



**THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF UNCONTROLLED TEACHER ABSENTEEISM
IN SELECTED PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MANGAUNG METRO
MUNICIPALITY (BLOEMFONTEIN).**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Tshepo Ruben Mothibeli, hereby declare that this dissertation titled:

“CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF UNCONTROLLED TEACHER ABSENTEEISM IN SELECTED PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MANGAUNG METRO MUNICIPALITY (BLOEMFONTEIN).” is my original work and that I have not previously submitted this dissertation for any degree purpose to any institution or University. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references.

.....

TR MOTHIBELI

.....

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicated this study to my beloved wife, Dimakatso Patience and my two most cherished children, Natasha Eleasha and my son “Trix” Tshepo Jnr. This is an inspiration in the quest to inspire our children to greater and lofty heights of academic pursuits. This dedication is viewed in the light of human empowerment and development in the discourse of education.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein). The focus area was to find out how various factors like personal factors, school factors and environmental factors contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality. The study used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. This was in the quest of understanding the views of various stakeholders such as teachers, principals and Human Resources (HR) personnel from the district and also to identify the main causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality. Purposive sampling techniques were used to sample 10 school principals, 60 teachers and one HR personnel from the district office. Ethical considerations such as volunteerism, anonymity and confidentiality were adhered to.

Data were collected using questionnaires, one- on- one interview with principals and HR personnel dealing with the application of various types of leave, as well as documentary analysis. The interviews were aided by use of field notes and a tape recorder. Data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods of analyzing data. The findings of the study revealed that there is an urgent need to engage in critical discussion about the various types of leave such as study leave; sick leave; family responsibility leave and special leave for urgent private matters. Normally, an institution – based educator may during a scheduled working hours period, be granted a special leave to attend to an urgent private matter. The study also uncovered the challenges created by the management of the misuse of sick leave at schools by the teachers. The study found that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism impacts the smooth running of the school negatively as it affects delivery of the curriculum and incomplete syllabus coverage. It also creates disciplinary problems and unnecessary tension between the teachers who are always present at school and those who are frequently absent. In the quest for a conducive environment for the management of teacher absenteeism the study also alludes to the pivotal role that the unions and principals can play in order to regulate uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools as academic institutions.

Based on the findings it is recommended that Free State Department of Education must ensure that they hold leave policy management workshops to stop this scourge of habitual absenteeism. It further recommends proper management and strict monitoring of attendance registers by Senior Management Teams as this could assist to curb the high rate of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary schools.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
ANPPCAN	African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect
COSATU	Confederation of South African Trade Unions
CUT	Central University of Technology
ELRC	Education Labour Relation Council
FSDoE	Free State Department of Education
HICs	High income countries
HOD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
LWP	Leave without Pay
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organization of South Africa
PAM	Personnel Administration Measures
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADTU	South African Democratic Teacher's Union
SAOU	SA Onderwysers-unie / SA Teachers' Union
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SA SAMS	South African School Administration and Management systems
EMIS	Education Management Information System

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to determine the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in the Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein). This was done in order to address the problems and challenges associated with teacher absenteeism in schools. According to Usman, Akhmadi and Suryadarma (2007:207) teacher absence is one of the most serious problems in any education system. Observing this phenomenon of teacher absenteeism the South African government planned to introduce a biometric log in the system to combat unacceptable high teacher absenteeism South African schools (SA Government News Service, Online: 2013). This does not seem to be working since the need for this study.

Malungo (2010:1) indicates that education is purported to be a commodity to society, a core of human progress. It has significantly influenced the life of humanity all over the world in all spheres of development such as political, social, cultural, religious and economic development. The main goal of any learning institution, therefore, is to provide quality education to all its learners. To this effect, teachers play a significant role. Their attitude towards their work can play a significant role as this can affect the general performance of learners positively or negatively.

There are various factors that can contribute to absenteeism. Armstrong as (cited in Wambua, 2015: 1) points that some of the causes of absenteeism could be broadly attributed to factors such as situational factors and personal factors. Situational factors include the nature of the job itself, is it repetitive and boring or is it interesting and challenging enough? Obviously, a repetitive job may generate stress and job resentment. Personal factors are the worth of an employee, his or her personality, age or sex may contribute to an employee absence. The same is true of situational factors. They can make or break an employee.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Absenteeism is generally perceived as any failure of an employee to report for or to remain at work as scheduled. Cucchiella, Gastaldia and Ranieri (2014:1159) define absenteeism as habitual absence from work for one or more days, usually justified by medical certificate but, due to personal interests and poor sense of duty.

McKenzie, Nugroho, Ozolins, McMillan, Sudarno and Sumarto, Toyamah, Febriany, Sodo, Bima and Sim (2014: xii) distinguish between two kinds of absenteeism, viz teacher absenteeism from school and teacher absenteeism from class. Teacher absenteeism from school is defined as the number of teachers who are not at school on the day of the visit for whatever reason, expressed as a proportion of all teachers who were scheduled to be teaching during the observation. But, teacher absenteeism from class is defined as the number of teachers who, although present at school are not in fact in the classroom, expressed as a proportion of all teachers who were scheduled to be teaching during the observation. McKenzie *et al.* (2014: xvi) argue that the loss of effective teaching time occurs not just when a teacher is absent from school but also when the teacher- although present at school – is absent from the class they are scheduled to be teaching

According to Ejere (2010: 115) an employees' ability to attend work is influenced by factors such as family commitments, transport problems, ill health, injuries, accidents, disinterest and the like. In an attempt to explain the high level of unauthorized teacher absenteeism, Narayan and Mooij (2010:2) indicate that several scholars have emphasised the lack of motivation on part of the teachers. This has been ascribed to overcrowded classrooms, poor infrastructural facilities, unfilled vacancies, too many non-academic tasks to be completed, lack of adequate training to deal with multilingual and multi ability classes, declining social status of the teaching profession and increasing social difference between teachers and the clientele of government schools. Other reasons have to do with institutional context, lack of accountability, and incentives the absence of incentives for teachers to work well. Regular patterns of absenteeism are when employees fail to report to work as scheduled or withdrawal from carrying out their daily work as planned. Regular patterns of absenteeism may, amongst others things, be ascribed to HIV/AIDS, high teacher-learner ratio, overcrowded classes, a heavy workload and stress (Louw, Shisana, Peltzer and Zungu , 2009: 205).

The fore-going may also result in teachers becoming depressed they may not be able to cope with the circumstances in schools and subsequently stay away from school.

Teacher absenteeism can be problematic because it can disrupt the smooth running of the school. Malungo (2010: 9) takes this argument further and indicates that poor time keeping is a major problem in some countries and teachers arrives late, finishing early and leaving their classes during the day can seriously reduce total instructional time.

The problem of teacher absenteeism is not different in the South African school context than anywhere else in the world. Teacher absenteeism is a serious problem in South Africa and seems to be the latest target of President Jacob Zuma and Basic Education Minister, Angie Motshekga. According to the recent released statistics by the Minister of Basic Education on any one day, between 10% and 12% of teachers are not in school, amounting to about 39 000 absent teachers every day. The majority of these leave instances (77%) are for one or two days (discretionary sick leave) which means that they do not require any medical certificate (Rhodes University, n.d.: Online). In this regard, this study will refer to the cases of teacher absenteeism in Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda and Kenya.

1.3 TEACHER ABSENTEEISM: VIEWS ON DEVELOPING CONTRIES IN AFRICA

Like in many other developing countries, teacher absenteeism is a growing dilemma in Nigeria Education particularly in government or public schools. Teachers' ability is influenced by factors such as family commitments, transport problems, ill - health, injuries, accidents and disinterest. Ejere (2010:115). A study that was conducted by ANPPCAN for prevention and protection against child abuse and neglect in Uganda revealed that most teachers fake illness and can be seen roaming around the villages (Yiga & Wandega, 2010:19). In Ghana, Oduro (2009:14) observed that teachers tend to engage themselves in income generating jobs to augment their "meagre salary" and attend funerals at the expense of teaching.

1.4 TEACHER ABSENTEEISM: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

The extent of teacher absenteeism in South Africa is highlighted in a study by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC, 2010). This study reveals that 40 000 teachers out of estimated 400 000 in the South African education system are absent every day. Teachers tend to abuse sick leave by being absent from work for 1 or 2 days without producing a medical certificate. Although the *Leave Policy for Educators* (2002:21) regulates teacher absenteeism by means of leave procedures, it seems as if absenteeism remains a serious problem in this country. According to Lisele (in Free State News 07-13 September, 2012:4), the HOD for the Free State Department of Education (FSDoE), Mr Malope announced that the Department has lost about R16 million regarding the absence of teachers at schools. He further indicated that for the month only in June 2012, 24 000 days were reported to be for absentees in regard to sick leaves just to name few. These statistics shows that the FSDoE has received 5 047 sick leave applications in June 2012. In other provincial report Fengu (2012: 1) indicates that Eastern Cape teacher absenteeism rate is 10% the highest in the country. The next highest rate of 10, 3% was in Kwazulu-Natal, followed by Gauteng (9,4%) while the lowest was in the Free State (7,2%). It is against this background that this study sought to investigate the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in some of the public primary schools in the Mangaung Metro Municipality in the Free State Province.

Some of the key recommendations that were made by Reddy *et al.* (2010: x-xi) in order to curb teacher absenteeism in South Africa are: a) time away from regular school and classroom activities be reduced; b) to reduce the educator leave rates in schools where it is higher than 10%; c) to improve working conditions to encourage educators and learners to attend school; d) to improve the systems to record leave onto persal systems; e) to improve leave administrative systems and support in schools; f) record leave for official business on a central database and g) to monitor the national leave rate.

1.5 THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE STUDY

As indicated earlier, the aim of this study was to determine the cause and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected primary schools in Mangaung Municipality (Bloemfontein) in the Free State province. While teacher absenteeism is internationally and locally recognized as a serious problem, there are very few studies that have examined the causes and effects of the problem in Mangaung Metro Municipality. As a teacher and principal at a primary school, the researcher became aware that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is a major threat to educational quality and efficiency in Mangaung Municipality. Albeit the existence of a *Leave Policy for Educators*, it is not a guarantee that teachers would adhere to this policy. The leave policy might be full of gaps or grey areas that allow teachers to exploit the policy at the cost of the learners. For example, Mashaba and Maile (2013:9) argue that in Gauteng province, a teacher will be replaced by a substitute if he/she is absent for twenty or more consecutive working days, that is a full month. It therefore means, any number of absent days less than twenty, there is no substitution. This policy itself seems to perpetuate the negative impact of absenteeism on productivity and poor performance. An analysis of the *Leave Policy for Educators* and flaws that lead to the abuse of Educators Leave policy by teachers will be explored in this study. Therefore, it is essential to explore the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools Mangaung Municipality (Bloemfontein). In addition, the study seeks to explore possible solutions as to how the problem of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism can be addressed in public primary schools in the Mangaung Municipality (Bloemfontein).

This study is an attempt to find if any research of this kind has ever been undertaken within the South African education policy context, especially in the Mangaung Municipality. Currently, there is no evidence of any study or related study in which causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism has been researched on in public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality (Bloemfontein). This implies that this study can make an original contribution to policy studies in education.

What is often overlooked is that a high uncontrolled teacher absenteeism rate among teachers can demoralize pupils, cause friction between teachers and may cause education goals being placed in jeopardy. Because of the latter reasons, the

researcher consider a) a study on uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in Mangaung of utmost importance; b) perspectives on teacher absenteeism may serve as a critical component in guiding scholars and educationists with information about an educational issue that has not been researched on in public primary schools in Mangaung district; c) this research will grant the researcher opportunities to investigate how teacher uncontrolled absenteeism is presented in South African education policy; how different understandings of the phenomenon are made known by literature and by teachers and principals at Mangaung primary schools; and d) this study intends to suggest possible solutions to address problems that are relate to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

1.6 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teacher absenteeism is one of a range of disruptive school-related behaviours that has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years in South Africa. According to Mthombeni (2010:4), an inordinately large amount of teaching time is lost through uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. This includes work behaviour manifestations such as poor time keeping and a lack of punctuality by principals, teachers and learners within the school environment. It is quite common in many previously disadvantaged or under resourced schools that little or no teaching takes place after mid-morning on a Friday, the day before a public holiday, on a pay day or during the last week of the entire school term.

The Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga told Parliament that South Africa had the highest teacher absenteeism rate in the Southern Development Community (SADC) region. However, South African Democratic Teacher's Union (SADTU) said that the real average in South Africa was eight days per teacher (Nkosi, 2013: 4). Tackling teacher absenteeism would necessary pit the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga against one of the ANC's key alliance partners (i.e. SADTU). Majority of teachers are SADTU members who are routinely absent from the classroom). Calling them to account would be tantamount to a declaration of war. The learners should be priority not a trade union that is willing to sacrifice our children's future for its own narrow interest (Lovemore, 2012: Online). Parsee (cited by Mthombeni, 2010:19) found that the school principals often choose to ignore the teacher's absence rather than risk a confrontation with the trade union.

The increase in teacher absenteeism has also captured the attention of the President of South Africa. In his State of Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma said that “teachers should be in schools, in class, on time, teaching, with no neglect of duty and no abuse of pupils” (State of the Nation Address, 2009). This remark by the President further highlights concerns relating to teacher absence in South Africa.

General absenteeism can have serious repercussions. According to Nyirenda (2013) repercussions include: decrease in productivity, employees may be carrying an extra workload, or supporting new or replacement staff. Again, employees may be recruited to train and orientate new or replacement worker. As a result, staff morale and employee service may suffer financial costs, overtime or agency cost for replacement workers cost of self-insured income protection plans, administrative costs, etc.

The consequences of teacher absenteeism is that the failure to deliver quality education results in poorly educated persons leaving the school system often unable to access tertiary education opportunities. These poorly prepared persons enter the job market lacking proper and adequate education a drawback that has ensured from teacher absenteeism. The person lacks the basic competences required to become product employees who can sustain the country. This in turn has destructive key term consequences such as the inability to maintain global economic competitiveness as well as resulting in wide spread negative social and societal breakdown (Mthombeni, 2010: 17).

The researcher has worked at various schools and districts such as Xhariep and Motheo. The researcher worked both at primary school and secondary school as a school principal. He observed with great interest how some of the colleagues abused the leave by being absent from work on Mondays, Fridays and every month ends. In some schools learners are released earlier during month ends in order to allow teachers to do shopping and pay their personal accounts. In an attempt to explore the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in the Mangaung Municipality district of the Free State province, this study will focus on the following research questions.

1.7 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following constitutes the fundamental research question:

- What are the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality (Bloemfontein)?

Taking the above research question, the following sub-research questions emanate:

- a. To what extent do personal factors contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in the selected schools in the Mangaung Municipality?
- b. To what extent do contextual factors (school factors, school management, etc.) contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in the selected schools in the Mangaung Municipality?
- c. What are the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism on learner performance in public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality?
- d. What are the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism on learner discipline in public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality?
- e. What are the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism on the overall school climate?
- f. What strategies can be used to solve the problem of teacher absenteeism in schools?

1.8 THE RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.8.1 The Research Aim

As already stated the aim of this study is to determine the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in the Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein).

1.8.2 THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In line with the research aim, and research questions, the following are the objectives of the study:

- a. To assess the extent to which personal factors contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in the selected schools in the Mangaung Municipality?
- b. To determine the extent to which contextual factors (school factors, school management, etc.) contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in the selected schools in the Mangaung Municipality?
- c. To investigate the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism on learner performance in public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality?
- d. To examine the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism on learner discipline in public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality?
- e. To determine the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism on the overall school climate?
- f. To determine strategies that can be used to solve the problem of teacher absenteeism in schools?

1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW

Creswell (2008:89) defines literature review as a written summary of journal articles, books and other documents that describe the past and current state of information. Furthermore, literature is organized into topics and documents are studies to gain information for a particular study. In relation to the latter view, in writing the literature review, the purpose is to convey to the reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. The literature review must be defined by a guiding concept (e.g. your research objective, the problem or issue you are discussing or your argumentative thesis). It is not just a descriptive list of the material available, or a set of summaries (University of Toronto, 2017: Online). As such, a comprehensive literature study of the nature and content of and causes and effects for uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary school will be undertaken. In this regard, the researcher consulted primary and secondary sources that include books, academic journals research based articles, newspaper articles, acts and other relevant information retrieved from the internet.

In his research findings, Mthombeni (2010:i) indicates the reasons given by the teachers to justify their absenteeism include, inter alia: a) as a complete lack of, or non-functionality of, public transport to and from their place of work; b) the geographic distance between their places of residence and work; c) the lack of or absence of service facilities such as clinics; d) stress; e) depression; f) an excessive work load; g) a lack of motivation; h) a low morale; i) poverty; j) alcoholism; k) criminality; and l) extramural activities. However, Mthombeni further argues that this underlies the well documented phenomenon of school level learner under performance, and consequential functional illiteracy manifested in many learners. The manifestations of teacher absenteeism, learner under- performance and poor quality education are clearly closely interrelated, and are recognized as key factors that have contributed to a crisis of epidemic proportions in education.

Again stress can lead to teacher absenteeism. According to Mampane (2013:125) the stressors include financial problems and teacher debts, ill health, teacher workload, lack of subject knowledge and skills, family problems and personal relationships, drinking problems and the ever changing curriculum. Uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is problematic because it can disrupt the smooth running of teaching and learning in South Africa. For example, Louw *et al.* (2009:214) warn that teacher absenteeism may lead to poor learner performance because teaching is curtailed and the syllabus is incomplete. In one of the studies conducted at Duke University by Clotfelter and colleagues found that schools that are having more lower socio and minority learners experienced higher teacher absence rates and this led to lower learner test score (Finlayson, 2009:2017).

The study conducted by Yiga and Wandega (2010:4) indicates that sickness, active teacher involvement in other income generating activities, inadequacies in inspection weak monitoring mechanisms at school level, lack of teachers houses, low pay coupled with a high family dependence were correlated with absenteeism. This above study further reveals that 80% of the children interviewed said that their grades become low when their teachers were absent because of non-completion of their syllabus. Where there is a high teacher absence, it tends to lower the moral of remaining teachers. Other teachers tend to feel more burdened because they have to plan for the teachers who are absent (Bruno, in Jacobs & Kristsonis, 2007:4). According to Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor (2009:12)

Female teachers, like female workers in the workforce tend to be more absent than men. Scott and McClellan (as cited in Reddy *et al.*, 2010:22) argue that in high income countries (HICs) women are more likely to stay home to care for a sick child or dependent adults than are men.

Uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is also having a negative impact on the quality of education. For example, direct financial cost of teacher absence in the United States is not trivial. Stipends for substitute teachers and associated administrative costs amount to 4 billion dollars annually (Miller, 2008:3). The same view is further highlighted by Usma, Akhamadi and Surysma (2007:207) when they indicate that most education system and schools heavy cost by hiring substitute teachers. In the South Africa Annual Report 2 (2007:4) it was found that 14 leading South African companies invested R500 million (R1.6 billion) towards solving one of the greatest challenges the new democracy would face, namely the restructuring of the country's education system. For example, if a school principal is teaching Maths or Science and is on sick leave for a period of six months, the school must be provided with a substitute teacher and appoint the acting principal. In this scenario the department would be paying if a school principal is on sick leave for period of six months, a substitute teacher and the acting allowance for the acting principal at the same time. The acting principal would also be getting his/her normal monthly salary. It simply means three teachers are paid for one post.

1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research approach followed in this study is the Mixed Methods which consists of both the quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative methodology is grounded on numerical and statistical inferences to make an opinion (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:18). On the other hand, the qualitative research methodology is based on the vocal opinions of co-researchers to make an informed opinion and decision; these come in the form of people articulations and reasons on matters at hand (McMillan, 2008:114). To advance the discourse of this study, interviews were also held with participating principals who expressed their opinions and views on the questions asked to them.

The research design is the next aspect of discussion.

1.10.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Monette, Sullivan and DeJong (2008:9) define research design as a plan outlining how observation will be made and how the research will be carried out. Creswell (2012:20) adds that research designs are the specific procedures involved in the research process such as a data collection, data analysis and report writing.

According to Denscombe (2010:99) a good research design has three things. First it provides a description of the variety components of the investigation. It specifies the general approach to the research that will be adopted- the strategy that will be used. Secondly, the research design provides a rationale for the choice of research strategy in relation to the research question. Thirdly, a research design explains how the key components of a research project link together.

1.10.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The fundamental understanding of the research paradigm simply refers to the theoretical lens with which the argument of the study is based. According to Niewenhuis (2016:52) a paradigm is a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular world view. It addresses fundamental assumptions taken of faith, such as believes about nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between knower and know (epistemology) and assumptions about methodologies.

This research study was conducted through the principles of phenomenology as the research paradigm. Phenomenology comes from the academic disciplines of philosophy and psychology, and it is based upon the work of the 20th Century philosopher Edmund Husserl, which was then later developed by Heidegger. The objective of phenomenology is the direct investigation and description of phenomena as consciously experienced, without theories about their causal explanations or their objective reality (Niewenhuis (2016:52).

This theoretical lens therefore seeks to understand how people construct meaning. A phenomenological research study is a study that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understandings of a particular situation (or phenomenon). In other words, a phenomenological research study tries to answer the question: '*What is it like to experience such and such?*' (University of Hertfordshire, n.d. Online).

In this instant, according to Mertens (2010:16) an investigation is launched into the appearance of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the way people experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience. Mertens (2010:235) further indicates that members of a group or community (e.g. teachers, principals and departmental official) themselves interpret the world and life around them. The researcher does not make assumptions about objective realities that exist apart from the individual. According to Lan, Mu and Hsieh (2007:2323) phenomenological deduction means to bracket past knowledge or prejudices about a phenomenon, to encounter it freshly and describe it precisely as it is experienced, as well as to withhold what is given precisely as given, as presence. Niewenhuis (2016:77) adds that in the phenomenological approach researchers are required to set aside their personal biases (that is to bracket or suspend personal judgment).

In conclusion Babble *et al.* (2010:28) reveal that phenomenologists emphasize that all human beings are engaged in the process of making sense of their worlds. People continuously interpret, create, give meaning to, define, justify and rationalize actions.

In the inherent context of this study, it therefore means that the researcher had interpreted things the way participants brought information to the fore. Thus, in the this study the researcher interacted with teachers, principals and departmental official in selected public primary schools and departmental official from district office in Mangaung Municipality with the intention to capture their own views on causes and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

The research approach will be highlighted in the next discussion.

1.10.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

As an elaboration of the earlier discussion, this seeks to elucidate the fact that the study will use mixed method design. According to Mertens (2010:293), mixed methods design is the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods to answer research question in a single study as well those studies that are part of a single study as well as those studies that are part of a larger research program and are designed as complementary to provide information related to reveal research questions, each answered with a different methodological approach. The advantage of using the mixed method in this study is that by combining and increasing the number of research strategies used within a particular project, the researcher is able to broaden the dimensions and hence the scope of a project. By using more than one method within a research study, the research and researcher are able to obtain a more complete picture of human behaviour and experience (Mertens (2010:293).

1.10.4 Population

According to Bless *et al* (2006:98) a population is the set of objects or people which is the focus of the research and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics. The population for study was primary school principals and teachers in the Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein) as well as Human Resources practitioners (dealing with and capturing leave forms of teachers) in the Free State Provincial Department of Education. The Mangaung Metro Municipality was chosen because of accessibility to the researcher.

