)
10	Imposing high expectations on oneself	14 (28)	12 (24)	15 (30)	9 (18)
11	Feeling pressure for better job performance	13 (26)	13 (26)	14 (28)	10 (20)
12	Writing memos, letters and other communication	10 (20)	15 (30)	16 (32)	9 (18)
13	Resolving differences with superiors	17 (34)	17 (34)	13 (26)	3 (6)
14	Speaking in front of groups	25 (50)	11 (22)	9 (18)	5 (10)
15	Meeting social expectations (outside of school hours)	24 (48)	9 (18)	14 (28)	3 (6)
16	Not knowing supervisor's evaluation of one's performance	18 (36)	12 (24)	16 (32)	44 (88)
17	Making decisions that effect the lives of colleagues, staff and students	11 (22)	8 (16)	19 (38)	12 (24)
18	Sacrificing personal time (after working hours) for school activities	16 (32)	12 (24)	10 (20)	12 (24)
19	Feeling too much responsibility delegated by superior	16 (32)	10 (20)	15 (30)	9 (18)
20	Resolving parent/school conflict	9 (18)	16 (32)	13 (26)	12 (24)
21	Preparing and allocating budget resources	15 (30)	12 (24)	15 (30)	8 (16)
22	Too little authority to carry out responsibilities	18 (36)	13 (26)	13 (26)	6 (12)
23	Handling student discipline problems	13 (26)	12 (24)	15 (30)	10 (20)
24	Being involved in the collective bargaining process	19 (38)	11 (22)	19 (38)	1 (2)
25	Evaluating staff members' performance	7 (14)	13 (26)	20 (40)	10 (20)
26	Too heavy a workload to finish during normal work day	9 (18)	13 (26)	20 (40)	8 (16)
27	Complying with state, federal and organizational rules and policies	11 (22)	9 (18)	22 (44)	8 (16)
28	Feeling progress on job is not enough	13 (26)	9 (18)	21 (42)	7 (14)

29	Administering the negotiated contract	16 (32)	11 (22)	16 (32)	7 (14)
30	Unclear on job scope and responsibilities	19 (38)	15 (30)	9 (18)	7 (14)
31	Feeling meetings take too much time	8 (16)	11 (22)	18 (36)	13 (26)
32	Completing reports/paperwork on time	8 (16)	7 (14)	19 (38)	16 (32)
33	Resolving staff differences	12 (24)	12 (24)	20 (40)	6 (12)
34	Influencing superiors actions and decisions that affect me	16 (32)	10 (20)	18 (36)	6 (12)
35	Gaining public approval/funds for school programs.	10 (20)	9 (18)	16 (32)	15 (30)
	Average frequency (Percentage)	15 (30.0)	11.5 (23.0)	15.6 (31.2)	7.9 (15.8)

Table 8 shows that, on average, 30% of the school administrators indicated low stress levels, 23% indicated moderate stress level, 31.2% indicated high stress levels and 15.8% were experiencing extreme stress levels, as measured by the ASI.

These findings were similar to the self-reported stress levels in the preceding section. A total of 47% of the respondents reported high and extreme levels of stress as measured by the ASI, as compared to 40% reporting high and extreme self-reported levels of stress.

For the first stressor, 'frequent interruption by phone calls', it was indicated that a total of 62% of the administrators found it either stressful or extremely stressful. Table 9 also indicated that it was ranked the tenth major stressor in this study. Only 20% of the administrators attributed low stress and, 18% moderate stress to it. This result implies that principals were spending a lot of time in the office. They probably could minimize this kind of stress by performing more out-of-the-office duties such as making regular rounds to check on their schools.

The second stressor, 'supervising & coordinating many people', ranked as the sixth major stressor (Table 9). Some 64% of the administrators attributed high or extreme stress to it, while 14% reported low stress and 22% reported moderate stress for this stressor. This result indicates that dealing with people contributed to a fairly high level of stress. This result implies that principals need to have skills and techniques in interpersonal relations and problem-solving.

The third stressor, 'feeling staff don't understand goals and expectations', caused high or extreme stress among 48%, low stress among 28% and moderate stress among 24% of the administrators. The implication of this result is that principals were not confident of effectively communicating their goals and expectations to their staff. They must therefore, apply communication techniques that are more effective. An example of this is having 10-minute weekly 'housekeeping' meetings to keep staff well-informed.

