AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPACT OF STRESS ON THE MEMBERS OF THE NAMIBIAN POLICE: A CASE STUDY OF POLICE OFFICERS AT KATIMA MULILO POLICE STATION

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DECLARATION

I, Rita Musialike, hereby declare that the research project entitled "*An investigation into the impact of stress on the members of the Namibian Police: A case study of police officers at the Katima Mulilo Police Station"* is my own work. All sources of information used in this study have been acknowledged and correctly referenced in the reference list. Therefore, errors or omissions contained in this document are a direct responsibility of the author.

I, Rita Musialike, hereby declare that this study is my own work and is a true reflection of my research, and that this work, or any part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to establish the impact of stress on members of the Namibian Police Force. The specific objectives of this study were to assess stress awareness levels of the members of the Namibian Police Force working at Katima Mulilo Police Station (KMPS); to explore the causes of stress among the members of the Namibian Police Force working at KMPS; to determine the effects of stress on the performance and well-being of the members of the Namibian Police Force working in KMPS, and to suggest strategies on how to reduce the level of stress among members of the Namibian Police Force working at KMPS. To achieve the above objectives, this study adopted a quantitative research approach. Data was collected from a sample of 90 police officers who were selected randomly. This study found that police officers at KMPS have a high level of awareness regarding the symptoms, causes and effects of stress on employee performance and well-being; stress among police officers is caused by poor remuneration, the traumatic nature of work done by police officers, working alone on night shifts, work overload, risky work environment, autocratic leadership style, biased promotion of police officers, and shortage of police officers which deprives existing police officers of their free time.

Additionally, this study found that stress among police officers leads to the creation of a toxic work environment, decreases employee productivity, promotes employee absenteeism, makes employees sickly and makes police officers adopt irrational behaviours such as excessive drinking and smoking. This study recommends the recruitment of more police officers, an increase in remuneration of police officers and the introduction of regular counselling sessions for police officers.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study aimed at investigating the impact of stress on members of the Namibian police and specifically on police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police Station. This chapter comprises of the introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives along with research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study and the definition of key terms.

As defined by Fonkeng (2018), stress in an organisational context is a reaction of an employee when certain demands, pressures and professional aspects which are to be faced at the work place, do not match their knowledge levels. This situation creates or poses a challenge and threat to the capabilities of the employee which in turn would create a struggle for existence in terms of being employed in a place (Fonkeng, 2018). Given the above, this paper investigates the impact of stress on members of the Namibian Police at Katima Mulilo Police Station (KMPS), in the Zambezi Region.

1.2 Background of the study

Looking at the world today, people are prone to some form of stress in one way or another. Al-Makhaita, Sabra and Hafez (2014) define stress in the context of work as the harmful, physical and emotional responses that occur when the demands of the job do not correspond with the competencies and work requirements. Stress has become a world-wide organisational spectacle that occurs in various forms within the workplace. That means, job requirements, social responsibilities and time spent

at work can lead to stress when they are not effectively balanced (Al-Makhaita, Sabra, & Hafez, 2014). By its nature, police work presents stressful situations and is drastically dynamic, which leads to stress.

Ajaganandam, Rajan & Ravichandran (2013) describe stress as the state at which one is strained or afflicted due to the environmental factors beyond their control. This state leads to discomfort and pain (Ajaganandam, Rajan & Ravichandran, 2013). Hutton and Mwansa (2015) define stress as any psychosomatic reaction to conditions which wield more pressure on employees than their capacity to handle. Al-Makhaita, Sabra & Hafez (2014) define work stress as the harmful, physical and emotional responses that occur when the demands of the job do not correspond with the competencies or needs of the work.

Garrosa, Rainho, Moreno-Jiménez & Monteiro (2010) argue that when positive expectations contrast with negative stress, individuals perceive a stressor as a threat that will have a poor outcome. Police officers work to the best of their ability when they are appointed as officers; however, things turn around to be negative during police work. That triggers stress and impact on police officers and the police force at large (Garrosa, Rainho, Moreno-Jiménez, & Monteiro, 2010). Work-related stress is regarded as one of the leading causes of low productivity and poor performance among employees. It is also connected to increases in employee absenteeism and dissatisfaction (Anshel, 2000). Stress causes devastating effects on employees since hardworking and valuable employees are demoralised which consequently affects their performance, hence, affecting service delivery and the company image (Kangunga, 2016). In order to mitigate the effects of stress, there is a need to identify

sources of emotional pain and come up with appropriate strategies to address the root causes of stress. With regards to human security which is the mandate of security forces, Kangunga (2016) argues that stress on the police force has detrimental effects. According to Burke (2000), employees who start to feel the pressure to perform are caught in an increasing effort to meet rising expectations with no increase in job satisfaction. Stress among police officers makes them unable to fulfil their mandate of providing peace and security to the citizens.

The Namibian Police Force (NPF) was established in 1990 following Namibia's independence. NPF was established by an Act of Parliament under Article 115 of the Namibian Constitution which came into force in 1990. Established under the Ministry of Safety and Security, NPF started with an initial workforce of 2,500 police officers. The total workforce of NPF currently stands at 16,493 uniformed staff and 665 non-uniformed staff. Although the approved workforce strength is 36,344, the NPF currently operates with total personnel which are less than a half of the approved workforce strength (NPF, 2015). In terms of the legislative instruments providing for the founding and establishment of the Namibian Police Force, Section 3(1) of the Police Act, (Act 19 of 1990) places the Inspector General of Police (IGP) in command of the Namibian Police Force and spells out the duties and responsibilities entrusted upon the IG. Section 3(2) of the Police Act prescribes the functions of the Inspector General which among others include the power to develop a plan setting the priorities of the Force, determine the fixed establishment of the Force and the number and grading of posts, determine the distribution of the

numerical strength of the Force, and to organise or reorganise the Force into various components, units and groups.

The Namibian Police Force consists of officers and non-officers appointed under the Police Act by the Inspector General of the Namibian Police Force. Currently, there are 16493 employees under the Namibian Police Force working in various departments (Namibian Police Annual Report, 2014/2015). The Namibian Police Force is divided into different Regions, Directorates, Divisions, Subdivisions and Police Stations. In accordance with the Police Act, the functions of the Namibian Police Force include the preservation of internal security of Namibia, maintenance of law and order, investigation of any offenses or alleged offenses, prevention of crime and protection of life and property.

The Directorates under NPF include: Special Branch Directorate (SB) which deals with internal Security of the Country; Traffic Directorate (TD) which regulates road traffic, Very Important People Directorate (VIPD) which is responsible for guarding and protecting very important people, Operations Directorate (OD) is entrusted with national and international operations, Human Resources Directorate (HRD) which is responsible for recruiting and training, among other functions. Special Field Force Directorate (SFFD) protects the Namibian borders, and Criminal Investigation Directorate (CID) deals with investigations of all kinds of crime committed in Namibia (NPF, 2009-2012).

NPF classifies police stations based on the number of police officers deployed in a specific police station. KMPS is classified as an A station because it has a big numerical size of police personnel. It is the biggest police station in Zambezi

Region. KMPS is located in a highly populated and busy town of Zambezi Region – Katima Mulilo. Given that KMPS is located in a busy area, police officers have extended working hours and extra workload in order to maintain peace and security in the region. Owing to excessive workload, some police officers have been unable to cope because of poor health.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Due to the dynamic nature of the world which is characterised by paradigm shift and uncertainty, many employees in both private and public organisations are becoming victims of stress (Anshel, 2000). Although employees in other professions experience stress, Police work is one of the professions which is so demanding and has inherent risk factors which expose police officers to considerably high levels of stress (Shah, Aziz, Jaffari, Waris, Ejaz, Fatima & Sherazi, 2012). According to Shah et al. (2012), police officers are exposed to distressing situations such as accidents, murders, exposure to injured people's rape cases, and others which affect the emotional states of police officers, hence, emitting high levels of stress on police officers. Since police officers have no choice on which situations to attend to and which ones to avoid, the nature of their work put them at risk of encountering stressful situations. According to Shah *et al.* (2012), some of the stressors inherent in the police work are shift work, the responsibilities for protecting others, continued exposure to injured persons, the need to keep composed even if provoked, the presence of firearms, shooting, routine and periods of inactivity and boredom, conflict, constant threats to the officers' security and safety.

The employees of the Namibian Police Force (NPF) are not unique to the factors affecting the policing environment which expose their members to stress. Although all members of NPF are exposed to some degree of stress, police officers particularly those stationed at the busy police stations as well as those in remote areas, experience an unproportioned degree of stress as compared to other police officers. In this regard, Katima Mulilo Police Station is one of the NPF stations that are far from the headquarters and one of the busiest in the country in terms of the volume of cases, which puts more pressure on police officers. KMPS has also in the past recorded the highest number of police officers who sought counselling from the social workers on account of stress. This study, therefore, sought to investigate the impact of stress on members of the NPF stationed at the KMPS.

1.4 Research objectives

The study sought to achieve the following specific objectives:

i. To assess the stress awareness level of members of the Namibian Police Force working in Katima Mulilo Police Station.

ii. To explore the causes of stress among members of the Namibian Police Force working in Katima Mulilo Police Station.

iii. To determine the effects of stress on the performance and well-being of members of the Namibian Police Force working in KMPS

iv. To suggest strategies on how to reduce the level of stress among members of the Namibian Police Force working in KMPS.

1.5 Significance of the study

An understanding of the impact of stress on police officers will enable the management of the Namibian Police Force to tailor interventions and services that can prevent and treat stress in the whole NPF. The research findings will also be useful in formulating policies and budget priorities by the Ministry of Safety and Security and the Namibian Police Force management as it will highlight the impact of stress among police officers.

Findings from the study can also inform individual police officers about the impact of stress and possible ways to manage stress. This is vital as police officers will be able to navigate through stressful situations that they experience. This will in turn improve their focus and determination for their work. Therefore, this research is important because police officers will be able to effectively deal with stressful events and consequently this will increase their ability to perform their jobs effectively. The effectiveness of police officers will significantly improve human security within the Katima Mulilo town and the country at large.

1.6 Limitations of the study

An unexpected limitation of this study was that the questionnaire was long and thus most participants felt it time consuming to complete. However, this limitation was overcome by granting participants ample time to complete the questionnaire at their own pace.

Another limitation was that some words in the questionnaire were not understood by some participants. For example, words such as fatigue and insomnia were not familiar with some participants. This limitation was overcome by the researcher being always present to clarify certain unfamiliar words since she is a member of the NPF stationed at KMPS.

In addition to the limitations of the questionnaire, there were also other limitations. The consent form which required the participants to add their names and sign in order to give consent to being part of the study, presented a major challenge as most participants felt uneasy to do so. This explains why only 90 research participants ended up participating in this study from a target sample of 123.

1.7 Delimitation of the study

This study was confined to the study of the impact of stress on police officers. The study focused on the case study of the Katima Mulilo Police Station only. This means that the data used for this study was collected from the members of the Namibian Police Force assigned to KMPS only. However, the results can be generalised to other police stations in Namibia because police work is universal and the challenges faced by police officers elsewhere in Namibia are similar to those faced by police officers working at KMPS.

1.8 Definition of key terms

Stress: Al-Makhaita *et al.,* (2014) define work stress as the harmful, physical and emotional responses that occur when the demands of the job do not correspond with the competencies or needs of the work.

Police Officer: In the context of this study a police officer is a person whose job is to enforce laws, investigate crimes, and make arrests.

1.9 Structure of the Mini-Thesis

This mini thesis is structured in five chapters as follows:

1. Chapter one: Introduced the study and explained the problem statement as well as research objectives and significance of the study. This chapter also explained the limitations and delimitations of the study.

2. Chapter two: Reviews literature on the impact of stress among police officers. It covers overview of stress, theoretical framework, causes of stress and strategies on how to mitigate stress levels experienced by police officers.

3. Chapter three: Discusses the research methodology that was adopted in this study. This chapter covers the research design, data collection procedures, the instrument for data collection, the population of the study, the sample size and sampling technique as well as the method of data analysis.

4. Chapter four: Presents the findings of the study and a detailed discussion of the results that were collected through the questionnaires.