The Free State Department of Education is demarcated into five districts namely, Lejweleputswa, Thabo Mofutsanyana, Fezile Dabi, and Xhariep and Mangaung Metro Municipality which was previously known as Motheo district. The fact that the Mangaung Metro Municipality is very big, it means that the researcher could not access all the schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality. The research only focused on selected public primary schools Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein). The Mangaung Metro Municipality is formerly known as Bloemfontein. It simply means that primary schools from Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu could not form part of the study because of the huge number of schools in those areas. In a discussion with one of the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), Mr F. Kok (Head of Emis Unit)

in the Free State Department of Education held on the 14 February 2016, he indicated to me that currently there are 2 420 teachers and 63 885 learners in public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality. The study only focused on principals, teachers, and HR personnel from the provincial office (i.e. leave sections) who deals with the teachers leave forms on daily basis.

1.10.5 Sample and sampling procedure

The process of selecting a part of a group under study is known as sampling. A sample is a part of the greater group from which it was drawn. Mertler and Charles (2008:155) explain that a sample comprises a small group from a population, carefully selected in order to closely reflect the characteristics of the population. Samples are used in research because it is often impossible and always inconvenient due to financial constraints, time factors, and so on- to study the population.

Purposive sampling was used to select 10 public primary schools. According to Mertler and Charles (2008:127) judgmental sampling also known as purposive sampling is the type of a sample that is used to select segments of the population for the study. The researcher uses his/her judgment as to which segments should be included in the study. For this reason, Check and Schutt (2012:104) argues that purposive sample a “key informant survey” which targets individuals who are particularly knowledgeable about the issue under investigation. Therefore, the principals as heads of the institutions would be selected because they are seen as key informants regarding the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Ten (10) principals, from the sampled primary schools were earmarked for interviews. Principals are the first people who are directly experiencing the causes and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. One senior HR Personnel was also interviewed because she is responsible for administering leave forms from various schools in Mangaung on daily bases.

From each 10 primary schools the researcher used purposive sampling to select 6 teachers from the 10 primary schools in order to complete the questionnaires. The primary school teachers will be in a position to know why their colleagues are always absent because they are their close friends and always they eat together during school break. The researcher wanted the general views and opinions of the primary

teachers regarding the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein). All in all sixty (60) questionnaires will be distributed in order to be complete the questionnaires. Gender, age, experience and qualifications were given priority when selection was done in order to avoid gender biases and find out which group of teachers is always absent.

1.10.6 Data generation methods / Instruments

These are methods proposed to assemble generated data in various form such as: instruments, questionnaires, and documentary analysis in the form of literature review.

1.10.6.1 Questionnaires

According to Babbie *et al.* (2010:646), a questionnaire is a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis. They are used primarily in survey research and in experiments, field research and other modes of observation. The questionnaires will be developed and pre tested. Strydom (2011:236) emphasizes that the pilot study is valuable for refining the wording, ordering, layout and filtering and in helping to prune the questionnaire to manageable length. The wording of the questionnaires is very important because this can substantially influence the reactions of respondents.

Delport and Roestenburg and (2011:171) mention that the basic objective of using questionnaire is to obtain facts and opinions about a phenomenon from people who are informed on the particular issue. Therefore, in this study the questionnaires were primarily used to gather more information about the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung. The researcher personally distributed and collected the questionnaires. According to Delport and Roestenburg (2011:188) the questionnaires that are handled /distributed in this way usually saves much time and the response rates are raised because of

the personal contact. The other important matter is that the researcher does not bother the respondents at an inconvenient time. The researcher first conduct quantitative research, analyses the results and then builds on the results to explain them in more details with qualitative research. It is considered exploratory because the initial quantitative results are explained further in the qualitative data (Creswell, 2014:15).

Permission was sought from Central University of Technology, Free State, the Free State Department of Education and the school principals. The researcher then made appointments with the principals and teachers to explain the purpose and the importance of the research.

1.10.6.2 Interviews

Interviews were used to collect data from principals and one senior HR personnel in this study. The literature review and conceptual analysis followed by interviews with principals in public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality to gain insights into the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in the effective running of the school. Nieuwenhuis (2016:92) defines an interview as a two way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participants questions to collect data and to learn about ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants. The aim of the qualitative interviews was to see the world through the eyes of the participants, and they can be a valuable source of information, provided they are used correctly. The other aim was to obtain rich descriptive data that will help you to understand the participant's construction of knowledge and social reality.

The ten (10) principals from Mangaung (Bloemfontein) public primary schools were interviewed to establish the causes and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in the effective running of the schools. The school principals were chosen because they are knowledgeable about teacher absenteeism. One HR senior official from the leave section who deals directly with teacher absenteeism on daily basis was also interviewed in order to establish the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung.

There are three types of interviews, namely open - ended (unstructured) interviews, and structured interviews and semi - structured interviews. The researcher employed semi-structured interviews. In a semi-structured interview, an open - ended question will be asked and the interviewer follows up on the clues about a specific topic that the participants provide. Some of the advantages of semi- structured interviews are that these methods help to clarify concepts and problems and they allow for the establishment of a list of possible answers or solutions which, in turn, facilitates the construction of more highly structured interviews. In particular, they facilitate the elimination of superfluous questions and the reformulation of ambiguous ones (Bless *et al.*, 2006:119).

The interviews were taped and recorded with the permission of all participants. The recordings were transcribed verbatim and resulting text be analyzed). Terre Blanche, Kelly and Durrhein (2006:298) list some of the advantages of tape recording the interviews as follows: a) it allows the researcher to keep a full record of the interview without having to be distracted by the detailed note-keeping; b) it also shows the interviewee that the researcher takes what he/she says very serious. The interview enabled the researcher to get understanding of how the participants perceived the phenomenon of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

1.10.6.3 Documentary analysis

There are various documents and Acts that regulate the general conditions of services of teachers in South Africa. For the purpose of this study only few Acts were scrutinized and discussed. Various documents such as Leave policy for educators, Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997, (BCEA), Personnel Administration Measures (PAM), Employment Educators Act 76 of 1998 (EEA), and leave registers were used to gather information about teacher absenteeism. Leave policy for educators normally regulate absenteeism of educators while the BCEA contains types of leaves which are to be utilized by the teachers. PAM is the document that sets out the terms and conditions of EEA, while EEA deals with the general conditions of services of Employment of Educators in Republic of South Africa. The leave register summarizes all the days and types of leaves utilized by the educators. These documents assisted and provided the researcher with valuable information regarding uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in the selected public primary schools in Mangaung.

1.11 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

According to Creswell (2012:10) analysis is the process consisting of “taking the data apart” to determine individual responses and then “putting it together” to summarize it. The quantitative and the qualitative databases are analyzed separately in this approach. The quantitative results are then used to plan the qualitative follow up. One important area that Creswell (2014:224-225) highlights is that the quantitative results cannot only inform the sampling procedure but it can also towards the types of qualitative questions to ask participants in the second phase. Creswell (2012:618) emphasizes that during the qualitative research the researcher will make sense out of the text data, divide it into text or image segments, labels the segments, examines codes for overlap, and redundancy and collapses these code themes.

In this study quantitative data analysis involved generating frequency tables of teacher absenteeism, different types of leave educators take and the impact such leave of absence create in the process of enhancing school stability for a good educational discourse. For qualitative data themes and categories will be generated.

1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics in research are understood to mean the process that has the quest to ensure and embrace voluntary involvement of the co-researchers with particular commitment to elucidating the will to take part or withdraw from participation. This takes into account the worth of human collective and collaborative unison (Green, Camilli & Elmare, and 2006:57).

One of the reasons why researchers are concerned with research ethics is that there have been many cases of abuse of people’s rights in the name of social research (Bless *et al.*, 2006:139). Therefore some of the good practice guidelines that the researcher can apply in order to abide with ethical principles are transparency, validity, reliability, and comparison (Knoesen, Truter & Stroud, and 2009:81). Maree and van der Westhuizen (2010:41-42) further emphasizes that an essential ethical aspect is the issue of the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study and the protection of the participants’ identities. This could include obtaining letters of consent, obtaining permission to be interviewed, undertaking to destroy audiotapes

as part of the ethical process.

In this study, the principal researcher therefore assured the participants that they will remain anonymous, and that they can withdraw from the interview process if they feel uncomfortable. The researcher also sought permission from both Central University of Technology (CUT) and the Free State Department of Education (FSDoE) to conduct a research in public primary schools in Mangaung. After the researcher received the permission, schools were supplied with details of research as well as letters of consent from CUT and the FSDoE.

1.11 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study will provide guidelines for improved management and monitoring of teacher absenteeism at schools, with Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality as the case study.

1.12 METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study focused on ten (10) public primary schools with a reputation of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in Mangaung Metro Municipality (i.e. Bloemfontein). The principals and the teachers were knowledgeable and also in a position to know more about the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in their respective schools because they were directly experiencing uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.. Therefore, the findings of the study would not be generalized to other schools in Bloemfontein.

1.13 DELINEATION OF THE FIELD OF STUDY

This study addressed itself to two parameters of delineation or separation. These parameters are Geographical and Scientific delineations with brief discussions to follow.

1.13.1 Geographical demarcation

Geographical delineation is about division based on a particular area or neighbourhood in the study taken. This takes into account the relevant partial unit of reference (Lippert, Stow & Weeks, and 2010:907).

In this context, the study focused on public primary schools in Mangaung in the Free State Province. The Free State Department of Education is demarcated into five

districts namely, Lejweleputswa, Thabo Mofutsanyana, Fezile Dabi, and Xhariep and Mangaung Metro Municipality which was previously known as Motheo district. The fact that the Mangaung Metro Municipality is very big, it means that the researcher was not able to access all the schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality. The research only focused on selected public primary schools Mangaung Municipality (Bloemfontein).

1.13.2 Scientific demarcation

Scientific delineation refers to particular divisions made as informed by a precise study with specific inherent nature (Confalonier, Jones, van Dieper & Oshoven, 2014:7). In the latter thought, this research will be placed within the realm of education policy studies (Educational Law). Education policy studies are relevant for this study as it can be associated with educational structures regarding teacher education, as well as with educational issues in South African education policy. The findings of this study could therefore inform policy makers of the realities (i.e. causes and effects) pertaining to the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. It also aimed to provide guidelines to the schools on how to deal with uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

1.11 RESEARCH OUTLAY

This aspect seeks to highlight the manner in which the research will be organized in respect of Chapters and respective content.

Chapter One: Of significance to this study are the following aspects: The Introduction and background; the purpose of the study will be highlighted; the theoretical grounding; research questions, aims and objectives; synopsis of literature review consulted as well as ethical considerations to be embraced.

Chapter Two: This chapter will focus on Literature overview on teacher absenteeism. In this chapter the focus will be on a literature study where South African and selected African states' perspectives on teacher absenteeism will be investigated.

Chapter Three: In this case, focus will be on the Research Methodology of the study. This chapter presents the general description of the research methods, research design, area of study, population, research sample. Other aspects that will be discussed are research instruments, reliability and validity of the research and ethical consideration.

Chapter Four: The content of this chapter will focus on Data Presentation and Data analysis. It discusses the analysis of data as well as the results of the study.

Chapter Five: This aspect will focus on the discussion of findings; conclusion and recommendations. (It discusses the summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations for further study).

1.11 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This aspect comprises the word-list frequently used in this study for purposes of collective understanding and interpretation from a contextual view the research anticipates addressing. The following terms are contextually defined for this study, these are:

Absenteeism: Absenteeism is generally perceived as any failure of an employee to report for or to remain at work as scheduled per official policy (Casio, as cited in Jacobs & Kritsonis, 2007:2).

Learner: Denotes any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of the South African School Act 101 of 196.

Mangaung Metro Municipality: Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality is a Category A municipality. It is situated in the Free State province, in the central interior of South Africa. It constitutes of Bloemfontein, Botshabelo, Mangaung, Thaba Nchu (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2017: Online).

Public primary schools: Mean those schools that are owned and funded by the state. (Department of Education, 1995(b):16).

Sick leave: Sick leave is the type of a leave that benefits an employee who will not be able to work effectively because of illness. It allows the employee to take down time for self-care and healing.

(Heathfield, 2017).

Teacher: Means any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services (South African School Act, 1996).

The last aspect of this initial aspect of this study culminates with the chapter summary.

1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter gave a short introductory overview of teacher absenteeism. It examined some of the circumstances that causes high rate of teacher absenteeism in schools such as lack of motivation, health reasons, poor salaries and stress. It also highlighted some of the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Significant to this chapter has been aspects on: The study aim and objectives; the research questions; the methodology adopted for the study; research design; study limitations; delineation and study contextualization as well as the glossary of terms used for common understanding.

The next chapter will give a literature overview on various definitions of teacher absenteeism. Focus will be extended to teacher absenteeism in some of the African states and South Africa in particular. The causes and effects of teacher absenteeism will be explored. The strategies that can be used to reduce high rate of teacher absenteeism will also be discussed.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the literature review which pays attention to the various definitions of teacher absenteeism and different forms of teacher absenteeism. The aim of the literature is also to identify the reasons for and effects of teacher absenteeism in public primary schools. This chapter highlights and analyses the Educators' leave policy and leave measures in South Africa. Attention will also be given to the practical strategies to curb teacher absenteeism in public primary schools. Teacher absenteeism from a South African perspective and some of the African countries will be discussed. A summary of the pivotal and relevant points discussed will in Chapter 2 will conclude the chapter.

2.2 TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

In this study absenteeism will be discussed from a theoretical perspective within which the relevant literature will be used to explore different meanings of absenteeism. It has different meanings to different people. The definitions of both a teacher and absenteeism will be first provided, and the word teacher absenteeism will be defined and further indicate what it entails. Two categories of excused/involuntary and unexcused/voluntary will be examined. The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2010:5) defines absenteeism as being frequently away from work or school especially without good reasons.

The South African School Act (SASA, 1996) defines a teacher as any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at a school. According to Pitts (2010:6) the term *absence* refers to any period of time which necessitates a teacher's use of some form of leave from work. The terms *absence* and *absenteeism* will be used synonymously to indicate use of leave from work. Mampane (2013:17) defines absenteeism in simple terms by saying absenteeism is generally used to refer to unscheduled employee absences from the

workplace. Absenteeism is any failure of an employee to report for or to remain at work as scheduled, regardless of reason (Casio, as cited in Jacobs & Kritsonis, 2007:2).

Kearney (2008:452) also refers to absenteeism as an excusable or inexcusable absence from elementary (primary) or secondary (high) school.

According to Mthombeni (2010:21) absenteeism does not only entail the complete absence of employees from the workplace, but it also take place if an employee is at work, but not at his or her actual workstation. It means that the teacher is at work but he/she is not involved at all in teaching and learning activities.

Therefore, the word absenteeism does not only mean not being at work but it includes the following as well a) arriving late for work; b) leaving the workplace early; c) having extended tea or lunch breaks; d) attending to private business during working hours; e) not attending to assigned roles during working hours; f) extended toilet breaks; g) feigned illness; h) undue length of time in fetching water; and i) other unexplained absences from the workstations or from the premises (Labour Guide, 2016: Online).

In conclusion, teacher absenteeism can also be defined as teachers who are not available in school. This includes teachers who have reported for work and have left for whatever reason and teachers yet to report to school (Al-Hassan, 2009:10).

2.3 TYPES OF ABSENTEEISM

The two main types of teacher absenteeism will be discussed in this study as the context of the school as an academic learning space.

2.3.1 Excused absenteeism and unexcused absenteeism

There are two main types of absenteeism, namely, excused and unexcused absenteeism.

2.3.2 Excused absenteeism/Involuntary absenteeism

According to Abeles (2009:33) excused absence is a planned behaviors which the employer knows about in advance (e.g. study leave) and also less planned behaviours such as personal reasons (family relocation) and absenteeism caused by illness and personal religious observations. Similarly, Hackett and Guion (as cited in Stoica and Wamsiedel, 2012:20) refer to involuntary absenteeism as the absence caused by factors which escape the control of the employee such as illness, personal problems, or any other event or situation preventing the employee from coming to work. Van der Westhuisen (2006:36) concurs with the above definitions by saying involuntary absences are beyond the employee's immediate control.

2.3.3 Unexcused absenteeism/Voluntary absenteeism

Abeles (2009:33) describe unexcused absenteeism as when a person is absent from work without an official or recognized reason. Hackett and Guion (as quoted in Stoica and Wamsiedel, 2012:20) also refer voluntary absenteeism as an unjustified and illegitimate nonattendance of employees. This includes not coming to work without providing due notice in advance as well as without giving any explanation as to be the reasons of the absence. Van der Westhuisen (2006:36) explains that voluntary absences are under the direct control of the employee and are frequently utilized for personal aims.

2.4 LEAVE POLICY AND LEAVE MEASURES IN SOUTH AFRICA

There are several Acts that govern the employment and working conditions of teachers in South Africa. For the purpose of this study, attention will be paid to the following Acts which deal with the teachers 'leave matters such as: i) Employment Educators' Act 76 of 1998, as amended (EEA), (Department of Education), ii) Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997(BCEA), as amended and Labour Relations Act of 1995 (LRA), (Department of Labour) and iii) as amended Personnel Administration Measures, notice no. 222 as amended, PAM ,(Department of Education).

Education Labour Relation Council (ELRC) is a council in South Africa where the employer and the teachers' unions discuss all relating workplace matters that are affecting teachers including leave measures.

2.4.1 Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997

Basic Conditions of The Employment Acts 75 of 1997, (Act 77 of 1997) (hereafter referred to as BCEA) gives effect to the right to fair labour practices referred to in section 23(1) of the Constitution by establishing and making provision for the regulation of basic conditions of employment; and thereby to comply with the obligations of the Republic as a member state of the International Labour Organization; and to provide for matters connected therewith. Chapter 3 of this Act deals with the various types of leaves such as Annual leave, sick leave, Maternity leave and Family Responsibility Leave.

2.4.2 Personnel Administration Measures (PAM)

Personnel Administration Measures (hereafter referred to as PAM), published in the Government Gazette no. 19767 (Notice no. 222). PAM is the document that sets out the terms and conditions of Employment of Educators Act (1998).

2.4.3 Employment Educators Act 76 of 1998

In a nutshell EEA deals with the general conditions of service of teachers (educators) in Republic of South Africa (RSA). Chapter 4 of EEA (14) 1(a) states that the teacher (educator) who is absent from work for a period exceeding 14 consecutive days without permission of the employer shall, unless the employer direct or otherwise, be deemed to have been discharged from service on account of misconduct.

2.4.4 Labour Relations Act of 1995

The main purpose of the LRA is to promote orderly collective bargaining, collective bargaining of sectorial level, employee participation in decision making in the workplace and to promote the effective resolution dispute. The Education Labour Relation Council (ELRC) is a forum in South Africa where the employer and teachers' unions discuss all relating workplace matters that are affecting teachers including leave measures.

The council affords teachers' unions the opportunities to negotiate salaries, conditions of services, leave measures, pensions etc. Prinsloo and Reddy (2012:1) state that educators must account for 1 800 working hours per year. These are made up of 1 400 hours performing core duties during a formal school day and 400 hours spent on work done outside the formal day, for example planning, evaluation, extra and co-curricular activities, professional duties and professional development. Eighty of 400 hours may be used for ongoing professional development, which may take place outside the formal school day and during school holidays.

It is very interesting to note that chapter A, paragraph 3 of PAM and Sections 4 of EEA (1998) indicate that formal school day for teachers are expected to be 7 hours long. But, despite having a good leave policy for educators the rate of teacher absenteeism is still high in South Africa. It is important to determine whether the leave policy meet the needs that it seeks to address pertaining to teacher absenteeism. It is also important to identify if there are grey areas in the existing Leave policy for educators. The various types of leave are found in PAM document.

2.5 TYPES OF LEAVE

PAM is a document that consolidates the terms and conditions of the employment of teachers determined in terms of section 4 of the employment of teachers' Act 1996 (published in the Government Gazette no. 19767 (Notice no. 222)). The following types of leaves will be discussed due to their contribution to the discourse of teacher absenteeism at school; this being the major concern in this study.

2.5.1 Annual leave

According to Chapter J of PAM teachers (educators) are entitled to annual leave with full pay during each leave cycle of 12 months, commencing on 01 January of each year. An educator retains all her or his leave credit when she or he is transferred within a department or between state departments without a break in service.

Unless indicated otherwise in these measures, days of leave granted in respect of any category of leave, other than annual leave, shall not be deducted from an educator's leave provision in respect of annual leave.

An educator shall not be considered to be on leave if she or he:

a) appear as a witness,

In any court,

In misconduct proceedings or in a misconduct investigation in terms of any

law,

at inquest proceedings, or

Before a commission or committee appointed by the State or committee

or institution instituted by or in terms of any Act,

b) appears as defendant or co-defendant in civil proceedings arising from his or her official duties and in which the State or any statutory body or institution has a direct interest,

c) is taken into custody or must appear in any court on a criminal charge and the offence he or she is charged with is withdrawn or if he or she is acquitted of such offence, or

d) Attends or participates in a training programme required by the employer or the professional body with whom she/he is required to register in order to remain registered or with the approval of the employer attends or participates in a training programme or other activity that is in the employer's interest.

The main purpose of annual leave is to provide periods of rest to an office based educator but, subject to these measures, may be used to extend periods of other categories of leave as provided in the measures.

2.5.2 Special leave

a) Special leave with full pay be granted to an educator who has been exposed to a medical conditions that requires such person to be placed under quarantine.

b) Application for such leave must be accompanied by a certificate from a medical practitioner stating the period of quarantine as well as the reasons necessitating such leave.

2.5.3 Maternity leave

- a) A female educator is entitled to 4 consecutive months' maternity leave on full pay to commence at 14 days prior to the expected date of birth, but not later than the actual date of birth in a case of a premature confinement.
- b) Maternity leave may be extended upon application by one or more of the following:

the granting of sick leave as a result of a medical complication; the granting of up to 184 consecutive days unpaid leave,

- d) An educator who experiences a miscarriage, still birth or termination of the pregnancy after starting paid maternity leave, shall be eligible for six consecutive week's paid maternity leave, where after sub paragraph i) shall apply in the event of a medical complication.
- e) For at least six weeks after the birth, no educator may commence with normal official duty unless the attending practitioner certifies that the educator is fit to do so.
- f) Where it is practically feasible and subject to paragraph 2.5.3.4, an employer may allow an educator to interrupt her maternity leave by letting her return to work temporarily if the baby is hospitalized for a period longer than a month during the maternity leave due to premature birth or illness.

2.5.4 Adoption leave

An educator, who adopts a child that is younger than two years, qualifies for adoption leave to a maximum of 45 working days.

If spouses or life partner are employed in the Public Service, both partners qualify for adoption leave provided that the combined leave taken does not exceed 45 working days.

2.5.5 Family Responsibility leave

An educator shall be granted 3 working days leave per annum leave cycle if the educator's spouse or life partner gives birth, or if educator's child, spouse or life partner is sick. An educator shall be granted 5 working days leave per annum leave cycle if the educator's child, spouse or life partner dies or the educator's immediate family member's dies.

2.5.6 Special leave for professional and personal development

Special leave with full pay may be granted to an institution based educator

- a) To engage in activities aimed at his/her professional development.
- b) To engage in activities aimed at his or her professional development where such personal development is also in the employer, or
- c) a religious observance

The total number of leave days granted to an institution based educator may not exceed 3 working days per annual leave cycle.