The fourth stressor, 'feeling not fully qualified to handle job', only caused high and extreme stress among 16% of the administrators. 66% attributed low stress to it, while 18% claimed moderately stressed by it. This indicated that the majority of administrators were quite confident and comfortable with their roles and qualifications.

The fifth stressor, 'lack of relevant information to carry out job', only caused high and extreme stress for 36% of the administrators. 46% claimed low stress and 18% attributed moderate stress to it. This finding, like that of the third stressor is indication of ineffective communication.

Here, it is implied that administrators must maintain a good two-way communication with their staff. In this way, not only do they ensure that their staff understand them and their goals, but also that they receive the necessary feedback and information from their staff.

The sixth stressor, 'not being able to satisfy conflicting demands of those in authority', caused 40% of the administrators high or extreme stress. 32% attributed low stress and 28% moderate stress to it. This indicates that the principals are being considerably pressured by the relevant authorities. The Education Ministry and State Education Departments must look into the possibility that some directives might be conflicting and therefore look into how these directives could be improved.

The seventh stressor, 'resolving student conflict', was stressful or extremely stressful for 38% of the administrators. 32% found it to cause low stress and 30%, moderate stress. This finding is consistent with the newspapers that report a rise in student indiscipline. The Sun (2000) attributes this largely to parents that no longer back the school system in disciplining their children. The News Straits Times (2000) report on gangsterism that is on the rise in schools. These in no small measure could result in high stress levels among school administrators.

The eighth stressor, 'feeling superiors don't expect enough of me', caused high or extreme stress to 36% of the administrators. 38% found it to caused low stress and 26% said it was moderately stressful. This again is indication of ineffective communication, as in the case of the third and fifth stressor.

The ninth stressor, 'frequent interruption from staff', caused 62% of the administrators high or extreme stress. 40% found it to cause low stress, while 18% found it moderately stressful. The high level of stress here indicates either one of two things. Firstly, that problems exist in every aspect of the school that the staff can't handle on their own. And secondly (also more likely), that the staff don't feel that they have the authority to deal with matters on their own. Schools, as collegiate organizations and principals as instructional leaders should adopt measures that promote teacher empowerment, thereby much reducing the burden of the administrators in having to make all decisions.

The tenth stressor, 'imposing high expectations on oneself', caused extreme or high stress to 48% of the administrators. 28% attributed low stress, while 24% claimed it caused them moderate stress. This indicates that these administrators take their job very seriously. It is therefore all the more important that they are equipped with the necessary know-how and skills of good management like planning and prioritizing.

The eleventh stressor, 'feeling pressure for better job performance' only caused 48% of the administrators high or extreme stress. 26% felt it attributed low stress and 26% found it moderately stressful. This implies that almost half the administrators felt that they could be doing better at their jobs than they are now.

The twelfth stressor, 'writing memos, letters and other communication' caused 50% of the administrators high or extreme stress. 20% claimed it caused low stress, while 30% attributed moderate stress

to it. This finding implies that these administrators were facing time constraints. They either had too much paper work or they were not organizing their time well.

The thirteenth stressor, 'resolving differences with superiors' caused high or extreme stress to 32% of the administrators. 34% found it caused low and 34% also found it to cause moderate stress. The indication of this finding is that the majority of administrators got on well with their superiors.

The fourteenth stressor, 'speaking in front of groups' was only highly or extremely stressful for 28% of the administrators. 50% found it caused low stress, while 22% attributed moderate stress to it. Generally speaking, this implies that most of these administrators did not have a problem with public speaking.

The fifteenth stressor, 'meeting social expectations' was also found to be relatively easy to handle by the administrators. Only 34% attributed high stress to it. 48% said it caused low stress, while 18% said it was moderately stressful.

The sixteenth stressor, 'not knowing supervisor's evaluation of performance' only caused 40% of the administrator's high or extreme stress. 36% experienced low stress and 24% were moderately stressed by it.

On the other hand, the seventeenth stressor, 'making decisions that effect the lives of colleagues, staff and students', was ranked third major stressor (Table 9) in this study. 62% of the administrator found it highly or extremely stressful, while 22% found it to cause low stress and 16% moderate stress. Interestingly, this indicated that administrators found evaluating their subordinates more stressful than having themselves evaluated by their superiors as we can see by comparing this finding with that of the sixteenth stressor.