5. Chapter five: Summarises the study by giving key findings of the study and gives recommendations and the conclusion of the study.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the study by giving the background to the study and also provided the problem statement, significance of the study, the objectives of the study, as well as the limitations and delimitations of the study. The next chapter reviews relevant literature regarding stress.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the study by giving the background to the study and the problem statement together with the research objectives as well as the significance of the study. This chapter reviews relevant literature on stress. It further covers an overview of stress, types of stress, theoretical framework, causes of stress among police officers, impact of stress on the well-being and performance of police officers, the strategies of dealing with stress among police officers, and finally a summary of the chapter.

2.2. Overview of work stress

According to Ajaganandam, Rajan & Ravichandran (2013) human stress dates back to ancient times. During the 14th century, stress was associated with hardships, adversity and afflictions experienced by people (Kangunga, 2016). This means that any form of hardship, adversity and affliction that human beings suffer would be categorised as stress. This also means that any hardships, adversity or affliction that a person can be subjected to may lead to stress. Work stress is a harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker (Maxwell, 2012). According to Maxwell (2012), stress is manifested in employees through constant headaches, aches, pains, sleep disturbance, insomnia, stomach upsets, anxiety, depression, and heart diseases. Related to the definition offered by Maxwell (2012), Hutton and

Mwansa (2015) define stress as any psychosomatic reaction to conditions which wield more pressure on employees than their capacity to handle it. Al-Makhaita, Sabra & Hafez (2014) define work stress as the harmful, physical and emotional responses that occur when the demands of the job do not correspond with the competencies or needs of the work. According to Al-Makhaita *et al.*, (2014) the effects of stress can be categorized as mental, physical, behavioural and cognitive. This can be seen in the poor physical and mental health of the employees. These impacts manifest in poor attendance and less commitment to work, less productivity, distress and irritability (Al-Makhaita, Sabra, & Hafez, 2014). This in turn results in the organisation being unsuccessful in the competitive market and portraying a poor image to stakeholders (Al-Makhaita, Sabra, & Hafez, 2014). Wainwright and Calnan (2002) describe stress as a physical and mental reaction to a perceived challenge. Wainwright and Calnan (2002) further allude that stress is the body's psychological, emotional, and physiological responses to any demand that is perceived as threatening to a person's well-being. According to Ahmad, Hussain, Saleem & Qureshi (2015) stress occurs due to demand that exceeds the individual's coping ability, hence, disrupting his or her psychological equilibrium.

Stress is inescapable and part of daily life and is prevalent in the work environment (Blaug, Kenyon & Lekhi, 2007). Work related stress occurs when there is a mismatch between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands (Blaug, Kenyon, & Lekhi, 2007). Although stress is generally perceived in a negative sense, some scholars believe that a certain level of stress is needed to motivate people to work hard. A moderate

amount of stress helps to motivate people to achieve great feats such as passing exams and winning medals in competitive matches. According to Khamisa, Oldenburg, Peltzer and Ilic (2015) stress can manifest itself in both a positive way and a negative way. Stress is said to be positive when a situation offers an opportunity for one to gain something and it is negative when stress is associated with heart-disease, alcoholism, drug abuse, marital breakdowns, absenteeism, child abuse and a host of other social, physical, organisational and emotional problems (Khamisa *et al.*, 2015).

Psychologically, stress is experienced when one perceives a threat and the fight or flight response is called for (Schub, 2015). This perception is an interpretation that one makes within oneself towards the external factors. For example, when a police officer is tasked to track armed robbers, he or she may be frightened. Fright is a psychological reaction which contributes to stress of oneself. The reaction is one's own and is not dictated by the armed robbers. This choice or reaction is made largely unconsciously on the basis of one's beliefs about the external situation in general, what one has heard about armed robbers, what one sees about the characteristics of the armed robbers and so on.

For the purposes of this study, the definition of stress, as mentioned in chapter one and defined by (Al-Makhaita, Sabra, & Hafez, 2014) will be used as the basis for this study. In relation to the work context, the definition states that work stress is "the harmful, physical and emotional responses that occur when the demands of the job do not correspond with the competencies or needs of the work". The first part of the definition - harmful physical responses includes dizziness, headache, heart

pounding, stomach distress, heart disease. These are said to be harmful as they hinder an employee from performing his or her tasks to the full potential. The second part - emotional responses consists of the physiological reactions to stimulus. These include anger, anxiety, and bad mood, frustration with the job or people and poor job attitude. Job demands are viewed as the physical or emotional stressors in a worker's role (Al-Makhaita, Sabra, & Hafez, 2014).

2.3. Types of stress

There are three types of stress identified by Legg (2016) and Ajaganandam *et al*., (2013). According to these authors, the three types of stress are acute, episodic acute, and chronic stress. Each of these three types of stress is briefly explained hereunder.

Acute stress

According to Legg (2016) acute stress can be described as: when the body immediately reacts to a new challenge, event, or demand and it triggers one to a fight-or-flight response. For example, as the pressures of an argument or misunderstanding with a family member or workmate, or a costly mistake at work sinks in, one's body turns on this biological response (Legg, 2016).

Episodic acute stress

Ajaganandam *et al*., (2013) stipulated that, when acute stress happens frequently, it's called episodic acute stress. People who always seem to be having a crisis tend to have episodic acute stress (Ajaganandam *et al*., 2013). According to Ajaganandam *et al*., (2013), people suffering from episodic acute stress tend to be short-tempered, irritable, and anxious. Negative health effects are persistent in people with episodic acute stress (Ajaganandam, Rajan, & Ravichandran, 2013).

Chronic stress

According to Legg (2016), if acute stress isn't resolved and begins to increase or lasts for long periods of time, it becomes chronic stress. This stress is constant and doesn't go away. It can lead to aspects such as a dysfunctional family, an unhappy marriage, and unpleasant relationships at work. According to Legg (2016), this type of stress can be detrimental to an individual's health as it can contribute to several serious diseases or health risks, such as heart disease, cancer, lung disease, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver and suicide.

2.4. Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Human Security Theory and Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory (GST). According to Amartya (2013), there are essentially seven issues associated with human security. The authenticity of the human security theory was derived from its three categories: health security, community security and environmental security. These three categories are related to the impact of stress on the members of the Namibian Police Force. Wiese, Rothmann and Storm (2003) argue that institutions that undertake to protect human security will not be able to promote every aspect of human well-being, but at the very least they must protect the core of people's lives.

2.4.1. Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory (GST)

The General Strain Theory (GST) was developed by Robert Agnew in 1992 (Broidy, 2011). In relation to this theory, stress and strains of police officers impact their emotions and how they treat others (Broidy, 2011). Quoting Robert Agnew, Broidy

(2011) points out that the strains or stressors of police officers tend to increase negative emotions such as frustration and anger. The GST theory suggests that emotions that police officers go through in the course of their work stimulate pressure for corrective action, and crime is one possible response. The GST helps to explain the relationship between the stress experienced by police officers and its impact in relation to other people. The components of GST provide some guidance as to how police officers deal with the stress imposed on them by the very nature of their career. The GST was originally used to explain delinquency and criminality. Regarding policing, Padilla (2016) outlines that the first strain - the inability to achieve positively valued goals can include instances such as not receiving a promotion, not getting an arrest, or something as simple as not receiving praise for following protocol. This lack of support from supervisors tends to be a major source of strain for police officers (Padilla, 2016).

The second source of strain - the loss of positively valued stimuli, can be seen in policing in the form of a suspension, a demotion, or a chastising from an individual's superior (Padilla, 2016). The final source of strain, the presentation of negatively valued or aversive stimuli, can appear in policing in the form of an injury obtained in the field or a civil suit (Padilla, 2016). According to Padilla (2016), police officers are vulnerable to stress and due to the significance of their duty, have to be able to deal with stress and stressful environments that are inherent to their job of providing human security.

2.4.2. Principles of Human Security

The Human Security Theory came into being in 1994 following the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report (UNDP-HDR) of 1994. Quoting the United Nations Development Programme Report, Kop, Euwema, and Schaufeli (1999) postulate that, from an operational perspective, human security aims to address complex situations of insecurity through collaborative, responsive and sustainable measures that are people-centred, multispectral, comprehensive, context-specific, and prevention-oriented.

Human security employs a hybrid approach that brings together these elements through a protection and empowerment framework. Subsequently each human security principle informs the human security approach and must be integrated into the design of a human security programme (Kop *et al.*, 1999). The table summarises the principles of the Human Security Theory along with human security approaches that need to be implemented in order to ensure human security. Human security recognises that people and communities are fatally threatened by events well beyond their control; a financial crisis, a violent conflict, AIDS, a national policy that undercuts public and private investments in health care, a terrorist attack, water shortages, chronic destitution or pollution in a distant land (Kop *et al.*, 1999).

Table 2.4.1. Human Security Theory

Human Security Principle	**Human Security Approach**
People-centred	• Inclusive and participatory

Human Security Principle	Human Security Approach
	• Considers individuals and communities in defining their needs/vulnerabilities and in acting as active agents of change. • Collectively determines which insecurities to address and identifies the available resources including local assets and indigenous coping mechanisms
Comprehensive	• Holistic analysis: The seven security components of human security • Addresses the wide spectrum of threats, vulnerabilities and capacities • Analysis of actors and sectors not previously considered relevant to the success of a policy/programme • Develops multi-sectoral/multi-actor responses
Context-specific	• Requires in-depth analysis of the targeted situation • Focuses on a core set of freedoms and rights under threat in a given situation • Identifies the concrete needs of the affected community(ies) and enables the development of more appropriate solutions that are embedded in local realities, capacities and coping mechanisms • Takes into account local, national, regional and global dimensions and their impact on the targeted situation
Prevention-oriented	• Identifies risks, threats and hazards, and addresses their root causes. • Focuses on preventative responses through a protection and empowerment framework.

According to Kop *et al.*, (1999), UNPD-HDR recognises that many threats are far more destructive if they come as a surprise. The damage and deaths of an earthquake can be minimised by producing earthquake resistant buildings, the impoverishing effects of a financial crisis can be mitigated if countermeasures are put in place in advance. The human security approach urges institutions to offer protection, which is institutionalized, not episodic, responsive, not rigid, preventative and not reactive. In this way, people will face inevitable downturns with security (UNPD-HDR, 1994).

According to Singh (2014), if law enforcement welfare is disturbed, the aspects of human security would be varied as well. Aspects such as stress upon law enforcement agents hinder police officers from maintaining all dimensions of human security smoothly.

2.5. Causes of stress among police officers

2.5.1. Job demands

Al-Makhaita *et al.,* (2014) identify demands for the job as one of the causes of stress among employees. According to Al-Makhaita *et al.,* (2014) high job demands exhaust employees' mental and physical resources and therefore lead to depletion of their energies which leads to health problems. According to Al-Makhaita *et al.,* (2014) job demands comprise of time pressures, heavy workload, a stressful working environment, role ambiguity, and poor relationships. For example, fear to execute duty contributes to anxiety which later contributes to employee stress. According to Morash, Kwak and Harar (2006), police officers working in investigation departments are faced with unrealistic job demand which require them to deliver within limited timelines. Excessive paperwork involved in police work can be frustrating to police officers. According to Morash *et al.,* (2006), unrealistic job demands coupled with low promotional opportunities and poor reward system leads to stress in police officers.

2.5.2. Level of remuneration

Remuneration is one of the key factors that determine employee motivation and level of stress (Aguinis & Casio, 2014). According to Aguinis and Casio (2014),

when employees are not satisfied with the level of remuneration that they receive, they are most likely to experience stress. As stated by Hutton and Mwansa (2015), being one of the least remunerated professions; police officers are more likely to experience stress than other professionals because of the perceived meagre pay they receive in return for the sacrifices they make for their nations.

2.5.3. Nature of the work done by police officers

The nature of the work done by police officers exposes them to considerable level of stress (Pastwa-Wojciechowska & Piotrowski, 2016). According to Pastwa-Wojciechowska and Piotrowski (2016), during the course of executing their duties, police officers face verbal abuse and other forms of disrespect from suspects leading to psychological stress among police officers. Police officers are also exposed to distressing situations such as accidents, murders, exposure to injured persons, rape cases and others which affect their emotional state, hence emitting high levels of stress on police officers. Since police officers have no choice about which situations to attend to and which ones to avoid, the nature of their work put them at risk of encountering stressful situations.