2.5.7 Special leave for quarantine purposes

- a) Special leave with full pay may be granted to an educator, who has been exposed to a medical condition that requires such person to place under quarantine,
- b) Application for such leave must be accompanied by a certificate from a medical practitioner stating the period of quarantine as well as the reasons necessitating such leave.

2.5.8 Normal sick leave

Educators are entitled to 36 working days sick leave with full pay over a three cycle. Unused sick leave shall lapse at the expiry of the three year cycle. An educator can be on sick leave for one or two days without submitting the medical certificate.

2.5.9 Temporary incapacity leave

An educator who has exhausted her/his sick leave in a three year cycle and who, according to the relevant medical practitioner, requires to be absent due to incapacity that is not permanent may be granted additional sick leave with full pay.

2.5.10 Permanent Incapacity

Educators whose degree of incapacity has been certified by a competent medical practitioner as permanent shall, with the approval of the Head of Department, be granted a maximum of 30 working days paid sick leave.

2.5.11 Leave for occupational injuries and diseases

Educators, who, as a result of their work, suffer occupational injuries or contract occupational diseases, shall be granted occupational and diseases leave for the duration of the period they cannot work.

2.5.12 Special leave for study purposes

A special leave may be granted to an educator for an approved course of study and for a period approved by the employer, on conditions as approved by the employer, including leave with full or partial pay or without pay.

2.5.13 Special leave for examination purposes

An educator may be granted special leave for examination purposes and with full pay for each day on which such educator sits as a candidate for an examination approved for this purpose by the employer plus one additional day of special leave for study purposes for each such day of examination which may be taken on the working days immediately prior to the days of examination.

2.5.14 Special leave for participating in sporting, cultural and other events

A special leave for a period and on conditions approved by the Head of a department in terms of policy of such department may be granted to an educator for participating in sports, cultural, local council and other relevant activities.

2.5.15 Special leave in extraordinary circumstances

Notwithstanding disciplinary measures that may apply, unauthorized absence by an educator shall be seen as special leave in extraordinary circumstances, and would be leave without pay unless the employer in a specific case determines otherwise.

2.5.16 Unpaid leave

If an educator has utilized all his/her annual leave, the Head of Department may grant him/her unpaid leave up to a maximum of 184 consecutive days.

Mashaba and Maile (.2013:9) argue that in Gauteng province, a teacher is to be replaced by a substitute if a teacher is absent for twenty or more consecutive working days, that is a full month. It therefore means, if a teacher is absent for less than twenty, no substitute teacher will be appointed. This policy itself seems to perpetuate the negative impact of absenteeism on productivity and poor performance.

2.6 TEACHER ABSENTEEISM IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Teacher absenteeism is a common and serious problem in developing countries, thus limiting the opportunities for students to learn. Based on the assumption that the teacher in the classroom is an important to promote students' learning and other outcomes, different types of intervention have been implemented in past years to tackle teacher absenteeism in developing countries (Guerrero, Leon, Zapata, Sugimaru & Cueto, 2012:4, 5).

Patrinos and World Bank (cited in Ivatts, 2010:5) argue that teachers are the transmitters of knowledge who help ensure that children learn. They are role models to students, and in most rural communities, they are the most educated and respected personages. They are at the frontline of developing pupils' understanding, attitudes,

skills, learning, and core values. Teachers are therefore, the most important element in producing education.

UNESCO (2005:4) emphasis that education is a fundamental human right and the most lever for the promotion of welfare, civic, and social advancement, the progress of democracy and respect for human rights, the building of peace and the promotion of an environment that allows pluralism, knowledge, including scientific and technological knowledge and cultural diversity to prosper. Patrinos (2013:1) believes that education is critical if we are to meet the goal of ending poverty and boosting shared prosperity in 2030. Therefore, the presence of the teacher is paramount important in the classroom in order to transmit knowledge and skills to the learners.

2.61 Nigeria

Like in many other developing countries, teacher absenteeism is a growing dilemma in Nigerian education particular in government or public schools (Ejere, 2010:115). In one of the case study that was published by The World Bank (2013:1), Programme Advisory for teacher absenteeism it was found that frequent teacher absences led to fragmented learning experiences for students and poor learning outcomes. According to Adeyemi and Akpotu (2009:138) in Nigeria, teachers' welfare and conditions of service were abysmal especially in the 1990's. In addition, the school environment was highly repellent. School buildings were dilapidated, with inadequate teaching-learning facilities and in most cases, the classrooms were over-crowded. All these could alter the attitude of teachers to work. In fact, since the government take-over of schools, the attitude of the Nigerian teacher seems to have gradually deteriorated. Adeyemi and Akpotu (2009:143) further indicate that the total cost of teacher absenteeism in Nigeria is translating to about N28, 000,050 (US \$400,009) annually.

Moreover, it has been discovered that school inspectors and supervisors hardly visit the rural schools for the reasons of bad roads, poor terrain and inadequate security arrangement. Therefore, the absence or irregularity of inspection of rural schools could have accounted in part for the seemingly higher cost of absenteeism among rural schools' teachers (Adeyemi & Akpotu, 2009:143).

2.6.2 Ghana

The National Inspectorate Board (NIB) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) conducted the research on Teacher Absenteeism. The study focused on 1, 465 schools in 165 districts across the 10 regions of Ghana. In this report teacher absenteeism was identified as a threat to the education system of the country (Ghana News Agency, 2015: Online). Al-Hassan (2009:17) shows that 35 % of teachers practice lateness and absenteeism in Ghana. According to the report teachers are late or depart early on Thursdays and Friday. According to Afenyo (2015:1) most teachers become absent on Mondays and Fridays. Many teachers engage in distance education course mostly at the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba to upgrade and sharpen their skills. Distant education programmes are mounted for weekend where students can meet to have lectures, take quizzes and write examinations.

Some of the root causes of teacher absenteeism at the school level in Ghana may be caused by lack of effective supervision and management of instructional time, lack of local community interest in the school system, lack of appropriate, timely sanctions and lack of teacher duty post accommodation (Acquanye, 2012:3). The effects of absenteeism on the quality of education are drastic, and most people, parents and teachers recognize the negative effects. When a teacher is absent, classes are doubled up with other ones, taking the recommended teacher-pupil ratio to unacceptable levels. Absenteeism, lateness and leaving early also makes it much harder for teachers to finish the syllabus, spending less time on task, they find themselves rushing to catch up on lost time, and preventing pupils from asking questions they need to properly comprehend the material. It is unusual for a lesson to be completed as planned (Northern Network of Education Development, 2010. Online). NNED is a collaborative initiative of civil society organizations that was formed in 2001. Its main aim is to campaign and address challenges to educational development in Northern Ghana.

2.6.3 Uganda

Teacher absenteeism in Uganda is one of the highest in the world, with obvious implications for the quality of education. With absenteeism rates of 20% - 30% varying per districts, teacher absenteeism costs the Ugandan government US\$ 30 million every year for paid services that are not delivered (Kimera & Wakholi, 2010: Online).

The role of a headmaster is very critical in facilitating the implementation of quality education initiatives. In accomplishing their tasks, however, principals said they encountered a number of challenges including dealing with low motivation, managing class sizes, dealing with inadequate and delayed textbooks supplies, handling the misuse of teaching time resulting from lateness and absenteeism of teachers and pupils, combining administrative work with teaching, adapting to frequent educational policy changes, managing school funds, handling interference from educational authorities, and coping within adequate training and professional support (Oduro, 2009:143).

Okurut (2012: 17) lists other causes of teacher absenteeism in Uganda as follows: drunkenness, administrative lapse (i.e. poor supervision and leadership), poor supervision and monitoring, lack of teacher mentorship programme, poor time management by teachers, engagement in other official duties, such elections monitoring and public health campaign.

2.6.4 Kenya

Kenya African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC) study shows teacher absenteeism rates to average 13%, and as high as 17% for teachers in public primary school.

The APHRC study in both private and public secondary schools, in major towns in Kenya, shows that between 35% to 40% of lesson time is lost during teaching. The huge loss of learning time inside the classroom presents a more serious issue than teacher absenteeism. Of the 30, 000 primary schools in Kenya, the proportion of 13% of teachers who report being absent on any given school day translates to an

equivalent loss of at least 60, 000 cumulated teaching days in a week, assuming 4.7 teaching hours in a school day and an average of eight teachers in a school. Taking a 36% loss of learning time inside the classroom, and using the same parameters, the loss translates to an equivalent of over 100, 000 teaching days in a week (Ngware, 2015:1).

2.7 TEACHER ABSENTEEISM – SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

During the 1980s, the young population was committed to destroying the education system of apartheid. Protests, boycotts and ensuring violence flared up, and schools and other government properties were damaged and destroyed in townships. All this contributed to severe deterioration of the culture of teaching and learning in black schools. Presently, the education authorities and the disadvantaged communities are struggling to restore the culture of teaching and learning. This culture is a determinant of attendance and performance at schools (Khalabai, 2012:35).

Amtaika (2013:113) argues that the deterioration of culture of learning is due to ill-discipline and is also one of the major contributing factors to the education crises. Among teachers, ill-discipline has been compounded by a lack of commitment or clarity on policy and code of conduct. According to statistics there were 392 000 teachers employed at public schools around the country in 2012. According to Spaul (2013:1) on any one day, between 10% and 12% of teachers are not in school, amounting to about 39 000 absent teachers every day.

The majority of these leaves instances (77%) are for one or two days (discretionary sick leave), which means that they do not require any medical certificate. This can be one of the reasons why teachers are abusing discretionary sick leave in South Africa. Mthombeni (2010:ii) indicates that the so called “abuse” of privileges that is perpetrated under the pretext of the teachers exercising their “rights” is characterized as such because the teachers exhaust all the leave provisions irrespective of there being an actual cause/justifiable reason for them to do so. This trend towards excessive and unjustified absenteeism, both authorized and unauthorized, has indisputable had a negative impact on the delivery of quality education. Miller (2009:2) warns that state policymakers should reexamine and justify statutes governing teachers'leave

privileges. Some statistics may be excessively generous, elevating rates of absence and incurring the financial liability of accumulated, unused leave. According to this report, an average teacher is away from school or the classroom for between 20 and 24 days a year.

South Africa has the highest rate of absenteeism in the South African Development Community (SADC). For example, according to the Basic Education Minister, Angie Motshekga truant teachers were absent for close to 7.5 million days last year (News24, 2013: Online). Mgaga (2013:2) indicates that the Minister was shocked at the number of teachers absent from school during visits by politicians at the start of the academic year. There were 1000 absent teachers in 451 schools visited in one day and most were principals. Against the above background the South African government is planning to replace the current manual clocking by a biometric system that will require that teachers clock in and out of school using their fingerprints. The new system is expected to eliminate a lack of accountability among schools heads and root out absenteeism (Mgaga, 2013:1).

Taylor (2008:6) points out that teachers work an average 41 hours (out of 43) per week. 41% of this on teaching: 3.4h per day, 41% devoted to planning and preparation and 14% on assessment, evaluation, reports and record keeping. Khalabai (2010: 38) found that in our schooling system, teachers are required to do a lot of administrative work. According to Spaul (2013:2-3), the 2011 Carnoy Chisholm study showed that teachers in the North West taught only 52 of the 140 daily lessons scheduled for the year (40%) compared with 78 in Botswana (60%). Given that unwarranted teacher absenteeism in South African is unacceptably high particularly in certain parts of the school system the department should be encouraged to clamp down on negligence. However, one must remember that teaching time and curriculum coverage are the real goals here. Because inadequate curriculum coverage and low teaching time are most problematic in the poorest 60% of schools, district officials and subject advisers should use workbooks as an indication of curriculum coverage and randomly sample three workbooks per subject per grade per term. Teachers must be taught that the workbooks structure the curriculum per week of teaching time allowing them to ensure that the full curriculum is covered.

Miller (2009: 6) warns that the poverty level of a school is associated with teachers' rates of absence. Spaul (2013:2) concurs with the above statement by saying that teacher absenteeism varies widely by school quintile, with teacher absenteeism in the poorest 60% of schools being twice as high as in the wealthiest 20% of schools in some provinces. According to Mashaba and Maile (2013:5) a lack of infrastructure and resources in township and rural schools which fuel teacher absence implies that there is no equal opportunity to education in the country. Mthombeni (2010:4) adds that in many previous disadvantaged or under resourced schools, that little or no teaching takes place after mid-morning on Friday, the day before a public holiday, on a pay day or during the last week of the school term.

Sick leave is of the most abused type of leave in South Africa schools. Spaul (2013:2) emphasizes that the main reason provided for teacher leave is sickness. Surprisingly, sickness seems to strike teachers particularly on Mondays and Fridays. Miller (2009:7) seems to share the same sentiments that teachers are absent most frequently on Monday (5.1%) and Friday (5.9 %).

2.8 CAUSES OF TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

Taylor (2008:21) hints that the first problem with the majority of South African schools is that they exhibit a culture which tolerates a very loosely bounded timetable: teachers and learners come and go as they please and teaching happens desultorily.

Ivatts as cited in Komoni (2015:3) argues that there are several causes of teacher absenteeism which vary from one country to another and from one region to another. These causes include teacher demography, gender, seniority, type of employment, type of school, job satisfaction, professional commitment, school and institutional management, weak monitoring systems, incentives and sanctions, educational administration, recording and reporting procedures, health, secondary employment, class size, quality of school infrastructure, distance to school, isolation, level of training, formal duties, quality of learning environment, social context of the school, community social economic status, school leadership and community participation.

Komoni (2015:11) categorizes three main factors that cause teachers absenteeism as personal factors, school factors and environmental factors.

Personal factors: Research data available shows that this aspect influences teacher absenteeism. They include age and gender of the teacher, illness of the teacher or a family member, experience and job dissatisfaction of the teacher, seniority and the type of employment for the teacher; qualification and lack of professional competence of the teacher, compassionate leave and family conflicts among other family responsibilities (Komoni, 2015:12).

School factors are institutional characteristics and working conditions that in different ways influence teachers' absenteeism. They include: Lack of group accepted norms, poor leadership style of the principal, lack of effective supervision and monitoring policies by the school administration and Ministry of Education, the status of the school whether private or public, poor school infrastructure and equipment, lack of in-service training programs among other motivation policies, high pupil-teacher ratio and assignment of other school administrative duties. (Komoni, 2015:14).

Environmental factors are community based characteristics that in different ways contribute to teachers' absenteeism. Some examples include the location of the school, residence of the teacher, remoteness of the school, level of poverty of the community, assignment of non-teaching tasks to the teachers, education level of the p

2.9 THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER ABSENTEEISM ON TEACHING

In one of the studies that was conducted in South Africa by Mampane (2013:120-122), the following were highlighted as some of the main effects of teacher absenteeism on teaching:

a) Learners not attended to

Often in the previous disadvantaged or under resourced schools particularly in the township schools, there is no one who takes care of learners in the absence of their teachers as a result of lack of teacher substitutes. The findings of this study confirm that teachers in the participating schools absent themselves from school without a valid reason and, worse they don't inform the principal beforehand.

b) Lack of discipline

When a teacher is absent from either class or school the learners will not be disciplined. This lack of discipline, in turn creates disruptions in the schools as well as disorder because of the noise made by the unattended learners. In the absence of a teacher in the class learners often fight amongst themselves with this causing chaos and a culture of no discipline in the school.

c) Chaos and disruption

With the teacher not being in class, the learners become disruptive and chaotic and, thus, learning and teaching do not happen. “There will be a lack of discipline and there will be chaos in the classes that are not attended and this, in turn will eventually affect the tone of the school” (Mampane, 2013:120).

d) Teacher frustrations

While the general school discipline is affected by the teacher absenteeism, the individual teachers become frustrated by other teachers’ absences from school. One of the HODs expressed the feeling that the absenteeism of other teachers from school frustrates the school managers because they have to take care of learners who are without a teacher. They feel abused and misused because of the extra efforts they have to make to assist the principal to maintain order and discipline around the school.

Having to control classes that are not attended is “time consuming and frustrating, affects the plan for the day, eventually affecting my future plan of work”. The managerial duties of the HODs may also frustrate the HODs in such way that they cause stress them and promote absenteeism amongst the HOD

e) Teacher - to - teacher relationship

The study found that teacher absenteeism causes poor relationships between teachers. In most case, adverse relationship is grossly affected by those teachers who neglect their duties by absenting themselves from class and from school. The HODs feel that it “is really unfair and it frustrates us who are always present at school. This tendency promotes conflicts amongst teachers and learners (Mampane, 2013:120-122).

Mashaba and Maile (2013:8) caution that the economic policy and the schooling system appear to be complementing each other by creating a cycle which ensures that the disadvantaged majority Africans remain poor and marginalized. The failing economic policy uses its transmission mechanism- state budget- to export its failure to the schooling system in the form of inadequate resources and low economic incentives, resulting in poor conditions in schools. These conditions fuel teacher absenteeism which contributes to poor performance.

According to Khalabai (2010: 41) besides lost productivity, wasted education time, and salary costs for the absent employees, the state spends millions of Rands on substitute teachers. Dame (2009:1) found that in the optimum circumstances, substitute teachers help mitigate the disruptive impact on student learning caused by the absence of their regular teacher. However, substitute teachers have to work through many challenges and uncertainties such as inadequate, unclear, or no lesson plans left by regular teachers: not enough time to know the students’ learning styles, and limited training in classroom management. Sparse research and other documented evidence as cited in Damle (2009:1), reveal that substitute teachers are able to keep students busy with work; they accomplish very little by the way serious instruction and student learning. Teacher absenteeism and the resulting employment of substitute teachers entail financial costs and an increase in educational expenditure.

The cost of the teacher absenteeism as shown below was conducted in South Africa by Mashaba and Maile (2013) in the District of Tshwane West was calculated as follows:

1: Summary of teacher absenteeism (adopted from Mashaba and Mailie (2013:18))

Position	Absent days	Teacher absent cost
PL1	1 065	R 968 945
PL2	121	R 132 124
PL3	120	R 155 037
PL4	33	R 58 226
TOTAL	1 339	R 1 314 332

Table 1 summarizes absenteeism of teachers in different categories. It shows that PL1 teachers are more absent than PL4, for example. The table also gives the total cost of teacher absenteeism and estimate it at R 1 314 332. Participants in schools under study, took 1339 paid leave days which cost the education department an amount of R 1 314 332.

2.10 TEACHER UNIONS AND ABSENTEEISM

According to Lajewski (2010:27) teacher unions have a long history in South Africa. The history includes fragmentation along political, ideological, racial, class and organizational lines. South African Democratic Teachers’ Union (SADTU) is a leading member union of the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), continue to have close political ties with the ruling party, African National Congress (ANC).

Macfarlane and Chaykowski (2012:1) mention that South African teachers are highly unionized with more than 80% of teachers in public schools belonging to unions, and the vast majorities are SADTU members. SADTU had an estimated membership of 245 000 teachers between 1990 to 2010. Letsoalo (as cited in Amtaika , 2013:109) argues that teachers play dual roles: first as educators and second as organizers of political support for the ANC. This partnership, however, did not dissolve the employee-employer relationship between COSATU and the government. As government, the ANC still remains an employer and COSATU/SADTU still remains employees of the

government. This relationship complicates the alliance partnership. The supremacy of the union's interests was clearly evident in the causes of the 2010 teachers' strike, where workers demanded a salary increase of 8.6%, a housing allowance of R1000 and the equalization of subsidies for medical aid.

Amtaika (2013:109) highlights that SADTU's objectives of fighting for better education for all was overshadowed by interests in party politics and material gains. It became the mobilization machine of political support for the African National Congress (ANC), and was ultimately caught up in the ideological battles of the ANC as it sought to exert its influence on policy formulation.

Mthombeni (2010:i) indicates that teachers neglect core work activities such as teaching, in order to attend to, inter alia, personal matters, as well as, other authorized activities like trade union meetings. Macfarlane and Chaykowski (2012:1) maintain that teachers bunking lessons with tacit union endorsement is a major cause of learners' poor academic achievement. Spaul (2013:2) also supports that union meetings during school time were also identified as a problem. Sometimes the meetings were scheduled just outside of school times, but teachers who stayed far away from the venue would leave school early, sometimes as early as 8am, to ensure they were on time. SADTU members usually give up teaching time to attend meetings and workshops, or to participate in marches and demonstrations. Nevertheless, the fact that teachers went to court to support their union leader illustrates the influence that union leaders wield in schools. SADTU has a stranglehold on our education system (Amtaika, 2013:113).

2.11 THE HEADMASTER AND TEACHER

The quality of school leadership and management in schools plays a pivotal role in order to reduce the high rate of teacher absenteeism. Ngware (2015:2) maintains that headmasters play a role in giving instructional leadership, and they should manage cases of absenteeism. School should also find ways of recovering learning time lost when the teacher is absent. Rosenberg, Ntsubunga and Burt (2009:3) stress that with good management staff members are motivated, on time, teaching when they are meant to teach, and following a structured, planned curriculum. South

Africa is unique in the extent to which the factors are absent in the schools and learning is affected dramatically.

Oduro (2009:143) highlights that some headmasters are overwhelmed by their dual role of carrying out administrative work and teaching. In coping with the workload, some occupied pupils with class exercises to enable them to attend to administrative responsibility. Bush and Oduro (as quoted in Oduro, 2009:143) further indicate that headmasters are scarcely prepared for their leadership tasks. In both Ghana and Tanzania primary school headmasters, especially those in rural schools, are left unsupported once they are offered a headmaster appointment. Most newly appointed headmaster gain awareness of the nature of their leadership tasks through their own efforts.

The inability of the head teachers to sanction or discipline habitual absentees or lateness to school also contributed to the poor teaching days, leaving the classrooms empty (Ghana News Agency, 2015: Online].

Therefore, Cilliers *et al.* (2004:3) suggest that there should be local monitoring, whereby school stakeholders- headmasters, parents, or the school management committee, are invited to monitor teacher attendance. Patrinos (2013:2) recommends that this monitoring should take the form of documenting the prevalence of ghost teachers, beefing up inspections, and increasing the quality and volume of auditing. One option is the hiring of external personnel to monitor attendance. This person can either reward teachers who teach regularly or penalize those who miss significant numbers of classes.

Basic Education Department spokesperson, Granville Whittle indicated that the department may introduce performance contracts for principals and deputy principals to ensure that they clearly understand what their responsibilities are in terms of management and supervision of staff (Macfarlane & Chaykowski, 2012).

2.12 STRATEGIES TO CURB THE TEACHER ABSENTEEISM IN SCHOOLS

According to Mthombeni (2010:17) the problem of absenteeism is so serious for organizations such as schools whose core business is the delivery of quality education to learners who have a constitutional right to quality education. In schools

teacher absenteeism results in a loss of learning opportunity for the learners, failure to deliver quality education, which is the core business of the schools, and an indirect denial of the constitutional rights of learners to have the right to education.

Munro (2007:21) explains that absenteeism is probably one of the biggest problems that a manager has to handle on an ongoing basis as it impacts on service delivery, staff morale and could lead to financial losses.

Yiga and Wandega (2010:28) indicate that teacher absent rates are so worrying that most teachers stay back home and only go to fetch a salary yet they have not done any work. If this practice continue ongoing basis, it impacts on service delivery, staff morale and could lead to financial losses.

