

**EXPLORING SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS'
APPROACHES FOR MANAGING TEACHER
ABSENTEEISM IN RURAL SCHOOLS**

BY

Sithembile Rejoice Gabuza

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the Degree of
Master of Education in the School of Education in the
discipline, Educational Leadership, Management and Policy

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

December 2015

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

Supervisor: Dr PE Myende

DECLARATION

I, Sithembile Rejoice Gabuza, declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced
 - b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks, and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

Student Name

Date

Statement by Supervisor:

This dissertation is submitted with/ ~~without~~ my approval

Name of Supervisor

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my appreciation and gratitude to the following individuals:

- First and foremost I wish to thank God Almighty, indeed my Lord, you are Omnipotent. I would not have made it this far without your Grace.

- To my Supervisor Dr PE Myende, your tireless guidance and constructive critics in refining my skill has made me realise that nothing is impossible if instructions are clear. You were a manual for this research project.

- To my loving and caring mother, Zithobile (MaShezi) Gabuza, thank you for the support you have given since day one up until now. I know I am always part of your prayers. The fact that you believe in me keeps me going. You are my life, my pillar of strength. *Ngiyakuthanda Mama wami.*

- To my Cousins, Nqobile and Bongwe, I thank you for understanding why I had to keep the door closed and for accepting me when I open it. You have given me all the love and support I needed during the process of completing this work.

- To my colleagues at Asande Senior Secondary, especially Mr SJ Dlamini and Miss ST Ngcobo the support you have given is highly appreciated.

- To Pietermaritzburg EMLP group you have moulded me, especially Nelisiwe, Vusi and Nhlanhla. You gave me hope after a seemingly hopeless situation in 2014

DEDICATIONS

This work is dedicated to my parents, my late father Doda Moses Gabuza. I know you always wanted the best for me and I still believe you sacrificed your life for my future. You will always be in my heart. *Ngiyabonga, Phakathwayo!!*

To my mother Zithobile (MaShezi) Gabuza. Without your understanding support and most of all love, the completion of this work would not have been possible.

To my son Zolani, niece Thobeka and nephews Luyanda, Samkelo, Skhumbuzo, Wandile and Wanele, I have set a benchmark for you. Set another benchmark for the generation that will come after you.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to explore School Management Team (SMT) approaches for managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context of UMgungundlovu District. To fulfil the purpose of the study, key questions posed addressed the approaches used to manage teacher absenteeism, the challenges SMTs faced with managing teacher absenteeism and how they addressed these. Data generated from the key questions was used to answer the research question, pertaining to the approaches used for managing teacher absenteeism in a rural context. The interpretive paradigm and qualitative case study were embraced as a research approach, with data generated using semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Interviews were held with six SMT members (one acting principal, one Deputy Principal and four Heads of Department) from three high schools. Documents analysed were the time books, leave registers, teacher attendance policies, leave forms and substitute timetable. Findings of the study revealed that approaches used by SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism included formulating or following the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) teacher attendance policies; arranging leave in advance; reporting absence timeously; keeping a record of absence; encouraging punctuality; monitoring work; and motivating teachers. The challenges faced in managing teacher absenteeism were lack of passion for teaching; teachers' personalities; teacher sickness; pressure on other teachers; and commuting. In addressing them and managing teacher absenteeism the findings revealed the strategies adopted by the SMTs to be filling the gaps; greater managerial grip; catching up with the schedule; and involving stakeholders. Some of the conclusions I made are that keeping records of managing teacher absenteeism is the first step of managing this problem, and that SMTs are the ones who create more challenges in managing teacher absenteeism by not monitoring it properly and by loosening the managerial grip. I recommend further study of the approaches used by SMTs to manage teacher absenteeism on a large scale that will involve a number of schools and a number of SMT members to produce quantitative reports.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSACEFA	Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All
DoBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
EPRC	Economic Policy Research Centre
HOD	Head of Department
HRM	Human Resource Management
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
KZNDoe	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Basic Education
NDP	National Development Plan
PAM	Personnel administrative Measures
PSCBC	Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SACMEQ	Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
UNICEF	United Nations International Childrens Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASB	Wisconsin Association of School Boards

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE NUMBER
Declaration	ii
Supervisor's statement	iii
Acknowledgments	iv
Dedications	v
Abstract	vi
List of abbreviations	vii
Table of content	viii
CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the study	1
1.3 Rationale for the study	4
1.4 Statement of the problem	6
1.5 Purpose, objectives and research questions	6
1.6 Significance of the study	7
1.7 Clarification of key concepts	8
1.7.1 Teacher absenteeism	8
1.7.2 Rurality and rural schools	8
1.7.3 School management	9
1.7.4 School leadership	9
1.8 Mapping the chapters of the study	9
1.9 Chapter summary	10

CHAPTER 2	
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 Dealing with teacher absenteeism: The legal framework	11
2.3 Approaches of managing teacher absenteeism	14
2.3.1 Improving working conditions , school culture and climate	14
2.3.2 Improving supervision and monitoring	16
2.3.2.1 Using personnel	16
2.3.2.2 Using time book	17
2.3.2.3 Using electronic devices	17
2.3.2.4 Using mobile phones	18
2.3.3 Rewarding attendance	18
2.3.3.1 Monitoring with rewards	19
2.3.3.2 Offering bonuses	19
2.3.3.3 Improving remuneration	20
2.3.4 Providing non-monetary incentives	20
2.3.5 Enforcing policies	21
2.3.6 Holding manager accountable	21
2.3.7 Raising teachers accountability	22
2.3.8 Involving the community	22
2.4 Challenges faced in managing teacher absenteeism	23
2.4.1 Poor management and lack of accountability	23
2.4.2 Faulty and inaccurate administrative records	23
2.4.3 Ineffectiveness of substitute teachers	24
2.4.4 Increase the workload	24
2.4.5 Lateness and early departure	24
2.4.6 Distance to services	25

2.4.7 Offenders not sanctioned	25
2.4.8 Ineffective role of unions	26
2.4.9 Lack of administrative support	26
2.5 Addressing challenges in teacher absenteeism	26
2.5.1 Organising cover or substitute teachers	27
2.5.2 Sanctioning absentees	27
2.5.3 Acting with teachers	28
2.5.4 Empowering SMTs	28
2.5.6 Using biometric system	29
2.5.7 Applying leave without pay	30
2.5.8 Organising health programmes	30
2.5.9 Decentralising teachers	31
2.5.10 Reviewing the leave policy	31
2.6 Hoodø framework and managing teacher absenteeism	32
2.6.1 Hierarchist approach	32
2.6.2 Egalitarian approach	34
2.6.3 Individualist approach	36
2.7 Chapter summary	37
CHAPTER THREE	
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Introduction	38
3.2 Research paradigm	38
3.2.1 Ontology	39
3.2.2 Epistemology	39

3.2.3 Methodology	40
3.3 Research design	40
3.3.1 Multiple case study	41
3.4 Methodology	41
3.4.1 Delimitations of the study	41
3.4.2 Participants	42
3.4.3 Data generation instruments	42
3.4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews	42
3.4.3.2 Document analysis	43
3.4.4 Data generation procedures	43
3.4.5 Data analysis procedures	43
3.4.6 Ethical considerations	44
3.4.7 Trustworthiness	44
3.4.7.1 Credibility	45
3.4.7.2 Transferability	45
3.4.7.3 Dependability	45
3.4.7.4 Confirmability	46
3.5 Chapter summary	46
CHAPTER FOUR	
DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	
4.1 Introduction	47
4.2 Profiling the research sites and the participants	47
4.2.1 Profiling the research sites (schools)	47
4.2.1.1 Indlela high	48
4.2.1.2 Inqubo high	48
4.2.1.3 Iziko high	48

4.2.2 Profiling participants	49
4.3 Approaches for managing teacher absenteeism	49
4.3.1 Formulating or following DoBE teacher attendance policy	49
4.3.2 Arranging leave in advance	52
4.3.3 Reporting absence timeously	54
4.3.4 Keeping record of absence	55
4.3.5 Encouraging punctuality	57
4.3.6 Monitoring work and motivating teachers	59
4.4 Challenges in managing teacher absenteeism	61
4.4.1 Lack of passion for teaching	61
4.4.2 Teachers personalities	64
4.4.3 Teachers are sick	66
4.4.4 Increase of workload	68
4.4.5 Commuting	70
4.5 SMTs responses to the challenges	71
4.5.1 Filling the gaps	72
4.5.2 Greater management grip	74
4.5.3 Be in line with the teaching plan	76
4.5.4 Involving other stakeholders	78
4.6 Chapter summary	79
CHAPTER FIVE	
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1 Introduction	80
5.2 Study summary	80
5.3 Summary of the findings	81
5.3.1 What are the approaches that SMTs in the rural context use to manage teacher	

absenteeism?	81
5.3.2 What are the challenges SMTs in the rural context face in managing teacher absenteeism?	83
5.3.3 How do the SMTs in the rural context address the challenges they face in managing teacher absenteeism?	84
5.4 Conclusions	85
5.5 Recommendations	86
5.5.1 Recommendations directed to the Department of Basic Education	86
5.5.2 Recommendations directed to the schools and SMTs	86
5.5.3 Recommendations directed to the researchers	86
5.6 Chapter summary	87
References	88
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Letters to the school principals	100
Appendix B: Informed consent for participants	102
Appendix C: Interview schedule	104
Ethical clearance from University of KwaZulu-Natal	105
Ethical clearance letter from Department of Basic Education	106

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In several speeches the president of the Republic of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, has stated that teachers are the key role players in the improvement of education. He has further urged teachers, learners and parents to work with government to turn schools into centres of excellence. In an address delivered on 7 March 2013 in Gallagher Estate, Midrand, he stressed that teachers needed to be in school on time and teaching (Zuma, 2013), and that education was the top priority in the National Development Plan (NDP). Given that education is one of the major tools in addressing unfavourable social and economic conditions facing the country, teachers should be dedicated to their work (Myende, 2012; Myende & Chikoko, 2014). I argue in this study that teacher absenteeism, if not addressed, may pose a serious challenge to achieving the goals of the NDP, to provide quality education in particular.

Teachers have a critical role in making certain that the future citizens are properly raised by conveying to them essential skills, knowledge and values (Maphosa, Mutekwe, Machingambi, Wadesanga & Ndoferipi, 2012). Therefore, they are accountable for their attitude towards their duties (Ballard & Bates, 2008). Teachers should account to the learners that they teach (Maphosa et al., 2012) and to the government as their employer (Mampane, 2013). Given the argument of this study, that teacher absenteeism poses challenges to the achievement of quality education, it explores rural school management team (SMT) strategies for managing teacher absenteeism.

Rooted in the purpose and focus of the study, this chapter is an introduction to the study. It presents the background, rationale, the problem statement, the purpose and significance of the study. Concise definitions of the main concepts are discussed.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

South African school culture is characterised by lack of actions against misconduct of teachers (Mthombeni, 2010), which may send wrong messages to learners about the importance their teachers attach to education and they too start to absent themselves (Ivatts, 2010). The Minister of Basic Education (Motshekga, 2013) indicates that South Africa had the highest teacher absenteeism rate of all Southern African Development Community (SADC)

members, with about 10 percent of South African teachers absent for an average of 19 days annually. In contrast, Uganda's rate of teacher absenteeism was over five times higher than that of New York (McGuirk, 2013), and in Portland, teachers were absent on an average 15.6 days during the instructional school year (Tracy, 2012). Approximately nine percent of teachers were out of their classrooms whilst in Indonesia one in ten teachers was found to be absent from school (McKenzie, Nugroho, Ozolins, McMillan & Sumarto, 2014). It was found by McKenzie et al. (2014) that of teachers who were scheduled to teach, 14 percent were found in school but not in the classroom. On any given day, up to 40 percent of teachers in New Jersey public schools were absent from their classrooms (Vargas, 2012). The World Bank (2008) confirms that teachers in Tunisia missed 11.6 days, while in Morocco teachers missed 13.4 days. About 20 percent of the teaching workforce in government primary schools in Nigeria were absent on a given work day (World Bank, 2010). These figures indicate that teacher absenteeism is an international issue.