The eighteenth stressor, 'sacrificing personal time' caused 44% of the administrator's high and extreme stress. It caused low stress for 32% and moderate stress for 18% of the administrators. This finding also indicates that these administrators required skills in time management. This is to ensure that their personal time is not encroached upon by their work, and thus inflicting unnecessary stress on them.

The nineteenth stressor, 'feeling too much responsibility delegated by superior' caused high or extreme stress for 48% of the administrators. 32% claimed it caused low stress and 20% claimed it caused moderate stress. This implies that while administrators were being delegated responsibilities by their superiors, they in turn, especially assistant administrators had no one to delegate to. As has been discussed at length for the ninth stressor, teacher empowerment might elevate this kind of stress.

The twentieth stressor, 'resolving parent/school conflict', was ranked eighth major stressor (Table 9). This indicated that the parents of

secondary school children in Petaling Jaya being mostly from the middle and upper class societies, were probably closely monitoring the school and actively questioning the principal and the schools actions. 50% of the administrator attributed high or extreme stress to this stressor. 18% found it to cause low stress and 32% attributed moderate stress to it.

The twenty-first stressor, 'preparing and allocating budgets', caused 46% of the administrators high or extreme stress. 30% found it to cause low stress, while 24% reported it caused moderate stress. This indicates that many principals and their assistants found school budgeting to be stressful. They could benefit from attending courses and workshops on this subject.

The twenty-second stressor, 'too little authority' was found to cause only 38% of the administrator high or extreme stress. 36% attributed low stress and 26% attributed moderate stress to it. This finding indicates that the majority of administrators were confident with the amount of authority they wielded.

The twenty-third stressor, 'handling student discipline problems', caused 50% of the administrators high or extreme stress. This could be, as has been discussed for the seventh stressor, partly due to the current issue of gangsterism in schools (The Star, April 2000) in addition to other discipline problems associated with today's schools like truancy. 26% of the administrators claimed it caused them low stress, while 24% said it was moderately stressful.

The twenty-fourth stressor, 'being involved in the collective bargaining process', caused 40% of the administrators high or extreme stress. 38% attributed low stress to it, while 22% said it was moderately stressful. The majority of administrators did not find this to be stressful. This is probably because they accept some of the bureaucratic processes that they have to abide by.

The twenty-fifth stressor, 'evaluating staff members performance', was ranked fourth major stressor (Table 9). 60% of the administrators found it highly or extremely stressful. Only 14% found it to cause low stress while 26% experienced moderate stress from it. This finding ties in with the implications of the sixteenth and seventeenth stresses,

The twenty-sixth stressor, 'too heavy a workload to finish during normal work day', was also ranked seventh major stressor. 56% of the administrators found it highly or moderately stressful. Only 18% found it to cause low stress and 26% claimed it to be moderately stressful. This finding also, as was for the twelfth and eighteenth stresses, indicates that these administrators need to attend time management courses.

The twenty-seventh stressor, 'complying with state, federal and organizational rules and policies', was found to be the ninth major stressor (Table 9) in this study. This indicates that these administrators generally found bureaucratic processes set for them by the Education Ministry to be stressful even if some aspects, like collective bargaining, were accepted. 60% of the administrators found it to be highly or extremely stressful,

while only 22% and 18% experienced low and moderate stress from it respectively.

The twenty-eighth stressor, 'feeling progress on job is not enough', highly or extremely stressed 56% of the administrators. 26% attributed low stress to it, while 18% experienced moderate stress from this stressor. This again indicates that these administrators felt that time was not on their side, as for the twelfth, eighteenth and twenty-sixth stressors.

The twenty-ninth stressor, 'administering the negotiated contract', caused high and extreme stress for 46% of the administrators. 32% found it to cause low stress and 22% found it to cause moderate stress. This finding also supports the finding of the twenty-seventh stressor.

The thirtieth stressor, 'unclear on job scope and responsibilities', caused only 32% of the administrators to feel high or extreme stress. This means that the majority of administrators understood what was expected of them in their work. 38% indicated low stress and 30% moderate stress by this stressor.