Therefore, the school managers/principals must ensure that there is an effective control to lower habitual absence of teachers by implementing a comprehensive plan. It is also very critical that the district officials must always support and empower principals on how to lower teacher absenteeism effectively at schools. Brown and Arnell (2012) suggest a comprehensive plan that school and the district office can use to lower teacher absenteeism in schools as follows:

First the district can determine the extent of its teacher absenteeism problem by looking at factors such as:

- Job dissatisfaction;
- Teacher burnout, and a
- Decrease in teacher morale.

Once the problem of teacher absenteeism has been assessed in a particular school or school district, a comprehensive plan of action should be created. The school and the district office To implement a comprehensive and systematic attendance improvement program the following should be considered:

- Review board policy;
- Appoint an attendance guidelines;
- Buy back of unused sick leave should be considered;
- Develop an attendance recognition plan;
- Improve work conditions;

- Provide an incentive for experienced teachers who volunteer for assignment in falling schools;
- Increase teacher morale is a substantial factor in increasing and
- Teacher attendance. There are several factors that contribute to high morale in a work environment.

Teachers must feel that they are:

- Treated fairly and equally
- Valued and appreciated for their work
- Recognized for their work, and
- Doing work that is important (Brown and Arnell, 2012: 174)

Yiga and Wandega (2010) also make the following recommendations in order to reduce teacher absenteeism:

- To strengthen the inspection function of the central and local government;
- Strengthen local accountability mechanism;
- Punish non-compliant school heads;
- Transfer teacher who have been at school for 20 years;
- Build houses for teachers and head teachers to ensure they stay at school;
- Increase primary teachers' ceiling for the affected schools;
- Provide meals for teachers at school;
- Ensure timely distribution of instructional materials to schools;
- Activate school management committee or School Management Team;
- Increase the teachers' salaries;
- Make arrangements for teachers to draw salaries in or near school location;
- Leaves (submission of proof of medical treatment and
- Appoint teachers on the performance contract (Yiga and Wandega, 2010: 28)

very critical that the district office must be in a position to assist principals to increase teachers' attendance. Some of strategies that are recommended by Ejere (2010:119) to order to increase teachers' attendance in public primary schools are:

- Application of extant rules and regulations;
- Cultivating a culture which does not tolerate excessive absences;
- Deliverance improving the economic and social status of teachers;
- Provision of conducive working environment;
- Rewarding attendance;
- Teachers' empowerment;
- Empowering head teachers and school based management committees (SBMC);
- Developing wellness programme and
- Increased professionalization of teaching (Ejere , 2010:119)

Mashaba (2012:185) conducted a study on the impact of teacher absenteeism on the effective management of schools in Gauteng province. He recommended two levels (i.e. departmental and school) that can be used to reduce teacher absenteeism in schools:

2.12.1 At the department level, official may work to

- 2.12.1.1 Improve working conditions.
- 2.12.1.2 Reduce class size.
- 2.12.1.3 Reduce heavy workload.
- 2.12.1.4 Improve remuneration.

2.12.2 At the school level

- 2.12.2.1 Principals must support and help teachers who are regularly absent overcome their difficulties.
- 2.12.2.2 Principal must create a happy working atmosphere (Mashaba, 2012:185).

2.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Teacher absenteeism still remains a major problem in schools. The causes of teacher absenteeism vary according to schools, provinces and countries. In this chapter attention was given to different definitions of teacher absenteeism. The types of absenteeism (involuntary and voluntary) were discussed. Focus was also on the Educators leave policy and various Acts (BCEA, PAM, EEA & LRA) that include the types of leave in South Africa. Problems of teacher absenteeism in developing countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, & Kenya) were dealt with. Reflection was also on teacher absenteeism in South Africa. Different factors such as causes, effects, relationship between teacher unions and the rate of teacher absenteeism in the country, the challenges that the headmaster are facing in order to reduce absenteeism were explored. In conclusion various different strategies to curb teacher absenteeism were discussed in details.

The next chapter focuses on the research design, population and sampling procedures, research paradigm to be employed in this study. The overview of data analysis and ethical consideration will also be discussed.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the research design and methodology that will be employed in this study. First the paradigm and methods to be used in the study will be discussed and justified. Secondly, the chapter will describe population and sample, data collection instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis. The reliability and the validity of the research will be explored. Finally, the ethical considerations and the role of the researcher will also be outlined.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Mills (2014:32) defines methodology as a lens a researcher looks through when deciding on the type of methods they will use to answer the research question and how they will use these methods for best effects. Broadly speaking, methods include choice and recruitments of participants or sampling data generation or a collection fieldwork, data recording, data analysis and the reporting of a study.

Furthermore, the researcher contests that the experience of teachers and principals should be interpreted in order to come to understanding of how they view the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism (Delpont, & Roestenburg, 2011:309). The next aspect to follow is on the subject of research design that governs this study.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Punch (2014:114) refers to research design as a basic plan for a piece of research, and includes four main ideas, namely a) the first is the strategy; b) the second is the conceptual framework; c) the third is the question of who or what will be studied; and d) the fourth carry the tools and procedures to be used for collecting and analyzing

empirical materials. Research design thus deals with four main questions, corresponding to these ideas.

Research design connects research questions to data. Marvasti (2004:9) adds and defines research design as the steps that researchers follow to complete their study from start to finish. This includes:

- Asking a research question based as a theoretical orientation,
- Selecting of research respondents and data collection
- Data analysis
- Report the results

Macmillan and Schumacher (2006:22) mention that the purpose of a research design is to specify a plan for generating empirical evidence that will be used to answer the research question. The intent is to use a design that will result in drawing the most valid, credible conclusions from the answers of the research.

3.3.1 Quantitative design and Qualitative design

Williams (2007:65) mentions that the three common approaches to conduct research are quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. Williams further explains that researchers select the quantitative approach to respond to research questions requiring numerical data, the qualitative approach for research questions requiring textual data, and the mixed methods approach for research questions requiring both numerical and textural data.

With the outlined understanding of quantitative research outlook; the approach is thus relevant to this study in the sense that it has statistical inferences to lay ground for opinion making and conclusions significant in particular.

3.3.3.1 Quantitative design

Denzin and Lincoln (2011:8) purport that quantitative researcher stress the social constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied and the situational constraints that shape inquiry.

Creswell (2014:4) states that the quantitative research is an approach for testing objectives theories by examining the relationships among variables. These variables in turn can be measured, typically an instruments so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistically procedures. The final written report has a set structured consisting of introduction, literature and theory, methods, results and discussion.

Williams (2007:66) maintains that quantitative research also involves data collection that is typically numerical and the researcher tends to use mathematical models as the methodology of data analysis. Additionally, the researcher uses the inquiry methods based to ensure alignment with statistical data collection methodology. Punch (2014:3) argues that the term quantitative research means more than just research which uses quantitative or numerical data. It refers to a whole way of thinking, or an approach, which involves a collection or cluster of methods, as well as data in numerical form. Creswell (2012:13) lists some of the major quantitative characteristics as:

- Describing a research problem through a description of trends or a need for an explanation of the relationships among variables.
- Providing a major role for the literature through suggestions like the research questions to be asked and justifying the research problems and creating a need for the direction.
- Creating purpose statements, research questions and hypotheses that are specific, narrow, measurable and observable.
- Collecting numeric data from a large number of people using instruments with preset questions and responses.
- Analyzing trends, comparing groups, or relating variables using statistical analysis and interpreting results by comparing them with prior predictions and past research.
- Writing the research report using standard, fixed structures, and evaluation criteria and taking an objective unbiased approach.

In this instance and the research context in particular, quantitative research is relevant to this study by way of attending to the amplification of the voice of interviewed principals.

3.3.3.2 Qualitative design

Macmillan (2008:144) argues that qualitative research is often described as field research; much of it takes place in the field or setting. There are two reasons for conducting research in the field. Qualitative research believes that a) behaviour is best understood as it occurs without external constraints and control; and b) the situational content is very important in understanding the behavior. The setting influences the way human behave and, and therefore, it is not possible to understand the behavior without taking into account the situational characteristics

According to Stake (2010:36) qualitative research is sometimes defined as interpretive research. All research requires interpretations, and in fact, human behavior requires interpretations minute by minute. But interpretive research is investigating that relies heavily on observations defining and redefining the meanings of what they see and hear.

Creswell (2014:19) adds that the researcher uses the qualitative approach to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from views of participants. One of the key elements of collecting data in this way is to observe participant's behavior during their engagement in activity. Denzin and Lincoln (2011:8) stress that the word qualitative implies an emphasis on the quality of entities on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Williams (2007:67) concludes that there are five areas of qualitative research namely: case study, ethnology study, phenomenology study, ground theory study, and content analysis. This study, selects a qualitative approach with an emphasis on phenomenological inquiry to explore the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in some of the public primary schools in Mangaung.

Some of the major qualities of qualitative research are as follows:

- Exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon.
- Having the literature review play a minor role but justifies the problem.
- Stating the purpose and research questions in a general and broadway so that the participants' views are obtained.

- Analyzing the data for description and themes using text analysis and interpreting the larger meaning of the formula.
- Writing the report using flexible, emerging structures and evaluative criteria, and including the researchers' subjective flexibility and bias (Creswell, 2012: 13).

Stake (2010:15) also lists some of the special characteristics of qualitative study as follows:

- It is interpretive
- It is experiential
- It is situational and
- It is persona list

But, Stake (2010:29) warns that those phenomena that are being studied by qualitative research are evolving. It often takes time to come to understand what is going on, how it all works. The research is labor intensive and the costs are high and some findings are esoteric.

3.3.3.3 Mixed methods

Creswell (2014:303) asserts that mixed methods research is empirical research that involves the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. According to the researcher the fundamental rationale behind using mixed methods research in this study is that we can only learn more about the topic if we combine the strength of quantitative research while compensating at the same time for the weaknesses of each method.

Creswell goes further and indicate that quantitative research brings the strength of conceptualizing variables, profiling dimensions, tracking trends and relationships, formalizing comparisons and using large and perhaps representative samples. On the other hands, qualitative research brings the strengths of sensitivity to meaning and to context, local groundedness, the in-depth study of smaller samples, and great methodological flexibility which enhances the ability to study process and change.

Considerations such as these imply that qualitative methods can be strong in those areas where quantitative methods are weak. The researcher opines that by combining the two methods in this study offered the possibility of combining these two sets of strengths, and compensation for the weaknesses (Creswell, 2014:304).

The following are some of the advantages of using mixed method is that it:

- provides more comprehensive data,
- Includes multiple approaches to compensate for disadvantages with using a single method.
- Allows investigation of different types of questions,
- Allows examination of complex research question,
- Includes triangulation to enhance credibility of the findings (Macmillan, 2008:31).

The purpose of using mixed methods is purely to supplement the deficiencies that one genre of method one can have when juxtaposed with the other.

3.3.3.4 The Theoretical Lens: Phenomenology

In this study, the phenomenological methodology was employed. Ratele (2006:562) posits that phenomenology is an approach to research which aim to understand human experience in context. A number of specific phenomenological research techniques have been developed, but the term phenomenology is also used more broadly to signal a commitment to understanding human phenomena in context, as they lived, using context-derived terms and categories. Van Manen and Adams (in Usher & Jackson, 2014:182) explain that the term lived experience derived from the German Erlebnis or experience as we live it, which recognizes it as a particular type of experience. It is this notion of lived experience in phenomenology that makes it distinct from other types of qualitative research that also focus on human experience. In view of the phenomenological approach the researcher assumes that knowledge about teacher absenteeism is socially constructed by people active in the research process, and that researchers should attempt to understand the complex world of lived experience

from the point of view of those who lived it (Schwandt, in Mertens, 2010:16).

Usher and Jackson (2014:183) warn that Husserl also suggests that the researchers should shut out all that they know about a phenomenon, free from preconceived taken for granted notions of the phenomenon. The notion of bracketing is considered as one of the key elements that distinguish Husserlian phenomenology from the other types. The goal of reduction is to isolate the central core meaning or features of the phenomenon, to accomplish this task, the thinker must strip away all prior understanding of the phenomenon and approach it from a fresh and new attitude. This neutral stance (without either believing or disbelieving in the existence of the phenomenon or anything about it, is called bracketing. The researcher considered the views of Edmund Husserl and Wilhelm Dilthey to be suitable to this study. The above concepts such as bracketing, reduction, to strip away all the prior understanding of the phenomenon and also taking a neutral stance had guided the researcher to remained unbiased and objective during the interviews with the principals in order to understand participants' points' of views. Leedy and Ormrod as cited (in Williams, 2007:69) state that phenomenology approach helps the researcher to understand an experience from their participants' point of view". According to Williams (2007: 69) the approach would also enable the researcher to understand and interpret a participant's perception on the meaning of an event. These philosophers assert that phenomenology studies structure of experience or consciousness. In this instance, an investigation is launched into the appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the ways we experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience (Mertens, 2010:16).

3.4 POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

3.4.1 Population

According to Bless *et al.* (2006:98) a population is the set of objects or people which is the focus of the research and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics (cf.1.8). The study population consists of 2 420 teachers and 63 885 learners in public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality. It targeted principals, teachers and the HR senior official from the provincial office.

3.4.2 Sampling procedure and sample

A non-probability sampling procedure was used in this study. According to Macmillan (2008:117) a non-probability sample is one in which the probability of including population elements is unknown. Usually, not every element in the population has a chance of being selected. There are several types of non-probability sampling procedures used in qualitative studies, namely convenience, quota and purposeful. For the purpose of this study the researcher used non probability sample because it is less costly and less time consuming. It is easy to administer. But the main disadvantage of this sampling is that it is difficult to generalize to other subjects due to less representative of an identified population (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:22).

Purposive sampling procedure was used in this study. According to Maree and Pietersen (2010:178) this method of sampling is used in special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind. For example, in this study the researcher used the sampling method to determine the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary schools in Mangaung. Macmillan (2008:117) argues that purposeful sampling is referred to as purposive, judgment or judgmental sampling. The researcher selected particular individuals such as principals, primary school teachers and one HR official because they were in a better position to provide particular information about the topic.

Coming to the sample, a sample is a part of the greater group from which it was drawn. Durrheim (2006:49) indicates that the main concern in sampling is representativeness. The aim is to select a sample that will be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusions.

The study sample was made up of 10 public primary schools, 10 principals (both male and females), 60 teachers and one senior HR official. Durrheim (2006:49) argues that often sample size is determined in part by practical constraints, for example, how many people the researcher has access to, how much money and time are available for the study, and so on. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:101) add that there is no clear cut answer, for the correct sample size depends on the purpose of the study and the nature of the population under scrutiny. It needs to be pointed out that the initial intention was to have the following schools participating in the research: Maboloka

primary, Gonyane primary and Monyatsi primary. Regrettably due to their unavailability to participate in the study, the researcher had no option but to replace them with the other schools for progressive sustainable and meaningful participation in the study.

3.5 DATA GENERATION

3.5.1 Data generation procedure

The researcher first sought permission to do the research from the Central University of Technology, Research Ethics Committee. Once the permission was granted, the researcher then sought permission from the Free State Department of Education. Upon obtaining those permissions the researcher made appointments with the sampled school principals, later with the teachers and the senior HR personnel to explain the purpose and the importance of the research. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaire to the schools.

The schools were labelled as follows:

School A; School B; School C; School D; School E; School F; School G; School H; School J and School I. This was done to protect the identity of the schools.

3.5.2 Research instruments

The data were collected through the use of questionnaires, interviews and the documentary analysis. It was felt that the three sources of data would yield valuable information as it made triangulation of data possible.

3.5.2.1 Questionnaires as data collection instrument

A questionnaire is a written document containing statements or questions that one used to obtain subject perceptions, attitudes, values, perspectives and other traits. Questionnaires are used extensively because they provide an efficient way to obtain information about a wide range of research problems from survey of large population to reactions of student to different instructional methods (McMillan, 2008:167). In this study 60 questionnaires were distributed to sixty (60) primary school teachers.

Cohen *et al.*, (2007:101) maintain that a sample size of thirty (30) is held by many to be the minimum number of cases if the researcher plan to use some form of

statistical analysis on their data. The questionnaire consisted of closed ended questions. In this study, the researcher used closed ended questions because of ease of analysis (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:342). Kanjee (2006:487) add that the closed questions have the advantage of eliciting a standardised set of responses from all the respondents, and thus allow for easier comparative data analysis.

The questionnaires were piloted in order to enhance the principle of validity and reliability. Oppenheim, Morrison and Mclean as cited in (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:341) emphasize that pilot study has several functions such as to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire. Therefore, the researcher piloted the questionnaires with that in mind. This is a major reason for a pilot test of the instrument and procedures for administering it (Macmillan, 2008:149). To ensure validity, a research instrument must measure what it was intended to measure. To achieve validity, the research instrument subject area and operationally defined subject areas must exactly match (Gray, 2009:151).

The questionnaire used Likert-type scales to address various questions. According to Kanjee (2006:488) scaled questions, are followed by a rating scale where respondents indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the item. Scaled questions are useful for measuring attitudes and personality as they can capture subtle gradations of opinion or perception. There are number of different kinds of rating scale formats, of which the Likert scale format is the most commonly used. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert type scale with items ranging from strongly disagrees to strongly agree as follows:

1. Strongly disagree – 1
2. Disagree – 2
3. Agree – 3
4. Strongly agree – 4

The questionnaire was divided into five sections: namely Sections A to E
Section A, The personal data that contribute to teacher absenteeism (Section B), school related factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism (Section C), the environment factors that might contribute to teacher absenteeism (Section D) and the effects of absenteeism (Section E), on the effects of teacher absenteeism.

Gihaam (in Gray: 2009:338-339) describes the advantages of using questionnaires as

follows:

- They are low cost in terms of both time and money.
- The inflow of data is quick and from many people.
- Respondents can complete questionnaires at the time and place that suit them.
- Data analysis of closed questions is relatively simple, questions can be coded.
- Responded anonymity can be assured.
- There is a lack of interview bias

The questionnaires were accompanied by a covering letter. Cohen *et al.*, (2007:339) mention that the purpose of the questionnaire or sheet is to indicate the aim of the research, to convey to respondents its importance, to assure them of confidentiality, and to encourage their replies. In order to maximize response rates the researcher will provide the respondents with incentives. Marvast (2004:138) argues that the researchers rely on research respondents to provide the raw material for the researchers' analysis and report. The respondents share with the researchers their time and social experiences, but usually they are not financially compensated for their contributions. The aim is not to exploit subjects or respondents, by taking to them without giving anything back. Cohen *et al.*, (2007:346) warn that a great care is needed in selecting the most appropriate type of incentive. It should clearly be seen as a token rather than a payment for respondent's efforts. Therefore, incentives will be in the form of sports bottles. Sixty (60) questionnaires were fully completed and returned. This is representing a response rate of 100%.

3.5.2.2 Interviews as data collection instrument

Marvasti (2004) mentioned that one of the most elementary forms of data collection is an interview, which involves asking people questions and receiving answers from them. Polit and Hunger (as cited in Berg, 2009:104) lists three major categories as a) standardized/formal or structured interviews, b) unstandardized /informal or non-directive interviews and c) the semi - standardized//guided or semi structured interviews.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews. The researcher preferred to use

this type of interviews because they allowed more fluid interaction between him and the respondents. In this format, respondents were not forced to choose from pre assigned set of answers, instead they can elaborate on their statements and connect them with other matters of relevance (Marvasti, 2004:20). According to Berg (2009:106) the flexibility of the semi- structured interviews allows the interviewers both to ask a series of regularly structured questions, permitting comparisons across interviews, and to pursue areas spontaneously initiated by the interviewee. Interviews as one of the instruments used to collect data played a critical role. For example, some of the purposes of the interviews were:

- To evaluate or assess a person in some respect
- To select or promote an employee
- To effect therapeutic change, as in the psychiatric interview
- To test or develop hypotheses
- To gather data, as in surveys or experimental situations
- To sample respondents' opinions, as in doorstep interviews.

The ten (10) principals from Mangaung (Bloemfontein) public primary schools were interviewed to establish the causes and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in the effective running of the schools. The school principals were chosen because they are knowledgeable about teacher absenteeism. One HR senior official from leave section who deals directly with teacher absenteeism on a daily basis was interviewed in order to establish the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung (c.f 1.9.3).

The interviews were taped and recorded with the permission of all participants. Macmillan and Schumacher (2006:352) highlight that the primary data of qualitative interviews are verbatim accounts of what transpires in the interview session. Tape recording the interview ensures completeness of the verbal interaction and provides material for reliability checks. Tape recorders can be remarkably effective in capturing the nuances of conversations such as pauses and interruptions that could escape even the most astute observers, but this technique is not without problems. First audiotapes should not be seen as a substitute for note taking. Remember that the tape recorder does not see or take notice of the social context; you have to supply that with your notes (Marvasti, 2004:54).

Gray (2007:371) indicates the use of interviews in the study as follows:

- need to attain highly personalized data,
- Opportunity for probing are required
- A good return rate is important
- Respondents are not fluent in the nature language of the answer
- Large number of respondents must be realized
- Both reliability of data is desired

The ten (10) principals were interviewed after the researcher has analyzed and interpreted the questionnaires. This was to assist the researcher to try to find more clarity and expand upon the data that was generated via the questionnaires. In this study, the semi structured face- to -face interviews were conducted in the principals' offices in order to minimize any form of distractions. The duration of each interview was roughly 30 minutes.

The interviews schedule has three sections. The first section was based on the biographical information of the participants, the second parts focuses on the prevalence of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools, challenges the principals are facing regarding teacher absenteeism, the types of leave that are normally utilized by teachers. This section further sought to know the form of assistance that the school principals get from the district office and the teacher unions to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The third section aimed at establishing the various causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism, effectiveness of the current leave policy of educators in selected public primary schools in Mangaung.

3.5.2.3 Documentary analysis

According to Kelly (2006:316) documentary sources such as letters, newspaper articles, official documents, and books can be useful in all forms of qualitative research. In this study, various documents such as Educators Leave policy, various Acts (i.e. (BCEA), (PAM), (EEA), and leave registers were used to gather information about teacher absenteeism focusing on the types of leave taken by the teacher, rate of attendance, reasons for the leave taken, the gender of absentees, their teaching experience, and age. This helped the researcher to get an idea of how the principals handle and manage uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

Data analysis involves organizing, accounting for, and explaining the data, in short, making sense of data in terms of participations ‘definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:184).

In this study, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods in analyzing data obtained from the questionnaires and interviews respectively. The quantitative and the qualitative data sets were analyzed separately in this approach. The researcher first collected 60 questionnaires that were sent to 60 primary teachers. He then, analyzed and interpreted data. From the data that was generated, the researcher constructed interviews questions that used when interviewing the school principals. One important area that Creswell (2014:224-225) highlights is that the quantitative results cannot only inform the sampling procedure but it can also help towards the types of qualitative questions to ask participants in the second phase. Creswell (2012: 618) emphasizes that during the qualitative research the researcher will make sense out of the text data, divide it into text or image segments, labels the segments, examines codes for overlap, and redundancy and collapses these codes themes (cf 1.10). Huberman and Miles (as cited in Marvarsti, 2004:89) state that all forms of qualitative analysis seem to be based on three procedures: data reduction, data display and data drawing/verifying.