Spaull (2013) found teacher absence to be more prevalent in schools serving disadvantaged children. In South Africa, teachers were absent for 23 days in rural schools compared to 11 days in urban schools, whilst in Mongolia, according to the World Bank (2006), the absence rate was 16 percent in rural schools compared to five percent of urban schools. In rural India, primary schools had only one teacher and if he or she was absent the school would be forced to close (Rogers & Vegas, 2009). It was evident that rural areas in particular showed a high level of teacher absenteeism due to unattractive conditions (CSACEFA, 2013). These figures signal the importance of managing teacher absenteeism on a school level in the rural context.

Previous studies have found national averages of teacher absenteeism in developing countries such as Bangladesh, Ecuador, Peru, India and Uganda that range from three percent to 27 percent days per school year (Guerrero, Leon, Zapata, Sugimaru, Cueto, 2012). In Sierra Leone, teacher absenteeism varies from 10 to 40 percent per year as classrooms are occupied by unpaid and unqualified educators or even go without teachers (Arnott, 2013). Female teachers tend to be absent because of high family responsibilities (Okurut, 2012). Vaughan (2013) reported on the promotion of healthier schools by giving stress reduction programming for teachers.

In South Africa, the Department of Basic Education (DoBE, 2010) indicates that, on average, the absenteeism rate is about eight percent, which translates on average to 16 days per year. KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape have the highest provincial figures, as these are predominantly rural.

Teachers are the most important school-based source of learners' achievement. It is no surprise that Herrmann and Rockoff (2010) discovered that when a teacher is absent for eight days learner achievement is equivalent to that, meaning that teacher absence lowers learners' achievements. Joseph, Waymack and Zielaski (2014) suggest that investing in a system that keeps effective teachers in classroom should be a priority for school leaders and policymakers, so school climate should be created in a way that will encourage teachers to attend. In Uganda, teachers' earnings are based on qualifications and experience and some suggestions are that they should be paid for attendance or performance in order to reduce absenteeism (World Bank, 2008). On the other hand, Tanzania provided teachers with accommodation and teaching allowance to ensure that teachers are motivated to be in class on time teaching. In South Africa, the unavailability of teacher housing in close proximity to the rural schools contributes to poor teacher attendance (Arnott, 2013). For Palmer and Cooper (2010), some work-related stressors, such as lack of subject knowledge, changing curriculum, overload of paperwork and policy changes, are part of the factors contributing to teacher absenteeism in South African schools.

The World Bank (2008) studies conducted in the Latin American countries and Asia demonstrated higher rates of teacher absenteeism in rural areas than in urban areas. Arnott (2013) found a self-perpetuating cycle in rural areas of struggling to attract and retain teachers and hence a high rate of teacher absenteeism. For instance, it is difficult to find a suitable substitute for specialists in Mathematics and Science in secondary schools (Prinsloo & Reddy, 2012).

According to the DPSA (2008), all employees are entitled to take leave but teachers are abusing it. The general leave measures are set out in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 66 1995 (RSA, 1995), whilst Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) (Government Gazette Vol. 404 No.19767) indicates the measures for school-based teachers, Chapter B of which makes provision for the appointment of substitute teachers paid by the state in a case in which a teacher cannot perform his/her duties (RSA, 1999). Teachers must account for 1,800 working hours per year, 1,400 performing core duties and 400 spent on work outside the formal school day. Despite these clear guidelines presented in different government policies, teacher absenteeism continue to be a problem in South Africa. Mampane (2013) calls for a serious need for the policy directives and instruments that regulate teacher absenteeism to be amended. Circulars such as HRM No.35 KZNDoe (2008) and HRM No. 49 KZNDoe (2009) are based on the implementation of revised determination

on leave of absence of teachers in terms of the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 1 of 2007. This will also help schools to stay in line with the departmental policies. The most common instrument used in schools is the time book, which teachers sign in on arrival and sign out when leaving the school. There is a view that when teachers report directly to the principal whenever they are absent or sick and submit proof of medical treatment from a recognised practitioner, that will discourage teachers from faking sickness (Okurut, 2012). Management circular No.73 of the Glasgow City Council (2013) states clearly that absence is the responsibility of the management; the principal and his or her management team.

With the obtained literature, (Okurut, 2012; Mampane, 2013; Prinsloo & Reddy, 2012; Arnott, 2013; Palmar & Cooper, 2010; Joseph, Waymack & Zielasri, 2014; Guerrero et al., 2012; World Bank, 2008; Rogers & Vegas, 2009; Motshekga, 2013; Maphosa et al., 2012; Mthombeni, 2010), scholars covered a large scale, such as teacher absenteeism in developing countries, and some African countries such as South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. Most scholars focused on approaches that are beyond powers and authority of the SMTs, such as asking the school psychologist to introduce stress management programmes for staff members, as Vaughan (2013) suggested. Rogers and Vegas (2009) indicate that in the United States incentives are paid to reduce absence. On the other hand, in Bolivia rural teachers are compensated for the perceived hardship of living and working in rural schools. Job satisfaction by improving teacher salaries is another approach in reducing teacher absenteeism (Ejere, 2010).

New York provides year-end bonuses and remuneration for up to seven days unused sick leave (WASB, 2011). There are difficulties in studying teacher absenteeism as administrative records of teacher attendance are not accurate (Rogers & Vegas, 2009). The study explores the approaches that are used by the School Management Teams (SMTs) in managing teacher absenteeism in rural schools. The study further explores the challenges faced by the SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context. Different ways of addressing these challenges are further examined in this study.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Motshekga (2013) planned to replace the manual attendance register for teachers at schools with a biometric log-in system because she believes that it would allow the Department of

Basic Education to collect real data on what schools were affected by high rates of teacher absenteeism. This is a sign that South Africa's education is facing challenges in dealing with teacher absenteeism. This has triggered my interest in the study, based on experience as a teacher and parent.

My concern has been raised by the experience I have as a parent. I live with children who attend school in rural and urban areas and it is rare to hear those who attend urban schools complain about teachers who do not come to class, teachers being absent from school or even those who came to class and start to tell irrelevant stories during their lessons. In contrast, in rural schools, they talk about a certain teacher who did not come to school or who would ask them to keep quiet while he was busy with other things or would ask the class representative to write names of all those who were making noise while he was sitting in the staff room. The South African newspapers have published stories of parents handing petitions to the DoE in which they complained about teachers who did not come to school (*Daily Sun*, 22 August 2011). On the other hand, the DoE (2009) reported that schools could be reformed only if teachers were in class, on time, teaching.

Rogers and Vegas (2009) reaffirm in their study that teacher absenteeism is prevalent in schools serving disadvantaged children. I am working in quintile 2 school. Quintile is the poverty ranking of South African ordinary public schools from 1-5 where quintile 1 is the poorest quintile, while quintile 5 is the least poor. I have noticed that colleagues are not doing justice to the children. It takes the Head of Department (HoD) or the Deputy Principal to remind them of their duty to teach. They only leave the staffroom after they have been reminded that they are supposed to be in class. Sometimes, on passing their classrooms one sees them sitting at the back of the class marking or attending to their files. Teachers tend to forget that they are responsible for learning to take place (Maphosa et al., 2012) and so accountable for their actions (Narayan & Mooij, 2010). Teachers have been asked to report telephonically if they are not coming to school and fill in the leave forms on their return. I have noticed hardly two weeks elapse without 'A' (absent) appearing on the time book next to a teacher's name, sometimes accompanied by the manager's comment, such as 'reported' or 'on sick leave'. In the last week of every term the deputy principal runs after teachers asking for the leave forms, despite Resolution 1 of 2007 on leave of absence in the public service stating clearly that on the return from leave teachers themselves must submit leave forms, with supporting documents (DoE, 2008).

I believe that what is happening in rural schools will impact negatively on the country's development. The President has been quoted by the *Daily News* (19 February 2013) as promising that if teachers do not reverse the high rate of absenteeism and appear in class on time the government will be forced to bring back school inspectors. This indicates that the SMTs are not doing enough to reverse the problem of teacher absenteeism. Research has shown that teachers make choices about where they want to work UNICEF (2012) and in most cases rural schools are the last choice. The questions of *why* they do not come to school and *what* should be done to assist them had been answered by different scholars, such as Okurut (2012), Mampane (2013), Vaughan (2013), Arnott (2013) and Guerrero et al. (2012), but to date *who* should assist has not been clearly answered. Given the importance of teachers in creating an effective culture of teaching and learning I became interested in how teacher absenteeism can be managed in rural schools.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teacher absenteeism may appear to be a priority for both the President and Basic Education Minister Angie Motshega (Spaull, 2012; Mampane, 2013), but with teachers of central importance to the quality of education, their frequent absence not surprisingly reflected in low curriculum coverage. There still have lazy teachers who do not report to work punctually, leave early or miss classes. The *Sowetan* (11 February 2013) cited Minister Motshega's (2013) surprise visit of 451 schools in which she found around a thousand teachers absent.

I believe it is crucial to explore the approaches used by the SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context. If managed well it would not be difficult to provide children with education, but conversely, weak teacher management, monitoring and accountability systems will contribute to unequal education opportunities (Arnott, 2013). It is claimed that teacher absenteeism affects the country's economy, school effectiveness and learners (Hackett, 2009; Stoica & Wamsiedel, 2012). In the view of the above challenge faced by South Africa and other parts of the world, this study explores SMTs' approaches in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context at school level.

1.5 PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Taking into consideration the problem of teacher absenteeism discussed above, the purpose of the study was to explore SMTs' approaches for managing teacher absenteeism in rural

context. It further sought to explore challenges SMTs faced when trying to manage teacher absenteeism and how they addressed these.

Objectives of the study were:

- To explore approaches that the SMTs in the rural context use to manage teacher absenteeism.
- To determine the challenges faced by SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context.
- To examine different ways through which SMTs address challenges faced in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context.

Based on the purposes, this study attempt to find answers of the following three key questions:

- What are the approaches that the SMTs in the rural context use to manage teacher absenteeism?
- What are the challenges SMTs in the rural context face in managing teacher absenteeism?
- How do the SMTs in the rural context address the challenges they face in managing teacher absenteeism?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study's purpose required examination of possible ways of increasing teacher attendance so as to reduce absenteeism. It aims to add to knowledge on reducing and managing teacher absenteeism in an era when there is demand for quality education, especially within the rural context (Myende, 2015; Hlalele, 2012). In the process of managing teacher absenteeism, the study may further add ways of addressing challenges SMTs face, thus contributing to policy debates on possible measures for addressing teacher absenteeism within the rural context.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

This section of the study clarifies key concepts used in the research study.

1.7.1 Teacher absenteeism

Absenteeism is the term generally used to refer to unscheduled employee absences from the workplace (Mampane, 2013). For Rogers and Vegas (2009) it is a high level of choice and is less judgemental. Providing a reliable definition for absenteeism is a difficult task, with researchers in the field of management and education studies disputing whether the phenomenon even exists. Mampane (2013) reflects the common understanding of it as teachers who are physically not present at school, whilst Stoica and Wamsiedel (2012) make a distinction between physical absence and 'presenteeism' seen by Mthombeni (2010) as including teachers who are at school but who are not engaging in actual teaching. Teacher absenteeism can be authorised absenteeism or unauthorised (Arnott, 2013).