The thirty-first stressor, 'feeling meetings take too much time', was also ranked as the fifth major stressor. 62% of the administrators found it to cause high or extreme stress, 16% low stress and 22% moderate stress. This indicates that administrators spend a lot of time attending meetings, which in their opinion was stressful. This is another area in which the administrators indicated a problem concerning time.

The thirty-second stressor, 'completing reports/paperwork on time', was found to be the first in ranking of the stressors (Table 9). It was reported to cause 70% of the administrators to feel highly or extremely stressed. Only 16% reported low stress and 14% moderate stress, from this stressor. While also implying that time was a problem with these administrators, it also could mean that these administrators are being burdened with unnecessary amounts of paperwork.

The thirty-third stressor, 'resolving staff differences', caused 52% of the administrators to experience high or extreme stress. 24% of the administrators experienced low stress and 24% also reported moderate stress. This finding supports the finding of the second stressor in which, the high stress level indicates that the acquiring of techniques and mastery at interpersonal skills and in problem solving are needed.

The thirty-fourth stressor, 'influencing superiors actions and decisions that affect me', had 48% of the administrators reporting high or extreme stress while 32% and 20% reported low and moderate stress respectively. This finding also indicates high stress in an area that can be greatly reduced with people-managing and conflict negotiation skills.

The last stressor, 'gaining public approval/funds for school programs', was also found to be ranked as the second major stressor by this study. This indicated that the administrators probably had to constantly be lobbying for funds, or that it was not easy to raise funds for school programs. 72% of the administrators reported high or extreme

stress for this stressor. 20% found it to cause low stress while 18% found it to be moderately stressful.

4.2 The Major Work Stressors

In this section the ten major work stressors was identified and then ranked, according to their mean as calculated by the SPSS.

Table 9: The Mean Stress Value of the Ten Major Work Stressors

No	ASI Item No	Stressor	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	32	Completing reports/paperwork on time	2.86	1.26
2	35	Gaining public approval/funds for school programs	2.72	1.31
3	17	Making decisions that effect the lives of colleagues, staff and students	2.70	1.37
4	25	Evaluating staff members performance	2.70	1.11
5	31	Meetings that take too much time	2.70	1.15
6	2	Supervising and coordinating many people's tasks	2.66	1.06
7	26	Too heavy a workload to finish during normal workday	2.56	1.23
8	20	Resolving parent/school conflict	2.54	1.23
9	27	Complying with state, federal and organizational rules and policies	2.52	1.20
10	1	Frequent interruption by phone calls	2.50	0.97

Table 9 showed that the ten major stressors for secondary school administrators in Petaling Jaya in descending order of importance were:

1. Completing reports/paperwork on time
2. Gaining public approval/funds for school programs.
3. Making decisions that effect the lives of colleagues, staff and students.
4. Evaluating staff members' performance.
5. Meetings that take too much time.

6. Supervising and coordinating many people's tasks.
7. Too heavy a workload to finish during normal workday.
8. Resolving parent/school conflict.
9. Complying with state, federal and organizational rules and policies.
10. Frequent interruption by phone calls.

The frequencies and percentages of these stressors are indicated in Table

8. The discussion is as presented in the preceding section.

The stressors that ranked first, fifth, seventh and tenth indicated that these administrators found time to be working against them. These were also the findings of Downton (1987), Borg and Riding (1993) and Abu Omar (1997). This was not surprising considering the multitude of tasks (the principals rule-book lists 360 tasks) these administrators had. That is, from the routine running of the physical school to the not so routine handling of it's human component, all while ensuring the function of the school that was the teaching-learning process was running smoothly. These stressors together with those ranked third, fourth and sixth, belonged to the dimension of task-based stress.

The stressors that rank third, fourth, sixth and eight indicated situations that were connected to the administrator as a manager or handler of people. As had been pointed out, the task of managing large, diverse groups of people while maintaining harmony and managing conflict increased work stress levels of administrators. These stressors were consistent with the finding that jobs with high responsibility towards people, such as an administrator's, was stressful.

Interestingly, the third major stressor "Gaining public approval/funds" was found to be unique to this study, unlike the other major stressors that had been previously reported by other studies. This was probably due to the current exercise by the Selangor State Department to attach a five-star rating to schools. The schools physical appearance, discipline and academic and co-curricular fields were graded in that order of importance. In the race to achieve the five-star status, schools have had to beautify, improve on it's surrounding, and, do a lot of repair work, of which the Government did not provide funds for. Thus, schools have to turn to the community for funding and hence, the high prevalence of this stressor.