The interactive model was followed for data analysis. The following diagram is a representative of data analysis:

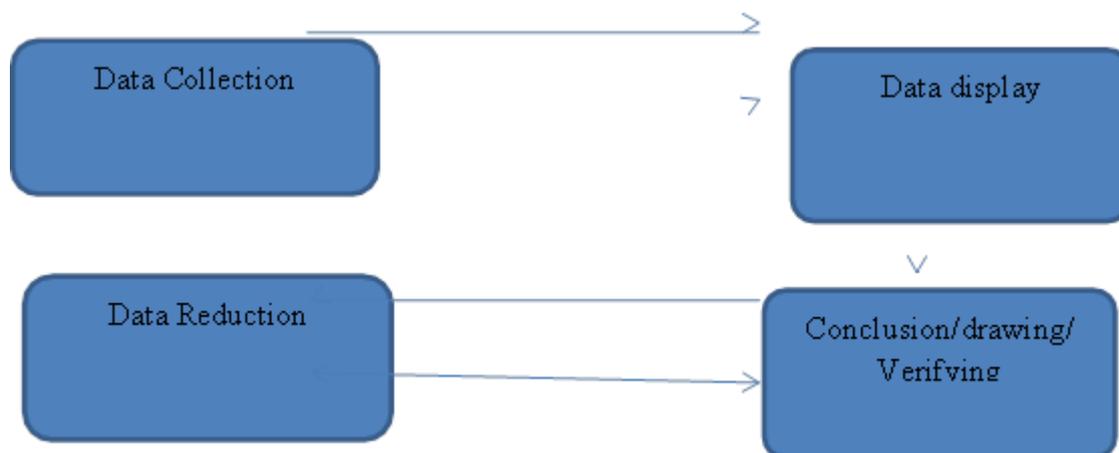


Figure 1: Data Analysis (adapted from Miles & Huberman, 1994:12)

The above diagram (Fig. 1) is an illustration of the process involved in data analysis: In

the first instance is the collection or generation of data with specific relevance to the research problem; the second stage involves the broader display of the data generated for careful analysis with a reflective mind; the third process is about reduction of data to specifics to avoid possible confusion and mind-clouding and the fourth process that is characterized by reflective conclusion grounded on informed verification and critical conclusions founded on both deductive and inferred opinion-making. A detailed and sourced deliberation on the aspects of the diagram follows next.

3.6.1 Data reduction

It occurs continually throughout the analysis. It is not something separate from the analysis. It is a part of the analysis. In the early stage it happens through editing, segmenting and summarizing the data. In the middle stages it happens through coding and memo-taking and associated activity, such as finding themes, cluster and patterns. In the later stages, it happens through conceptualizing and explaining, since developing abstract concepts is also a thing of reducing the data. The objective is to reduce the data without loss of information.

3.6.2 Data display

Data displays organize, compress and assemble information. Data can be displayed through graphs, charts, networks, diagrams of different types.

3.6.3 Drawing and verifying conclusion

The reasons for reducing and display data are to assist in drawing conclusions. Conclusion will be in the form of proposition, and once they have been drawn, they need to be verified.

Conclusion, drawing and verifying is the part of this analysis. It involves developing prepositions and is conceptually distinct from the other stages, but again is likely happen concurrently with them (Huberman and Miles as cited in (Marvasti, 2004: 71-172).

3.7 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH

The differentiation between the issues of reliability and validity will be discussed in attempt to show the differences in meaning and application of the two concepts in research discourse. The concerns of reliability and validity are consistent with the paradigm of quantitative research approach.

3.7.1 Reliability

According to Punch (2014:237) reliability is a central concept in measurement. It basically means consistency. There are two main aspects to this consistency: consistency over time (stability) and internal consistency. Firstly, consistency overtime (stability) means stability of measurements over time, and is usually expressed in question, if the same measurements were given to the same people under the same circumstance but at a different time, to what extent would, they get the same score (Punch, 2014:237).

McMillan (2008:150-151) adds that a stability estimate of reliability is obtained by administering on measure to one group of individuals, waiting a specific period of time then re-administering the same instrument to the same group. The correlation of the two sets of scores is calculated. This type of estimate is called test related reliability. What is measured is the consistency of the subjects' performance over time.

Black as cited in Gray (2009:158) concludes that reliability is an indication of consistency between two measures of the same thing. These measures could be:

- Two separate instruments
- Two like halves of an instrument (e.g. two halves of a questionnaire).
- The same instrument applied on two occasions
- The same instruments administered by two different people.

The reliability of the interviews will be enhanced by careful piloting of interviews schedules, inter rater reliability in coding of responses and the extended use of closed questions (Silverman as quoted in Cohen *et al.*, 2007:151).

3.7.2 Validity

Validity, according to Bush (2007:97) is used to judge whether the research accurately describes the phenomenon that it is intended to describe. Maxwell (2013:126) is of the opinion that respondent validation is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpretation regarding the meaning of what participants say and do as well as their perceptions. Durrheim and Painter (2006:147) state that in order to establish measurement validity, the researcher must determine whether instrument provides a good operational definition of the construct, and whether the instruments is suited to purposes for which it will be used. Therefore, in order to ensure the validity of the instrument the researcher took the instrument to his colleagues and his supervisors to examine it and make some changes where necessary.

One of the ways to enhance validity in this study is to employ data triangulation. Data triangulation, according to Kelly (2006:380) means the use of variety of data sources in a study. Berg (2009:6) states that triangulation is restricted to the use of multiple data gathering techniques (usually three) to investigate the same phenomenon.

The next feature of this study to follow next is question of the status of the researcher.

3.8 THE STATUS AND ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

The researcher is a seasoned educational practitioner in the capacity of the school headmaster in one of the local schools in the Mangaung Educational Metropolitan jurisdiction. In the latter context, it therefore warrants him the positive pedestal to argue on matters with deep insight and understanding of the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

According to Gray (2009:183) the role of the researcher in qualitative research is to try to remain objective and detached from the research process. On the other hand, in quantitative research the researcher must be able to peruse the situation holistically and be responsive to situations where they risk biasing the responses of people they are interviewing. In addition, they usually adopt a reflexive stance, reflecting on the subtle ways in which bias might creep into their research practice through the influence of their personal background and the belief system.

Gold (as quoted in Berg, 2009:80) mentions four roles that a researcher take when conducting a research: complete participant, participant as observer, observer as participate and complete observer. But for the purpose of this study, the researcher will play a role of participant as observer.

When the researcher adopts this role, he/she is accepting an overt or announced role as a researcher. In this case, the researcher formally makes his or her presence and intentions known to the group being studied. This may involve a general announcement that he/she will be conducting research, or a specific introduction as the researcher meets various people who participate in the setting. This strategy carries its own problems related to the ability of the researcher to develop sufficient rapport with participants, and the potential the researcher will go native, that is, become so immersed in the activities, issues, and meanings of the group that he/she has difficulty maintaining an objective researcher's perspective on these activities, issues, and meanings.

In this regard, the researcher sought permission to conduct research in Mangaung from the Free State Department of Education. After receiving the permission the

researcher sent the permission letter and the letter to the principals and teachers. The researcher made an appointment with the school principals and personally distributed and collected the questionnaires the following day. The questionnaires were accompanied by the cover letter that explains the purpose, benefits of the research, assurance of the confidentiality and anonymity aspects. The teachers were given the consent letter before they can complete the questionnaires.

During the second phase of the research, the researcher made appointments with the school principals with the view of interviewing them. The interviews were conducted after school hours to avoid disrupting the smooth running of the school. The interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participants. After the interviews the researcher transcribed each interviews word by word three times. The data was then analyzed and placed into categories and subcategories. After the analysis of the data the researcher took the data to the participants to verify if the information is correct.

The importance of ethical considerations is a subject of discussion in the next aspect.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics are understood to define principles that couch a particular research undertaking). Historically, informed consent, according to Wassenaar (2006: 72) has been seen as the only determinant of the ethicality of research. In this framework, it is only one of eight determinants of ethicality in research. Participants may not, for example, legally consent to research known to cause harm without accruing benefits. The standard components of consent are a) provision of appropriate information; b) participants' competence and understanding; c) voluntariness in participating and freedom to decline or withdraw after the study has started; and d) formalizing of the consent, usually in writing, This means that researchers must provide potential participants with clear, detailed and factual information about the study, its methods, its risks and benefits, along with assurances of voluntary nature of participation, and the freedom to refuse or withdraw without penalties.

Marvast (2004:135-139) presents a brief review of basic research ethic/principles as voluntary participation, protection of research participation, potential benefit to participate and guidelines on the use of deception. These latter research ethics/principles including confidentiality and anonymity will form the base of this study.

3.9.1 Voluntary participation

Participation in a research should be voluntary; you should not psychologically or physically force your subject to take part in your research.

The principal who may have experienced trauma caused by the stress of managing uncontrolled teacher absenteeism during the interviews, especially in case where there was possibility of potential harm, there was already a psychologist that was organized by the researcher.

3.9.2 Benefit to research participants

As a whole, qualitative research can be beneficial in three important ways:

- It could help to increase awareness and stipulate debate about public policies.
- It could make people more aware about their choices,
- It could provide new perspectives on an old problem (Silverman as cited in Marvasti, 2004:139).

3.9.3 Guidelines on the use of deception

Deception means researchers representing their research as something which it is not. A typical and common example would be not telling participants the truth that interviews it will take an hour to complete (Gray, 2009:79-80).

3.9.4 Confidentiality and anonymity

An important part of protecting your research subjects is guarding their privacy, revealing the identities of your respondents could harm them. Disclosure of participants could seriously damage their family relationships or can result in his/her dismissal from work. Confidentiality and anonymity are two aspects of the privacy issue. Confidentiality means that the identity of the respondent will not be disclosed to anyone. When a researcher refers to a particular research participant he/her must keep the identity by using fictional names.

Anonymity means even the researcher does not know the identity of respondents. In qualitative studies where the researcher observes people in various settings and interviews from face to face, complete anonymity is impossible – in cases where the researcher meet participates in person. Never less, certain steps can be taken towards providing subjects with limited anonymity. For example of the interviews are taped, do not label the cassettes with the respondent actual names. Either use fictional names or your tapes using tapes using randomly assigned number.

Similar, the researcher can create a set of pseudonyms for all his/her research participants and use them in researcher's notes instead of their real names.

3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter highlighted the research design and methodology that were employed in this study. First, the phenomenology paradigm and methods (i.e. quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods) to be used in this study were discussed and justified. Secondly, the chapter described population and samples, data collections instruments such as questionnaires, interviews and documentary analysis, data collection procedure and data analysis. The reliability and the validity of the research were explored. Finally, the ethical considerations and the status and role of the researcher were also outlined.

The next chapter will focus on the presentation and analysis of the research.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, the focus was on research methodology (theoretical framework) and research design (quantitative and qualitative design). Attention was also paid to population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection (i.e. procedure and research instruments such as questionnaires and interviews and documentary analysis). The reliability and validity of the research, status and role of the researcher were discussed. The ethical considerations were also highlighted.

This chapter presents findings that are derived from the data collected through questionnaires, interviews and official office documents obtained at schools. The findings will be compared with the literature review in Chapter 3. In this chapter data will be presented, analysed and interpreted in tables, percentages and be summarized. The findings presented below were implored by means of self-administered questionnaires consisting of fifty eight (58) questions that were distributed to sixty (60) post level one teachers, one-on-one interviews with 10 public primary school principals and with one senior HR personnel, documents such as attendance register, permission register in some of the selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein) were also used to gather data related to teacher absenteeism.

4.2 RESPONSES FROM BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

4.2.1 **Section A:** Gender of respondents

Question 1 – 10 of the questionnaire focused on the gender distribution of the respondents.

Table 4.1 gives a breakdown of the gender distribution of the respondents.

Table 4.1: Gender of the respondents (N=60)

Category	Frequency	Percent
Male	21	35%
Female	39	65%
Total	60	100%

In Table 4.1 a respondent had to indicate his/her gender. It is evidence that 35% are males and while 65% are females. This is may be an indication that there are more females teachers in primary schools than males

Geographical location of the schools

All the teachers (60) in the sample indicated that their schools were located in the townships. All teachers were Africans who resided in the Free State Province.

Medium of Instruction

Table 4.2: Medium of instruction (N=60)

Medium of Instruction	Frequency	Percentage
<i>English</i>	0	0
<i>Sesotho</i>	24	60 %
<i>Setswana</i>	18	30 %
<i>IsiXhosa</i>	18	30%
<i>Total</i>	60	100%

In Table 4.2 respondents were required to indicate the medium of instruction in their schools. It is evident that the medium of instruction for twenty four (60%) public primary schools is Sesotho, eighteen (30%) has Setswana as medium of instruction while the medium of instruction for eighteen (30%) public primary schools instruction is IsiXhosa. 60% of primary schools their medium of instruction is Sesotho. This high number was a result of the proximity and accessibility of the researcher to those schools.

Table 4.3: Teaching experience of the respondents (N=60).

Category	Frequency	Percentage
1 to 5 years	5	8%
6 to 10 years	12	20%
11 to 20 years	16	26%
21 years or more	27	45%
Total	60	100%

Respondents were required to indicate his or her years of teaching experience. From Table 4.3 indicates that five (8%) of the respondents had one to five years teaching experience, twelve (20%) had six to ten years' experience, sixteen (26%) of respondents had eleven to twenty years of teaching experience while twenty seven (45%) had 21 years and more in teaching as educators. Very few respondents with one to five years teaching experience completed the questionnaires. This might have been caused by lack of knowledge and experience regarding the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Qualifications

Table 4.4: Qualification of respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher's Diploma	14	23,3
Advanced Diploma	13	21,6
B.A degree	10	16,6
B.Ed. (Honours)	20	33,3
Other (specify)	3	5
Total	60	100

According to Table 4.4 the professional qualifications held by the respondents were as follows: fourteen (23.3%) of the respondents held teacher's diploma, thirteen (21.6%) held advanced diploma in Education. As far as professional degrees are concerned, ten (16.6%) of respondents held B.A. degree and twenty (33.3%) held B.Ed. degree. Three (5 %) respondents held other educational qualifications in education. This is probably an indication that the questionnaires were completed by teachers who have rich knowledge about the educational issues including teacher absenteeism.

Age of Respondents

Table 4.5: Age of Respondents (N=60)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
20 years – 30 years	3	5
31 years – 40 years	8	13,3
41 years – 50 years	32	53,3
51 years – 60 years	17	28,3
Total	60	100

Table 4.5 shows the age range of respondents. Three respondents (5%) were in the age group of 20 to 30 years, eight (13%) in the age group of 31 to 40 years, thirty two (53%) in the age group of 41 to 50 years, while the seventeen (29%) of respondents were almost in the retirement age bracket. More than half of the respondents (53, 3%) completed the questionnaires. This can be attributed to the fact that these teachers have more knowledge and understanding about the topic.

Grades taught by Respondents

According to Table 4.6 twenty three (38%) of the respondents taught in the Foundation phase while 37 (62%) taught in the Intermediate phase of the primary schooling. Majority of teachers who completed the questionnaires were from Intermediate and senior phase. This might have been caused by the unavailability of foundation phase educators who are always attending meetings and departmental workshops.

Table 4.6

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Foundation Phase	23	38.3
Intermediate senior Phase	37	61.6
Total	60	100

4.2.2 Section B. Personal Factors

Questions 1 – 13 of the questionnaire focused on the **personal factors** that contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary school.

The researcher has decided to combine the categories of the Likert scale used in the study as the number of respondents is not big. Numbers 1 and 2 were combined to indicate disagreement, whereas numbers 3 and 4 were combined to indicate agreement to the statement as indicated in chapter 3.

The following table presents a summary of the responses to the 13 statements related to personal factors contributing to teacher absenteeism. The major contributing factors to teacher absenteeism from the respondents in the sample appear to be illness (90%), low salaries (52%) family conflict (78%), and use of alcohol (78%). Absenteeism is high on Mondays (77%), Fridays (73%) and mid-month (73%). This is cause for concern. Teacher absenteeism appears not to be caused mainly by experience, qualifications, gender, age and marital status in this study as the responses from the table indicate.

Table 4.7: Personal Factors contributing to Teacher Absenteeism (N=60).

No.	Statement	Agree	Disagree	Total
1	Poor performing teachers are often absent	28 (47 %)	32 (53 %)	60 (100 %)
2	Illness contribution to higher teacher absenteeism	54 (90%)	6 (10%)	60 (100%)
3	Low salary as a contributing factor to teacher absenteeism	31 (52%)	29 (48%)	60 (100%)
4	Experience as a contributing factor towards teacher absenteeism	12 (20%)	48 (80%)	60 (100%)
5	Higher qualifications as a contributing factor to teacher absenteeism	4 (07%)	56 ((93%)	60 (100 %)
6	Female teachers are more often absent than male colleagues	20 (33%)	40 (67%)	60 (100 %)
7	Older teacher are more absent than younger teachers	13 (22%)	47 (78%)	60 (100 %)

8	Married teachers tend to be more absent than single teachers	16 (27%)	44 (73%)	60 (100 %)
9	Family conflict as a contributing factor to teacher absenteeism	47 (78%)	13 (22%)	60 (100 %)
10	Drunkenness as a contributing factor to teacher absenteeism	47 (78%)	13 (22%)	60 (100 %)
11	Teacher absenteeism on Mondays	46 (77%)	14 (23%)	60 (100 %)
12	Teacher absenteeism on Fridays	44 (73%)	16 (27%)	60 (100 %)
13	Teacher absenteeism at month-end	43 (72%)	17 (28%)	60 (100 %)

95% of respondents disagree that higher qualifications can be one of the contributing factors to teacher absenteeism. This statement contradicts the literature review which indicated that higher qualifications are one of the factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism. The above table reveals that 78% of respondents agreed that family conflicts and drunkenness are the main contributing factors of teacher absenteeism. It is evident that 77% and 73% of respondents respectively agreed that teachers tend to absent on Mondays and Fridays. It is worthwhile to note that 72% of teachers are absent during month end. It is probably an indication that teachers are doing shopping because they have more money.

4.2.3 Section C: School Factors

Questions 1 – 9 of the questionnaire focused on school factors that are perceived to be contributing to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary schools.

Table 4.8: School factors contributing to Teacher Absenteeism (N=60)

No.	Statements	Agree	Disagree	Total
1	Lack of effective supervision and management	38 (63%)	22 (37%)	60 (100%)

2	Too much workload encourages teacher absenteeism	43 (72%)	17 (28%)	60 (100%)
3	Poor working conditions contributing to teacher absenteeism	44 (73%)	16 (27%)	60 (100%)
4	Poor infrastructure and resources	34 (57%)	26 (43%)	60 (100%)
5	Poor control of attendance registers	35 (58%)	25 (42%)	60 (100%)
6	More administrative duties of teachers make teachers to miss their classes	51 (85%)	09 (15%)	60 (100%)
7	Regular absenteeism causes teachers not to complete the syllabus	53 (88%)	07 (12%)	60 (100%)
8	Learners failing the subjects of teachers who are always absent	46 (76%)	14 (23%)	60 (100%)
9	Good motivational programmes contribute to low teacher absenteeism.	52 (87%)	08 (13%)	60 (100%)

As can be seen from the Table provided, school factors are major contributors to teacher absenteeism. Factors worth noting and which affect teachers directly, are more administrative duties for staff (85%), poor working conditions (73%), and too much workload (72%). Regular absenteeism causes teachers to miss their classes (88%) and learners whose teachers always absent themselves fail the subjects (76%). These factors have a negative effect on teaching and learning which a core business of a school is. This needs urgent attention. The last statement with a frequency of 87% indicates that teachers need to be motivated in order to come to school. School managers and policy makers have to devise strategies to boost the morale of staff in their schools.

It appears that poor infrastructure and resources (57%) are also causing teacher absenteeism.

4.2.4 Section D: Environmental Factors

Questions 1 – 6 of the questionnaire focused was on the **environmental factors** that contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary school.

Table 4.9: Environmental Factors affecting Teacher absenteeism (N=60)

No.	Statements	Agree	Disagree	Total
1	Location of the school contributes to teacher absenteeism	21 (35%)	39 (65%)	60 (100%)
2	Level of poverty in the community contribute to teacher absenteeism	9 (15%)	51 (85%)	60 (100%)
3	Limited amenities and poor conditions contribute to teacher absenteeism	22 (37%)	38 (63%)	60 (100%)
4	Rainy days contribute to teacher absenteeism	24 (40%)	36 (60%)	60 (100%)
5	Teachers' strike contribute to teacher absenteeism	32 (53%)	28 (47%)	60 (100%)
6	Union officials are often absent at school	33 (55%)	27 (45%)	60 (100%)

From the table provided, the location of the school (35%), Level of poverty in the community (15%) and to some extent, limited amenities in the community (37%) were not seen as the major contributors to teacher absenteeism. There appear to be a relationship between the location of the school and weather conditions. Some schools are far from the communities where teachers stay and if teachers do not have a regular transport, weather conditions could affect school attendance, especially in schools in the rural areas. The major contributing factors in this category are union officials (55%) and teacher strikes (53%). It is worthwhile to note that 85% of teachers disagree that the level of poverty in the community contributes to teacher absenteeism. This might have been caused by the fact that all the sampled primary schools in this study are situated in the middle class locations where the level of poverty is not so high.

4.2.5 Section E: Effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

Questions 1 – 11 of the questionnaire focused on the effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism on teaching and learning in public primary schools.

Table 4.10: Effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism (N=60)

No.	Statements	Agree	Disagree	Total
1	When teachers are absent classes are sometimes combined	49 (82%)	11 (18%)	60 (100%)
2	Teacher absenteeism causes other teachers to carry extra load	57 (95%)	3 (5%)	60 (100%)
3	Teacher absenteeism contribute to low staff morale	50 (83%)	10 (17%)	60 (100%)
4	Schools suffer financial loss by paying substitute teachers	56 (93%)	14 (07%)	60 (100%)
5	When teachers are absent learners are not taught or attended to	38 (63%)	22 (37%)	60 (100%)
6	Teacher absenteeism contribute to lack of discipline in the classroom	55 (91%)	5 (08%)	60 (100%)
7	Teacher absenteeism causes chaos and is very disruptive.	52 (87%)	08 (13%)	60 (100%)
8	Teacher absenteeism makes teachers not to complete the syllabus on time	54 (90%)	6 (10%)	60 (100%)
9	High rate of teacher absenteeism affects learner performance	56 (93%)	4 (07%)	60 (100%)
10	High rate of teacher absenteeism frustrates other teachers who are always present	56 (93%)	4 (07%)	60 (100%)
11	Teacher absenteeism promote conflict or poor relation between teachers.	46 (76%)	14 (23%)	60 (100%)

There is consensus among the respondents that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism affects teaching and learning negatively. This affects learner performance, causes disciplinary problems and extra burden on other teachers. Table 4.10 shows that 93% of teachers agreed that teacher absenteeism causes teachers not complete the syllabus on time and also it lower the performance of learners respectively

4.2.6 Section F: Measures to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

Questions 1 – 9 of the questionnaire focused on the **various measures that can curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism** that contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary school.