According to Shah, Aziz, Jaffari, Waris, Ejaz, Fatima and Sherazi (2012) some of the stressors inherent in police work are shift work, the responsibilities for protecting others, continued exposure to injured persons, the need to keep composed even if provoked, the presence of firearms, shooting, routine and periods of inactivity and boredom, conflict, constant threat to the officers' security and safety. According to

Shah *et al.,* (2012) inherent stressors have an immense psychological effect on police officers which in effect affects the performance of police officers.

Shah *et al.,* (2012) argue that, although police officers know that their work involves exposure to traumatic situations, there is a need for emotional and psychological therapy administered to police officers after they are exposed to traumatic situations. Shah *et al.,* (2012) argue that this is the only effective way to keep police officers productive.

Carr and Umberson (2013) state that critical incidents such as shootings, mass disasters and violent crimes are distressing events for police officers that goes far beyond the experiences of the ordinary citizen. These traumatic stressors are the most obvious sources of psychological stress and are the source of most cases of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among police officers (Carr & Umberson, 2013).

According to Khamisa, Oldenburg, Peltzer and Ilic (2015), police officers generally carry out their sworn duties and responsibilities with dedication and, valour. However, some stresses are too much to take, and every officer has his or her breaking point. According to Khamisa et al. (2015), stress in police officers come in the form of a particular traumatic experiences, such as a gruesome accident or homicide, a vicious crime against a child, a close personal brush with death, the death or serious injury of a partner, the shooting of a perpetrator or innocent civilian, and grisly or large-scale crime.

According to Miller (2005), in the United States, two-thirds of police officers involved in shootings suffer moderate to severe problems. Mass disasters such as the 1989 Bay Area Earthquake, 9/11 Terrorist Attacks, and the Gulf Coast Hurricanes stressed some officers to the point of suicide (Miller, 2005). Gruesome and violent crime scenes, fatal vehicle accidents, and fires involving death or serious injury are also stressors which are easy to identify because of the intense emotional strain they have on officers (Miller, 2005).

Shift rotations are a source of police work stress that can interfere and cause problems in the personal lives and responsibilities of officers (Nicoara & Amelia, 2012). According to Nicoara and Amelia (2012), the disruptive effects of irregular work schedules on family-centred activities, school delinquency, and adjustment problems among children are a heavy price paid by the police family. According to Huda (2003) shift rotations affect the police officers' sleep patterns, hence, building even more stress on police officers leading to poor physical health and poor performance at work.

2.5.4. Relationship with the public

Another source of police stress emanates from the relationship with the public or society (Nicoara & Amelia, 2012). From the society, stress originates from a perceived lack of support from the community, public complaints against police officers, and the negative image of the media about police work and police officers as well as frequent exposure to intentional or accidental violence (Nicoara & Amelia, 2012).

Boyce (2006) states that negative publicity, distorted press accounts of incidents involving police, and allegations of brutality and racism are an external source of stress for some officers. According to Boyce (2006), negative attitudes towards police and perceived lack of support create stress for police officers. Police officers have to deal with the negative behaviour of citizens on a daily basis because some members of the general public consider police officers enemies.

As a result, they tend to isolate them and share little or no information at all with police officers. This causes stress in police officers because of isolation and the hatred that some members of the public show towards them. Negative treatment of police officers by members of the general public creates a perception among police officers that no one supports them or appreciates them for what they do (Boyce, 2006).

2.5.5. Regular court appearances

According to Arthur (2016) court appearances interfere with police officers' work assignments, personal time and even sleep schedules. Unfavourable court decisions, perceived leniency of the courts, court delays and continuances, and the release of offenders on bail, probation, or parole also lead to stress (Arthur, 2016).

2.5.6. Leadership and management style

Another source of stress among police officers is the type of leadership and management style exercised in the police force (Rakshase, 2014). According to Rakshase (2014), the key reasons for resignations of police officers are inadequate support from supervisors, poor or inadequate supervisions, low salaries, difficulty

in getting along with supervisors and excessive paperwork. According to Rakshase (2014), supervisors can be a source of stress to police officers because of unrealistic demands and failure to understand their subordinates.

According to Abbas (2011), each law enforcement organisation has its own policies and procedures, in most cases, the formulation of which law enforcement officers are not involved in. Owing to its para-militaristic nature, the police force expects police officers to implement orders of their supervisors without questioning those in authority (Abbas, 2011). This type of leadership and management style is a recipe for stress among police officers (Abbas, 2011).

2.6. Impact of stress on the well-being and performance of police officers

This section covers the impact of stress on the well-being of police officers and the effects of stress on the performance of police officers.

2.6.1. Impact of stress on the well-being of police officers

According to Pastwa-Wojciechowska and Piotrowski (2018), the great number of stressful factors at work must have numerous repercussions. With regards to these stressors, some of the consequences of police officers' occupational stress are behavioural disorders, suicides and alcoholism. According to Burke (2017), in many cases of stress within police officers, the change of behaviour can be recognised as the aftermath of stress. Some of the effects of stress on police officers are discussed hereunder.

2.6.2. Irrational behaviour

One of the main impacts of stress on police officers is a display of irrational behaviour (Shah *et al.,* 2012). According to Shah *et al.* (2012), if stress fails to be controlled, police officers' behaviour may impair the effectiveness of the organisation. The behavioural effects of stress that may impair organisational effectiveness include apathy, cynicism and passive-aggressive behaviour that deliberately undermine performance. Other forms of irrational behaviour which too have an effect on the performance of police officers is increased or excessive use of alcohol, tobacco products and drugs, increased levels of absenteeism or sick leave, increased workplace accidents, staff turnover and marital problems (Pastwa-Wojciechowska & Piotrowski, 2016).

According to Violanti (2015), owing to irrational behaviour caused by stress, the organization may suffer from police officers' increased variability in vigilance, slowed reaction time, impaired judgment, inattentiveness, deteriorations in mood and the inability to articulate and interact socially – all of which may impair judgment and performance. With regards to performance, Shane (2008) points out that as stress levels increases performance decreases leading to organisational ineffectiveness.

In an effort to find relief, studies conducted by Brown and Campbell in the early 2000s found that severe occupational stress compounded by a lack of support from colleagues and superiors leads to an increased consumption of alcohol in workers. Workers do this with the hope of reducing tension. A study by Pastwa-

Wojciechowska and Piotrowski (2016) found that police officers abuse alcohol more frequently than other occupations because of the level of stress they are exposed to. The same study showed that 25% of American police officers had an alcohol problem and 31% of police officers abuse alcohol in India. In relation to other countries, the percentage of alcohol-abusing police officers is somehow lower in Norway at 18% and Japan at 12% (Pastwa-Wojciechowska & Piotrowski, 2016). Alcohol abuse by police officers as a method of stress reduction stems from many factors (Kangunga, 2016). According to Kangunga (2016) these factors include but are not limited to conflict with superiors, organisational injustice, lack of support, punishment for even the slightest misdemeanours, insufficient rewards and low morale.

Being a member of the highly bureaucratic, paramilitary force, one lacks individuality which is different from other organisations such as in the private sector and small medium enterprises. Occupational stress, depression and poor interpersonal relationships are the factors largely contributing to dangerous alcohol abuse by police officers (Kangunga, 2016). Symptoms of depression are far more frequently observed in police officers than in the general population and unfortunately due to the nature of work, the problem of alcohol abuse in the police force is yet to be solved (Kangunga, 2016).

2.6.3. Poor health of law enforcement officers

Stress affects the health of police officers. A study by Burke (2000) found that, occupational stress leads to short-term sicknesses among police officers. The same

study found that the German police officers suffer from cardiovascular diseases as a result of heightened levels of stress. A study by Carr and Umberson (2013) reveals that stress has a negative impact on the immune system of a human being. An immune system is the body's system of defence against disease and its function is to assist the body to cope with diseases on its own (Carr & Umberson, 2013). According to Barons (2010), the human body consists of millions of white blood cells, or leukocytes, regarded as foot soldiers of the immune system. The functions of the white blood cells are to kill pathogens (producing disease) such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi, worn-out body cells, and cells that have become cancerous (Barons, 2010). The white blood cells also produce antibodies, specialised proteins which attach these foreign bodies, destroying them and making them inactive (Barons, 2010). Barons (2010) regards white blood cells as the soldiers of the body which fight against the body's enemies.

According to Colbert (2002), occasional stress may not damage the health of employees, but chronic or repetitive stress weakens the body's immune system overtime. A weakened immune system increases susceptibility to common illnesses, such as colds and flu, and possibly increases the risk of developing chronic diseases, including cancer. Colbert (2002) further elaborates that the bodies are more prone to bacterial, viral infections, allergies, and many illnesses. According to Colbert (2002), traumatic stress such as exposure to earthquakes, hurricanes, or other natural disasters, or terrorist attacks, or other forms of violence, can also dampen immunological functioning.

2.6.4. Suicide

In relation to the study conducted by Violanti (2015) the joint effect of work-related stress and alcohol consumption leads to a tenfold increase in the risk of committing suicide by a police officer. Violanti (2015) noted with concern that the rate of suicides among police officers has been increasing at an unprecedented rate globally. According to Violanti (2015), increasing demands on police officers to handle complex and changing dimensions of crime also put increasing pressure on police officers.

2.6.5. Effects of stress on performance of police officers

Sauter and Murphy (2010) observed that the main challenge faced by police officers is work-related stress which has corresponding effects on employee productivity. Productivity is output measured against unit input (Armstrong & Taylor, 2012). According to Sauter and Murphy (2010), stress makes employees sickly and unproductive. This ultimately affects their performance and productivity at work. For an employee to produce quality output, there is need for him or her to be in the right frame of mind. It therefore follows that if police officers are stressed, then the quality of their work is bound to be poor.

According to Maxwell (2012), stress reduces the ability of employees to concentrate on tasks that they do. As a result of stress which reduces employees' level of concentration, Maxwell (2012) points out that the rate of accidents at the workplace increases. Additionally, Maxwell (2012) points out that stress leads to production of faulty products which require rework, and wastage of resources. Abbas (2011)

points out that an organisation with a large proportion of its workforce experiencing stress experiences negative public image as well which has an effect on an organisation's profitability.

Employee stress increases the rate of absenteeism. According to Leka, Griffiths and Cox (2010), work related stress makes employees to dread their jobs. Therefore, in order to hide away from their jobs, employees' resort to absenteeism. According to Leka, Griffiths and Cox (2010), employees who are stressed yearn to stay away from situations that make them stressed. As employees stay away from work, the resultant effect of employee absenteeism is increased costs as an organisation may be forced to get replacement temporary employees to step in for employees who are absent. Employee absenteeism also affects the quality of service delivery by the police force.

2.7. Strategies of dealing with stress among police officers

Although Rollinson (2016) argues that stress in a police force cannot be eradicated, there are strategies that should be adopted to identify its signs and manage its effects. According to Rollinson (2016) coping strategies are classified into individual level strategies and organisational level strategies. Individual level strategies help individuals to cope with stress that they experience, and organisational strategies helps organisations to manage stress amongst employees. According to Seyle (2015), in order to avoid or reduce employee stress, organisations should identify stress creating factors and take necessary steps to eradicate them by way of changing the rules, regulations and organisational strategies.

2.7.1. Individual stress management

Individual stress management strategies discussed under this sub-section include training of employees on stress management techniques, provision of psychologists and chaplains to manage employee stress, physical exercises and taking control over one's actions and decisions.

2.7.2. Training employees on stress management

According to Seyle (2015), individual stress management can be in many forms depending on the needs and requirements of an individual officer. The major aspect of individual stress management is privacy. If the police officers believe that stress management systems expose them, it is highly likely that they will not seek assistance (Rollinson, 2016). According to Nevid, Rathus and Greene (2014), stress training should make officers aware of the resources available so that they do not have to go to supervisors or other officers to obtain the resource information. By equipping police officers with knowledge about stress management and availing the right and adequate resources to them, police officers will be able to manage their stress levels at individual level.

2.7.3. Provision of psychologists and chaplains to manage employee stress

Another strategy for managing individual stress among police officers is through provision of psychologists and chaplains to manage stress among police officers (Rollinson, 2016). Psychologists and chaplains play a vital role in reducing employee stress by recommending appropriate therapies based on individual stress

levels of police officers. One of the therapies that work in most of the cases of stress is physical activities (Rollinson, 2016).