1.7.2 Rurality and rural school

There is no common definition of 'rural' with Hlalele (2012) asserting that it is difficult to understand the term because of its inexactness and an error in comparison between rural and urban. The Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005) defines 'rural' in terms of population, distance to towns, access to services and facilities. On the other hand, Kozol (1991) sees rural regions as isolated, poor, and traditionally administered. Rural contexts face challenges that negatively impact in the attainment of quality education (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005), associated with social ills such as low levels of education, low learner achievement and unfavourable policy environments (Chikoko & Khanare, 2012). They are unique in their own way as there is a strong bond that exists among rural community members which contributes to their welfare (Hlalele, 2012). According to Sherwood (2002), there is a need for a better definition of 'rural' as it may refer to poor, wealthy, large or small communities.

By extension, 'rurality' is also a complex and difficult term to define (Myende & Chikoko, 2014), for instance viewed by the government as a way of life (Hlalele, 2012). The KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act No. 5 of 2005 applies it to as any place that is under the leadership and governance of traditional leaders (KZN Legislature,

2005).Therefore, any school that is found in a place led and governed by traditional leadership is a rural school (Myende & Chikoko, 2014).

1.7.3 School management

School management involves co-ordination of human and material resources toward the accomplishment of the objectives (Maile, 2002), defined by Bhamani (2012) as the act or manner of managing, handling, directing or controlling. On the other hand, Edersheim and Drucker (2007) view management as 'doing things right' that is, maintaining school arrangements efficiently and effectively (Bush, 2008).

1.7.4 School leadership

Leadership occurs when one attempts to influence the behaviour of the individual or the group (Maile, 2002). The central element in leadership is a process of influence. Bush (2008) also defines school leadership as the process of influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends. So, leadership is also about 'doing the right thing' (Edersheim & Drucker, 2007), and in a school relates to leading, guiding and directing (Bhamani, 2012).

1.8 MAPPING THE CHAPTERS OF THE STUDY

The study consists of five chapters which are briefly outlined below.

Chapter One has introduced the study by discussing the background, rationale, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and key research questions. It has presented the significance of the study, clarification of key concepts as well as the structure and contents of chapters.

Chapter Two presents the literature review in which the content is guided by the research questions. Debates around managing teacher absenteeism will be discussed from international, continental as well as local perspectives. The theoretical framework (Hoods framework of public management styles) serves as the foundation of the study.

Chapter Three presents the research paradigm, design and methodology used in the study. It presents the methodological choices made by the researcher and further justifies why such choices are relevant for this study. These include data collection procedures and methods,

data analysis procedures, issues of trustworthiness, ethical issues and methodological limitations.

Chapter Four presents the findings of the study using themes that emerged from data analysis. It is strengthened through revisiting the literature and the theoretical framework as ways of making meaning of the data.

Chapter Five provides a summary of the study as well as findings and conclusions based on them. Recommendations and implications for further research are also provided.

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed the introduction and background of the study. The introduction of the argument advanced in the study and the background providing reasons from the literature justified the need for the study. The rationale has provided the experiences of the researcher that triggered interest in the study. The chapter continued with the statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the study, the research questions as well as the significance of the study. There was also a brief clarification of concepts.

The next chapter is a literature review and presents the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one furnished the background of the study, the purpose and the significance. This chapter reviews literature on the topic of teacher absenteeism with an overview of the legal framework and role of SMTs in managing it. Review on some reasons behind teacher absenteeism lays the foundation for the main debate, with focus mainly on approaches used in managing it and the challenges faced by SMTs internationally, locally and in rural schools. The chapter justifies the use of Hoodsø framework of public management styles as a theoretical framework.

2.2 DEALING WITH TEACHER ABSENTEEISM: THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Teacher absenteeism must be controlled in order to ensure that teachers provide effective and efficient service to the communities they serve. If teachers do not attend then learners do not learn (Stoica & Wamsiedel, 2012). In South Africa, Chapter J of the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 (RSA, 1998) lists the categories of leave to which educators are entitled, including normal sick leave, maternity leave, family responsibility leave and special leave. A teacher may not be considered to be on leave if she or he appears in court as a defendant or co-defendant or appears in court on a criminal charge. It is clear that attending the training programme required by the employer is not considered as leave in the Act (RSA, 1998).

The HRM No.35 KZNDoE (2008) and HRM No. 49 KZNDoE (2009) are based on the implementation of revised determination on leave of absence of teachers in terms of the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 1 of 2007. It provides SMTs with procedures and directives of regulating teacher absenteeism. The policy states clearly that teachers are entitled to a full 36 days sick leave in the three-year cycle. Approximately, in a year a teacher is entitled to at least 12 days because of sickness. The circulars KZNDoE (2008) and KZNDoE (2009) include other leaves such as: the family responsibility leave, where an educator shall be granted 3 days per annual leave cycle if the spouse or child is sick; the educator should also be granted 5 days if educator's immediate family member dies; special leave aimed at professional development and for religious

observances. There is also a provision of 3 days or less in a year for these religious observances. Circulars KZNDoE (2008) and KZNDoE (2009) specify that SMTs have the responsibility to maintain accurate sick leave records of their subordinates. Consistency in KZN schools can only be achieved by having common procedures of regulating teacher absenteeism.

The main objective of the legal framework in most countries is to have uniformity in the implementation of leave measures. Most policies or legal frameworks, such as Glasgow City Council (2013) and Dundee City Council (2013) (UK), Bridgeport District School (USA) (2012), and North Ayrshire Council (2014) of Scotland acknowledge the fact that teachers are unable to come to school every day because of sickness. This does not mean that sickness is the only reason for teacher absenteeism. Glasgow City Council (2013) aimed at responding effectively to actual and possible problems with service delivery and providing assistance to teachers with health problems at an early stage. Teachers might stay away from school because of workload, type of learner and poor working environment, therefore, SMTs have a clear duty placed on them to identify and address problems in the workplace that may contribute to teacher absenteeism. Dundee City Council (2013) also regard healthy teachers and schools as important for achieving higher levels of attendance, therefore, SMTs should ensure that all absence due to sickness is recorded on time and accurately.

In Scotland, policy is aimed at maximising teacher attendance (North Ayrshire Council, 2014). It has been noted that high levels of absenteeism due to sickness are costly and disruptive so if it can be addressed properly there is a possibility that teachers will benefit. Teachers could seek support and assistance from the Council and be clear of expected standards of attendance. All this could be achieved when SMTs manage and control teachers' attendance and absence. The policy states that the (SMT) must also account for sickness absence level of their teachers (North Ayrshire Council, 2014). SMT should explain the approaches put in action to support teachers with attendance problems.

Different policies use different approaches in managing teacher absenteeism, but there are also similarities on their approaches. According to the KZNDoE (2008) and KZNDoE (2009) circulars, teachers are expected to personally notify the principal if there is sudden illness. Teachers can only send the message by relative or any other person if the situation prevents the teacher from personally informing the principal. Dundee City Council (2013) is following a similar approach but is more specific on reporting time. On the first day of absence, the teacher should notify the line manager before school begins and provide a reason(s) for

absence and estimate the length of absence. Bridgeport District School, Ohio (2012) has a specific legal framework, reporting time is 30 minutes prior to school starting time. If a teacher fails to report by the deadline the teacher should email the district with reasons for absence. The SMT is responsible for monitoring and enforcing the policy. Another approach used to manage teacher absenteeism is the submission of leave forms. Teachers should apply for a sick leave in respect of clinical procedures in advance (KZNDoE, 2009). The teacher can therefore be absent for two days without tangible proof of absence as long as s/he claims to have been sick. Teachers could use this two days without a medical certificate to their advantage but if the teacher has been absent for more than two days a medical certificate must be submitted. In other countries, such as the UK, a medical certificate is only required after seven days of absence, with less than this requiring only self-certification and a filled in leave form (Glasgow City Council, 2013; Dundee City Council, 2013).

Teachers, on the other hand, have a responsibility to correct the attendance problems and prevent absenteeism. In South Africa, especially KwaZulu-Natal, teachers do not comply with the legal framework on leaves application procedures (KZNDoE, 2009). They do not report their absence in time, do not fill in leave forms or sometimes do not even produce proof of their absence. Sometimes there is a pattern that has been established in the use of sick leave (KZNDoE, 2009; Bridgeport District School, 2012). The pattern identified is of teachers who do not come to school on certain days of the week, such as Mondays or Fridays, or when a term begins or ends. That is seen as abusing the policy. Some submit false or incorrect information, thereby necessitating that action be taken.

The SMT should ensure that teachers are well informed of the procedures and it is advisable that SMTs should prevent disruption of the school programme by allowing a large number of teachers to take special leave on the same day (KZNDoE, 2009). This could be avoided by requesting all staff members to indicate at the beginning of the year the days they intend to take. Teachers should be aware that if they do not comply their period of leave could be covered by granting unpaid leave. According to Chapter J of the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998), KZNDoE (2008) and KZNDoE (2009), the teacher must not be absent from work for more than two occasions within an eight-week period. If it happens that teacher will be required to submit a medical certificate for every term of absence, even if only one day. In a case where teachers are abusing their leave, disciplinary action should be taken, firstly by counselling the teacher to discourage the bad behaviour, if counselling fails, an oral warning follows, and if the behaviour persists a written

warning should be issued (Bridgeport District School, 2012). In the UK, teachers who fail to comply have their leave allowance terminated (Dundee City Council, 2013).

All this information can only be available if accurate leave records are maintained in the form of a leave register of each educator, applications for sick leave monitored and prior approval obtained before educators are allowed to proceed on study leave. It is also the duty of the SMT to acknowledge good attendance. In Ohio, a teacher who is only absent for four days or less in 10 months is considered to have a good attendance record (Bridgeport District School, 2012). Several approaches can be used to address teacher absenteeism in schools, as discussed below.

2.3 APPROACHES TO MANAGING TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

Approaches school management teams can use to reduce and manage teacher absenteeism include: (i) improving working conditions, school climate and culture; (ii) improving supervision and monitoring; (iii) rewarding attendance; (iv) providing non-monitory incentives; (v) enforcing policies; (vi) holding managers accountable; (vii) raising teacher accountability and (viii) involving the community.

2.3.1 Improving working conditions, school culture and climate

One of the approaches in managing teacher absenteeism is to improve working conditions (Scott, Vaughn, Wolfe & Wyant, 2007; Saloojee, 2009; Chaudhury, Hammer, Kremer, Muralidharan & Rogers, 2006). Most teachers are stressed by teaching itself as it is a stressful occupation (Wisconsin Association of School Boards, 2011). Improving working conditions can be achieved by creating smaller classes, guaranteeing daily planning for teachers and improving administrative support (Scott et al., 2007). According to Mampane (2013), most teachers experience stresses on a daily basis, which than pushes them away from school.

The nature of working conditions at a school, such as its culture, physical conditions and responsibilities or expectations assigned to teachers can influence teacher absenteeism rate (Lee, Goodman, Dandapani & Kekahio, 2015). Stressors are workload, type of learners, lack of recognition and poor working environment (Mampane, 2013). In Kenya, Komani (2015) found that teachers with high workload tend to be absent, however, Van Tonder and Williams (2009) strongly believe that it is a burnout situation and work-related stress that causes

teachers to resign, creates high teacher absenteeism, low teacher moral and reduced job satisfaction. It is evident that school stressors play an important role in causing teacher absenteeism (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2012), therefore, the role of the SMT is to offer help and support to the concerned teachers so as to reduce stress (Obeng-Denter, Yebour, Sam & Monkah, 2011) and improving working conditions in such a way that they respond to stressors and burnout (Scott et al., 2007).