4.3 Dimensions of Stress among Secondary School Administrators

The stressors in this study were clustered into four dimensions, namely, role-based stressors, task-based stressors, conflict-mediating stressors, and, boundary-spanning stressors. In this section these dimensions had been ranked by mean stress value to determine the order in which the dimensions of stress caused most stress.

Table 10: Ranking of the Four Dimensions of Stress

Dimension	Mean Stress Value
Task-Based Stress	2.37
Conflict-Mediating Stress	2.30
Boundary-Spanning Stress	2.22
Role-Based Stress	2.16

Table 10 indicated that Task-Based Stress ranked the highest among the dimensions of stress, followed by Conflict-Mediating Stress and Boundary-Spanning. Role-Based Stress ranked the lowest. As had been discussed previously, this finding was consistent with the fact that these administrators had a multitude of tasks to perform and had to constantly deal with people (and conflict) in their normal workday. The indication that Boundary-Spanning and Role-Based Stress had lower values suggested that these administrators adjusted quite well to the expectations of their role.

The tables below ranked each individual stressor in the various dimensions by their mean stress value.

Table 11: Mean Stress Value of Task-Based Stress (N=13)

No	ASI Item No	Stressor (ASI items)	Mean Stress Value
1	32	Completing reports/paper work on time	2.86
2	17	Making decisions that affect the lives of colleagues, staff and students.	2.70
3	25	Evaluating staff members' performance	2.70
4	31	Feeling meetings take too much time	2.70
5	2	Supervising and coordinating many people	2.66
6	1	Frequent interruption by phone calls	2.50
7	12	Writing memos, letters and other communication	2.44
8	18	Sacrificing personal time (after working hours) for school activities	2.32
9	21	Preparing and allocating budget resources	2.26
10	29	Administering the negotiated contract	2.14
11	9	Frequent staff interruption	2.00
12	5	Lack of relevant information to carry out job	1.80
13	14	Speaking in front of groups	1.76
Mean Stress Value			2.37

The frequencies and percentages pertaining to each stressor is as portrayed in Table 8. The discussion is as presented in the preceding section.

Table 12: Mean Stress Value of Conflict-Mediating Stress (N=5)

No	ASI Item No	Stressor (ASI items)	Mean Stress Value
1	20	Resolving parent/school conflict	2.54
2	23	Handling student discipline problems	2.44
3	33	Resolving staff differences	2.36
4	7	Resolving student conflict	2.20
5	13	Resolving differences with superiors	1.96
Mean Stress Value			2.30

The frequencies and percentages of each stressor is as displayed in Table 8. The discussion is as presented in the previous section.

Table 13: Mean Stress Value of Boundary-Spanning Stress (N=4)

No	ASI Item No	Stressor (ASI items)	Mean Stress Value
1	27	Complying with state, federal and organizational rules and policies	~ 2.72
2	35	Gaining public approval/funds for school programs	2.52
3	15	Meeting social expectations (outside of school hours)	1.84
4	24	Being involved in the collective bargaining process	1.80
Mean Stress Value			2.22

The frequencies and percentages of each individual stressor's stress level was portrayed in Table 8. The discussion has also been presented in the preceding section.

Table 14: Mean Stress Value of Role-Based Stress (N=13)

No	ASI Item No	Stressor (ASI items)	Mean Stress Value
1	26	Too heavy a workload to finish during normal work day	2.56
2	28	Feeling progress on job is not enough	2.40
3	3	Feeling staff don't understand goals and expectations	2.38
4	11	Feeling pressure for better job performance	2.36
5	19	Feeling too much responsibility delegated by superior	2.36
6	10	Imposing high expectations on one's self	2.26
7	6	Not being able to satisfy conflicting demands of those who have authority over me	2.24
8	34	Influencing superior's actions and decisions that affect me	2.22
9	16	Not knowing supervisor's evaluation of one's performance	2.08
10	22	Too little authority to carry out responsibilities	2.02
11	30	Unclear on job scope and responsibilities	2.02
12	8	Feeling superiors don't expect enough of me	2.00
13	4	Feeling not fully qualified to handle job	1.22
Mean Stress Value			2.16

The frequencies and percentages pertaining to each stressor is as portrayed in Table 8. The discussion is as presented in the previous section.