2.7.4. Physical exercises

According to Armstrong and Taylor (2012), individual aspects such as physical fitness, proper diet and resting periods helps to manage stress. According to Rollinson (2016), physical exercises help to relieve police officers of pain, stress, and toxic thoughts. Rollinson (2016) recommends that instead of fighting the sergeant or running away from the wife, an individual police officer should kick a ball or go for a run. These aspects help individual employees to ease mind tension by diverting their thoughts to other aspects and this helps to boost the individual's immune system.

2.7.5. Taking control over one's actions and decisions

Another effective strategy for dealing with individual stress levels is taking control over one's actions and decisions (Ajaganandam, Rajan & Ravichandran, 2013). Taking control over one's actions and taking more rational decisions is one effective way of dealing with stress at individual level. According to Ajaganandam, Rajan and Ravichandran (2013), actions taken by police officers without thorough analysis of the consequences of such actions causes stress among police officers. Therefore, in order to reduce the level of employee stress in the police force, there is a need for police officers to delay taking action, if need be in order to ensure that best decisions are taken at all times. Ajaganandam, Rajan and Ravichandran (2013) are of the view

that when law enforcement officials analyse and take control of their own actions, the stress level among police officers will be kept under control.

One technique for police officers to take control over their action is to learn how to manage their time more effectively and prioritise work tasks. Another is for officers to learn to recognise situations that put them under stress and make plans for handling them so that the situations are less stressful (Ajaganandam, Rajan & Ravichandran, 2013).

2.7.6. Organisational stress management

Organisational stress management strategies discussed in this sub-section include relaxing hierarchical aspects and management styles used in paramilitary organisations such as the police, improvement of work environment, increasing budget allocation, offering of social support and educating spouses and family members of police officers, increasing salaries paid to police officers, and educating police officers and their supervisors.

2.7.7. Improving the work environment

One of the ways to counter work stress is to improve the environment. According to Maxwell (2012:53), improving the conditions of work environment, reducing noise and dust from the workplace helps to reduce the level of stress, and hence, boosting the level of performance of police officers. Since work environment is one of the causes of stress in employees, creating a conducive work environment reduces the level of stress among employees.

The work environment includes an array of factors including management style, relationship between employees, office space, workstation design and the level of cleanliness of the workplace among others. According to Leka, Griffiths and Cox (2010), to reduce work-related stress, there is need for the management of organisations to create conducive work environments which give employees job satisfaction. Leka, Griffiths and Cox (2010) suggest that the work environment should be kept clean, and management should create spacious offices for employees, encourage open communication between employees and management, promote job rotation and adopt an appropriate management style.

2.7.8. Increasing budget allocation

Abbas (2011) suggests that in order to mitigate stress level among police officers, there is need for proper budget allocation for the police force in order to enable it carry out its mandate with ease. Abbas (2011) argues that appropriate budget allocation enables the police to undertake all its functions effectively. For an organisation to be able to fulfil its mandate, there is need for adequate funding. For police officers to be able to effectively carry out their professional duties, there is a need for specialized facilities which require money.

2.7.9. Increasing salaries paid to police officers

To ensure an acceptable level of employee productivity, Hutton and Mwansa (2015) recommend that employers should increase the salaries paid to employees, improve the safety of employees and provide employees with resources such as cars, machines and other specialised tools that aid them to perform their jobs efficiently

and effectively. Hutton and Mwansa (2015) recognise that better performance of employees depends on the ability of employers to pay their employees an acceptable level of salaries, and to provide them with necessary tools to aid their work. This view is shared by Aguinis and Casio (2014) who state that employees' productivity depends on the tools at the disposal of employees.

According to Aguinis and Casio (2014), employees who are well-trained but lack the necessary tools to perform tasks in their jobs are rendered less-productive. Therefore, in the police force there is a need for police officers to be paid an acceptable level of salaries in order to motivate them to work hard.

2.7.10. Offering of social support and educating spouses and family members of police officers

Spouses and family members of police officers determine whether or not people in the law enforcement career succeed (Pastwa-Wojciechowska & Piotrowski, 2016). According to Shchuka (2010), the work-related stress of employees does not only affect the performance of such employees at work but also family relations. Owing to the above assertion, Boyce (2006) suggests that families and spouses of police officers should be trained to recognise early warning signs of stress and learn techniques of reducing it in order to control its adverse effects on the career performance of police officers. Boyce (2006) suggests the introduction of orientation seminars for spouses of police officers that would help them understand the nature of the work done by police officers. Boyce (2006) further suggests counselling by psychologists and chaplains in order to buttress the understanding of stress within officers' families. According to Toch (2002), police appreciation

dinners and family fun activities could help families feel like they are a part of the big police family.

Police officers should also be given adequate social support by their family members. According to Toch (2002), social support is one of the best moderators of stress. Carr and Umberson (2013) define social support as the functions performed for an individual by significant others, including family, friends, and colleagues. Social support is used as a way of coping with stress by discussing stressful situations with colleagues, peers, family members and friends (Carr & Umberson, 2013).

2.7.11. Educating officers and supervisors

The effects and symptoms of stress vary from one police officer to another and from one station to another (Boyce, 2006). According to Boyce (2006), personality, years of service, level of education, and use of coping strategies, are personal characteristics which affect stress levels. Social support structure, the intensity of the stressful event, and unique features of the organization can also affect the level of stress. Officers react to situations presented in different ways. Something that may severely stress one officer may not stress another officer in the same way. Boyce (2006) stipulated that, stress is referred to as the silent killer or the hidden assailant because we are often unaware of its effects and often don't even realize we are under stress until it is too late. Given the above scenario, every officer and supervisor should be trained to recognise and manage stress in order to avoid serious effects (Boyce, 2006).

Besides educating officers and supervisors on the effects and symptoms of stress, officers should also be trained regularly in stress management (Boyce, 2006). Rakshase (2014) postulates that training police officers to cope with stressful work events particularly organisational work events found in the work environment is a good strategy to prepare police officers for the worst situations and equipping them with techniques on how to effectively manage those situations. Rakshase (2014) suggests that management intervention for police officers should include training police officers in coping strategies and appropriate interventions to be taken in different situations.

2.8. Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature on stress and its impact on the wellbeing and performance of police officers. The literature reveals that police officers are exposed to traumatic situations and events in the course of carrying out their duties causing them stress. Besides the nature of their work, police officers are also stressed because of poor pay, autocratic leadership and negative public perception about police officers.

In terms of effects of stress on police officers, the literature reveals that stress affects both the wellbeing and performance of police officers. Police officers tend to display irrational behaviour such as excessive drinking and smoking as an antidote to stress and are generally in poor health. The next chapter covers the research methodology that was adopted in this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the literature on stress and its effects on employee performance. This chapter covers the research methodology that was adopted in carrying out this study. This chapter covers the research design that was adopted, the characteristics of the population under investigation, sample size and sampling techniques applied, the research instrument, procedure for data collection, data analysis and finally, research ethics that were observed when conducting this study.

3.2. Research design

Research design is an overall strategy used to integrate the different constituents of a study in a logical manner in order to guide the study (Creswell, 2014). There are three research designs that scholars can adopt to carry out their studies. These are qualitative, quantitative and mixed research methods. Quantitative research involves the analysis of numerical and quantifiable data (Creswell, 2014).

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2012), quantitative research is used for testing the relationships between given variables and the main tool used in quantitative research is a questionnaire. The quantitative approach is used when analysing numerical data collected from a large population size. The qualitative research approach is an approach used for exploring and understanding the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014).

The mixed research approach is an approach that uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The quantitative research approach was adopted in this study because the research used a large sample size of 90 research participants in order to gain understanding of the impact of stress on the performance of police officers at Katima Mulilo Police Station.

3.3. Study population

Population refers to all the elements or individuals who meet the criteria of being included in a study (Creswell, 2014). The population for this study was made up of 179 Namibian Police Force (NPF) officers deployed at KMPS. NPF falls under the Ministry of Safety and Security and has a total population of over 16000 police officers working in different departments and directorates all over the country. The researcher chose to conduct this study on a population of 179 police officers working in Katima Mulilo Police Station because the researcher is also a police officer stationed at KMPS.

3.4. Sample size and sampling techniques

A sample is a subset of the population that is selected for analysis while sampling refers to the various techniques used by researchers to select the sample (Creswell, 2014). Sampling methods are divided into two: probability sampling and non-probability sampling methods. Probability sampling is a selection of the sample from a population that is done randomly, and every member of the population has the same chance of being chosen.

Non-probability sampling is a sampling method based on a specific criterion decided by the researcher (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012). This study used simple random probability sampling to select a sample of 123 research participants in order to give a fair chance to all police officers to be included in this study. Although the target sample for this study was 123 police officers, only 90 questionnaires were answered and successfully retrieved representing a response rate of 73%. This response rate was large enough to provide the data needed for the completion of this study.

3.5. The research Instrument

For the purpose of data gathering, the researcher used a questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaires were given to the participating police officers at KMPS to complete. A questionnaire was used because it is cost effective and time saving in gathering perceptions of Police Officers with regards to the impact of stress at KMPS.

3.6. Procedure

The participants were solicited through their shift commanders. The KMPS has four shifts, therefore, participants were addressed by their shift commanders on the parade about the purpose of the research and that their cooperation was important. The data was collected through self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaires were left with the police officers so that they could complete it at their own appropriate time. Questionnaires were later collected at the agreed date prior to filing them. The questionnaires were administered during working hours between 8am to 5 pm.

3.7. Data analysis

Quantitative data which was collected from respondents was summarised to give a clear meaning to the findings of the study and advanced excel was used to analyse the data. The data was summarised to help the researcher understand and interpret the data from the respondents. Graphs, tables, and charts were used for data presentation because they summarise a large amount of data in a visual and easily interpretable format.

3.8. Research Ethics

The ethical considerations that were considered in this study included the fundamental ethical principles such as ensuring participant privacy and obtaining informed consent from the research subjects. To protect the research participants, personal data or information, anonymity and confidentiality were maintained. Personal information of research participants will not be shared with third parties.

It is for this reason that personal information of research participants such as names, cellphone numbers and residential addresses were not solicited. To ensure that data was collected from participants who were willing to participate in this study out of their own will, the researcher explained to the selected sample that they had the liberty to discontinue should they have felt uncomfortable continuing with the study. Additionally, permission to conduct this study was sought from the University of Namibia and clearance was also obtained from the Inspector General of the Namibian Police Force.

3.9. Summary

This chapter presented the research methodology that was used in this study. It adopted the quantitative research method and used simple random probability sampling to select a sample of 123 research participants although only 90 research questionnaires were eventually collected. This chapter also explained research ethics which were observed in conducting this study. The next chapter presents, analyses and discusses research results obtained from a sample of 90 research participants on the impact of stress on Namibian police officers.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Introduction

Chapter three presented the research methodology that was adopted for this study. This chapter presents and analyses results obtained from a total sample of 90 police officers selected from Katima Mulilo Police Station (KMPS) on the impact of stress on Namibian police officers. This study targeted to study 123 police officers but only 90 police officers eventually participated in this study. The analysis is therefore based on responses obtained from 90 research participants. This chapter covers biographical information of research participants, data presentation and analysis, discussion of research results in relation to existing literature, and finally presents chapter summary.

4.2. Biographical information of research participants

Table 4.2.1 below shows gender and rank analysis of police officers who participated in this study.

Table 4.2.1. Gender and rank analysis of research participants

	Male	**Female**	**Total**
Inspectors	2 (2.22%)	0 (0%)	2 (2.22%)
Warrant Officer 1	3 (3.33%)	2 (2.22%)	5 (5.56%)
Warrant Officer 2	9 (10%)	8 (8.89%)	17 (18.89%)
Sergeant 1	11 (12.22%)	8 (8.89%)	19 (21.11%)
Sergeant 2	12 (13.33%)	7 (7.78%)	19 (21.11%)
Constable	15 (16.67%)	13 (14.44%)	28 (31.11%)
Total	**52 (57.78%)**	**38 (42.22%)**	**90 (100%)**

Table 4.2.1 above shows that more male than female participants took part in this study. From a sample of 90 research participants, 57.78% were male while the remaining 42.22% were female police officers. Jobs in security circles have traditionally been regarded as masculine jobs and therefore, male dominance in terms of numbers in security jobs remains a norm in the contemporary world. It is therefore not surprising that more male police officers took part in this study than their female counterparts.