Most researchers, including Mampane (2013), Chaudhury et al. (2006), Hackett (2009) and Scott et al. (2007) regarded poor working conditions as a reason for teacher absenteeism. It is also clear that teachers will continue leaving the profession until the issue of improved conditions of service is addressed (Diko & Letseka, 2009). On the other hand, Rosenblatt, Shapira-Lishchinsky and Shirom (2010) state that improving teacher work conditions and paying individual attention to teachers who show absence tendency will improve the character and quality of school life. Lee et al. (2015) state that improved working conditions such as culture, physical conditions, structure of classrooms, responsibilities and expectations of teachers to improve attendance.

Establishing behavioural expectations in a school is very important and will encourage positive and respectful school climate and culture. In a study conducted in Uganda which aimed to identify the impact of new measure of ethnic divisions on teacher absenteeism, McGuirk (2013) found that ethnic diversity is related to increases teacher absenteeism, such that when interpersonal relationships are not good teacher attendance will also be poor. Therefore, the SMT must create a climate that is conducive to teachers, with no discrimination in any form, whether by distinctive culture, religion or language. Komani (2015) revealed that good climate also creates a sense of belonging and therefore increases willingness to come to school among teachers.

Rosenblatt et al. (2010), investigated teachers' perspectives of organisational normative behaviour and organisational ethical climate in Israel. Findings were that teachers used their absence to extend their weekends and holidays and reduce their workload. This was also evident in a study conducted in Virginia by Pitts (2010). School climate and culture are important in creating and maintaining a safe and supportive school. It has been noted that the professional culture of a school, including the relationship between teachers and administrators, has an impact on teacher absenteeism (Arnott, 2013). According to Mampane (2013), improving the school climate will automatically improve classroom attendance by teachers. On the other hand, Palmer and Cooper (2010) support the notion of improving

school culture with the idea that it includes good relationships. If teachers are not happy at work, not attending is the only option that will put them at ease. Therefore, the SMT should improve management, supervision and creation of collaborative and collegial work teams in order to reduce teacher absenteeism in rural schools (Tracy, 2012). Through improved management and supervision, positive school culture and climate characterised by teamwork and collaboration can be created, thus increasing social cohesion in the school. This will in turn increase teacher attendance.

2.3.2 Improving supervision and monitoring

Suryahadi and Sambodho (2013) argue that improving school supervision and monitoring by both government education agency and the SMT is vital in reducing teacher absenteeism. In other words, the DoBE should work hand-in-hand with the SMT in managing teacher absenteeism. A review on the policy paper in Uganda which assessed the efficiency of alternative forms of local monitoring in rural government schools (Cilliers et al., 2013) found that local monitoring improved teacher attendance by 11 percent points higher at relatively low cost. Arnott (2013) explored possible models that focus on accounting for the attendance of teachers in class using technologies and other management tools. The findings of this policy brief revealed that truancy often went unpunished by those in authority while the head teachers themselves were frequently absent. In a case of South Africa, managing teacher absenteeism was complicated by regulations that allowed teachers to be absent for a legitimate reason (Arnott, 2013). According to Arnott (2013), there were also promising initiatives involving mobile telephones, electronic devices and others beyond the physical register of teacher absenteeism.

2.3.2.1 Personnel

Local monitoring by head teachers is cheaper and has the potential added value of providing useful information to the government for planning purposes (Cilliers et al., 2013). Toyamah, Sulaksono, Rosfadhila, Devina, Arif, Hutagalung, Pakpahan and Yusrina (2009) state that the presence of the principal at school can help reduce teacher absenteeism, which is coupled with other factors such as regular inspection by the school supervisor and regular school committee meetings. This calls for principals or SMTs to lead by example, coming to school on most days. Suryahadi and Sambodho (2013) also state that schools that have good

leadership from their principals have been able to control teacher absenteeism and improve the quality of management in their schools.

According to Narayan and Mooij (2010), SMTs need to use a management approach that looks on teachers as not only part of the problem but also as part of the solution. Ejere (2010) concurs that a participatory approach to school management and administration will address the challenge by empowering teachers. Okurut (2012) reveals that SMTs should encourage teachers to propose their own solutions to the problem of teacher absenteeism.

2.3.2.2 Time book

A time book is an official document that teachers sign in the morning and when they leave (Mampane, 2013). The attendance register / time book is controlled by the principal and kept in the principal's office (Reddy et al., 2010). The recommended measures are the establishment of effective school management practices by school heads and administrators when teacher attendance logbooks are completed twice a day in the principal's office and weekly reports are sent to district administrators (Cilliers et al., 2013). In the case of a teacher being absent, the space in the register for that day had to be struck off by the principal (Reddy et al., 2010). This will make it easier to identify teachers who did not attend on certain days, therefore, the attendance register or time book should be well kept and maintained Okurut (2012).

2.3.2.3 Electronic devices

In Virginia, USA, Pitts (2010) examined the teacher absence data of a school division in order to determine teacher absence behaviour. Findings revealed that the total absence increased by almost four percent after the introduction of an electronic reporting system. Evidence from India also suggests that automated monitoring combined with bonus payment can reduce teacher absenteeism and improve education performance (Duflo et al., 2010). Narayan and Mooij (2010) reaffirm that regular monitoring by the SMT using cameras to monitor teachers and laying down code of ethics for teachers reduce absenteeism. So, the SMT is encouraged to develop policies on managing absenteeism that focus on ensuring that learner progress is maintained. Schools should apply their attendance management policies robustly, particularly in the management of long-term absence.

2.3.2.4 Mobile telephones

An alternative method is the introduction of ICT to report teacher absenteeism on a daily basis. Arnott (2013) argues that this can only be effective if SMTs, administrators and the school community are involved. Arnott (2014) further states that in Gambia mobile phones have been used to collect data on teacher attendance. The phone is used by the head teacher to send data on key attendance indicators to the computer server on a daily basis. This system has reduced the challenge of tracking and consolidating data and makes information available in real time (Arnott, 2014). It has shown a great improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of data collection, as teachers had not even bothered to sign the time book.

In Soshanguve (South Africa), a study was conducted by Khalabai(2012) to devise strategies and practices that could be used to reduce teacher absenteeism. The findings were that concerned teachers should telephonically communicate with the principal so that they could discuss the urgency of the leave request. The bargaining goal positioning paper mentioned that reporting absence directly to one's supervisor telephonically reduced absence (Wisconsin Association of School Boards, 2011).According to Finlayson (2009), monitoring of teacher absenteeism requires teachers to make personal contact with the principal or SMT when reporting absence through direct contact with the principal via mobile telephones, as teachers may discuss their reasons for being absent timeously.

2.3.3 Rewarding attendance

New policies to encourage good attendance and discourage excessive absence are needed, such as performance-based pay for teachers (Joseph et al., 2014). In Ghana, school authorities use regular attendance as one of the bases of promoting teachers (Gyansah et al., 2014). That is a good reward for good attendance, with the hope that teachers are not using attendance to get to the top. A challenge can be poor management and lack of accountability from SMT (Khalabai, 2012). Ejere (2010) argues that SMTs should recognise and reward attendance to send a clear message to staff members that attendance is important and noticed. This can be positively achieved if SMTs keep a detailed record of teacher absence and initiate follow-up activity when necessary (Estyn, 2013). Maphosa et al. (2012) stated that the issue of performance-related salary increase, bonuses and other incentives should seriously be considered in South African public schools.

2.3.3.1 Monitoring with rewards

Guerrero et al. (2012) reviewed a report on Peru and India, in which the effectiveness of intervention aimed at increasing teacher attendance in developing countries, was explored. Findings were that monitoring with rewards had a positive and statistically significant effect on teacher attendance. Cueto et al. (2008) indicate that monitoring teacher attendance by designated management staff (SMT) and monetary incentives improves teacher attendance. Duflo et al. (2010) found that monitoring teachers' absenteeism using cameras and monetary incentives on an individual basis lowered absenteeism. Different rewards, such as bonuses, improved remuneration, and non-monetary incentives can reduce teacher absenteeism. An international study by Joseph et al. (2014) called for SMTs to reward excellent attendance with additional leave or compensation, whereas Ejere (2010) suggests commendation letters or awards as another way of reducing teacher absenteeism

2.3.3.2 Offering bonuses

Offering monetary bonuses for better attendance reduces absence (Gyansah et al., 2014). A district in New York provided year-end bonuses and remuneration for up to seven unused sick days, an approach that produced positive results as teacher absenteeism decreased by two days per teacher (Wisconsin Association of School Boards, 2011). On the other hand, the Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (2013) suggests that more incentives need to be provided to encourage older teachers to take up rural posting. It called for SMTs to seek sponsorship from private companies so as to fund bonuses aimed at reducing teacher absenteeism in rural schools. Clotfelter et al. (2009) also state that teacher absenteeism was more prevalent in schools serving disadvantaged children.

Evidence from Zambia and South Africa suggests that by offering teachers incentives or rural allowance to work in more marginalised areas and with more disadvantaged populations, government could make the distribution of teachers more equitable (Kang & Hong, 2008; Rogers & Vegas, 2010). Furthermore, a Georgia district provided both monetary and non-monetary incentives to produce a 16 percent improvement in teacher attendance (Wisconsin Association of School Boards, 2011). In a larger-scale experiment in government schools conducted in Andhra Pradesh, India it was found that when teachers were paid bonuses as individuals or collectively based on their student learning rates, teacher attendance rates did not change but student learning did improve (Muralidharam & Sundaraman, 2008). Maybe, if

bonuses were also paid based on attendance rate, teacher absenteeism could have been reduced.

2.3.3.3 Improving remuneration

There is a view that if there is a wish to have better teachers, a career in teaching should be more desirable (Diko & Letseka, 2009). Khalabai (2012) also argues that teacher absenteeism can be reduced by improving remuneration, though SMTs have no power to improve remuneration since teachers are paid by the state. From an alternative perspective, Nesane (2008) recommends the use of performance-related incentives to motivate outstanding teaching. This can also refer to teachers with good attendance. It is the duty of the SMT to recognise good attendance as they closely monitor teacher attendance (Ejere, 2010).

2.3.4 Providing non-monetary incentives

Teachers are concerned about working conditions and if they show no interest in their job this can lead to them being de-motivated and absent themselves (Mampane, 2013). Providing SMTs with more support to improve the management of school schedules and teachers' role to make the most of their time can reduce absenteeism. Rogers and Vegas (2009) posit that non-monetary incentives such as support in the classrooms, increased training opportunities, improved infrastructure as well as availability of teaching material could reduce absenteeism by feeding into teachers' sense of professionalism and ability to produce desired results. SMTs can make decisions about the level of professional development, in-service training and school needs that pull teachers out of the classroom (Tracy, 2012). Though development is continuous, SMTs could scrutinize development in order to keep teachers in school.

Support can be provided to teachers but, according to Komani (2015), the challenge to the SMT is that in-service training is conducted during working hours. Okurut (2012) reveals that teachers do not prepare lessons because of difficulties and limited time. Some are untrained and do not even know how to prepare a lesson plan, and end up absenting themselves. Therefore, it is the duty of the SMT to show they care about their subordinates by boosting their moral (Obeng-Denter et al., 2011). On the other hand, Okurut (2012) calls for SMT members to get all key skills that would enable them to fulfil their mandates. Maphosa et al. (2012) argues that SMTs should conduct staff development meetings to keep abreast of new development in education. Teacher absenteeism can be reduced by increasing intrinsic and

non-pecuniary rewards for good attendance, for example, by turning the school into a pleasant learning environment that offers adequate support for teachers (Rogers & Vegas, 2009).

2.3.5 Enforcing policies

Rogers and Vegas (2009) state that policymakers should pay more attention to skills and efforts to measure teacher absence accurately so that there will be a clear indication of where the problem lies. It is the duty of the SMT to design policies to improve school quality. Okurut (2012) argued that SMTs should enforce teacher compliance with existing policies and guidelines.