Table 4.11 Measures to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

No	Statements	Agree	Disagree	Total
1	Rewarding teachers with good attendance.	54 (90%)	6 (10%)	60 (100%)
2	Firm application of supportive management style by principal	59 (98%)	1 (2%)	60 (100%)
3	Firm application of 8 week rule by the principal can help to curb teacher	55 (92%)	5 (8%)	60 (100%)
4	Pay decent salary for teachers will help to reduce teacher absenteeism	47 (78%)	13 (22%)	60 (100%)
5	Discussion of attendance records and quarterly report with staff by SMT	58 (97%)	2 (03%)	60 (100%)
6	Application of sanctions against teachers who are frequently absent can help to	46 (77%)	14 (23%)	60 (100%)
7	Effectiveness of the current policy on incapacity and ill health retirement	40 (67)	20 (33%)	60 (100%)
8	Good infrastructure and resources	48	12	60 (100%)
9	Circuit Managers can help	54	6	60 (100%)

Table 4.11 depicts that firm application of supportive management style by principal can curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public schools (98%), followed by discussion of attendance records with staff by SMT (97%), firm application of 8 week rule by the principals can help to curb teacher absenteeism (92%), rewarding teachers with good attendance (90%) and the assistance given to the principals by the Circuit Manager (90%) is very critical.

According to the above findings it is very clear that the school principals are the key role players in determining the prevalence of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in primary schools by fully implementing the current leave policy. Therefore, if the school principal do not understand and implement the leave policy the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism will continue to pose a serious challenge in the educational

fraternity. The above analysis further indicated that decent salary to teachers (78%), sanctions against teachers who are often absent from school (77%) and the good infrastructure and resources (80%) can help to reduce the current uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in primary schools.

But is worth noting that the teachers pointed out that the current leave policy of educators on incapacity and ill health retirement is not 100% effective (67%). In other words, the current leave policy need to be reviewed in order to address the “grey areas” in the leave policy that is making it less effective.

4.3 DATA GENERATED THROUGH INTERVIEWS WITH THE PRINCIPALS

The principals as accounting managers at school have a responsibility to give an account of the dominance and toxic nature of teacher absenteeism at school. This is an elaborative discussion of the views they hold in respect of absenteeism.

4.3.1. Responses of the school principals regarding the prevalence of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.

The school principals have different views regarding the prevalence of uncontrolled teachers in schools. Principal A, C and D shared the same view, that the prevalence rate of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is high their schools. The following are comments by various school principals on teacher absenteeism:

Principal A: *The prevalence of teacher absenteeism is serious, 3 or 4 teachers are absent per day.*

Principal C: *Absenteeism is very high or challenging, 5 teachers are absent per week.*

Principal D: *The pervasiveness is high in our school. This problem may be may be attributed by the fact that these schools do not get an appropriate support from the both the district office and the unions to curb the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The challenge here is demonstrative of a probable need for teacher capacity building on labour law imperatives and the notion of teacher absenteeism in particular.*

Principal B: *The dominance of absenteeism is low at our school.*

Principal E: *Absenteeism is not so much at our school*

Principal F: *Teacher absenteeism is low at our school.*

Principal G: *The trappings of absenteeism are not frequent at our school*

Principal H: *Absenteeism at our school is low*

Principal J: *The incidence of absenteeism at our school is average*

In the contrary, principals B, E, F, G, H and J indicated that the prevalence rate of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is very minimum/average/low in their respective schools. On the contrary the latter is probably of the fact that the teachers in this category may be receiving constant support from the district office, unions and good administrative measures that are in place to curtail uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. Other good practices such as accurate, constant leave management policy, daily control of attendance register, completion of leave forms, giving counselling to teachers who are frequently absent and the involvement of HR personnel from the department are as well of assistance to restraint negative teacher absenteeism in the name of leave for absence.

4.3.2 Responses of the school principals regarding the challenges that they are experiencing in connection with uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.

All the principals shared comparable sentiments that they all experienced challenges pertaining to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Some of the challenges cited by the principals are summarized as follows:

Classes are without teachers, no teaching is taking place, there is chaos, extra load for teachers who are always present at school, causes disciplinary problems, learners are packed in one classroom and the amalgamation of classes which normally lead to uncontrollable learners' noise.

From the above challenges it is clear that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism impact negatively on the smooth running of the school. It clearly denotes that when a teacher is absent at school, most of the time learners are not taught at all and this leads to

fighting in class, overcrowding, loitering and noise by uncontrollable learners.

4.3.3. Responses of the school principals regarding the explanations that the teachers normally give when they are absent from school.

Most of the school principals indicated that teachers are taking sick leave and family responsibility leaves.

Principal A: *Teachers normally take children to clinic, and family matters.*

Principal B: *Teachers take family responsibility leave*

Principal D: *Teachers take family responsibility leave*

Principal I: *Teachers give report of attending private urgent matters.*

Principal J: *Teachers give report of attending private urgent matters.*

School principals shared the same view, that in most cases the teachers are utilizing sick leave, family responsibility leave and the urgent private matter leave. It is normal that teachers just like any parent has to take his/her sick child to the clinic when sick. The other main reason why most teachers are using family responsibility is that they attend the funerals of their family members.

The views expressed above are multifaceted in nature in instances that teachers produce evidence to the fact of their absenteeism; this does not however alleviate the multifaceted nature of teacher absenteeism at school. It can thus be concluded that teacher absenteeism remains a school problem for school stability and progressive sustainable environment for teaching and learning.

4.3.4 Responses of the school principals regarding the types of leaves that the teachers normally take when they are absent from school.

All the school principals shared the same views that the teachers utilize sick leave and family responsibility leave the most when applying for a leave. It is clear that sick leave and the family responsibility leaves are the most abused leaves in schools. The probability for the latter is that teachers are able to produce sick notes which are normally required after three days absenteeism and sick notes given when accompanying children to doctors for medical attention. They are needed only after three days of teacher absence is indeed a loop-hole to given attention with the intention to review.

Other types of leave which are sometimes used by the teachers are urgent private matters and bookings for absence on account of examinations writing.

Principal A: *The most frequent leave types are sick leave and special leave by school teachers.*

Principal B: *Sick leave and family responsibility leave are common leaves of absence at school.*

Principal C: *The impression on teacher absence at school is sick leave*

Principal D: *Teachers take: sick leave, family responsibility leave and special leave to attend personal matters.*

Principal E: *Sick leave the most is the most taken leave by school teachers*

Principal F: *Sick leave and family responsibility leave are perceived common leave type by school teachers.*

Principal G: *In most instances, sick leave, family responsibility and exams are leaves teachers commonly take in majority.*

Principal H: Teachers enjoy the prevalence of sick leave as reason for absence at school.

Principal I: To us as managers, sick leave and urgent private matter are leave attributable to teacher absence at school.

Principal J: The notion of sick leave enjoy much teacher excuse for school absence

4.3.5 Responses of the school principals regarding the role that the principals normally give to support teachers who are frequently absent at school.

Principals both collectively and collaboratively agreed that they are giving support and counseling to teachers who are habitually absent from school. They have the following articulations to highlight:

Principal A: I talk one on one with a teacher.

Principal B: For this challenge, I do substitute a teacher who is absent personally.

Principal C: In this case I allow a teacher to sit down while teaching.

Principal D: In a sense of understanding and sympathy, I talk to a teacher, do counseling and refer a teacher to Employee Wellness Programme.

Principal E: As the accounting school manager, I sit down with them and try to help.

Principal F: To address this scourge of teacher absenteeism. I invite labour personnel from leave section in education.

Principal G: In an attempt to address this problematic scenario, I call the respective teacher and offer counseling as a need for resolution.

Principal H: To respond to this challenge, I sit down with a teacher to find more about

the actual problem.

Principal I: *In the context of absenteeism, I call the respective teacher to my office and discuss, refer to educator to Employee Wellness programme.*

Principal J: *Taking absenteeism into account, I encourage teachers to visit the doctor for an informed account of the nature of purported illness with the intent to arrange a substitute in case this takes a longer period of time.*

The school principals do assist teachers who are repeatedly absent from school in various ways such as giving counseling, talking one on one with the teacher, referring teachers to Employee Wellness Programme and inviting labour personnel from leave section also to talk to the teacher. Indeed, the school principals do show love and compassion to teachers who often absent from school.

It is very important to note that Principal B went to extend of leaving the administrative work of the school to “baby sit” in order to prevent disciplinary problems, chaos, fights in class, loitering and noise.

4.3.6 Responses of the school principals regarding the support that they are getting from the district office.

The school principals held different views relating to the kind of support that they got from the district office in order to lessen uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. The views of the principals are as follows:

Principal A: *No support*

Principal C: *No assistance.*

It is quite disturbing that principal A and B indicated that they do not get any form of support or assistance relating to increasing uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Lack of support from the district office can also be one of the contributing factors why there is a high rate of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in Motheo district. Teacher absenteeism is very multifaceted and need collaborative efforts from various stakeholders to fight it

successfully in schools. It is quite clear that the poor principal alone cannot fight the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. Teachers would continue to misinterpret leave policy and on the other hand principal would not be able to fully implement the leave policy as expected. It simply means that if the Education district office (i.e. leave section personnel and Circuit Managers) does not provide the schools with adequate leave management workshop, the prevalence of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism would remain exacerbated in schools. Principals B, D, F, G, and I indicated that they enjoy substantial support from the district office in the form of having leave management workshops.

The latter view is couched in a positive human spirit advocating unity and collaborative effort between the school and Educational higher echelons.

4.3.7 Responses of the school principals regarding the support that they are getting from the teachers union.

The following are teacher articulations in respect of the support of teachers unions to arrest teacher absenteeism at schools. This is what they have to say:

Principals B, C, D: *There is no support I get from teachers unions to minimize the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.*

Principal B: *In my case, I have no support from unions in respect of alleviating teacher absenteeism*

Principal C: *I regrettable have no assistance form the unions*

Principal D: *Nothing at all, as a school I experience lack of support from teachers unions*

Principal I: *The show of unions is only when they defend a member during disciplinary hearing.*

Teacher unions are one of the most influential stakeholders in education system with the agenda to guide, advice and represent teachers in labour related matters. It is paramount that unions work hand in hand with the school managers in order to reduce the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. SADTU as of the biggest and powerful unions with huge membership have an imperative duty to discourage their members not to be absent from school during the union workshops and mass meetings with a better time schedule to avert school disruption through absenteeism. In the latter context, the subject of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism advocated to form part of their agenda for progressive teaching and learning.

4.4. DATA GENERATED FROM THE PRINCIPALS THROUGH THE INTERVIEWS

The interviews around the issue of teacher absenteeism unveil the following critical perspectives. The perspectives are captured in the manner to follow.

4.4.1 Principals' opinions regarding the causes of teacher absenteeism

As managers of schools, principals share the following concerns as causes contributing towards teacher absenteeism at school. The concerns are:

Principal A: *personal mostly.*

Principal B: *sick leave, if not abused?*

Principal C: *illness*

Principal E: *health of teachers*

Principal F: *sick leave*

Principal G: *sick leave*

Principal H: *family responsibility*

Most principals from A, B, C, E, F, G and H shared the same view that personal factors contribute largely to the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism such as sick leave (e.g. illness), family responsibility and aggravated personal stress. The following cases are cited as contributory to teacher absenteeism at school.

Principal C: *Teachers cite low income one of the causes of absenteeism at school*

Principal D: *In the reasons given, teachers perceive financial remuneration as inadequate to sustain momentary obligations*

Principals C and D indicated that low income and finances (salary is not sustainable) can also contribute to the high rate of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. It is very significant to note that low salary income was also hinted as one of the contributing factors that underscores uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The perception may be that the majority of teachers are in deep financial debts or have serious financial commitments thus leading to unprecedented school teacher absenteeism. Therefore, an opinion can be made for one to can conclude that some of the teachers do not come to school because they have no enough money to cater for transport and other school related financial obligations and as such be absent from school.

Principal D indicated that the current teacher salary cannot sustainable them throughout the month. Therefore one can safely conclude that some teachers do not report at work because they do not have enough money to pay for the daily transport to school.

This a pathetic situation that compromises teachers and as such reflect them in a different negative light that undermines the worth school attendance for sustainable teaching for better learning in learners.

Principal C: *Some teachers at school are a cohort of alcoholic staff.*

Principal C further indicated that some of the teachers are alcoholic. It simple implies that alcohol contributes to the high rate of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. Maybe it is one of the causes that make most of the teachers to be absent on Mondays and Fridays in particular due to heavy drinking over weekends resulting to hangovers to them.

4.4.2 Principals' opinions regarding the effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Absenteeism is critical factor in the welfare of sustainable progressive schooling for both teaching and learning. The opinion of principals on this matter follows.

Principal A: *This causes disciplinary problems to the school.*

Principal B: *Disciplinary problems are heightened by this notion of absenteeism as an occurrence*

Principal C: *The school registers disciplinary problems due to teacher absenteeism*

Principal F: *Absenteeism of teacher is disruptive to the school and as such causes disciplinary problems*

Principals A, B, C, F, shared a similar view that disciplinary problem is one of the major effects contributing to the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. It is the given fact from my virtual experience as an educator that when teachers are absent in most township schools learners are not attended to/taught or classes are combined together and this practice leads to chaos, fighting learners running around making noise and even disturbing other classes in the process teaching and learning.

Principal A: *I regrettably register the prevalence of teaching and learning severely affected.*

Principal E: *In our school teaching and learning is not affective.*

Principal F: *In such instances, there seem to be no effective teaching.*

Principal H: *Absenteeism affects teaching and learning; learners in particular are without a teacher.*

Taking the above into context, it becomes evident again that, principals A, E, F and H also agreed that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism seriously affect the teaching and learning due to poor curriculum coverage. According to principal D and I, this eventually lead to poor learner performance. Principal C is of the view that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism causes low morale amongst the teachers and also makes the poor schools to suffer financially by hiring substitute teachers in place of the teachers who are regularly absent from school.

4.4.3 Principals' opinions regarding the effectiveness of the leave policy to minimise the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

The teachers on this matter have the following concerns and opinion on the issue of teacher absenteeism. The following are their views:

Principal B: *The policy on absenteeism is not 100% effective, teachers are abusing the sick leave.*

Principal C: *My view is that the policy does not help, nothing is done, to follow up.*

Principal D: *The policy on this critical matter is not effective.*

Principal J: *I am not sure of the as to whether the policy might help to arrest the prevalence of absenteeism among teachers.*

Principal A: *Teachers do not understand the policy itself and such cannot be responded to with success as recipients.*

Principals B, C and D agreed that the current leave policy for educators is not 100% effective while Principal J was not sure if the leave policy is effective or not. The main reason why the principals are saying that leave policy is not effective may possibly be the fact that: little or nothing is done to discipline teachers who are often absent, the Education district office follow up on teachers who are regularly absent from school, most teachers do not understand different types of leaves and how they implemented. The following principals have this to say on the matter of absenteeism at school. They say:

Principal E: *In my situation, the policy regarding absenteeism is essentially of help to the smooth running of the school.*

Principal F: *I find the policy on teacher absenteeism very effective with correct implementation.*

Principal G: *I need the policy on teacher absenteeism is effective.*

Principal H: *Education policy addresses teacher absenteeism with effectiveness.*

However, principals, E, F, G, and H mentioned that the current leave policy is very efficient and effective. When one juxtaposes the opinion of principals: B, C, D, J and A with the views of principals, F, G, and H, it does emerge that the policy on teacher absenteeism and leave in general in the opinion of principals interviewed is not perceived as effective; this is the general case that can possibly conclude this matter.

4.4.4 Principals opinions regarding the measures that the school put into place in order to reduce uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.

School principals attempt to reduce uncontrolled teacher absenteeism with the following measures. The measures are;

Principal A: *In this instance, teachers complete the leave forms and I share leave circulars with teachers to better understand the ramifications of the policy in respect of teacher absenteeism and leave in general.*

Principal B: *The school takes the following measures to restraint uncontrolled teacher absenteeism at school: Complete leave forms, adhere to leave management policy, strictly control time book, and diligently control leave register.*

Principal D: *At our school teachers complete leave forms and spell out the genre of leave taken for proper recoding.*

Principal F: *Absenteeism by teachers is attended by daily control of attendance register and complete leave forms in case of absence.*

Principal G: *It's expected that the teacher absent complete leave forms for the period absent.*

Principal H: *The teacher is ordered to complete leave forms and permission register signifying for this nature of absence.*

Principal J: *The respective teachers absent complete leave forms and leave without*

pay is recommended if so necessary

Principals, A, B, D, F, G, H and J ensured that teachers who are absent complete their leave forms timeously. Other measures that the principals are employing to reduce uncontrolled teacher absenteeism are as follows: to adhere to leave management policy, strictly controlling leave register, time book, attendance register.

In other schools principals said they share circulars pertaining to leave measures in order to help teachers understand and interpret the leave policy correctly. Progressive principals also show the teachers the type of leaves and the amount of days that they have used/ exhausted already so that the stance taken is collective and collaborative within the context democratic practice.

Principal E: In this case, if the teacher is absent he/she must cover and complete the work-load behind due to absenteeism

Principal E indicated that the school ensured that if the teacher is absent he/she must cover the work as a result of lost time. This can be done by presenting the recovery plan to both the HOD and principal to show on which days he/she is going to cover the work. Normally, the HOD will physically supervise those extra classes.

Principal G said some of the measures that the school put in place is counseling and outsourcing HR personnel from the district office to come and address the problem of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Other principals such as principal I and J showed that their schools implement leave without pay when the teacher has exhausted all his/her leave and advance reasons unacceptable taken in the context of leave. Principal I also emphasized the fact the teachers are encouraged to inform the management in charge in order to do proper planning

4.5. Documentary Analysis

The researcher used the documentary analysis as a data generating tool to determine the prevalence of teacher absenteeism in sampled schools. The targeted school documents were teacher attendance register, late coming register and permission register.

Principal A: *I use the following documents to address this prevalence: The teacher attendance register, late coming register and permission registers are updated daily.*

Principal D: *In my case I engage the following documents: The teacher attendance register, late coming register and permission registers are available and updated daily.*

Principal E: *The following documents are used: The teacher attendance register, late coming register and permission registers are available and updated daily.*

Principal F: *I find the following beneficial to address absenteeism: The teacher attendance register, late coming register and permission registers are available and updated daily.*

Principal G: *For absenteeism the following documents are of essence: The teacher attendance register, late coming register and permission registers are available and updated daily.*

Principal J: *Critical to absenteeism are the following documents to restrain absenteeism: The teacher attendance register, late coming register and permission registers are available and updated daily.*

Principals A, D, E, F, G and J showed that the teacher attendance register, late coming register and permission register were frequently consulted and as such updated daily to respond to teacher absenteeism as a matter of concern.

Principal B: *The teacher attendance register and permission registers are available and updated daily, but the school does not have late coming register.*

Principal C: *In our school, the teacher attendance register and permission registers are obtainable and updated daily, it needs to be emphasised that the school does not have late coming register*

Principal H: *As a matter of fact, the teacher attendance register and permission registers are available at the school and as such updated regularly, but the school does not have late coming register.*

Principal J: *Of assistance are the following documents to assist manage teacher absenteeism at school: The teacher attendance register and the permission registers. The latter documents are available and updated daily. Of importance to note is the fact that the school does not have late coming register.*

It is very surprising that Principals B, C, H and J did not have the late coming register. However, during the interviews they indicated that they use the highlighter to show teachers who are late in the attendance register. It is important to note that late coming register is one of the indispensable management tools to keep the accurate records for all the teachers who are habitually absent at school.

4.6 FINDINGS FROM THE HR PERSONNEL' S INTERVIEW

The researcher had the opportunity to interviewed one of the Human Resource Officers. She has been in this position for a year. There are currently other 13 personnel who are working with in the district leave section. Currently there are almost 316 schools in Motheo district (i.e. Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu). But the schools are divided according to circuits. She is directly responsible for 26 schools.

It is also important to indicate that it took me almost three months to get hold of the HR personnel. It was not easy to secure appointments with the HR personnel as she was always busy, in meetings and sometimes on leave.

4.6.1 Prevalence of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

- *The HR personnel indicated that the rate of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is high in Motheo district. This information contradicted the one that was provided by the majority of the school principals who said the prevalence of teacher absenteeism is average/minimal.*

4.6.2 Challenges regarding submission of leave forms

- *The findings of this study revealed that there is a serious problem regarding late submission of leave forms by the school principals.*
- *Late submissions prevent capturing of leave forms timeously on SA SAMS programme (South African Schools Administration and Management System).*

4.6.3 Teachers' explanation to their absenteeism

- *The study findings revealed that teachers normally cited sick leave and private matter as reasons.*

4.6.4 Type of leaves that teachers normally take.

- *According to the HR personnel sick leave is always one of the most utilized leave in schools.*
- *It is clear that sick leave is the most abused leave in Motheo schools.*

4.6.5 The role of the district office to support teachers who are always absent from schools.

- *According to the HR personnel the district office holds workshops to explain all the type of leaves and which they qualify to take/utilize.*

4.6.6 Type of support that the district get from the unions to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

- *None at all, the only thing they do is to fight with the district office.*

4.4.7 Causes of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

- *The HR personnel indicated that the root cause of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is personal matters.*

- The HR personnel pointed out that the other reason is that teachers don't get along with their principals (i.e. poor working relationship). This piece of information again contradicted the information that was provided by the school principals that they give pastoral care to teachers and give counselling.

4.6. 8 Effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

- *The teacher lack behind with their syllabus and the learner performance also drops.*

4.6.9 The effectiveness of the current policy to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

- *The current policy is very effective but the teachers don't adhere to the policy.*

4.6.10 Types of measures that are in place in the district to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

- Assist with the workshops - per school if necessary.
- Apply leave without pay (LWP).

It is very important to highlight that the HR personnel sometimes experiences serious challenges from unions when trying to implement the LWP. In most cases Sadtu which has huge membership mostly in township schools would use its power to literally stop HR personnel from implementing LWP to its members. The union would always threaten the district office that it would embark on the strike and this would disrupt the smooth running of the schools by barring all district officials, Circuit Managers, Subject advisors etc. from entering the schools. School principals would always be instructed to ignore any correspondence and instructions from the Circuit Managers. It is quite clear that the deep rooted political alliance between Sadtu and the ruling party plays an important role in this matter. It is also important to emphasize that from the higher to low hierarchy majority of senior officials from the district office are Sadtu members and are occupying strategic positions.

It is very sad that the voiceless learners are suffering and failing because of this uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Teachers are only focusing on their rights when at

the same time are violating the constitutional rights of the learners, the right to education. Parents from SGB component should be given a bigger role to scrutinize the attendance of each teacher. Teacher attendance report must be a standing item on the SGB agenda. These learners who are unable to talk for themselves when sick leave is openly abused by teachers belong to the parents. The parents are the ones who are on the receiving end and must ensure that their children are receiving good and quality education all the time. The researcher's experience is that majority of the children of teachers, Circuit managers, senior officials in the district office are attending at the ex-model C schools where they are taught by white counterparts who are always prepared, highly committed, arrive on time in classes, and present at school for full 7 hours.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, data derived from the questionnaires, interviews, field notes and the documentary analysis for the study were analysed, classified and categorized according to themes, presented and discussed. The responses included the principals, teachers and a HR personnel member from the district office. In the next chapter the summary, findings and recommendations were presented. This critical reflection espoused the fundamental need to the discourse of managing teacher absenteeism at school.

The notable challenges have been issues of informed knowledge of correct interpretation and availability of assisting policies to manage the scourge of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism at school.

Important to note in the discourse of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism are the following documents: leave register, leave policy, attendance register and the different genres of leaves associated with teacher management of absenteeism.