In terms of rank representation in this study, most of the ranks in the current Namibian Police set up were represented in this study. Although this study attempted to get views from officers occupying different ranks within NPF, the most represented rank was Police Constable and the least represented were at the level of Police Inspectors.

Constable level is the entry position in the current NPF's structure. By incorporating ideas and experiences about stress from diverse ranks within NPF, the researcher aimed at getting a balanced perspective regarding stress from all rank and file within NPF. From table 4.1 above, out of 90 research participants, 31.11% were at the rank of Police Constables, 21.11% were at the rank of Police Sergeant 2, another 21.11% were at the rank of Police Sergeant 1, 18.89% were at the rank of Warrant Officer 2, 5.56% were at the rank of Warrant Officer 1 and the remaining 2.2% were at the rank of Police Inspectors.

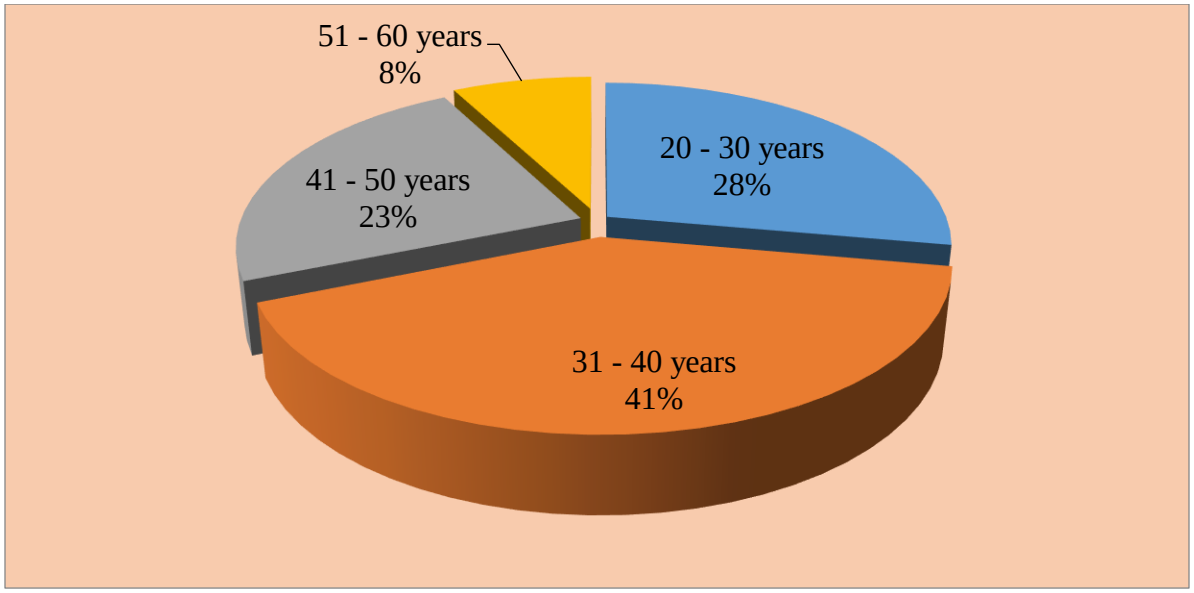

Figure 4.2-1. Age distribution of research participants

Figure 4.1 above depicts that the majority of participants who took part in this study were aged between 31 and 41 years and the least represented age group was between 51 and 60 years. From the figure above, 28% of the research participants were aged between 20 and 30 years, 41% were aged between 31 and 40 years, 23% were aged between 41 and 50 years and the remaining 8% were aged between 51 and 60 years.

4.2.1. Work experience of research participants

Table 4.2 below shows the number of years of work experience of police officers. The table further shows the number of years of work experience per category of research participants.

Table 4.2.2. Work experience of research participants

Number of years	Inspectors	Warrant Officers 1	Warrant Officers 2	Sergeant 1	Sergeant 2	Constables	Total
0 – 6	0% (0)	2% (2)	0% (0)	8% (7)	8% (7)	13% (12)	(31%) 28
7 – 12	0% (0)	3% (3)	9% (8)	10% (9)	9% (8)	9% (8)	(40%) 36
13 – 18	2% (2)	0% (0)	10% (9)	3% (3)	2% (2)	9% (8)	(27%) 24

Over 18	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	2% (2)	0% (0)	(2%) 2

The above results show that most participants who took part in this study had work experience at NPF of between 7 and 12 years. As indicated in the table above, 31% of police officers who were selected to participate in this study had work experience of between 0 and 6 years, 40% had work experience of between 7 and 12 years, 27% had work experience of between 13 and 18 years and the remaining 2% had worked for NPF for a period longer than 18 years. Additionally, the above statistics show that promotion to the rank of police inspectors requires long working experience since all the police inspectors sampled had worked for a period of between 13 and 18 years at NPF.

4.3. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.3.1. Research participants' level of awareness about stress

The first set of questions sought to probe the awareness level of police officers about stress. Participants were given three options to choose from. The options were Yes, No or Not sure. The summary of responses for each item tested are reflected in table 4.3.1 below.

Table 4.3.1. Respondents' awareness about stress

Awareness Issue	Yes	Not Sure	No
Does stress have a negative impact on your performance?	86 (95.56%)	1 (1.11%)	3 (3.33%)
Have you experienced any of the above symptoms due to stress?	82 (91.11%)	3 (3.33%)	5 (5.56%)
Is a bout of anger and hostility a symptom of stress?	81 (90%)	4 (4.44%)	5 (5.56%)

Awareness Issue	Yes	Not Sure	No
Are worry, anxiety and phobias symptoms of stress?	80 (88.89%)	4 (4.44%)	6 (6.67%)
Is fatigue a symptom of stress?	77 (85.56%)	4 (4.44%)	7 (7.78%)
Are you aware of the symptoms of stress?	76 (84.44%)	9 (10%)	5 (5.56%)
Does your work environment cause stress?	75 (83.33%)	3 (3.33%)	12 (13.33%)
Are constant headaches symptoms of stress?	65 (72.22%)	16 (17.78%)	9 (10%)
Are tense muscles, sore neck and back symptoms of stress?	62 (68.89%)	18 (20%)	10 (11.11%)
Is the feeling of irritation a symptom of stress?	56 (62.22%)	31 (34.44%)	3 (3.33%)
Are restlessness, itching and tics symptoms of stress?	37 (41.11%)	35 (38.89%)	18 (20%)
Are diarrhea, cramps, gas and constipation symptoms of stress?	34 (37.78%)	11 (12.22%)	45 (50%)
Is insomnia a symptom of stress?	27 (30%)	56 (62.22%)	7 (7.78%)

Responses obtained from research participants show that police officers in KMPS have a high level of awareness about stress. Participants were aware about the symptoms and the possible effects of stress on employees. From the table above, 95.56% of research participants were aware that stress negatively affects the performance of police officers; 91.11% experienced declined performance as a result of stress.

90% were aware that bouts of anger and hostility are signs of stress; 88.89% were aware that worry, anxiety and phobia are signs of stress. 85.56% were aware that

fatigue is a sign of stress; 83.33% were aware that an unconducive work environment causes stress, 72.22% were aware that headaches are a sign of stress. 68.89% indicated that tense muscles, a sore neck and back are symptoms of stress; and 62.22% indicated that irritation is a sign of stress. Participants however refuted the assertion that restlessness, itching, diarrhoea, cramps, constipation and insomnia are symptoms of stress.

Knowledge about signs of stress is the first step of overcoming stress. When employees know that they are suffering from stress, they are most likely to seek for help from professional people like police officers, counsellors, and medical practitioners. Early treatment of stress ensures a productive workforce.

4.2.5. Causes of stress among police officers working at KMPS

Research participants were asked their views about possible causes of stress among police officers working in Katima Mulilo Police Station. In this particular question, participants were required to show their degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the statements provided using the following legend: SD = Strongly agree; A = Agree; NS = Not sure; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly disagree. Summary of the responses is displayed in the following table.

Table 4.3.2. Respondents' awareness about stress

	SA	A	NS	D	SD
Overtime demands causes stress	28(31.11%)	27(30%)	13(14.44%)	16(17.78%)	4(4.44%)
Low remuneration and allowances paid to police officers makes me stressed	35 (38.89%)	32(35.56%)	17(18.89%)	5(5.56%)	1(1.11%)
Striving to uphold exemplary image in public causes stress	33(36.67%)	24 (26.67%)	14(15.56%)	8(8.89%)	9(10%)

The nature of my work makes me feel stressed	29(32.22%)	29(32.22%)	15(16.67%)	12(13.33%)	5(5.56%)
The feeling of being on the job always causes stress	1(1.11%)	12(13.33%)	6(6.67%)	54(60%)	17(18.89%)
Working alone at night causes stress	33(36.67%)	38(42.22%)	14(15.56%)	4(4.44%)	1(1.11%)
Lack of understanding of the nature of my work by my family causes stress	33(36.67%)	42(46.67%)	12(13.33%)	1(1.11%)	2(2.22%)

Results from table 4.4 above show that stress among police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police Station is caused by overtime work, low remuneration and allowances paid to police officers, striving to uphold exemplary public image, the nature of the work done by police officers, working alone at night, and lack of understanding of the nature of work done by police officers by their family members.

When research participants were asked to give their views about the effect of overtime work on the stress level of employees, 31.11% of the research participants strongly agreed, 30% agreed, 14.44% were not sure of whether or not, 17.78% disagreed, and the remaining 4.44% strongly disagreed that overtime work causes stress among police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police Station. Employees need to have a balance between family, social and work life. If employees are deprived of their social and family time because of constantly working overtime, an employee is most likely to experience stress. According to Leka, Griffiths, & Cox (2010), increased workload which requires employees to work overtime is likely to cause stress among employees. Leka et al. (2010) point out that constant overtime work deprives employees of the precious time needed

for them to relax their minds. The feeling of being deprived of one's leisure time because of overtime work causes employees to develop stress.

Regarding the effect of the level of remuneration and other allowances paid to police officers on employee stress, the majority of research participants alluded that low remuneration and other employment benefits is one of the causes of stress among police officers working at KPMS. From a sample of 90 research participants, 38.89% strongly agreed, 35.56% agreed, 18.89% were not sure of whether or not, 5.56% disagreed and the remaining 1.11% strongly disagreed that low remuneration and poor employee allowances is one of the stress factors among police officers working at KMPS. The above statistics reveal that poor remuneration is one of the risk factors of stress among police officers at KMPS. According to Maxwell (2012), an employee is motivated by the rewards that he or she receives from offering his or her services. Maxwell (2012) reasons that, when an employee is unable to derive satisfaction from the rewards for his or services, the employees are more likely to become stressed because they have to think of alternative ways about how to meet their needs.

Regarding as to whether or not striving to uphold an exemplary public image causes stress among police officers working at KMPS, there was a high degree of agreement among research participants that the striving by police officers to uphold an exemplary public image causes them stress. From a sample of 90 research participants, 36.67% strongly agreed, 26.67% agreed, 15.56% were not sure of whether or not they agreed with the statement, 8.89% disagreed and the

remaining 10% strongly disagreed that striving by police officers to uphold a good public image causes stress among police officers working at KMPS.

When research participants were asked whether or not the nature of work done by police officers makes them to feel stressed, the majority of research participants answered in the affirmative. From a sample of 90 research participants, 32.22% strongly agreed, another 32.22% agreed, 16.67% were not sure of whether or not they agreed, 13.33% disagreed and the remaining 5.56% strongly disagreed that the nature of work done by police officers causes them stress. According to Shchuka (2010), police officers and other security employees like the soldiers are exposed to deplorable work conditions which increase the risk of stress among employees of security agencies.

According to Shchuka (2010), police officers work for long hours, have to deal with emotionally and psychologically draining situations like responding to accidents, murder cases and other deploring scenes. Therefore, due to poor working conditions and working in hostile environments, police personnel are more likely to get stressed and get affected by other psychological problems.

When asked about whether or not working alone at night causes employee stress among NPF employees working at KMPS, 36.67% strongly agreed, 42.22% agreed, 15.56% were not sure of whether or not they agreed, 4.44% disagreed and the remaining 1.11% strongly disagreed that working alone at night causes stress among police officers working at KMPS. From these responses, it is evident that

fear of working at night because of the risks it poses to the lives of police officers causes stress among police officers.