An online survey by Scott et al. (2007) found strict requirements on sick leave were required, for teachers to submit a medical excuse for absence longer than a set time. This would require teachers to report to a human instead of an automated system as teachers will be less likely to call into a person if they were not actually sick. Teacher attendance improves when districts required teachers to report their absence directly to their SMTs (Wisconsin Association of School Boards, 2011).

Khalabai (2012) argues that not all leave taken by teachers is genuine and that even teachers who are furthering their studies take extra leave days. According to Ejere (2010), an extra rule and regulation of producing a medical certificate after one day of absence should be imposed, as Komani (2015) reveals that South African teachers abuse the regulation that allow teachers to be absent for two days without a medical certificate. Okurut (2012) further proposes that SMTs should encourage teachers to own the policy by proposing their own solutions to the problem of low teacher attendance. Through this, there will be an enforcement of policy regarding teacher absenteeism.

2.3.6 Holding managers accountable

Principals and SMTs should be held accountable as they communicate to the teachers their attendance expectations and results of their absence reduction programmes (Wisconsin Association of School Boards, 2011). It is the duty of the SMT to discuss attendance records and quarterly attendance reports with the staff and to motivate them to attend regularly (Khalabai, 2012). However, Joseph et al. (2014) reveal that restricting leave on specific dates

and requiring medical certificates for sick leave could be another intervention. Even if the policy allows for two days without a certificate, the school could modify the policy for its own benefit. Rosenblatt et al. (2010) argue that the higher the caring ethical climate the lower the absence frequency in particular for less senior teachers. Maphosa et al. (2012) add that SMTs should balance accountability and responsibility.

2.3.7 Raising teacher accountability

In South Africa, teacher absenteeism amounts to around 39,000 teachers on a single day. Mampane (2013) found that stress arises from changing curriculum, workload, ill-disciplined learners, lack of resources, unfriendly teaching environment, personal problems and lack of knowledge of subject content increase teacher absenteeism. According to Maphosa et al. (2012), these stressors are causes of teachers shirking accountability. Teachers hide behind the standards, examinations and resources when taken to task about their poor performance and lack of adequate care for teachers.

Sloan (2007) states that education is the single most important family investment, parents deserve quality education for their children. If education is seen as an investment it calls for SMTs as well as teachers to take good care of children as they grow while at school. The end of the year is taken as the maturity date for the investment as parents are expecting good results. If things did not go well with the investment, SMTs and teachers should account for it. Once measures are put in place to hold teachers accountable, their attitude towards their duties would improve and improved learner achievement be guaranteed (Ballard & Bates, 2008).

2.3.8 Involving the community

Other approaches are indirect interventions such as involving the community in student education and providing incentives schemes for teachers who have a positive effect on teacher absenteeism (Guerrero et al., 2012). Rural communities can help to strengthen ties with teachers posted to them by providing local non-monitory incentives such as land acquisition and provision of water (Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All, 2013). Rogers and Vegas (2009) found that introducing mechanisms for accountability through greater community involvement in school management would be a good action towards ensuring that teachers are accountable. This is supported by Okurut (2012) as he

argues that a participatory management style practised by SMTs encourages joint sharing and negotiating of beliefs and experience among all key players, including teachers.

Despite the several approaches considered in the literature, managing teacher absenteeism continues to be a challenge and difficult to reduce. In the next section I expose some of the challenges towards managing teacher absenteeism in schools.

2.4 CHALLENGES FACED IN MANAGING TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

Challenges towards managing teacher absenteeism include a number of issues, but in this study I discuss: (i) poor management and lack of accountability; (ii) faulty and inaccurate administrative records; (iii) ineffectiveness of substitute teachers; (iv) increase in workload; (v) lateness and early departure; (vi) distance to services; (vii) offenders not being sanctioned; (viii) ineffective role of unions and (ix) lack of administrative support.

2.4.1 Poor management and lack of accountability

According to Rogers and Vegas (2009), in a school in which accountability mechanisms are weak, record keeping is not likely to be a priority. Komani (2015) reveals that sometimes the principal and SMT do not attend school at all, so there is no monitoring and it becomes difficult to control teacher attendance. Principals who absent themselves from school lack the moral ground to supervise their colleagues and enforce compliance (Okurut, 2012). SMTs may prefer to make excuses for teachers rather than acknowledging unexcused absences that allow frequent absence (Rogers & Vegas, 2009). Khalabai (2012) affirms that poor management and lack of accountability is a challenge to reducing teacher absenteeism.

2.4.2 Faulty and inaccurate administrative records

Teacher attendance administrative records are faulty. SMT members who keep the administrative records know the days for spot check and even if there is inconsistency there would likely be no consequences (Rogers & Vegas, 2009). Teachers do not even bother signing time book on time because the minority of schools apply the policy justly and record all absence in detail while the majority of school records of absence are not fully completed or not completed at all. It is of utmost important that senior managers or line managers conduct return to work interviews in order to determine the reasons for the absence (Glasgow

City Council, 2013). The challenge is that return to work interviews are not always conducted (Estyn, 2013), which results in faulty and inaccurate administrative records as all sickness absence interviews should be recorded using appropriate documentation (Glasgow City Council, 2013).

2.4.3 Ineffectiveness of substitute teachers

In Wales, it has been noted that cover arrangements are not managed well, as most schools do not have formal policies on cover arrangements in the event of teacher absence (Thomas, 2013). Sometimes, the quality of work left for learners is not enough and puts a strain on SMTs to plan for work when the teacher is absent. Estyn (2013) argues that there is less progress in developing skills; knowledge and understanding when the regular class teacher is absent as substitute teachers are often ineffective and do not know about the needs of pupils. There is also a concern about the quality of some substitute teachers.

2.4.4 Increase in workload

Teacher absenteeism increases the workload for others (Wadenga, 2010; Ivatts, 2010 & Abelas, 2009), and encourages teachers to absent themselves (Khalabai, 2012). Estyn (2013) argues that long-term teacher absenteeism tends to be more of an issue than short-term absenteeism in rural Wales, especially, in medium and small primary schools because it makes it difficult to recruit supply teachers. SMT members spend more of their time covering classes as it is not easy to source external supply cover in a short time. Absenteeism costs SMTs management time as most time is spent dealing with support and processing of leave (Khalabai, 2012).

2.4.5 Lateness and early departure

McKenzie et al. (2014) examined teacher absenteeism from school as well as from class in primary and secondary schools of Indonesia. Unannounced visits found nine percent of classes were unattended for the duration of the class and a further five percent were temporally unattended because teachers were late to return to class. Scott et al. (2007) add that teachers did not respond to the school bell. Okurut (2012) reveals that lateness and early departure were common among teachers living outside the school community and made the

management task of reducing teacher absenteeism a serious challenge. Transport might be the reason teachers come late or leave early. In most rural areas transport is not reliable and teachers are forced to arrive late or to leave early, perpetuating the challenge of teacher absenteeism.

2.4.6 Distance to services

Teachers travel long distances to and from school because of lack of accommodation for teachers within the school communities (Gyansah et al., 2014). Most teachers admit that they sometimes miss school because of having to travel to where their family reside (Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All, 2013). Furthermore, Ejere (2010) and Wandega (2010) clearly state that any trip away from a rural area to visit a doctor, to collect pay, to engage in in-service training or to visit family may involve long trips and call for teachers to miss school days. This also results in teachers in rural schools having fewer working hours than teachers in urban schools (Okurut, 2012). In many cases when teachers from schools far away from cities have to attend workshops they have to be absent due to the schools' access to public transport. This is also one of the major challenges for SMTs in many rural schools towards reducing teacher absenteeism.

2.4.7 Offenders not sanctioned

In South Africa, teachers register with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) but the said authority does not play a thorough regulatory function (Mampane, 2013). The system still has lazy and truant teachers for years (Maphosa et al., 2012). The contradictory factor is that no matter how much principals manage teacher absenteeism, but if the professional licensing regulator is not doing anything about it their effort would be in vain. The SACE (2011) has been criticised for not delivering adequately on its mandate, including ensuring that teachers are accountable and professional, which makes them commit to their work as teachers.

2.4.8 Ineffective role of unions

Motshekga (*Sowetan*, 11 February 2013) stated that there is a high level of unionisation in the world but union focus is on rights rather than responsibilities. Mampane (2013) considers unions are silent on teacher absenteeism but are there to protect their members. The opposing view of the unions is that there is a need to balance between giving teachers the space to demonstrate passion and commitment to their learners and micro-managing their attendance (Arnott, 2013). The South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), which represents the majority of teachers, is against the use of biometric system despite teachers being in favour of it (Mampane, 2013). Therefore, unions and union representatives are responsible for helping teachers to be absent from school as they always protect them when charged with misconduct. This also makes the task of SMTs to reduce teacher absenteeism more daunting.

2.4.9 Lack of administrative support

In the case of Papua, the USAID (2009) found that about 70 percent of indigenous children live in remote rural communities with few or no teachers. Teaching conditions in rural and isolated areas are poor, with no housing, shortage of food supplies, poor sanitation and lack of access to clean water. A high rate of teacher absenteeism in rural schools results from little administrative support being provided for interior, coastal, remote and isolated areas (USAID, 2009). In Jakarta, Indonesia, the level of teacher absenteeism in urban tends to be lower than that in rural areas (Suryahadi & Sambodho, 2013). The uneven distribution of teachers in the country disadvantages the rural areas.

2.5 ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

SMTs have a clear obligation to identify and address problems in the school (Glasgow City Council, 2013), hence SMTs are expected to be visionaries, disciplinarians, communication experts and programme administrators. If teacher absenteeism has been identified as a problem and approaches put in place are not working because of challenges that SMTs come across when they try to solve the problem, it calls for SMTs to devise ways of addressing the challenges. Approaches and ways of addressing the challenges should be integrated in reducing teacher absenteeism. These include (i) organising cover or substitute teacher; (ii) sanctioning absentees; (iii) acting with teachers; (iv) staying in a close proximity; and (v)empowering SMTs.

2.5.1 Organising cover or substitute teacher

One of the normal approaches to addressing teacher absenteeism is organising cover or substitute teachers. In an era of teacher shortage, providing highly qualified substitute teachers can be a daunting task (Pitts, 2010). Absent teachers are typically replaced by less qualified substitute teachers (Miller, Murnane & Willett, 2008 and Pitts, 2010). Estyn (2013) states that SMTs should closely monitor the work of substitute teachers in such a way that, they canvas for the views of learners in order to evaluate the effectiveness of substitute teachers. Estyn (2013) encourages the importance of voluntary cover where there is an agreement between staff members in advance. It is also important that SMTs provide quality support for substitute teachers (Estyn, 2013), so schools should include substitute teachers who have either regular or long-term involvement with a school in their in-service training and performance management arrangement (Thomas, 2013).

2.5.2 Sanctioning absentees

According to Glasgow City Council (2013), discipline for an unacceptable level of attendance may take the form of a warning, withdrawal of self-certification, withdrawal of sickness allowance or dismissal. Stoica and Wamsiedel (2012) add that verbal warnings, written warnings or pay-cuts can be used if there is more efficient teacher inspection documentation. Principals have the power to recommend leave without pay in order to sanction teachers who are frequently absent (Khalabai, 2012).