Teacher absenteeism is unarguably a difficult task for principals to manage at school, hence a positive and progressive attitude has to be embraced to usher a more collaborative and collective stance an environment that embraces Ubuntu in all instances with the quest to win the battle.

The success of a well-managed scenario of uncontrolled absenteeism is when teachers become conscious of the problems associated with absenteeism and the impact it causes in respect of the smooth milieu for both teaching and learning. For the

latter to succeed people ought to have positive moral compass that guides them toward the consciousness of school attendance voluntarily.

4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, data derived from the questionnaires, interviews, field notes and the documentary analysis for the study were analysed, classified and categorized according to themes, presented and discussed. In the next chapter the summary, findings and recommendations will be presented.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a summary, findings conclusions and recommendations of the study will be presented, together with guidelines for further research. The findings will be explained in detail and examined on the basis of the literature reviewed. The fundamental aim of the study was to investigate the causes and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein).

It should be borne in mind that the following questions behind the study were addressed:

- What is the need to study the nature of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality?
- What are the causes contributing to the challenges of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in primary schools in Mangaung Municipality?
- What are the notable important effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism on learner performance in public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality?
- How can environment conducive be created in schools to address uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in public primary schools in Mangaung Municipality?
- What are the indicators of success for well-managed teacher absenteeism in schools?

As noted in in the literature study as well as the empirical research of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism factors such as personal factors, school factors and environmental factors have been identified as the major contributing factors of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. The study revealed that these factors also have negative effects on the learner performance. Some of the negative effects

of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism that were highlighted were as follows: learners not attended to, lack of discipline, chaos and disruption, teacher frustrations, teacher to teacher relationship. Finally the study also showed how the teacher unions and principals can play a pivotal role in curbing the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.

The following significant findings emerged in the fundamental discourse of the study and in principle will form the next agenda of discussion.

5.2 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following findings were the results of the research that was conducted for the purpose of investigating the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality schools (Bloemfontein).

5.2.1 Findings from literature

The literature study categorises the main factors that cause the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools as personal characteristics, school factors and environmental factors. A critical discussion is made of each of the factors.

Personal factors: Research data available shows that personal characteristics influence teacher absenteeism. They include age and gender of the teacher, illness of the teacher or a family member, experience and job dissatisfaction of the teacher, seniority and the type of employment for the teacher; qualification and lack of professional competence of the teacher, compassionate leave and family conflicts among other family responsibilities (Komoni, 2015:12).

School factors: These are institutional characteristics and working conditions that in different ways influence teachers' absenteeism. They include: Lack of group accepted norms, poor leadership style of the principal, lack of effective supervision and monitoring policies by the school administration and Ministry of Education, the status of the school whether private or public, poor school infrastructure and equipment, lack of in-service training programs among other motivation policies, high

pupil – teacher ratio and assignment of other school administrative duties (Komoni, 2015:14).

Environmental factors: These are community based characteristics that in different ways contribute to teachers’ absenteeism. Some examples include the location of the school, residence of the teacher, remoteness of the school, level of poverty of the community, assignment of non-teaching tasks to the teachers, education level of the parents, political influence and weather conditions (Komoni, 2015:16).

5.2.2 The effects of teacher absenteeism

In one of the studies that was conducted in South Africa by Mampane (2013:120- 122), the following were highlighted as some of the main effects of teacher absenteeism: affecting the normal school progression. The factors are:

5.2.2.1 Unattended learners

Often in the black schools, particularly in the township schools, there is no one who takes care of learners in the absence of their teachers as a result of lack of teacher substitutes.

5.2.2.2 Lack of discipline

When a teacher is absent from either class or school the learners will not be disciplined. This lack of discipline, in turn creates disruptions in the schools as well as disorder because of the noise made by the unattended learners.

5.2.2.3 Chaos and disruption

With the teacher not being in class, the learners become disruptive and chaotic and, thus, leaning and teaching do not happen).

5.2.2.4 Teacher frustrations

It is quite clear that the individual teacher become frustrated by other teachers' absences from school. This frustrates the school managers because they have to take care of learners that are without a teacher.

5.2.2.5 Teacher-to-teacher relationship

The study found that poor relationships between teachers. In most case, adverse relationship is grossly affected by those teachers who neglect their duties by absenting themselves from class and from school

5.2.2.6 Teacher unions and absenteeism

The study revealed that teachers neglect core work activities such as teaching, in order to attend to, inter alia, personal matters as well as other authorised activities like trade union meeting. It is a well-known factor that teachers, especially SADTU members usually give up teaching to attend meetings and workshops or to participate in marches and demonstrations.

5.2.2.7 Headmasters and teacher absenteeism

The literature study has highlighted that the quality of leadership and management in schools plays a pivotal role in order to reduce the high rate of teacher absenteeism. According to the study inability of the headmaster to sanction or discipline habitual absentees or late ness to school also contributed to poor teaching days, leaving the classrooms empty.

The aspects on empirical study findings are next to be discussed.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

Empirical findings need to be understood to be those genres of findings informed by the real articulations of the participants in this study.

Findings obtained from educators questionnaires

The questionnaires consisting of fifty eight (58) questions were distributed to sixty (60) post level one teachers in some of the selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein). The questionnaires consisted of three sections (i.e. Section A, Section B and Section C).

Section A focused on biographical information of teachers.

Section B focused on personal characteristics that contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Section C focused on school factors that contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Section D focused on environmental that contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Section E focused on various effects that are caused by uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Section E focused on various measures that can be used to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.

5.3.1.1 Section A (Biographical information)

Location of the school: All ten (10) schools were selected from township schools.

Medium of instruction in the school: The medium of instruction for twenty four (60%) public school primary schools was Sesotho; eighteen public primary schools (30%) had Setswana as medium of instruction while the medium of instruction for eighteen public schools (30%) was Isixhosa. In primary schools medium of instructions may differ, for example, in Foundation phase (Grade 1- 3) the medium of instruction was Home languages (i.e. Sesotho, Setswana and Isixhosa). But in both intermediate phase

(Grade 4 - 6) and senior phase (Grade 7- 9) the medium of instruction is English.

Teaching experience of teachers: Five (8%) of the teachers had 1-5 years teaching experience, twelve (20%) had 6 – 10 years teaching experience, sixteen (26%) had 11-20 years of teaching experience and while twenty seven (45%) had 21 years and more teaching experience.

Qualifications: Fourteen (23.3%) of the respondents held teacher's diploma, thirteen (21.6%) held advanced diploma in Education. As far as professional degrees are concerned, ten (16.6%) of respondents held B.A. degree and twenty (33.3%) held B.Ed. degree. Five (8.3%) respondents held other educational qualifications in education.

Gender: Twenty one (35%) respondents were male while thirty nine (65%) were female. This maybe the indication that female's educators are more in public primary schools than males

Age group: Three (5%) of the respondents were in the age group 20 years to 30 years, eight (13%) of the respondents were in the age group 31 years to 40 years, thirty two (53%) of respondents were in the age group of 41 years to 50 years, while the seventeen (29%) of respondents were almost in the retirement age bracket.

Marital status: Thirty three (55%) were married, nine (15%) of the respondents were divorced and thirteen (22%) of respondents were single. Only five (8%) of the respondents were widowers

Race/ethnicity: Sixty (100%) of the respondents were black educators. The researcher targeted the township schools because he worked in one of the township schools where the prevalence of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism might be high.

Province: Sixty (100%) of respondents are from the Free State province. The researcher focused only on the public primary schools in the Free State that were convenient and easily accessible to him.

The Grade/phase that the teachers are teaching: Twenty three (38%) of respondents were Foundation phase teachers while thirty seven (62%) respondents were both Intermediate and senior phase educators.

5.3.1.2 Section B (Teacher personal characteristics)

The findings derived from the questionnaires completed by teachers showed that very few teachers believe that poor performing teachers are absent more often. The information received from the findings clearly showed that overwhelming number of teachers agreed that illness contributes to higher uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.

The researcher findings revealed that majority of teachers fully agreed that low salary income contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. Generally, most teachers were not convinced that more experienced teachers are absent often at school.

The study found that majority of teachers strongly disagreed that teachers with higher qualifications are more absent than their colleagues. The findings revealed that large number of teachers strongly disagreed that female teachers are more often absent than male colleagues. The study found that most teachers were not convinced that all teachers are more absent than younger teachers.

The findings derived from the study showed that more teachers disagreed that teachers tend to be absent more than single teachers. The findings revealed that majority of teachers agreed that family conflict contributes to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Evidence from this study showed that majority of teachers indicated that drunkenness causes uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

The study found that the majority of teachers strongly agreed teachers tend to be absent on Mondays. The study revealed that large number of teachers tend to be absent during the month ends.

5.3.1.3 Section C (School factors)

It was found that most teachers strongly agreed that lack of effectively supervision and management can curb teacher absenteeism. The findings revealed that most of the teachers agreed that too much workload encourages uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The research findings further revealed that majority of teachers agreed that poor working conditions tend to cause uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. (i.e. personal conflict). According to the findings the teachers agreed that poor school infrastructure and resources experience more uncontrolled teachers' absenteeism.

The research findings revealed that most teaching agreed that poor control of attendance register tend to encourage teaching absenteeism. The study showed that overwhelming majority of teachers strongly agreed that who are assigned with other administration duties tend to miss their classes. The majority of teachers strongly agreed that regular absenteeism cause teachers not to complete the syllabus.

The study also revealed that majority of teachers indicated that learners tend to fail the subject (s) of teachers who are always absent at school and that the teachers agreed that good motivational programme have can lower teacher uncontrolled absenteeism.

5.3.1.4 Section D (Environmental factors)

The study further highlighted that teachers disagreed that the location of the school (i.e. distance and transport) contributes to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

According to the findings it was found that most teachers disagreed that the level of poverty in the community tends to encourage uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Evidence from this study showed that most teachers disagreed that limited amenities and poor conditions tend to encourage uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The majority of teachers indicated that the rate of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is not higher during rainy days.

The study showed that most teachers agreed that teachers' strikes causes uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The research findings revealed that most teachers who are union officials are absent more often at school

5.3.1.5 Section E (Various effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism)

The study indicated majority of teachers agreed that when teachers are absent classes are combined and also that an overwhelming number of teachers indicated that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism causes other teachers to carry extra load.

The majority of teachers strongly agreed that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism causes low morale amongst staff members. According to the substantial number of teachers learners are not taught or attended to when teachers are absent. The research findings revealed that huge number of teachers strongly agreed that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism causes lack of discipline in the classroom. The study found that astonishing number of teachers strongly agreed that uncontrolled teachers absenteeism causes chaos and is also very disruptive. Also, according to the findings large numbers of teachers indicated that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism makes teachers not to complete syllabus on time.

Generally, majority of teachers strongly agreed that higher rate of uncontrolled teachers' absenteeism affects the learner performance and a startling number of teachers indicated that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism frustrates other teachers who are always present at school. The findings revealed that most teachers indicated that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism can promote conflict or poor relations between teachers.

5.3.1.6 Section F (various measures that can curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism)

According to the findings astonishing number of teachers fully agreed that rewarding of teachers with good attendance will help to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The study further showed that the majority of teachers indicated that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism can be reduced by various measures such as firm application of supportive management style by the principals, firm application of 8 week rule by the principal and by also discussing attendance records and quarterly report with staff by SMT.

The findings derived from this study indicated that majority of teachers strongly agreed that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism can be reduced by paying decent salaries to teachers. The study showed that majority of teachers indicated that the discussion of quarterly teachers' attendance reports with staff by the SMT will help to reduce uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Majority of teachers agreed that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism can be curbed if the principal applies sanctions to those teachers who are frequently absent. The majority of teachers agreed that the current policy of incapacity leave is very effective to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Evidence from this study showed that the high number of teachers indicated that good infrastructure, resources and facilities can improve uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The research findings revealed that a relatively high number of teachers strongly agreed that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism can be curbed if Circuit Managers (formerly known as school inspectors) help school principals to deal with teacher absenteeism on monthly bases.

5.4 FINDINGS FROM THE PRINCIPALS' INTERVIEWS

The ten (10) principals from public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein) were interviewed to establish the cause and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The researcher conducted semi structured interviews with the school principals. The interviews were taped and recorded with the permission of all participants. The recordings were later transcribed verbatim. During the interviews the field notes were taken in order to enrich the taped discussions.

5.4.1 Biographical information

Principal A. The principal of the school has 12 years' experience. The medium of instruction of the school was Sesotho with 31 teachers and 1003 learners. The school starts from Grade R – 7.

Principal B. The principal of the school has 6 years' experience. The medium of instruction of the school was Isixhosa with 20 teachers and 741 learners. The school starts from Grade R – 9.

Principal C. The principal of the school has 2 years' experience. The medium of instruction of the school was Isixhosa with 21 teachers with 590 learners. The school starts from Grade R – 8.

Principal D. The principal of the school has 16 years' experience. The medium of instruction of the school was Isixhosa with 43 teachers and 1 433 learners. The school starts from Grade R – 8.

Principal E. The principal of the school has 1 year experience. The medium of the instruction of the school was Sesotho with 15 teachers and 530 learners. The school starts from Grade R – 7.

Principal F. The principal of the school has 1 year experience. The medium of instruction the school was Sesotho with 22 teachers and 810 learners. The schools starts from Grade R – 7.

Principal G. The principal of the school has 1 year experience. The medium of instruction of the school was Setswana with 22 teachers and 803 learners. The school starts from Grade R -7.

Principal H. The principal of the school has 6 years' experience. The medium of the school was Isixhosa with 26 teachers and 899 learners. The school starts from Grade R – 9.

Principal I. The principal of the school has 13 years' experience. The medium of the school was Sesotho with 26 teachers and 980 learners. The school starts from Grade R- 7.

Principal J. The principal of the school has 15 years' experience. The medium of the school was Setswana with 40 teachers and 1 321. The school starts from Grade R- 7.

5.4.2 Prevalence of teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein).

It was noted that school principals gave different views regarding prevalence of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung

Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein). Most of the school principals indicated that the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is average in their respective schools. However, very few principals showed that uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is high and serious in their schools.

5.4.3 Challenges regarding the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein)

The findings revealed that all the school principals fully agreed that the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism creates serious challenges in their schools. Classes are without teachers, no tuition is taken place. This leads to chaos and disciplinary problems as some learners are loitering outside causing noise and disruptions

5.4.4 Explanations given by principals when absent.

The research findings revealed that the majority of the school principals cited sick leave, family responsibility leave and urgent private matters as the main cause of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

5.5 THE TYPES OF LEAVE TAKEN BY TEACHERS

The study showed that sick leave is one of the outstanding taken and abused leaves in all the selected public primary school in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein).

5.5.1 The type of role/support that the principals give to teachers who are always absent

This study established that all the principals are continuously talking to teachers who are always absent from school.

It is quite interesting that principals indicated that they are providing counselling, refers teachers to Employee Wellness Programme and also involve labour relation personnel when deemed necessary.

5.5.2 The type of assistance that the district office provide to school principals to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

It was noted that the school principals gave different views regarding the support that they get from the district office.

Most of the school principals indicated that labour personnel do conduct leave management workshops for their staff members, while on the other hand some principals complained that they don't get any form of support from the district office in order to curb the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

5.5.3 The type of assistance/support that the union site stewards gives to principals to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

It is quite interesting to see that according to the research findings unions played a pivotal role to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism by supporting principals and talking to their members.

Maybe it is because of the principals belong to the same union like the teachers (i.e. SADTU, NAPTOSA and SAOU). This also indicates the good working relationship between the principals and the unions in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein).

But only few principals expressed their dissatisfactions towards little or no support they are getting from the unions. The site stewards only show up when they come to represent their members during the disciplinary hearings against their members.

5.6 PRINCIPALS PERSONAL OPINIONS REGARDING UNCONTROLLED TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

5.6.1 Causes of teacher absenteeism (Questions 1 – 11)

The study showed that the majority of principals indicated that the underlying causes of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism are sick leave, family responsibility leave, alcohol abuse, financial problems, health matters and some also indicate teachers take leave to avoid submitting their work.

5.6.2 Effects of teacher absenteeism

According to the findings of the study the school principals indicated that uncontrolled

teacher absenteeism negatively affect the smooth running of the teaching and learning and this always lead to disciplinary problems (i.e. fights) in classrooms.

Most teachers lost lot of time when they are absent and this make them to fall behind with their work/syllabus. Learners are always combined in one classroom if the teacher is absent and this always creates overcrowding in class.

5.6.3 Effectiveness of the current leave policy to curb teacher uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

The school principals indicated that the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism has a direct bearing on learner performance because no tuition is taking place when a teacher is absent.

The school also suffer financially when the SGB appoints the substitute teacher to replace the teacher who is always absent from school.

5.6.4 Type of measures that are in place to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

Most of the school principals felt that the current leave policy is not 100% effective because teachers are abusing sick leave, while on the other side some principals felt it is very effective.

5.6.5 Type of measures that are in place to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.

The study found that the school has proper measures in place to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism such as requesting inform management in advance if he/she is going to be absent. The school principals indicated that they strictly control time table, leave register and make teachers to complete leave forms.

This is also interesting to realise that some schools principals adhere to leave policy management policy, share the leave circular with teachers. In some schools principals indicated that they show teachers the number of leave days they have already exhausted.

5.6 DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS

During the interviews the researcher had an opportunity to access and analysis documents such as teacher attendance register, late coming register and permission register.

5.7.1 Teacher attendance register

The study findings revealed that all the schools have a teacher attendance registers and they are updated and controlled.

5.7.2 Late coming register

The study established that a small number of the primary schools did not have late coming register at all to monitor and regulate late coming at school.

5.7.3 Permission register

According to the research findings all the schools had permission registers and were updated and controlled effectively.

The following research views to be discussed are from the Human Resources in the Free State Department of education.

5.8 FINDINGS FROM THE HR PERSONNEL MEMBER'S INTERVIEW

The following are just the summary of responses from the Human Resource's official in the Department of Education regarding the prevalence of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in Mangaung primary schools. The HR personnel deals with the teachers leave forms in Motheo district on daily basis.

5.8.1 Prevalence of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

The HR personnel indicated that the rate of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is high in Motheo district. This information contradicted the information that was provided by the majority of the school principals who said the prevalence of teacher absenteeism is average/minimal.

5.8.2 Challenges regarding submission of leave forms

The findings of this study revealed that there is a serious problem regarding the late submission of leave forms by the school principals.

Late submissions prevent capturing of leave forms timeously on SA SAMS programme (South African Schools Administration and Management System).

5.8.3 Teachers' explanation to their absenteeism

The study findings revealed that teachers normally cited sick leave and urgent private matter leave as reasons for absenteeism.

5.8.4 Type of leaves that teachers normally take

According to the HR personnel sick leave is always one of the most utilized leave in schools. It is clear that sick leave is the most abused leave in Motheo schools.

5.8.5 The role of the district office to support teachers who are always absent from schools

According to the HR personnel the district office holds workshops to explain all the type of leaves and which they qualify to take/utilize.

5.8.6 Type of support that the district get from the unions to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

It appears as if there is no support at all - there is conflict with the district office.

5.8.7 Causes of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

The HR personnel indicated that the root cause of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism is personal matters.

The HR personnel pointed out that the other reason is that teachers don't get along

with their principals (i.e. poor working relationship). This piece of information again contracted the information that was provided by the school principals that they give pastoral care to teachers and give counselling.

5.8.8 Effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

The teacher lack behind with their syllabus and the learner performance also drops.

5.8.9 The effectiveness of the current policy to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism

The current policy is very effective but the teachers don't adhere to the policy.

5.8.10 Type of measures that are in place in the district office to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.

Measures in place include assisting with the workshops - per school if necessary and the application of Leave Without Pay (LWP).

5.9 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from this study include that:

- 1) An Employee Wellness programme to be utilized effectively by the district office in order to assist and give a proper counselling to habitual absentees.
- 2) The district office should initiate legal steps against teachers who are always absent on Mondays, Friday and month ends.
- 3) The principal/School Management Team (SMT) members should ensure that there is an effective supervision and management of leave.
- 4) The school governing body (SGB) should make sure they raise enough funds in order to appoint substitute teachers when the need arises. This would also

help to reduce the extra load, ensure that learners are taught all the time and reduce tension between teachers who are always at school and those are absent.

- 5) The principal /SMT should control the attendance register daily.
- 6) The principal /SMT should ensure that teachers who are always absent must draw up the catch up plan to cover the work that she/he is behind with. This programme should be strictly controlled by the Head of Department (HOD).
- 7) The principal/SGB should ensure that the school has a good motivational programme to encourage to be at work all the time. This would also forge a healthy relationship between colleagues and minimise personal conflicts.
- 8) The principal should make sure that all union meetings are held after school hours. The district office must charge those principals who allow teachers to have meetings during school hours.
- 9) The SMT should ensure that the school has a relieve time table. The relieve time table is normally used when teachers who are having free periods go and physically occupy the classrooms of teachers who are absent at school. The aim is to maintain order and discipline in class, and ensure that learner are taught all the time, and to prevent that no classrooms are combine (avoid overcrowding).
- 10) The principal/SGB should recognise and reward good teacher attendance each during the learner prize giving ceremony.
- 11) The principal should display a pastoral care, love and support to those teachers who are always absent at school with the aim of correcting the situation, but be firm on the other side.
- 12) The principal should ensure that he/she applies the 8 week rule and control the attendance register daily.
- 13) The salary scales of teachers should be revised in order to curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.
- 14) The SMT should print out the summary of attendance of each teacher at the beginning of each month and discuss with him/her alone.

- 15) It should be compulsory for teachers to submit a medical certificate even if the teacher was absent for one day. This would help to stop the abuse of the sick leave by some teachers. The leave policy for teachers must be reviewed regularly.
 - 16) The provincial department of education should ensure that schools have a good infrastructure and facilities, especially township schools are dilapidated.
 - 17) The Circuit Managers (school inspectors) should assist school principals to conduct disciplinary hearings against teachers who are always absent from school.
 - 18) The district office should ensure that it conduct leave management workshop regular for both the SMT and teachers.
 - 19) The principals should submit the leave forms weekly in order to be captured immediately on the system by the district officials. This would help that leave without pay is implemented within reason times.
 - 20) The district office should employ enough personnel in order to handle large volume of the leave forms from schools. This would help to avoid the current leave forms backlogs.
 - 21) The district office should also speed up the process of appointing substitute and temporary teachers. The “red tape” process is really frustrating schools or school teachers would always be overloaded with lot of period. And in the end this would lead to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.
 - 22) Administration of leave without pay should be implemented in time by the district office.
 - 23) Unions are the most important stakeholders in the education system; they have strong influence on the members. Unions should be used form genuine partnership with to the district office officials and speak against the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism during the union meetings or share the same platform with district officials to speak against uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.
- The aspect on the implications for further research is to be discussed next.

5.10 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTHER RESEARCH.