Police officers can get killed by robbers especially if they are working alone. It is therefore prudent to conclude that the volatile nature of the work done by police officers exposes them to considerable risk of losing their lives and this causes them stress. According to Shchuka (2010), risk involved in the work of police officers exposes them to high levels of stress.

Lastly, research participants were asked whether or not a lack of understanding of the nature of the job done by police officers by their family members leads to stress. The majority of research participants indicated that the failure by their family members to understand the nature of their jobs causes them stress. From a sample of 90 research participants, 36.67% strongly agreed, 46.67% agreed, 13.33% were not sure of whether or not they agreed, 1.11% disagreed and the remaining 2.22% strongly disagreed that failure by their family members to understand the nature of their work causes them stress.

4.2.6. Other causes of stress among police officers working at KMPS

Besides the above causes of stress, research participants were asked to identify other factors that cause stress among police officers working at KMPS. Research participants identified favouritism in promotion of employees at NPF, excessive administrative duties, shortage of staff, lack of training on how to use new equipment, poor remuneration, poor leadership style exercised by commanders, and

pressure on police officers to surrender their free time for official work as some of the stress factors experienced by police officers working at KMPS.

4.2.7. Effects of stress on employee performance at KMPS

Research participants were asked their views about the impact of stress on employee performance at Katima Mulilo Police Station. Participants were required to show their degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the effects of stress on employee performance. The following legend was used: SA = Strongly agree; A= Agree; NS = Not sure; D = Disagree; SD = strongly disagree

Summary of the responses obtained from research participants is displayed in the following Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.3.3. Effects of stress on the performance and well-being of police officers at KMPS

	SA	A	NS	D	SD
Stress has a negative impact on performance	36(40%)	35(38.89 %)	9(10%)	8(8.89%)	2(2.22%)
Stress reduces my ability to do my work effectively	54(60%)	30(33.33 %)	5(5.56%)	1(1.11%)	0(0%)
I cannot perform to the best of my ability when under stress	68(75.56 %)	17(18.89 %)	3(3.33%)	1(1.11%)	1(1.11%)
Stress makes me to be rude towards colleagues and community	32(35.56 %)	30(33.33 %)	12(13.33 %)	9(10%)	7(7.78%)
Stress makes me not focus on my work	53(58.89 %)	29(32.22 %)	6(6.67%)	1(1.11%)	1(1.11%)
I sometimes feel like going on AWOL when I am stressed	20(22.22 %)	51(56.67 %)	11(12.22 %)	8(8.89%)	0(0%)

stress makes me lose enthusiasm in my work	68(75.56 %)	17(18.89 %)	3(3.33%)	1(1.11%)	1(1.11%)
Stress makes me sickly	37(41.11 %)	45(50%)	0 (0%)	8(8.89%)	0(0%)
Stress makes me to contemplate suicide	3(3.33%)	12(13.33 %)	0 (0%)	64(71.11 %)	9(10%)
Stress makes me to drink excessively and sometimes to smoke	25(27.78 %)	43(47.77 %)	0 (0%)	22(24.44 %)	0(0%)

Table 4.5 above shows that stress negatively affects the performance of police officers deployed at KMPS. The above statistics show that stress negatively affects the performance of employees by reducing the ability of employees to perform their duties, makes employees rude with their colleagues, hence creating a toxic work environment, makes employees lose focus on their work, reduces the effectiveness of employees, creates the need for employees to keep away from work without official leave, and makes employees lose enthusiasm in their work. The above statistics also show that stress makes employees work below their potential.

In relation to the wellbeing and health of police officers, the above statistics show that stress makes police officers feel sickly, makes a small proportion of them contemplate suicide and makes them drink excessively in order to seek temporary relief from stress. When research participants were asked about the impact of stress on employee performance, the research participants alluded that stress negatively affects employee performance at KMPS. From a sample of 90 research participants, 40% strongly agreed, 38.89% agreed, 10% were not sure of whether or not they

agree, 8.89% disagreed and the remaining 2.22% strongly disagreed with the assertion that stress has a negative impact on employee performance at KMPS.

As regards the impact of stress on the ability of police officers at KMPS to perform their duties effectively, 60% of the research participants strongly agreed, 33.33% agreed, 5.56% were not sure of whether or not they agree, and the remaining 1.11% disagreed with the assertion that stress reduces the ability of employees to perform their duties effectively.

When research participants were asked about whether or not stress makes them become rude towards their colleague, 35.56% of the research participants strongly agreed, 33.33% agreed, 13.33% were not sure of whether or not they agree, 10% disagreed and the remaining 7.78% strongly disagreed with the assertion that stress makes police officers to behave in a rude manner towards their colleagues and towards community members where they serve.

When selected respondents were asked about the impact of stress on their ability, 75.56% of the research participants strongly agreed, 18.89% agreed, 3.33% were not sure of whether or not they agree, 1.11% disagreed and the remaining 1.11% strongly disagreed with the statement that police officers are not able to perform to the best of their abilities as a result of stress.

As regards as to whether or not stress makes police officers working at KMPS lose focus of their work, 58.89% of the research participants strongly agreed, 32.22%

agreed, 6.67% were not sure of whether or not they agree, 1.11% disagreed and another 1.11% strongly objected to the statement that stress makes police working at KMPS lose focus of their work.

When research participants were asked about the impact of stress on employee absenteeism, 22.22% of the research participants strongly agreed, 56.67% agreed, 12.22% were not sure of whether or not, and the remaining 8.89% disagreed with the statement that stress sometimes makes them experience a feeling of being absent from work without official leave.

When research participants were asked about the impact of stress on the level of employee enthusiasm, 75.56% of the research participants strongly agreed, 18.89% agreed, 3.33% were not sure of whether or not they agree, 1.11% disagreed and another 1.11% strongly disagreed with the statement that stress sometimes makes employees lose enthusiasm in their work.

When research participants were asked whether or not stress makes them feel sickly, 41.11% of the research participants strongly agreed, 50% agreed, and the remaining 8.89% disagreed that stress experienced by police officers at KMPS makes them feel sickly.

When research participants were asked about whether or not stress makes them contemplate suicide, the majority of police officers answered in the negative. From a sample of 90 research participants, 3.33% strongly agreed, 13.33% agreed, 71.11%

disagreed and the remaining 10% strongly disagreed that stress makes them contemplate suicide.

On the aspect of whether or not stress makes police officers drink excessively and sometimes to smoke in order to relieve themselves from stress, the majority of research participants indicated that they indeed engaged in some form of irrational behaviour in order to seek temporary solutions from the stress which they experience because of their work. From a sample of 90 research participants, 27.78% strongly agreed, 47.77% agreed, and the remaining 24.44% disagreed that stress makes them drink excessively and to sometimes smoke.

2.7.8. Effectiveness of the social services unit of NPF to deal with employee stress at KPMS

Research participants were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of NPF's social services unit in addressing employee stress at KMPS. The social services unit is composed of police officers who render professional help to employees suffering from stress. This unit aims at maintaining the emotional, psychological and mental wellness of employees so as to maintain a healthy and a productive workforce. The responses obtained from the selected research participants are reflected in the figure below.

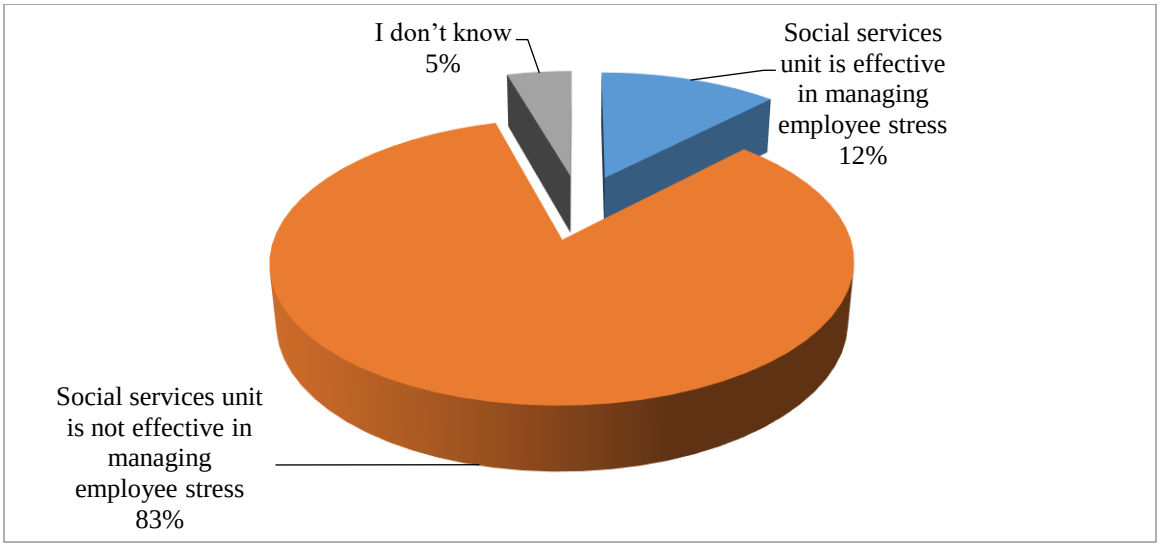

Figure 4.3-1. Effectiveness of the social services unit at KMPS

The above figure shows that the social services unit of NPF at KMPS is not effective in providing practical solutions to employees suffering from stress. From a sample of 90 research participants, a majority of 83% indicated that the social services unit is not effective in managing employee stress at KMPS. Twelve percent (12%) indicated that the social services unit is effective in managing employee stress while the remaining 5% were not aware of whether or not the social services unit is effective in providing effective solutions to employees suffering from stress.

2.7.9. Assessment of the adequacy of police officers to deal with employee stress at KMPS

Research participants were asked to indicate whether or not the social services unit has enough police officers to offer professional help to members of Katima Mulilo Police Station suffering from stress. The responses are indicated in the figure below.

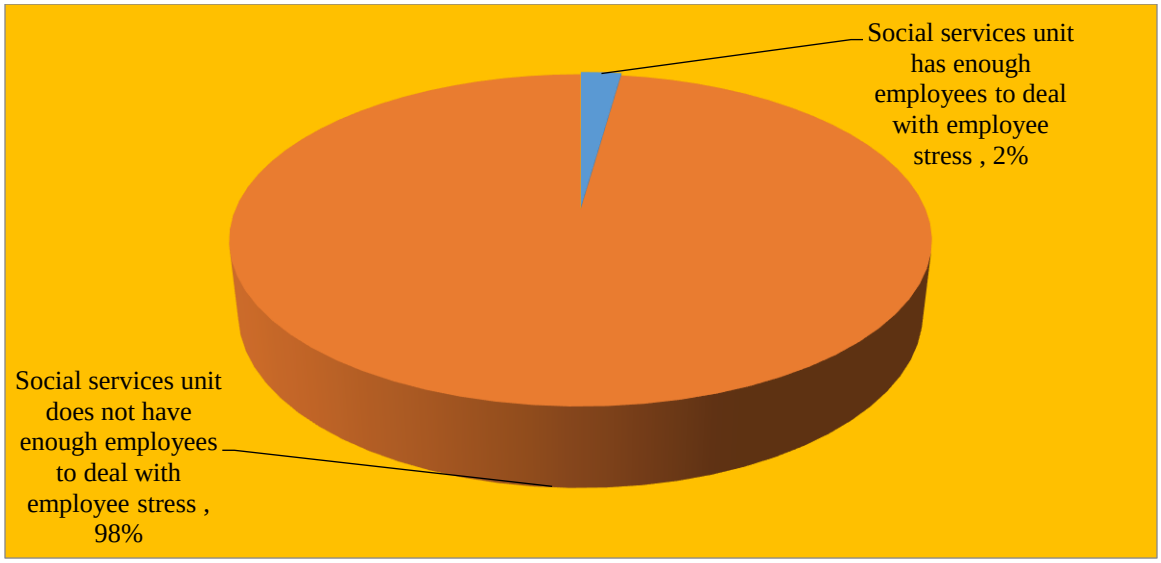

Figure 4.3-2. Adequacy of employees at social services unit

Based on the figure above, it is evident that most respondents believe the social services unit is understaffed. When police officers who are trained to offer professional help to members of the Namibian police are in short supply relative to the demand for their services, police officers are more likely not to receive professional help and this affects their performance at work. From the figure above, 98% of research participants indicated that the number of police officers is low relative to the demand for their services at KMPS while only 2% of research participants claimed that the number of police officers working at KMPS is adequate relative to the demand.