On a publicly available information from the United States Department of Education's Civil Rights Data collection, the empirical work focus on the relationship between observed school characteristics and the measure of teacher absenteeism (Miller, 2012). The results were that schools in towns suffer rates of teacher absence three to five percent higher than schools in rural areas. This could be because of lack of SMT attention to teacher absence which then creates a culture that does not value good attendance (Tracy, 2012). According to Gyansah et al. (2014), the approach is to empower SMTs of basic schools to be able to sanction absentee teachers. Sanctions should depend on the offence and be consistent in its application. Cilliers et al. (2013) suggest that SMTs should punish absence by submitting truthful reports. On the other hand, Joseph, Waymack and Zielaski (2014) state that including teacher attendance as a measure in teacher evaluation could also reduce teacher absenteeism in rural schools.

2.5.3 Acting with teachers

Edge (2008) and Kaweesi (2012) argue that perceptions of the school administrators and inspectors about teachers being part of the problem rather than part of the solution are misleading. Narayan and Mooij (2010) also conclude that their failure to recognise teachers as active players in the school system has demoralised teachers. In addition, When a district comes specifically to address issues the approach employed often implies the need to act *on* teachers rather than act *with* them (EPRC, 2010). Nsubuga (2008) states that management approaches employed have an idea that teachers need to be disciplined by external forces. From this it can be seen that regular monitoring by designated supervisor or SMT is a solution (Narayan & Mooij, 2010). In addition, teachers are motivated by the ownership of the policy so it is important that they also participate in decision-making (Okurut 2012).

Ejere (2010) studied the relationship between absenteeism and job satisfaction in Nigeria, and found a relationship between absenteeism and job satisfaction. Teachers in Nigeria have deep-rooted dissatisfaction with their jobs as they are not motivated and there are no rewards for their service (Omokhodion, 2008). Rewarding attendance and empowering teachers to participate in decisions about their jobs are approaches that can be used by SMTs to reduce teacher absenteeism (Ejere, 2010). Narayan and Mooij (2010) suggest that SMTs empower teachers by giving them a role to play in the formulation and implementation of a strategy.

2.5.4 Staying in close proximity

Lateness and early departures are normal practices in rural schools (Okurut, 2012), where transport between the school and the teachers' homes may be scarce. Proximity of teachers' residence to their workplace, means of transport used, climate conditions and time management challenge the reduction of teacher absenteeism. SMT members should have a one-on-one talk with concerned teacher to discourage the behaviour of teacher absenteeism (Okurut, 2012). It is also the responsibility of the SMT to create and maintain a culture which does not tolerate excessive absenteeism by condemning the undesirable tendency (Ejere, 2010). Suryahadi and Sambodho (2013) reveal that teachers in remote areas are required to live in the region in which they work, which is effective in reducing absenteeism. Improving teacher welfare with a remote area allowances is one of the possible ways to address the problem.

2.5.5 Empowering SMTs

SMTs should play a crucial role in reducing teacher absenteeism but at the same time they need to be empowered to deal with the systems and procedures that relate to leave measures (Mampane, 2013). Holding principals accountable for teacher attendance is another approach that can bring change (Wisconsin association of School Boards, 2011). Principals cannot be expected to account if they are not even clear about what is expected from them, so setting out a code of ethics for teachers is suggested (Narayan & Mooij, 2010). Mampane (2013) and Khalabai (2012) found that motivating teachers to come regularly to school is another strategy. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that principals as well as SMT members possess effective leadership and management skills and control the signing of leave forms. The SMT should lead by example (Khalabai, 2012) and the principal must be present at school to influence other staff members (Toyamah, Sulakson, Rosfadhila, Devina, Arif, Hutagulung, Pakpahan & Yusrina, 2009).

2.5.6 Biometric system

The Minister of Basic Education (Motshekga, 2013) announced a plan to monitor all teachers through the biometric system, with technology that identifies a person based on physical or behavioural traits (*Cape Argus*, 6 March 2014). The system has been widely used in developing countries and showed an improvement in reducing teacher absenteeism (Gelb & Clark, 2013). Motshekga (2013) argues that the system is expected to eliminate lack of accountability among school heads and the SMT, and root out absenteeism as it is viewed as a proper monitoring tool. SADTU rejected the approach on the grounds that it took away the professionalism of teachers (Arnott, 2013). On the other hand, the Department of Basic Education is considering expanding an online attendance register used in Western Cape schools to other provinces (*Cape Argus*, 6 March 2014). The spokesman for the Western Cape Education Department, Attwel (2014) says the system records teachers as absent if they are not registered as present online by 10 am every day. The average number of days of sick leave taken by teachers has dropped from seven in 2007 to four in 2013 (*Cape Argus*, 6 March 2014).

2.5.7 Applying leave without pay

Wills (2014) investigated whether teacher strikes affects student achievement. Findings were that strikes negatively affect learning for students in the poorest three quarter of schools in South Africa. Students with low socio-economic status have their academic performance most affected by strike action. If teachers are not in class learners are not learning formally, as happened in 2010 when a teachers' strike led to the loss of an estimated 20 days per teacher (Arnott, 2013). The high rate of teacher absenteeism in South Africa has put South Africa on top of the ranking of SADC countries (SACMEQ III, 2010). Maphosa et al. (2012) suggest that teacher earnings should be based on real performance, whilst Khalabai (2012) also encourages the implementation of leave without pay. This implies that if teachers do not work they should not be paid. When they are on strike they increase the teacher absenteeism rate, which can be achieved if principals or SMTs take pro-active action in managing leave levels (Tracy, 2012). The leave without pay approach is one of the best ways to help reduce the challenge of teacher absenteeism.

2.5.8 Organising health programmes

Research found the most common excuse made by teachers for their absence to be claiming they are sick (Miller, 2008). In addition, Rogers and Vegas (2009) note that most teachers are absent because of extended illness and SMTs need to focus their effort on making sure that classes are quickly covered by other teachers only to find that substitute teachers are not available. For that reason, Obeng-Denter et al. (2011) uncover the importance of training SMTs so that they can manage teacher absenteeism problems efficiently, and one of the ways is to ensure that SMTs are aware of how to ensure staff health and wellness.

Teachers need to be provided with health support, for example with herbal health supplements and influenza vaccines as these options may reduce the risk of teachers becoming ill (Wisconsin Association of School Boards, 2011). In addition, healthy teachers are less likely to fall ill, therefore wellness programmes, medical screening, fitness assessment and health education can encourage good health and reduce teacher absenteeism. It is the duty of the SMT to keep a detailed record of teacher absence and initiate follow-up activity when necessary (Estyn, 2013).

2.5.9 Decentralising teachers

Okurut (2012) conducted a study in Uganda aimed at assessing and documenting the nature and magnitude of teacher absenteeism in selected Rural Education and Development projects schools. The study explored the causes and examined stakeholders' attitude towards teacher absenteeism. Findings reveal that teacher absenteeism in rural areas appeared to be conditioned more by the systematic problems of poverty, disease and food insecurity than by school characteristics. Hungry teachers, like hungry learners, cannot work, affirming Wandega (2010), therefore, Rogers and Vegas (2009) call for accuracy in reporting from the SMT.

There is a need to decentralise teachers to achieve balance in schools. Masuku (2010) defines decentralisation as the transfer of some form of authority from the centre to the local level. On the other hand, the World Bank (2006) reveals that rural urban disparity in teacher deployment could be addressed by using a decentralised market approach, such that teachers apply for posting in response to advertisements of specific schools and the school governing body (SGB) select teachers. Teachers would deploy themselves and are more likely to have better attendance records (World Bank, 2006). Komani (2015) recommends that teachers themselves and relevant government institutions address the effects of personal, school and environmental factors on teachers' absenteeism.

2.5.10 Reviewing the leave policy

Teachers in South Africa are entitled to take leave according to various categories. The PAM document GN 222 (1999) expressed certain types of leave that may be taken by teachers. Much teacher absence is considered as excusable and is permitted by the conditions of teacher employment (Mampane, 2013). Much has been done on the continent to deal with absenteeism, with an emphasis on the application of extant rules and regulations as part of a strategy to raise the absenteeism barrier, making it more difficult for teachers to obtain permission to stay away from school (Ejere, 2010). According to Clotfelter et al. (2009), when a teacher is not in the classroom the learning is reduced. Teachers need to be responsible for their absence by organising substitution as a form of teamwork or by filling in leave forms and submitting them in time (Mampane, 2013). In addition, principals and the SMT should ensure application of the eight-week rule and submission of a doctor's medical

certificate for each day an employee is absent. Leave policy should also be reviewed to see if it is not the reason for teacher absenteeism.

2.6 HOOD'S FRAMEWORK AND MANAGING TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

Teacher absenteeism has been identified as more prevalent in rural schools than urban schools (World Bank, 2006). In this part of the chapter the focus is on exploring teacher absenteeism in the light of Hood's framework of Public Management Styles as a theoretical framework for this study. The purpose is to help in understanding which approaches should be adopted by the SMTs to reduce teacher absenteeism. Hood (1998) provides four approaches towards public management, namely, the *hierarchist*, the *egalitarian*, the *individualist* and the *fatalist*. All these approaches are paramount in leading and managing an organisation but the discussion will exclude the fatalist approach, because it calls for the creation of a separate para-teacher trained group to deal with teacher absenteeism. SMTs in the rural context will not have funds to remunerate the para-teachers since almost all rural schools are non-fee paying in the poorest categories. As from 2007, schools in quintiles 1 to 2 were declared non-fee schools and this was extended to quintile 3 in 2010 (Gardiner, 2008; Dieltiens & Meny-Gibert, 2012).

In order for these approaches to be fruitful certain preconditions should be met. For the hierarchist approach, Hood (1998) states that accountability requires clear assignment of responsibility for action, clear rules and regulations, and efficiency. On the other hand, the egalitarian approach requires decentralisation of power to the village level, where committees need to be empowered in order to execute their duties. Finally, the Individualist approach calls for a shift to greater competition and stressing the results rather than procedures. All these approaches are explained in details below and their relevance to this study is explained.

2.6.1 Hierarchist approach

Public management in the hierarchist approach is attributed to formalised roles of authority in which duties are clearly stated (Narayan & Mooij, 2010). The approach originates when there is poor compliance with rules and procedures and can arise because of a weak system of authority to evoke accountability. It calls for SMTs to be active and visible in order to deal with teacher absenteeism (Hood, 1998), and control teacher absence by laying down clear rules and procedures to be followed by teachers. SMTs should enforce compliance with

existing policies and guidelines (Okurut, 2012). It would be easy to hold teachers accountable with clear procedures and clear punishment if they are not followed.

In most schools, teacher absenteeism is monitored with a time book; early departure and late arrival register and leave forms. With the time book, the procedure that needs to be followed by teachers is to sign in before work and sign out after work. Usually, teachers do not sign in or out and can even spend the whole week at work without even signing in. This challenge arises from poor compliance with rules and procedures; therefore it should be the duty of the SMT to regularly monitor the time book, availing themselves to remind teachers of its importance. It can be a challenge if SMT members are the ones who do not sign the time book because they would not have courage to enforce compliance to their colleagues. They should use their influence and authority to motivate teachers to come to school early and sign the time book.

To supplement the time book, schools should have an early departure and late arrival register, in which a teacher who arrives late or leaves early should write down the total teaching time lost, the reason for late arrival or early departure, and his/her signature. Rogers and Vegas (2009) reveal that the actual conservative definitions of absence are to be present at school but out of the classroom or to be in the classroom but not teaching. The hierarchist is a greater managerial grip, whereby every action should be accompanied by a reason. It can be a challenge if SMTs report to school later than the staff (Okurut, 2012). The approach also gives the SMTs a chance to weigh the reasons as either valid or invalid. They could also identify causes of lateness and early departure for teachers from this register. It would be easier than word of mouth to deal with teacher absence when reasons are jotted down, since SMTs would show concern at the wrong behaviour by laying down code of ethics for teachers.