This study had addressed aim and objectives of researching on the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein in the context of emerging findings behind this study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) The need to engage the Section of Employee wellness in contributing towards the better management of teacher absenteeism as informed by personal teacher factors and environmental implications (In and outside school) to absenteeism
- 2) Further study should focus on the assessment of the level of teachers' knowledge pertaining to the leave management policy, legislations and Acts how can school principals be helped to effectively implement these policies to minimise the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.
- 3) Further study should also be conducted to empower and develop teachers on the aspect of personal financial management for a stable life that will create a sustainable financial environment for positive teacher attendance to restrain undue absenteeism at schools with unenthusiastic results
- 4) Since this study was carried out in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality, a similar study needs to be done in secondary schools and also in other districts such as Lejweleputswa, Thabo Mofutsanyane, Fezile Dabi and Xhariep in order to see if these the causes and effects will be the same like in secondary schools and other districts.
- 5) There is also a need for the Free State Department of Education to have copies of the research and to study it thoroughly as the findings, conclusions and recommendations made by the research can help in evaluating the current leave legislations, policies and procedure in order to make amendments/improvements where necessary.

The following closing remarks constitute the next chapter summary.

5.11 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study was aimed at investigating the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein). In order to achieve this aim, relevant literature study was reviewed to establish the real causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. The study achieved its objective in finding the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism, analysed and interpreted them and this might be a great value in curbing the causes and effects of teacher absenteeism in schools. The systemic implementation of the recommendations made above might be used to eradicate the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools.

The findings of this study revealed that various factors such as personal, school and environmental factors largely contributed to the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality. The findings of the study showed that personal factors such as sickness, family responsibility and urgent private matter are responsible for uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. The study further indicated that factors such as gender, experience in teaching, qualifications, marital status, age do not necessary cause uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. It is quite interesting that these findings are contradictory to the literature study.

According to the study the school factors that are directly involved in increasing the cause and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism are poor leadership style and management, too much workload, poor working conditions, poor school infrastructure, poor control of attendance register, and too much given administration work.

Regarding the role of environmental factors it was found that the findings of this study contradicted the literature study by disagreeing that the location of the school, the level poverty in the community, limited amenities, and poor conditions contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. In conclusion, the study showed that teachers' strike causes high rate of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism and also union members that are attending the union meetings and workshop during school hours are the cause of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

According to the findings of this study some of the effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism are unattended learners, combinations of classes, incomplete syllabus,

disciplinary problems, poor working relationship and serious financial implication for the school and the district office. All these factors would negatively affect the learner performance.

The following critical proposals for further research emerge from this study.

The use of a Wellness Unit to address teacher absenteeism, inform teachers on policy matters guiding broader leave policies and teacher absenteeism in particular. The unity should also conduct the study to other provinces except Free State to have informed knowledge on the aspect of teacher absenteeism at school and its inherent implications. This should also be on personal financial management skills workshop among teachers so as to capacitate them for sound financial management for school competitive desire to attend work and avoid absenteeism.

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Enquiries: BM Kitching
Ref: Research Permission: Mchibeli TR
Tel: 051 404 9265 / 9221 / 082 454 1519
Email: berhukitching@gmail.com and B.Kitching@edut.fs.gov.za

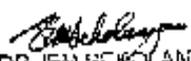
TR Mchibeli
1585 Mosema Street
Rocklands
BLOEMFONTEIN 5323

Dear Mr Mchibeli

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- This letter serves as an acknowledgement of receipt of your request to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education
Research Topic: The Cause and Effects of Uncontrolled Teacher Absenteeism in Selected Public Primary Schools in Mangaung Metro Municipality (Bloemfontein).
Schools: Dainxubo, Gonyane, Ithobe, Karabela, Kgabane, Kgato, Macoloka, Mmnyatsi, Nozisa, Rusanang in Moché District.
Target Population: 10 X Principals, 60 X Teachers and 1 X Official from District Leave section.
- Period of research:** From the date of signature of this letter until 30 September 2016. Please note the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term (quarter) of the academic year nor during normal school hours.
- Should you fall behind your schedule by three months to complete your research project in the approved period, you will need to apply for an extension.
- The approval is subject to the following conditions:
 - 4.1 The collection of data should not interfere with the normal tuition time or teaching process.
 - 4.2 A bound copy of the research document or a CD, should be submitted to the Free State Department of Education, Room 318, 3rd Floor, Old DNA Building, Charlotte Maxeke Street, Bloemfontein.
 - 4.3 You will be expected, on completion of your research study to make a presentation to the relevant stakeholders in the Department.
 - 4.4 The attached ethics documents must be adhered to in the discourse of your study in our department.
- Please note that costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.

Yours sincerely


DR JEM SEKOLANYANE
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

DATE: 21/08/16

RESEARCH APPLICATION NO: HEBLETR PERM1501/16 AUG 2016

Director: Planning, Policy & Research Directorate

Private Bag X21265, Bloemfontein, 9300 - Room 218, Old DNA Building, 3rd Floor, Charlotte Maxeke Street, Bloemfontein
TEL (051) 404 9255 / 9221 Fax (051) 6674 578



Enquiries: B. Kitching
Ref: Notification of research: MOTHIBEL
Tel: 051 306 9221 / 082 454 1519
Email: benkitching@gmail.com and B.Kitching@fseducation.gov.za

The Acting District Director
Mothibeli District

Dear Mr Moloi

NOTIFICATION OF A RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR DISTRICT BY TR MOTHIBELI

1. The abovementioned candidate was granted permission to conduct research in your district as follows:
Topic: Cause and Effects of Uncontrolled Teacher Absenteeism in Selected Public Primary Schools in Manguang Metro Municipality.
Schools Involved: Daluxulo, Gonyane, Proba, Karabalo, Kgabane, Kgato, Maboikwa, Manyala, Mozara, Rutanang in Motheo District.
Target Population: 10 Principals, 60 Teachers and 1 official from the district leave section.
Period: From the date of signature of this letter until 30 September 2016. Please note the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term / academic quarter of the year nor during normal school hours.
2. **Research benefits:** Expansion of the edifice of knowledge for the policy studies regarding uncontrolled teachers absenteeism strategies on addressing the causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher's absenteeism in Manguang and establishing knowledge that can provide scholars, educationalist, researchers and policy makers with perspectives on uncontrolled teachers absenteeism in public schools in Manguang.
3. Logistical procedures were met, in particular ethical considerations for conducting research in the Free State Department of Education.
4. The Strategic Planning, Policy and Research Directorate will make the necessary arrangements for the researcher to present the findings and recommendations to the relevant officials in your district.

Yours sincerely


DR JEM SEKOLANYANE
DPO

DATE: 30/08/2016

RESEARCH APPLICATION/NOTIFICATION MOTHIBELI (R) NOTIFIED 25 AUG 2016

Strategic Planning, Research & Policy Directorate

Private Bag 392005, Bloemfontein, 9301 - Col. CAR Building, Room 416, 2nd Floor, Charlotte Maxeke Street, Bloemfontein

Tel: (051) 484 3263 / 4721 Fax: (051) 484 3263

APPENDIX A

Cover letter

Dear Participant

My name is Tshepo Ruben Mothibeli and I am currently a Master's degree student at the University of Central Technology. I am conducting a research project which forms part of my dissertation for completion of my Master's degree programme in Education (Policy Studies in Education) at the University of Central Technology.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate various factors (i.e. personal, school and environmental factors) that contribute to the causes and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in Mangaung Metro public primary schools. This research project is very important because it will benefit the principals, teachers and the Free State Department of Education. The findings of this study could therefore inform policy makers of the realities (i.e. causes and effects) pertaining to the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. It also aims to provide guidelines to the schools on how to deal with or curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Participation in this study is voluntarily and teachers may withdraw from the study at any given time without given any reason. Efforts will be made to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. No names of the participants and the school will be divulged. The data will be used for research purpose only and later it will be destroyed after the research is completed.

This questionnaire consists of 57 items and can be completed within 30 minutes. The questionnaire consists of closed ended questions. Please complete the most appropriate answer by making a cross (x) next to the appropriate box. The questionnaires will be completed outside school normal hours. You are requested to complete the consent form before completing the questionnaire. **After completing the entire questionnaire the respondent will be given an incentive of a sports bottle.**

If you are willing to participate in this result project, please sign the attached consent letter (Appendix B) as a form of agreement and consent. For further inform or clarity you can contact me at 084 4632 669 or email: tshepomothibeli@yahoo.com.

Yours sincerely,

T.R. Mothibeli (Researcher) (213550717)

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM (TEACHERS)

Name of the school:

Name of the participant:

I (Name
and surname), (Mark relevant choice with an x)

AGREE	<input type="checkbox"/>	DO NOT AGREE	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------	--------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------

To take part voluntarily in the research project entitled: “Causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro” (Bloemfontein).

I am fully aware that I will give appropriate information by completing the questionnaire and can withdraw from the research study at any given time. The research findings will be anonymous and confidential. The research project shall not place me at risk or harm of any kind.

Attached find the copy of permissions from the Research Ethics Committee and the Free State Department of Education.

Participant signature:

Date:

Yours sincerely

.....

T.R. Mothibeli (Researcher) Cell: 084 4632 669

E mail: tshepomothibeli@yahoo.com

Prof P Phindane (Supervisor) 051 507 3832

Prof S Matoti (Co-Supervisor) 051 50733

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM (PRINCIPALS)

Name of the school:

I, (Initials and surname) Principal of

.....

Have been completely informed regarding the nature of this study and consent of the participation of the teachers in this study by Mr T.R. Mothibeli, a Master's degree student in Education, under the supervision of Prof P Phindane and Prof S Matoti from Central University of Technology on the condition that participation is voluntarily.

I am fully aware that teachers can withdraw from the research study at any given time. The research findings will be anonymous and confidential. The research project shall not place me/teachers at risk or harm of any kind now and in future

Attached find the copy of permissions from the Research Ethics Committee and the Free State Department of Education.

Participant signature:

Date:

Yours sincerely

.....

T.R. Mothibeli (Researcher) Cell: 084 4632 669

E mail: tshepomothibeli@yahoo.com

Prof P Phindane (Supervisor) 051 507 3832

Prof S Matoti (Co-Supervisor) 051 50733

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM (INTERVIEWS, PRINCIPALS AND HR PERSONNEL)

Name of the school:

Name of the participant:

I, (Name and surname),

(Mark relevant choice with an x)

AGREE		DO NOT AGREE	
--------------	--	---------------------	--

To take part voluntarily in the research project entitled: **“Causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro” (Bloemfontein).**

I am fully aware that I can withdraw from the research study at any given time. The interview process will take the form of semi structured interviews. The interviews will be conducted after school and will be tape recorded. The interviews process will take 30min – 40 min. The research findings will be anonymous and confidential. The research project shall not place me at risk or harm of any kind.

Attached, find the copy of permissions from the Research Ethics Committee and the Free State Department of Education.

Participant signature:

Date:

Yours sincerely

.....

T.R. Mothibeli (Researcher) Cell: 084 4632 669

E mail: tshepomothibeli@yahoo.com

Prof P Phindane (Supervisor) 051 507 3832

Prof S Matoti (Co-Supervisor) 051 5073

APPENDIX E

A LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

Enq: Mr T.R. Mothibeli

P.O. Box 100743

Cell: 084 4632 669

Kenworth Spa
Bloemfontein
9303
02 May 2016

The Principal

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

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

I am humbly requesting your permission to conduct a research study at your school. The topic of my research project is entitled: “**Causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro**” (Bloemfontein). I intend to interview the principal and distribute 3 questionnaires that must be completed by the three (3) PL 1 teachers after school hours.

My name is Tshepo Ruben Mothibeli and I am currently a Master’s degree student at the University of Central Technology. I am conducting a research project which forms part of my dissertation for completion of my Master’s degree programme in Education (Policy Studies in Education) at the University of Central Technology.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate various factors (i.e. personal, school and environmental factors) that contribute to the causes and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in Mangaung Metro public primary schools. This research project is very important because it will benefit the principals, teachers and the Free State Department of Education. The findings of this study could therefore inform policy makers of the realities (i.e. causes and effects) pertaining to the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. It also aims to provide guidelines to the schools on how to deal with or curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. **After completing the entire questionnaire the respondents will be given an incentive of a sports bottle.**

Participation in this study is voluntarily and participants may withdraw from the study at any given time without given any reason. I fully guarantee that I will maintain

confidentiality and anonymity of all participants. No names of the participants and the school will be divulged. The data will be used for research purpose only and later it will be destroyed after the research is completed.

Attached find the copies of permission from the Research Ethics Committee and the Free State Department of Education.

Yours sincerely

.....

T.R. Mothibeli (Researcher) Cell: 084 4632 669

E mail: tshepomothibeli@yahoo.com

Prof P Phindane (Supervisor) 051 507 3832

Prof. Matoti (Co-Supervisor) 051 507 337

APPENDIX F

A LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOLS

Enq: Mr T.R. Mothibeli

P.O. Box 100743

Cell: 084 4632 669

Kenworth Spa
Bloemfontein
9303
02 May 2016

The District Director (Free State Department of Education)

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

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

I am humbly requesting your permission to conduct a research study at some of the selected public primary school. My name is Tshepo Ruben Mothibeli and I am currently a Master’s degree student at the University of Central Technology. I am conducting a research project which forms part of my dissertation for completion of my Master’s degree programme in Education (Policy Studies in Education) at the University of Central Technology.

The topic of my research project is entitled: **“Causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro” (Bloemfontein)**. I intend to interview the 10 principals and distribute 30 questionnaires that must be completed by the three (3) PL 1 teachers after school hours.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate various factors (i.e. personal, school and environmental factors) that contribute to the causes and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in Mangaung Metro public primary schools. This research project is very important because it will benefit the principals, teachers and the Free State Department of Education. The findings of this study could therefore inform policy makers of the realities (i.e. causes and effects) pertaining to the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. It also aims to provide guidelines to the schools on how to deal with or curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Participation in this study is voluntarily and participants may withdraw from the study at any given time without given any reason. Efforts will be made to maintain

confidentiality and anonymity. No names of the participants and the school will be divulged. The data will be used for research purpose only and later it will be destroyed after the research is completed.

Attached find the copies of permission from the Research Ethics Committee and the

Yours sincerely

T.R. Mothibeli (Researcher) Cell: 084 4632 669

E mail: tshepomothibeli@yahoo.com

Prof P Phindane (Supervisor) 051 507 3832

Prof S Matoti (Co- Supervisor) 051 507 3370

APPENDIX G

A LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SCHOOLS

Enq: Mr T.R. Mothibeli

P.O. Box 100743

Cell: 084 4632 669

Kenworth Spa

Bloemfontein

9303

02 May 2016

The Ethics Committee (Central University of Technology)

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

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT SCHOOLS

I am humbly requesting your permission to conduct a research study at schools. The topic of my research project is entitled: "Causes and effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in selected public primary schools in Mangaung Metro" (Bloemfontein). I intend to interview the principal and distribute 3 questionnaires that must be completed by the three (3) PL 1 teachers after school hours.

My name is Tshepo Ruben Mothibeli and I am currently a Master's degree student at the University of Central Technology. I am conducting a research project which forms part of my dissertation for completion of my Master's degree programme in Education (Policy Studies in Education) at the University of Central Technology.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate various factors (i.e. personal, school and environmental factors) that contribute to the causes and effects of the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in Mangaung Metro public primary schools. This research project is very important because it will benefit the principals, teachers and the Free State Department of Education. The findings of this study could therefore inform policy makers of the realities (i.e. causes and effects) pertaining to the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism in schools. It also aims to provide guidelines to the schools on how to deal with or curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

Participation in this study is voluntarily and participants may withdraw from the study at any given time without given any reason. Efforts will be made to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. No names of the participants and the school will be

divulged. The data will be used for research purpose only and later it will be destroyed after the research is completed.

Attached find the copies of permission from the Free State Department of Education.

Yours sincerely

T.R. Mothibeli (Researcher) Cell: 084 4632 669

E mail: tshepomothibeli@yahoo.com

Prof P Phindane (Supervisor) 051 507 3832

Prof S Matoti (Co-Supervisor) 051 507 3370

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEWS QUESTIONS FOR PRINCIPALS

Name of the school:

Biographical Information:

- How long have you been a principal at this school?

.....

- How many teachers do you have in this school?

.....

- How many learners are at this school?

.....

From which Grade does your school start?

.....

1. How prevalent is teacher absenteeism in your school?
2. What type of challenges do you normally encounter regarding to absenteeism?
3. What is usually the teachers' explanation to their absenteeism?
4. What types of leaves they normally take?
5. What role do you normally play to support teachers who are always absent?
6. What type of assistance do you normally get from the department to curb absenteeism?

What type of assistance do you normally get from the site steward of the union to curb absenteeism?

In your own opinion what do you think are:

7. The causes of teacher absenteeism. (i.e. personal, school and environmental factors).
8. The effects of teacher absenteeism.
9. How effective is the educators' leave policy to curb teacher absenteeism?
10. What type of measures are in place to curb absenteeism your schools?

CHECKLIST FOR DOCUMENTARY ANALYSES

The other methods that the researcher will use in order to gather relevant information and to have a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism are:

- Teachers' attendance registers.
- Teachers' late coming register
- Teachers' permission register`

Documents	Available	Not Available	Updated	Not Updated
1. Teachers' daily attendance register				
2. Teachers' late coming register				
3. Teachers' permission register				

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR EDUCATORS

Instructions

- Please do not write your name on paper.
- Answer every question.
- All the information collected will be used for the purpose of this study and will not disclose for any purpose.

SECTION A

The questions used in this section are to establish whether **biographical factors** of the participants have direct or indirect bearing on the uncontrolled teacher absenteeism.

1. Indicate the geographical location of your school.

Town (suburb)	
Township	
Informal settlement	

2. Indicate medium of instruction in your school.

English	
Sesotho	
Setswana	
Isixhosa	
Other (specify)	

3. Number of years in teaching

1 to 5 years	
6 to 10yrs	
11 to 20 years	
21 Years or more	

4. Highest qualifications obtained

Teachers' Diploma	
Advanced Diploma	
B.A. degree	
B.Ed degree (Honours)	
Master's degree	
PhD degree	
Other (specify)	

5. Indicate your gender

1. Male	
2. Female	

6. Indicate your age group

1. 20yrs – 30yrs	
2. 31yrs – 40yrs	
3. 41yrs -50yrs	
4. 51yrs – 60yrs	

7. Indicate your marital status

Married	
Divorced	
Single	
Other (specify)	

8. Indicate your race or ethnicity

African	
Coloured	
Indian	
White	
Other (specify)	

9. In which province do you teach?

Northern Cape	
Limpopo	
Gauteng	
Free State	
Durban	
Eastern Cape	
Kwazulu – Natal	
North West	
Western Cape	

10. Indicate the grade that you teach.

Grade R	
Grade 1	
Grade 2	
Grade 3	
Grade 4	
Grade 5	
Grade 6	
Grade 7	

SECTION B

The following **PERSONAL FACTORS** describe various aspects that contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement by ticking the number that reflects your opinion. The response options range from 1 – 4 as follows: 1. (strong disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree) and 4 (strongly agree)

KEY:

1. (SD), 2 (D), 3. (A) and 4 (SA)

	1	2	3	4
PERSONAL FACTORS	SD	D	A	SA
1. Poor performing teachers are absent more often				
2. Teacher's illness contributes to high teacher absenteeism.				
3. Low salary income contributes to teacher absenteeism.				
4. More experienced are teachers are absent often.				
5. Teacher with higher qualifications are more absent than their colleagues.				
6. Female teachers are absent more often than male colleagues.				
7. Old teachers are often absent more than single teachers.				
8. Married teachers tend to be absent more than single teachers.				
9. Family conflict can contribute to teacher absenteeism.				
10. Drunkenness tends to cause teacher absenteeism.				
11. Some teachers tend to be absent on Mondays.				
12. Some teachers tend to be absent on Fridays.				
13. Some teachers tend to be absent during month end .				

SECTION C

The following **SCHOOL FACTORS** describe various aspects that contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement by ticking the number that reflects your opinion. The response options range from 1 – 4 as follows: 1. (strong disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree) and 4 (strongly agree)

KEY:

(SD), 2 (D), 3. (A) and 4 (SA)

	1	2	3	4
SCHOOL FACTORS	SD	D	A	SA
1. Lack of effective supervision and management causes absenteeism.				
2. Too much workload encourages absenteeism				
3. Poor working conditions tend to cause absenteeism (i.e. personal conflicts).				
4. School with poor infrastructure and resources experience more teacher absenteeism.				
5. Poor control of attendance register tends to encourage teacher absenteeism.				
6. Teachers who are assigned with other administration duties tend to miss their classes.				
7. Regular absenteeism causes teachers not to complete the syllabus.				
8. Learners tend to fail the subject (s) of teachers who are always absent.				
9. School with good motivational programme has low teacher absenteeism.				

SECTION D

The following **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS** describe various aspects that contribute to uncontrolled teacher absenteeism. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement by ticking the number that reflects your opinion. The response options range from 1 – 4 as follows: 1. (strong disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree) and 4 (strongly agree)

KEY:

1. (SD), 2 (D), 3. (A) and 4 (SA)

	1	2	3	4
ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	S D	D	A	SA
1. The location of the school (i.e. distance and transport) contributes to teacher absenteeism.				
2. Level of poverty in the community tend to encourage teacher absenteeism.				
3. Limited amenities and poor conditions tend to encourage teacher absenteeism.				
4. The rate of absenteeism is higher during raining days.				
5. Teachers' strike causes teacher absenteeism.				
6. Teachers who are union officials are absent more often.				

SECTION E

The following factors describe **various effects of uncontrolled teacher absenteeism**. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement by ticking the number that reflects your opinion. The response options range from 1 – 4 as follows: 1. (strong disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree) and 4 (strongly agree)

KEY:

1. (SD), 2 (D), 3. (A) and 4 (SA)

	1	2	3	4
EFFECTS OF TEACHER ABSENTEEISM	SD	D	A	SA
1. When teachers are absent sometimes classes are double up or combined.				
2. Teacher absenteeism causes other teachers to carry extra load.				
3. Teachers' absenteeism causes low moral staff.				
4. School suffers financial loss by paying substitute teachers in other circumstances (i.e. when schools don't qualify for a substitute teacher).				
5. When teachers are absent learners are not taught or attended to.				
6. Teacher absenteeism causes lack of discipline in the classroom.				
7. Teacher absenteeism causes chaos and is very disruptive.				
8. Teacher absenteeism makes teachers not to complete syllabus on time.				
9. High rate of teacher absenteeism affects the learner performance.				
10. Teacher absenteeism frustrates other teachers who are always present.				
11. Teacher absenteeism can promote conflict or poor relations between teachers.				

SECTION F

The following factors describe **various measures that can curb uncontrolled teacher absenteeism**. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement by ticking the number that reflects your opinion. The response options range from 1 – 4 as follows: 1. (strong disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree) and 4 (strongly agree)

KEY:

1. (SD), 2 (D), 3. (A) and 4 (SA)

	1	2	3	4
MEASURES TO CURB TEACHER ABSENTEEISM	SD	D	A	SA
1. To reward those teachers with good attendance.				
2. The principal to apply supportive management style.				
3. The principal to apply 8 week rule firmly.				
4. Pay decent salary to teachers will help to reduce teacher absenteeism				
5. School Management Team (SMT) to discuss attendance records and quarterly attendance report				
6. Principal to sanction those teachers who are frequently absent.				
7. The current policy of incapacity leave and ill health retirement is effective in reducing				
8. Good infrastructure, resources and facilities can improve teacher absenteeism.				
9. The Circuit Managers must assist principals to deal with uncontrolled absenteeism monthly.				