2.7.10. Assessment of whether members of KMPS suffering from stress receive support from the social services unit

Research participants were asked to indicate whether they receive help from social workers employed within KMPS.

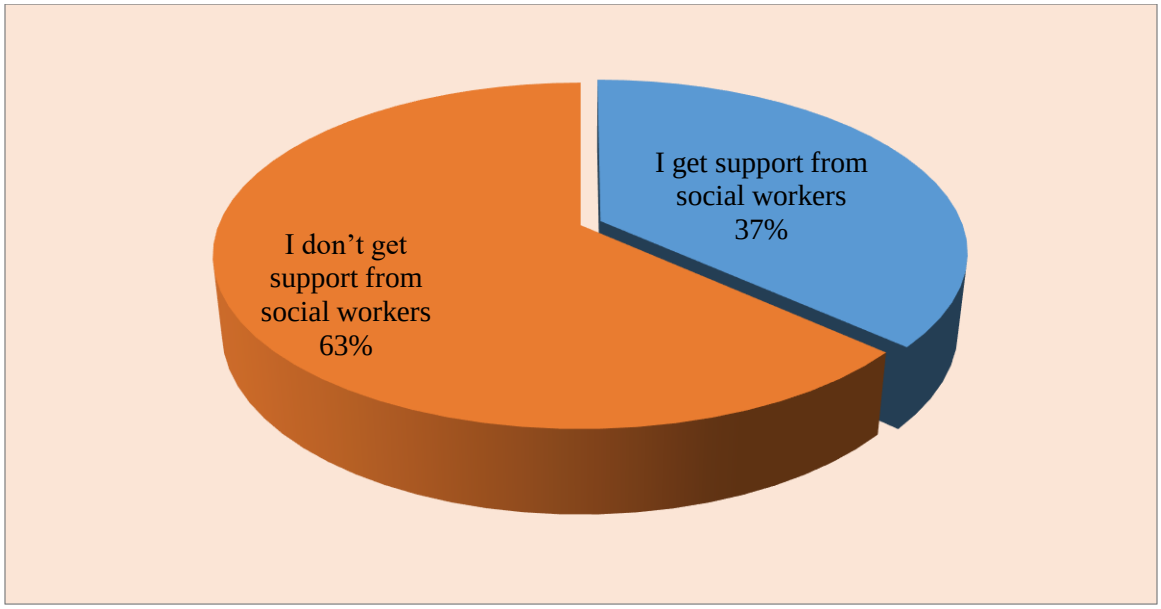

Figure 4.3-3. Figure 4.4: Support to police officers from social services unit

Most research participants suffering from stress are not able to obtain professional help from the police officers working at KMPS. From a sample of 90 research participants, 63% do not receive support from the police officers working at KMPS while only 33% claim to have received support from the police officers working at KMPS. Failure by police officers suffering from stress to get support from the social service's unit is likely to affect the performance and productivity of those employees.

2.7.11. Strategies on how to deal with stress

The last question asked research participants their views on what should be done in order to mitigate stress levels among police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police Station. Participants suggested that the management of NPF should increase the salaries of employees, recruit and employ more police officers in order to avoid overworking of the existing police officers, recruit and train more police officers so as to enable all employees to perform their professional services, to allow for the

training of employees whenever new work processes are introduced, as well as for the training of employees in basic stress management techniques.

4.4. Discussion of research results

4.4.1. Causes of stress among police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police Station

This study revealed that poor remuneration of police officers, unfair processes followed when promoting employees, shortage of police officers at police stations which forces the existing employees to work overtime and to sacrifice their free time to attend to official duties whenever called upon, are major causes of stress. Also, a lack of training on how to adapt to new processes and on how to use new tools and equipment.

Poor leadership style exercised by station commanders, the requirement by police management for police officers to strive to uphold an exemplary public image. The nature of the work done by police officers, working alone at night, and lack of understanding of the nature of work done by police officers. Their family members can be added as main factors which cause stress among police officers working at Katima Mulilo police Station.

A study done by Rakshase (2014) aimed at exploring occupational stress and coping in Maharashtra police personnel found that the reasons for stress among police officers are inadequate support from supervisors, poor or inadequate supervisions, low salaries, difficulty in getting along with supervisors and excessive paperwork.

According to Rakshase (2014), supervisors can be a source of stress to police officers because of unrealistic demands and failure to understand their subordinates because of the rigid leadership and management style. As identified above, one of the major causes of stress among police officers deployed at Katima Mulilo Police Station is the nature of work done by police officers.

In the course of carrying out their duties, police officers are exposed to traumatic situations and life-threatening incidents which affect their emotional well-being. These findings are consistent with findings in literature. For example, Carr and Umberson (2013) state that critical incidents such as shootings, mass disasters and violent crimes are distressing events for police officers. These go far beyond the experiences of the ordinary citizens, causing stress among police officers. According to Khamisa et al. (2015), stress in police officers comes in the form of a particular traumatic experiences, such as a gruesome accident or homicide, a vicious crime against a child, a close personal brush with death, the death or serious injury of a partner, the shooting of a perpetrator or innocent civilian, and grisly or large-scale crime.

4.4.2. Effects of stress on employee performance and employee well-being

This study revealed that stress negatively impacts employee performance by making members of the Namibian Police Force rude towards their colleagues which creates a toxic work environment which affects cooperation and coordination of police officers in carrying out tasks. Stress makes employees lose focus of their work

which makes them prone to making mistakes which have a subsequent effect on the quality of services provided by police officers. Stress increases the rate of absenteeism among police officers and stress reduces the level of effectiveness of police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police station.

The creation of a toxic work environment, reduces employee effectiveness and efficiency, creates an unfavorable environment where employees lose focus of their jobs and are increasingly absent from work, also contributes to stress which in turn compromises the potential of police officers to fulfil their statutory mandate of ensuring peace and stability within the borders of Namibia. The above effects of stress on employee performance at Katima Mulilo Police Station are consistent with findings in literature. For example, a study by Leka, Griffiths and Cox (2010) that sought to establish the effects of stress among police officers established that stress lowers employee productivity, promotes absence from work without official leave, causes disruption at work, increases the frequencies at which errors are committed, reduces employee concentration and causes disruptive behaviour at work.

Another study by Sauter and Murphy (2010) conducted on factory workers in developing countries found that stress makes employees sickly and unproductive which ultimately affects their performance and productivity at work. Additionally, a study by Maxwell (2012) found that stress reduces the ability of employees to concentrate on tasks that they do and as a result leading to increases in the rate of accidents at the workplace.

It also leads to production of faulty products which require rework and wastage of resources. The same study by Maxwell (2012) found that work related stress causes employees to dread their jobs and therefore, in order to hide from their jobs, employees' resort to absenteeism. Maxwell (2012) argues that employees who are stressed yearn to stay away from situations that make them stressed. The resultant effect of employee absenteeism is increased costs as an organisation is forced to get replacement employees to step in for employees who are absent.

This study also revealed that stress makes police officers feel sickly and makes them drink excessively in order to seek temporary relief from stress. These findings are consistent with findings in literature. For example, a study by Brown and Campbell in the early 1990s found out that severe occupational stress compounded by lack of support from colleagues and superiors leads to an increased consumption of alcohol amongst workers. Workers do this with the hope of reducing tension. A study by Pastwa-Wojciechowska and Piotrowski (2016) found that police officers abuse alcohol more frequently than other occupations because of the level of stress they are exposed to.

4.5. Summary

This chapter presented, analysed and discussed research results obtained from a sample of 90 police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police Station on the impact of stress on members of the Namibian Police Force. This study revealed that low remuneration for police officers, work overload, unfair promotion of police officers, shortage of manpower, working alone on night shifts, lack of training on how to use new equipment, poor leadership style exercised by commanders, and pressure on

police officers to surrender their free time for official work are some of the main causes of stress among police officers working at KMPS.

This study also revealed that stress experienced by police officers makes them work below capacity, stay away from work without authorisation, and makes employees lose enthusiasm for their work, hence affecting employee performance. The next chapter summarises the study and offers recommendations on how to mitigate the stress levels among police officers working at Katima Police Station.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Introduction

In chapter four the researcher presented, analysed and discussed research findings obtained from a sample of 90 research participants on the effects of stress on members of the Namibian Police Force at the Katima Mulilo Police Station (KMPS). This chapter concludes the study by giving a summary of key research findings, recommendations for action, recommendations for future research and finally the conclusion.

The overall objective of this study was to establish the impact of stress on members of the Namibian Police Force. The specific objectives of this study were to assess stress awareness levels of members of the Namibian Police Force working in KMPS; to explore the causes of stress among members of the Namibian Police Force working in Katima Mulilo Police Station; to determine the effects of stress on the performance and wellbeing of the members of the Namibian Police Force working in KMPS; and to suggest strategies on how to reduce the level of stress of among members of the Namibian Police Force working in KMPS.

5.2. Summary of key findings

The findings of this study are grouped according to the research objectives that this study sought to achieve. The findings are summarised under the three key objectives of this study in the following sub-section:

5.2.1. Stress awareness levels of the members of the Namibian Police Force working at KMPS

Responses obtained from research participants show that police officers at KMPS have a high level of awareness of the symptoms, causes and effects of stress on employee performance.

1. Participants indicated that bouts of anger and hostility, worry, anxiety, phobia, fatigue, headaches, tense muscles, sore neck and irritation are common symptoms of stress in employees.
2. Participants were aware that an unconducive work environment that employees are exposed to is a risk factor for employees to develop stress.
3. Participants were also aware that stress negatively affects the performance of employees.

5.2.2. The causes of stress among members of the Namibian Police Force working in KMPS

This study established that stress among police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police Station is caused by the following factors:

1. Poor remuneration and low employment allowances given to police officers causes stress among police officers working in KMPS. Poor remuneration makes it difficult for police officers to afford a decent lifestyle and this makes them susceptible to stress.
2. Prolonged overtime work which deprives police officers of their family and social life causes stress among police officers working at KMPS. Prolonged overtime work is occasioned by shortage of personnel in the

police force which forces police officers to sacrifice their free time to work overtime.

3. The poor work environment which exposes police officers to a considerable level of risk is another stress factor experienced by police officers working at KMPS. Police officers are exposed to traumatic situations in the course of carrying out their duties such as horrible accident scenes which affect them emotionally and psychologically, hence, exposing them to stress.
4. Working alone on night shifts is another contributing factor to stress level among police officers working at KMPS. Night shifts where only one police officer is deployed exposes them to high levels of risk of losing their lives, hence contributing to stress levels among police officers.
5. Shortage of suitably qualified police officers deployed at Katima Mulilo Police Station to help police officers suffering from stress is another contributing factor to high stress levels among police officers. Failure by police officers to receive professional help from qualified police officers adds to their level of stress.
6. Failure by family members of police officers working at KMPS to understand the nature of the work of police officers is another stress factor among police officers. A lack of knowledge of the nature of the work of police officers' breeds disagreements between police officers and their family members who may expect police officers to spend more time at home with their families. Police officers can be called to surrender their free time anytime for official work.

7. Unfair promotion criteria used to promote police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police Station is another cause of stress among police officers. Some police officers feel that they are not promoted based on merit and this leaves some police officers disgruntled.
8. Failure by the management of the police force to train police officers whenever new work processes, tools and equipment are introduced is another stress factor among police officers working at KMPS. Failure to properly train police officers in preparation for envisaged changes in the police force causes stress among police officers working at KMPS.
9. Pressure by the management of the Namibian Police Force on their officers to uphold a good public image causes stress among police officers working in KMPS. Police officers are expected to demonstrate professionalism when carrying out their duties, but some situations expose police officers to a considerable risk of losing their lives. For example, when arresting armed criminals, police officers are expected to arrest such criminals without unnecessary causing loss of lives, but this exposes police officers to risk of losing their own lives.
10. Poor leadership style exercised by commanders of NPF is another stress factor among police officers working at KMPS.