Some teachers are quick to identify a weak system of authority and take advantage of the situation, particularly if there is no accountability. Rogers and Vegas (2009) disclosed that it could be difficult to be sure of the underlying tendency for absence if each teacher's attendance was not tracked frequently; therefore the SMT needs to be active and ensure that all procedures are followed regularly to raise accountability, including the signing and submission of leave forms. It is the duty of the SMT to retain control by applying pressure to those teachers who do not submit leave forms on their return from leave, until they comply with rules and procedures. It will mean that the SMT should not wait for the end of the month to collect leave forms as the time book also contains details of absenteeism.

It should also be clear that the school is a learning organisation, each with its own goals. SMTs should clearly define these, with teacher attendance one of the measures of performance. Efficiency is required if teachers want the organisation to achieve its goals. Being efficient will mean that teachers are encouraged to leave learners with work if they know they will not make it to school the following day. In an emergency, the school has a pre-designed timetable to cover teacher absence so that there will be no class left unattended during teaching and learning time. Therefore, accountability requires clear assignment of responsibility for action, not diffusion of power (Hood, 1998).

To summarise on the hierarchist approach, SMTs should enforce compliance of all teachers using all existing policies and guidelines. SMTs should regularly monitor the time book and be provided with written reasons for late arrival and early departure. Teacher accountability will be raised as SMTs retain control and clearly define the goals and targets of the school.

2.6.2 Egalitarian approach

Unlike the hierarchist approach, the egalitarian approach emphasises decentralisation of power (Narayan & Mooij, 2010). School managers do not have to do everything themselves as leadership often exists through a group of people working closely together, therefore the SMT is challenged to shift from management styles that are based on authority to a new approach of power sharing. All stakeholders have to play a key role in order to reduce teacher absenteeism. According to the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996, (RSA, 1996), SGBs whose members are democratically elected to perform mandated duties have a responsibility to create conducive learning and teaching environment and support the school. Decentralisation has given local communities a voice in governance of the school while the day-to-day management still rests with the principal and SMT. School governors and managers need to work hand-in-hand to ensure that schools have teachers. SGBs have been given power to influence teacher quality and improve learner performance, so with that power they should make sure they recruit and retain the best teachers in schools. As the Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (2013) has revealed, teachers prefer to work in urban rather than rural areas.

Mampane (2013) found that rural schools suffer a high rate of teacher absenteeism because of the stress that is experienced by teachers. Stress is linked to poor working environment, transport to work and type of learners. Working environment can include classrooms with

broken windows and teachers avoid coming to school when the weather is relatively cold as they feel they are not protected from it. SMT should bring causes of absenteeism to the attention of the SGB after scrutinising the causes of truancy for teachers. Improved management, supervision and creation of collaborative work teams can lead to a reduction in teacher absenteeism (Tracy, 2012). If community members could own the school, vandalism of rural schools could stop because the thinking is that SGBs are mandated by SASA to improve, maintain and protect schools. It is also their duty to create a safe environment. Community members may even voluntarily offer security for the school. Empowering community members also raises a sense of responsibility and a desire to do well, therefore the SMT should also put empowering community as a priority in order to reduce teacher absenteeism in schools.

Distance and travelling fares affects teachers' attendance (Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All, 2013). Villagers in rural areas should open their houses for teachers so that they will not travel long distances on a daily basis. When they do so they arrive late and leave early, and sometimes do not even bother coming to school. If they are not in class, learners are not learning, which will have a negative impact on their results as research has revealed. It is advisable that the SMT involve all stakeholders in management of teacher absenteeism and empower them with relevant skills to perform their tasks as school governors. SMTs should make it clear to the SGB, traditional leaders and other concerned community committees that they are monitoring teacher attendance. In cases of truancy and abuse of leave their duty is to complain to the higher authorities, not to discipline teachers (Narayan & Mooij, 2010).

It is time for SMTs to empower their subordinates in the school context. SMTs tend to forget that they themselves are teachers and when the topic of teacher absenteeism is raised they feel excluded. In most cases they also have a bad influence on teachers' behaviour. SMTs should lead by example and control their own absenteeism before that of others. Narayan and Mooij (2010) suggest that management approaches should be based on acting *with* teachers, not *on* them. When teachers are not involved in decision making they are de-motivated and absent themselves (Komani, 2015), and they become rebellious against the decisions taken without their voice. Teacher absenteeism in schools would be reduced if teachers felt responsible and their ideas were appreciated as part of the solution.

The Egalitarian approach calls for the SMT to empower other school stakeholders so that they can also play an active role in reducing teacher absenteeism. The SGB should work

closely with the SMT in recruiting the best teachers and retaining them in the rural context. SMTs should also empower community members in owning the school and influence villagers to open their houses for teachers so that teachers would not absent themselves because of distance to school. Villagers should strengthen the relationship with teachers posted in their areas by ensuring that they work together in developing the infrastructure in their own community. This calls for provision of all basic, needs such as shelter, water, electricity and sanitation. Lastly, SMTs should involve teachers when dealing with teacher absenteeism in the rural context.

2.6.3 Individualist approach

In public management, the individualist approach places greater emphasis on output control and competition (Hood, 1998). Competition can be raised by the results and these can also raise competition among teachers so it is vital that, in every way, teachers come to school on a daily bases and execute their duties. Teachers should be aware that they are not doing the work for themselves only but have colleagues, parents, learners and the whole profession to account to (Maphosa et al., 2012). Competition amongst schools and teachers in the rural context is another approach that could reduce teacher absenteeism.

It is the duty of members of the school community to set common objectives and ensure they are implemented. SMTs in rural schools should clearly define the vision and mission of the school as an organisation in order to reduce teacher absenteeism. In the process of implementing it, SMTs should ensure that all set objectives are achieved as planned. Teachers who do not come to school regularly do not finish the syllabi and examination results are poor (Gynsah et al., 2014). No one would want to be the weakest link in an environment in which everyone is striving for the best. The motto would be, 'if I win, my school also wins', therefore, teacher absenteeism would also decrease.

A new culture will be developed, that of competing, which would also raise the level of accountability. Teachers would be accountable to the SMTs who are on the spot in school for professional management on behalf of the government (Burrett, 2008). The climate of the school would also improve as everyone would be clear about the standards expected and that they are individualised to compete with other teachers. In the existence of warmth and support displayed by the SMT, the degree of conformity would increase. Mutual respect and

trust between school managers and teachers would result in regular school attendance by teachers in a rural context.

With the individualist approach, schools in the rural context could set standards for themselves and meet them by encouraging competition amongst educators. SMTs should manage all the processes while monitoring teacher absenteeism. Where there is a need, the best should be awarded with non-monitory prizes. Hood (1998) suggests that rivalry can be a key to lower cost and better standards in managing teacher absenteeism. If SMTs ensure that all set objectives are achieved as planned that would raise the level of accountability for teachers.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

It is clear from the literature reviewed that SMTs in rural areas have a variety of approaches they could use to reduce teacher absenteeism. Schools in the rural context are different in context and even the level of teacher absenteeism will be different. The onus lies with SMTs to choose an approach that will best suit their schools and that will work well if coordinated with appropriate management approach and good leadership skills. Hood (1998) public management styles have been described and the relationship between these and teacher absenteeism predicted. SMTs could use the above styles to control teacher absenteeism, and they would work well if integrated rather than being left in isolation.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two presented a review of related literature and the theoretical framework grounding this study. The ways in which research studies are conducted vary because researchers have different beliefs and ways of viewing and interacting with their surroundings. Researchers' actions and beliefs are guided by certain standards and rules; therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to outline the research design and methodology used in the study. This chapter discusses the research paradigm and major dimensions under which this study is framed. The case study as a design is also discussed, as are the data generation instruments and procedures. I explain how I consider the trustworthiness and ethical issues in my study.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Researchers have defined 'paradigm' differently. According to Taylor, Kermode and Roberts (2007), it is a broad view or perspective of something, whereas, Guba and Lincoln (2013) refer to it as a set of basic beliefs, which represent a worldview for its holder and the range of possible relations to that world and its parts. According to Weaver and Olson (2006), paradigms are patterns of beliefs and practices that regulate research within the discipline by providing lenses, frames and processes through which the investigation is accomplished. A researcher should position his or her study within a particular paradigm in order to advance it with the set of beliefs about the world (Morrison, 2012; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). A paradigm steers the whole process of research, therefore this study was positioned within the interpretive paradigm.

Interpretivism aims to bring into consciousness hidden social forces and structures (Scotland, 2012). Interpretive research attempts to understand the subjective world, human experience and what informs human behaviour within the scope of the chosen context (Cohen et al., 2011; Betram & Christiansen, 2014). For the nature of this study, an in-depth understanding was required from participants (SMTs) on approaches used in managing teacher absenteeism. Interpretive theorists have put forward that multiple knowledge can exist as reality, as it is individually constructed (Cohen et al., 2011). The researcher and the SMT members interacted to create knowledge on teacher absenteeism in the rural context.

The study is subjective as it involves the interpretation of a person's internal reality rather than pure external and independent evidence (Freimuth, 2009). This is unlike positivists, who believe that there is an objective reality that exists beyond the sphere of human mind (Freimuth, 2009). Positivists collect data using scientific methods which results in single reality (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). TerreBlanch and Durrheim (1999), and reveal that the research process has three major dimensions, namely; ontology, epistemology and methodology.

3.2.1 Ontology

Defined by Blaikie (1993) as the science or study of being, ontology deals with the nature of reality. According to Freimuth (2009), it is the study of what we know or rather what we think we know, therefore, the ontological position of interpretivism is relativism. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), relativism is the view that reality is subjective and differs from person to person, transpiring when consciousness engages with objects that are already full of meaning (Crotty, 1998). In addition, interpretivism perceives that social phenomena are created from perceptions and consequent actions on those social actors concerned with their existence (Bryman, 2003). As a result, the study answers the ontological question of different SMT members making sense of their experiences with reference to their involvement in managing teacher absenteeism.

3.2.2 Epistemology

Interpretive epistemology is one of subjectivism based on real-world phenomena. Epistemology refers to the nature of the relationship between the researcher and what it represents (Hirschheim, Klein & Lyytinen, 1995). Grix (2004) reveals that the world does not exist independently of our knowledge and meaning is not discovered but constructed through interaction between consciousness and the world (Scotland, 2012). In studying approaches applied by SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context, only participants have meaning of their own reality. Cohen et al. (2011) emphasizes that reality is individually constructed, while Scotland (2012) argues that the interpretive paradigm does not question ideologies, it accepts them.

3.2.3 Methodology

Methodology deals with how we find out what can be known (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001). I therefore used qualitative research methodology to answer the research questions and explore the approaches that are used by the SMTs to manage teacher absenteeism in the rural context. The selection of an appropriate research method and specific procedures are derived from research questions (Moody, 2002). Qualitative methodology shares its philosophical foundation with the interpretive paradigm which supports the view that there are many truths and multiple realities. The interpretive paradigm is associated more with methodological approaches that provide an opportunity for the voice, concerns and practices of research participants to be heard (Cole, 2006). The study adopted the methodological methods such as interviews and document analysis which are widely used in qualitative research (Coe, 2012). Later in this chapter, I discuss the techniques used to construct multiple realities in detail.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Given the interpretive position embraced in this study and the nature of research questions, the case study was considered the most suitable approach because of its advantage in revealing the unique perceptions and concerns of individual participants in a real-world situation. A case study has been defined differently by scholars, for example, Thomas (2011) stating that it is about the set of the circumstances, events, arguments or rationale, while Gillham (2000) defines it as an investigation to answer specific research questions on a range of different evidence from the case settings. On the other hand, Yin (2003) defines it as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real context. For Ritchie and Lewis (2003) the primary defining features of a case study are multiplicity of perspectives which are rooted in a specific context.