4.4 Stress Levels of the Principals and Assistant Administrators

Table 15 shows the t-test comparing the stress levels of Principals and Assistant Administrators. The mean score of Principals was 81.8 and the standard deviation 33.7. The mean stress score of Assistant Administrators was 78.0 and the standard deviation 24.3. This fact means that both groups of administrators were experiencing a high level of work stress.

Table 15: Comparison of Stress Levels between Principals and Assistant Administrators

Stress Level	Principals	Asst. Adm.	t	p
Mean score	81.8	78.0	0.46	0.65
Standard Deviation	33.7	24.3		

The t value was 0.46 and the probability was 0.65. This meant at 0.05 level of significance, the difference in stress levels experienced by Principals and Assistant Administrator was not significant. This meant that Principals and their assistants both experienced undifferentiated high level of work stress.

4.5 Stress Levels of Administrators with Different Staff Size

Table 16 shows the t-test comparing the stress levels of Administrators with less than ninety staff and those with ninety or more staff in their control. The mean stress level of those with less than ninety staff was 75.9 and the standard deviation 31.5. The mean stress level of those with ninety or more staff is 82.2 and the standard deviation 28.3. This means that these two groups of administrators were also both experiencing a high level of work stress.

Table 16: Comparison of Stress Levels between Administrators with Less Than Ninety and Ninety or More Staff

Stress Level	Less than 90	90 or more	t	p
Mean score	75.9	82.2	-0.719	0.476
Standard Deviation	31.5	28.3		

The t value was -0.719 and the probability was 0.476. This also meant that, at 0.05 level of significance, the difference between administrators with less than ninety staff and those with ninety or more staff was not significant. It had been assumed that a larger staff size would create more stress for the school administrator. This study, however indicated that the schools staff size neither exacerbates nor reduced stress levels.

4.6 Stress Levels of Administrators with Different Enrolment

Table 17 shows the results of the one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test to compare the stress levels of administrators with different enrolment size. The mean stress level of administrators with an enrolment of less than one thousand, from one thousand to two thousand and more than two thousand were 86.3, 79.6 and 78.2, while the standard deviations were 39.5, 24.0 and 30.0 respectively. This indicates that all three groups of administrators were experiencing a high work stress level.

Table 17 : Comparison of Stress Levels Among Administrators With a Student Enrolment of Less Than One Thousand, from One Thousand to Two Thousand and More Than Two Thousand

Stress Level	<1000	1000-2000	>2000	F	p
Mean	86.3	79.6	78.2	0.23	0.79
Standard Deviation	39.5	24.0	30.0		

The F value was 0.23 and the probability was 0.79. This meant that at 0.05 level of significance, the difference of stress levels among these administrators was not significant. This also meant that, contrary to popular belief, the level of work stress among these secondary school administrators did not necessarily increase when the enrolment was larger.

4.7 Stress Levels of Administrators with Different Length of Administrative Experience

Table 18 shows the results of the ANOVA test to compare the stress levels of administrators with different years of administrative experience. The mean stress level of administrators with less than seven, seven to eleven and more than eleven years of administrative experience were 86.9, 85.6 and 60.2, while the standard deviations were 27.4, 30.0 and 23.5 respectively. This indicates that administrators with more than seven years of administrative experience were experiencing less work stress than those with less than seven years of administrative experience.

Table 18: Comparison of Stress Levels Among Administrators with Less than Seven, Between Seven and Eleven and More than Eleven Years of Administrative Experience

Stress Level	< 7 years	7-11years	>11years	F	p
Mean	86.9	85.6	60.2	4.05	0.02*
Standard Deviation	27.4	30.0	23.5		

* Significant at 0.05

The F value was 4.05 and the probability was 0.02. This meant that there was a significant difference among the stress levels of administrators with different years of administrative experience. The level of stress seemed to decrease as the administrators gained administrative experience.

The reason for this was probably due to the fact that, as the administrator gained experience, he/she learnt to better handle their duties and responsibilities. These administrators moved up through the ranks. They learnt 'on the job' what their role and function entailed. This finding also suggested that with experience, the administrators could also be developing better coping strategies and therefore become more and more adept at handling stresses, such that their negative effects were minimized.