5.2.3. Effects of stress on the performance of the members of the Namibian Police Force

This study established that stress among police officers negatively affects the performance of police officers through the following ways:

1. Stress makes members of the Namibian Police Force rude towards their colleagues; hence creating a toxic work atmosphere which affects cooperation and coordination in carrying out tasks. This slows the performance of individual employees especially if performances of their tasks are dependent on the output from tasks by their colleagues.
2. Stress makes employees lose focus of their work, therefore making them prone to mistakes. This affects the quality of services offered by police officers to the general public. Since police officers are charged with the responsibility of ensuring peace and security in Namibia, laxity to do so exposes citizens to danger.
3. Stress increases the rate of absenteeism among police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police Station. When employees stay away from work to seek medical help or to have rest from their routine tasks, poor service becomes inevitable given that the police force is already understaffed.
4. Stress reduces the level of effectiveness of police officers working at Katima Mulilo Police station. This affects the quality-of-service delivery offered by police officers to the communities where they serve.
5. Stress makes police officers working at KMPS lose enthusiasm for their work which consequently affects their performance at work. A demotivated workforce produces poor quality output.
6. Stress makes police officers deployed at Katima Mulilo Police Station feel sickly and engaging in irrational behaviour like excessive drinking and smoking in order to seek temporary solutions to stress.

5.3. Recommendations for action

The following recommendations should be embraced in order to reduce the levels of stress among members of NPF working in Katima Mulilo Police station:

1. The management of NPF should engage Government to increase the salaries and other employment benefits such as housing, medical and car allowances paid to police officers. This would help to reduce stress among police officers since some police officers are stressed on account of low salaries and employment benefits paid to them.

2. The management of NPF should engage Government for approval to recruit and train more police officers that would enable them to deploy sufficient numbers to all police stations across the country. This would address the problem of shortage of manpower and therefore help to relieve existing police officers from continuously working overtime.

3. The management of NPF should conduct regular training and counselling sessions to equip police officers with strategies about how to deal with and handle work-related stress. When these sessions are conducted, police officers will know how to manage stress and therefore remain productive at work.

4. There is need for the management of NPF to train and deploy more police officers to all police stations across the country so that each police station has enough police officers to help police officers suffering from stress.

5. Police officers who are exposed to traumatic situations which affect them psychologically and emotionally in the course of carrying out their duties should be given timely and appropriate therapy to help them overcome trauma. By giving police officers timely therapy in the event of encountering unpleasant situations one ensures the stress levels of employees is kept in check.

6. Commanders of police stations should ensure that police officers are adequately trained before new work processes, tools, and equipment are introduced.

7. Management of NPF should ensure that fair promotional practices are exercised. Police officers should be promoted based on merit in order to encourage other police officers also to work hard in order to be promoted. Promoting police officers on an unfair basis breeds resentment and increases the stress level of other police officers.

8. Commanders of KMPS should ensure that at least two police officers are deployed to man designated areas on night shifts. This helps to mitigate the risk and stress levels police officers are exposed to on night duty where only one police officer is deployed.

5.4. Recommendation for future research

This study sought to establish the impact of stress on members of the Namibian Police Force using a case study of 90 police officers drawn from Katima Mulilo

Police Station. Future research should focus on a comprehensive study to determine the impact of stress among members of the Namibian Police Force more generally using a sample drawn from all regions of Namibia.

5.5. Limitations of the study

This study was limited by the time in which it was conducted and completed. The limited time frame prevented collection of more detailed information on the impact of stress on the members of the Namibian police. Additionally, this study was limited by the number of respondents who were selected to provide answers required for this study. This study made use of only 90 research participants and their views were taken as the general view of the impact of stress on members of the Namibian Police Force. This limited the depth of this study. Thirdly, this study was limited by incomplete disclosure of information. Some research participants did not provide all the information that was required of them.

5.6. Conclusion

The overall objective of this study was to establish the impact of stress on members of the Namibian Police Force. Police officers are exposed to deplorable work conditions which increase the risk of stress among employees of security agencies. The nature of work performed by police officers makes them work for long hours and exposes them to emotionally and psychologically draining situations like responding to vehicle accidents, murder cases and other disturbing scenes. Besides the nature of police work, police officers are paid relatively meagre salaries, are deployed to work alone on night shifts, and are not properly trained to handle new

work processes, tools and equipment. All these factors and others contribute to high stress levels among police officers working at KMPS which consequently affects the performance of police officers.

In order to reduce the stress levels of police officers, there is a need to recruit and train more police officers and to increase the salaries and allowances paid to police officers. There is also a clear need to increase the number of suitably qualified police officers deployed at police stations to professionally help police officers manage stress and to conduct regular training and counselling sessions aimed at equipping police officers with techniques for stress.

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ANNEXURE 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Researcher: Rita Musialike

Profession: Social Worker from NPF

TOPIC: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPACT OF STRESS ON MEMBERS OF THE NAMIBIAN POLICE: A CASE STUDY OF POLICE OFFICERS AT THE KATIMA MULILO POLICE STATION

Dear respondent, this questionnaire has been prepared to collect data on employee stress at Katima Mulilo Police Station. The purpose of this investigation is purely academic and the identities of research participants will not be shared with any third party without express permission from the research participants. Thanking you in advance for taking part in this study.

1. Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. Rank

……

3. Years of work experience at NPF

☐ Between 0 and 6

☐ Between 6 and 10 years

☐ Between 11 and 15 years

☐ Between 16 and 18

☐ Above 18 years

4. Please tick the appropriate age category that applies to you.

☐ Between 20 and 30 years

☐ Between 31 and 40 years

☐ Between 41 and 50 years

☐ Between 51 and 60 years

5. Please indicate your level of awareness about stress by ticking the appropriate box in each row provided below.

Y = Yes
NS = Not sure
N = No

ID	Question	Y	NS	N
2.1	Are you aware of the symptoms of stress?			
2.2	Are constant headaches symptoms of stress?			
2.3	Are tense muscles, sore neck and back symptoms of stress?			
2.4	Is fatigue a symptom of stress?			
2.5	Are worry, anxiety and phobias symptoms of stress?			
2.6	Is the feeling of irritation a symptom of stress?			
2.7	Is insomnia a symptom of stress?			
2.8	Is bout of anger and hostility a symptom of stress?			
2.9	Are diarrhoea, cramps, and gas and constipation symptoms of stress?			
2.10	Are restlessness, itching and tics symptoms of stress?			
2.11	Have you experienced any of the above symptoms due to stress?			
2.12	Does your work environment cause stress?			
2.13	Does stress have a negative impact on your performance?			

6. Using the legend provided below, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements regarding the causes of employee stress on police officers attached to Katima Mulilo Police Station.

SA = Strongly agree
A = Agree
NS = Not sure
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly disagree

	SA	**A**	**NS**	**D**	**SD**
Overtime demands causes stress					
Low remuneration and allowances paid to police officers makes me stressed					
Striving to uphold exemplary image in public causes stress					
The nature of my work makes me feel stressed					
The feeling of being on the job always causes stress					
Working alone at night causes stress					
Lack of understanding of the nature of my work by my family causes stress					

6. Apart from the causes reflected on the table above, what do you think are other possible causes of stress among police officers in Katima Mulilo Station?

……
……
……
……

7. Using the legend provided below, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements regarding the effects of employee stress on performance of police officers attached to Katima Mulilo Police Station.

SA = Strongly agree

A = Agree

NS = Not sure

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly disagree

	SA	**A**	**NS**	**D**	**SD**
Stress has a negative impact on performance					
Stress reduces my ability to do my work effectively					
I cannot perform to the best of my ability when under stress					
Stress makes me to be rude towards colleagues and community					
Stress makes me not focus on my work					
I sometimes feel like going on AWOL when I am stressed					
stress makes me lose enthusiasm in my work					
Stress makes me sickly					
Stress makes me to contemplate suicide					
Stress makes me to drink excessively and sometimes to smoke					

8. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of the social services unit in addressing employee stress at KMPS?

☐ Effective

☐ Not effective

☐ I don't know

9. Does the social services unit have enough police officers to deal with employee stress at KMPS?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I don't know

10. Have you ever received help from police officers in order to relieve suffering from stress?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I don't know

11. What do you think should be done in order to reduce the level of stress among police officers working at Katima Mulilo police Station?

……
……
……

End

Thank you for taking part in this study

ANNEXURE 2: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

Dr.GM

The Rev. Dr. Greenfield Mwakipesile

ThD, MBA, HBS | mwakipg@outlook.com

CONTACT

PO Box 99539,
UNAM,
Namibia

LANGUAGE & COPY-EDITING CERTIFICATE

7th February 2020

RE: LANGUAGE, COPYEDITING AND PROOFREADING OF RITA NTEMWA's THESIS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES DEGREE OF THE MILITARY SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

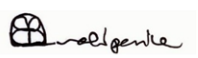
This certificate serves to confirm that I copyedited and proofread **RITA NTEMWA's** Thesis for the **MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES DEGREE** entitled: **AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPACT OF STRESS ON THE MEMBERS OF THE NAMIBIAN POLICE: A CASE STUDY OF POLICE OFFICERS AT KATIMA MULILO POLICE STATION**

I declare that I professionally copyedited and proofread the thesis and removed mistakes and errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. In some cases, I improved sentence construction without changing the content provided by the student. I also removed some typographical errors from the thesis and formatted the thesis so that it complies with the University of Namibia's guidelines.

I am a trained language and copy editor and have edited many Postgraduate Diploma, Masters' Thesis, Dissertations and Doctoral Dissertations for students studying with universities in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, South Africa and abroad. I have also copy-edited company documents for companies in the region and abroad.

Please feel free to contact me should the need arise.

Yours Sincerely,



The Rev. Dr. Greenfield Mwakipesile

ANNEXURE 3: LETTER SEEKING FOR AUTHORISATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Rita K Musialike
Private Bag 1999
Katima Mulilo
19/11/2018

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH AT KATIMA MULILO POLICE STATION, ZAMBEZI REGION

I am one of the Social Workers in the Namibian Police Force based in Zambezi Region. I am currently I am enrolled at the University of Namibia undertaking a Masters of Arts in Security and Strategic studies. As part of my studies I am required to conduct a research. My research is titled "An investigation into the impact of stress on members of the Namibian police: a case study of police officers at the Katima Mulilo police station.

An understanding of the impact of stress on police officers will enable the management of the Namibian police force and other helping professionals to tailor interventions on stress among members, so that members accomplish the mandate of the organization of preserving Human security. Therefore, I am hereby requesting permission to conduct research among members at Katima Mulilo Police Station

Looking forward to your positive feedback.

Yours sincerely

_____ SOCIAL WORKER

MRS. RITA MUSIALIKE

SOCIAL SERVICES UNIT, ZAMBEZI REGION

ANNEXURE 4: AUTHORISATION LETTER

NAMIBIAN POLICE
KATIMA MULILO
2018 -12- 04
REGIONAL COMMANDER
ZAMBEZI

POL 716

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Namibian Police Force

MINISTRY OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

Tel. No: (+264 61) 209 3111
Fax: No: (+264 61) 220 621

Enquiries: Comm Kashihakumwa / Sgt (1) Ngesheya

Our Ref.: SP/ Ntemwa R.K
Your Ref.:

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL
Namibian Police Force
Private Bag 12024
Ausspannplatz
WINDHOEK
Namibia

22 November 2018

The Regional Commander
Namibian Police Force
Zambezi Region
Private Bag 1022
KATIMA MULILO

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: NAMIBIAN POLICE FORCE, SOCIAL SERVICES, ZAMBEZI REGIONON

1. The above subject matter has reference.

2. Mrs R.K. Ntemwa has request permission to conduct academic research in the Namibian Police Force titled; **"An investigation into the impact of stress on members of the Namibian Police: A case study of Police officers at the Katima Mulilo Police Station"**. The request is hereby **approved.**

3. The staff member should be urged to ensure that information that will be provided to her must be treated with high level of confidentiality and must be used for academic purpose only.

4. Her interest and willingness to carry out the academic research in the Namibian Police Force is highly appreciated. Hence, this office would appreciate sharing the research findings with the force.

5. The staff member should consult the Regional Commander of Zambezi Region to administer the questionnaires.

Yours sincerely,

NAMIBIAN POLICE
WINDHOEK
23 -11- 2018
INSPECTOR GENERAL

LT-GEN
S.H. NDEITUNGA, OMS
INSPECTOR-GENERAL: NAMIBIAN POLICE FORCE