In this study, as mentioned above, I am more interested in the meaning of experiences of SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context; therefore I believe that the case study approach is the most appropriate research strategy as it provides systematic ways of generating data, analysing it and reporting the findings. Thus, understanding teacher absenteeism in greater depth as a case study also allows the use of multiple methods of data collection, such as interviews and document analysis. Case study design is more suitable for understanding teacher absenteeism. Yin (2003) reveals that this design is well suited in situations where it is difficult to separate the phenomenon's variables from its context. The

underlying philosophy of a case study is to *improve* rather than to *prove* (Stufflebeam, Madaus & Kellaghan, 2000). A case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied (Stake, 2005). Cases may be single or multiple, but I opted for multiple, for the following reasons.

3.3.1 Multiple case study

Stake (2005) supports the idea of investigating a phenomenon using multiple case studies if one is less interested in a single case. The intention of using multiple cases was to obtain a diverse range of data from various contexts. Schools have diverse management structures and styles with a different number of individuals, therefore participants were drawn from three different schools. The intention was not to generalise but to compare, contrast and find patterns from the data. This allowed the researcher to balance an in-depth understanding of each case under investigation with the width of understanding acquired through other cases in a form of sampling logic (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2013).

3.4 METHODOLOGY

Methodology has been defined as an approach to how reality, values and what counts as knowledge informs research (Myers, 2009). Qualitative methods in this study were used as interpretive, naturalistic approaches to teacher absenteeism in rural schools, to make sense of the phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

3.4.1 Delimitations of the study

This study was conducted in three schools in the rural context of Umgungundlovu District. All schools were high schools. The geographical area in which the schools were found was traditionally administered and distant from the city of Pietermaritzburg. The schools were not in close proximity and were selected for their size, which enabled the researcher to get participants who were able to advance the purpose of the research. The first school was under Impendle Circuit and had five SMT members and 18 post-level 1 teachers. The second school operated under Lions River Circuit with four SMT members and 15 post-level 1 teachers. The last school was under Elandskop Circuit and had six SMT members and 30 post-level 1 teachers.

3.4.2 Participants

Purposive sampling is a feature of qualitative researches in which researchers hand-picked the cases to be included in the sample, based on their judgement of the characteristics for which they are looking (Cohen et al., 2011). Purposive sampling requires the use of discretion so as to select participants who will be able to advance the purpose of the research (Basit, 2010; Rule & John, 2011). The participants in this study were two SMT members from each of the three high schools, namely, one acting principal, one deputy principal and four heads of departments (HODs). These were selected because of their experience, the aim being to access knowledgeable people in management. Ball (1990) reveals that knowledgeable people are those who have an in-depth knowledge about a particular issue by virtue of their professional role and experience. The aim of the study was not to represent a wider population so six SMT participants satisfied the needs of the study.

Qualitative studies examine the meaning, perceptions, experiences and understanding of those involved in the activity or event being studied (Adams & Smith, 2009). Participants in a qualitative research are valued and regarded as people who are informed about their context (Babbie, 2007), therefore SMTs were selected to participate because of their role in managing the school, including management of teacher absenteeism.

3.4.3 Data generation instruments

In exploring SMT approaches to managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context, data generating instruments used were semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The aim was to produce thick and descriptive data. The central issues reached by analysing documents were then linked to the findings obtained by interviewing SMTs to increase trustworthiness.

3.4.3.1 Semi-structured interview

An interview is an interchange of views between two people conversing about a theme of mutual interest (Kvale, 1996). The function of the interview is to be able to obtain data on what a person knows, likes or dislikes, or thinks about a certain phenomenon (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The advantage of using interview as a technique is that the interviewer can obtain detailed information which is rich from a relatively few participants (Cohen et al., 2011, Neuman, 2006, Thompson & Walker, 2002).

The interviews were conducted at the participants' convenience, regarding time and venue, after having setup an appointment. All participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview, as information can be gathered through an oral quiz using a set of pre-planned questions. Interviews were also recorded on a cell phone, using both closed and open questions. Questions were planned for guidance so that same aspects were covered with each participant. Participants were also given a chance to provide more relevant information.

3.4.3.2 Document analysis

According to Corbetta (2003), a document is any material that gives information about the investigated phenomenon and exists independently of the researcher's actions. A document is normally kept for specific reasons other than those of a researcher, but can be used by the researcher. As Creswell (2012) states, documents provide the researcher with a rich source of information. Analysing the above documents helped in studying the past.

3.4.4 Data generation procedures

A total of six interviews were conducted with two SMT members from each school. Semi-structured interviews enable the qualitative researcher to generate more descriptive data from fewer participants (Neuman, 2006 and Thompson & Walker, 2002). I therefore chose the semi-structured interviews because this would bring out data in line with my study objectives. All interviews were conducted face-to-face with each participant within the school. Each took less than half an hour. Short interviews are recommended because long interviews may decrease the quality of the responses (Patton, 2002).

I also analysed the available documents in each school to confirm the evidence obtained from interviews. Documents that I analysed included school teacher attendance policy; time book; substitute timetable; leave forms; and leave register. I developed themes to maintain focus of my study. Matters identified were linked to the findings from the interview.

3.4.5 Data analysis procedures

Data analysis involves the reduction and interpretation of data (Cohen et al., 2011). Creswell (2007) and Maree (2007) state that analysis means a close or systematic study or separation of a whole unit into parts for study. During data generation I took notes from the documents

analysed, and listened to interviews while probing participants with questions. I used a telephone to record the interviews and to avoid drawing preliminary conclusions. Gray (2004) identifies two approaches for analysing qualitative data that is content analysis and grounded theory. Content analysis was used to generate meaning that was conveyed by each document analysed. After data generation, I started transcribing, coding, and categorising the data into different sets and comparing themes. The grounded theory was used to organise data. Grounded theory is discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to the phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

3.4.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues are morally acceptable research topics and morally acceptable methods of researching a particular topic (Melville & Goddard, 1996). The need for ethical behaviour arose from researcher's concern for others and the researcher's efforts to strive for fairness (Neuman, 2006). As a result, ethics deal primarily with what is right or wrong and what is good or bad. I obtained ethical clearance from the University Ethics Committee to conduct the study and permission to conduct the study from KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education institutions. A letter of informed consent was issued to all participants. Informed consent is defined as the knowledge of participants that they have the right to exercise their choice, free from manipulation, to engage in a particular study (Farnham & Pilmott, 1995). Participants were also informed that their participation in the research study was absolutely voluntary and they had the freedom to withdraw at anytime should they wish to do so. Participants were also informed that pseudonyms would be used to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. Anonymity of research participants in social research must be respected (Creswell, 2009). I ensured participants that the memory card and transcripts would be kept for five years in a secure place and thereafter destroyed.

3.4.7 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the corresponding term used in qualitative research as a measure of the quality of the research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In establishing trustworthiness I adhered to four criteria suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1981) and Creswell (1998) as suitable for qualitative research, namely *credibility; transferability; dependability and confirmability*.

3.4.7.1 Credibility

Credibility deals with the question of how identical are the findings with reality (Shenton, 2004). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness. Each person who was approached was given an opportunity to refuse to participate in this study (Shenton, 2004). I wanted to ensure that the data collection sessions involved only those who were genuinely willing to offer data freely. The independent status of the researcher was emphasized to ensure that participants talked about their experiences without fear of losing credibility in the eyes of their principals. Triangulation, that is the use of different methods (Shenton, 2004) to verify individual data, was used, with interviews and document analysis provided supporting data. Transcripts were returned to participants for checking if words were representative of what they said.

3.4.7.2 Transferability

Many naturalistic inquirers believe that generalising is not possible as all scrutiny is defined by the specific contexts in which they occur (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993). Therefore, findings of this study are specific to the phenomenon under scrutiny and not applicable to other situations. Transferability refers to the extent to which the reader is able to generalize the findings of the study to her or his own context and address the core issue (Morrow, 2005). Basse (1981) proposes that if practitioners believe their situations to be similar to that described in the study they may relate the findings to their own position.

I provided sufficient contextual information about fieldwork to enable the reader to make such a transfer. The data provided will also allow the reader to have a proper understanding of the approaches used by SMTs to reduce teacher absenteeism in rural schools. The study also outlined the number of participants involved and ensured that participants were selected because of their experience as SMT members and data collection method so that the reader would consider this information before any attempt at transferability.

3.4.7.3 Dependability

If work presented were to be repeated in the same context with the same methods and with the same participants similar results would be obtained. Marshall and Rossman (1999) and Seale (1999) argue that the absolute replication of qualitative studies is difficult to achieve

since they reflect realities at the time they were collected and in a situation which is likely to change. Therefore, to address the dependability issue more directly, the process within the study is reported in detail to allow future researcher to repeat the work. The process is reported in detail to allow the reader to develop a thorough understanding of the methods and their successfulness.

3.4.7.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is based on the acknowledgement that research is not objective (Morrow, 2005), therefore, findings presented emerged from the data and not my own inclination. Miles and Huberman (1994) consider that a key criterion for confirmability is the extent to which the researcher admits his or her own predisposition. All interviews were recorded to present more reliable evidence and avoid any bias which might have arisen in trying to remember conversations. Other researchers are welcomed to audit the findings since all data collected will be safely kept by the University for five years.

3.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has detailed the research paradigm and research design undertaken throughout the research process. The study followed the qualitative approach as the approach is characterised the ability to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. The methodology has ensured that the research is sound, thus, questions helped to determine the techniques used in conducting this study. The process of making meaning of data generated has been discussed and the chapter has looked at ethical issues and trustworthiness.

The next chapter presents the findings obtained from the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the research design and methodology employed to explore approaches used by SMTs to manage teacher absenteeism in three high schools in the rural areas of UMgungundlovu District. This chapter provides a detailed presentation and discussion of the data generated through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The literature and the theoretical framework are also utilised in order to compare and contrast the unfolding themes from the data and the emerging issues from the literature. Verbatim quotations are used in the data presentation to provide evidence of what I present as the findings. The question is: what are the school management team's approaches for managing teacher absenteeism in schools in the rural context. Guided by the key research questions, the following main themes were developed and the findings are presented as sub-themes to the main themes below.

- Approaches for managing teacher absenteeism.
- Challenges in managing teacher absenteeism.
- School management team's responses to the challenges.

4.2 PROFILING THE RESEARCH SITES AND THE PARTICIPANTS

This section provides the profiles of the research sites (schools) and the profiles of the participants. The purpose is to link the results with the context in which the participants work necessary. This is also based on the paradigm (interpretive) that truth is context bound and researchers need to consider the context of the participants in understanding their lived experiences.

4.2.1 Profiling the research sites (schools)

The three high schools in which the data was generated were given the following pseudonyms: Indlela High, Inqubo High and Iziko High. Their brief profiles are provided below.

4.2.1.1 Indlela High

Indlela High is a school in the rural context with well-maintained buildings but insufficient classrooms. The school has maintained good Grade 12 results in the past years. It has 658 learners enrolled and 23 teachers. Indlela High is situated 86 km away from the city of Pietermaritzburg. It has a principal, deputy principal and three HODs as members of the SMT. Indlela High is in quintile 2 and has been declared a no-fee school by the DoBE because of poverty of the community. The school is in a place led and governed by a traditional leader.

4.2.1.2 Inqubo High

Inqubo High is a school in the rural context situated 59km out of the city of Pietermaritzburg. The school has a good infrastructure as it was previously governed by the Roman Catholic Church. It was a combined school which catered for Grade R to 12. Recently it has been split up into a primary school and a high school and operates under the auspices of DoBE. This school has 587 learners and 19 teachers. The school has one acting principal, and three HoDs as members of the SMT. The staff of Inqubo High consists of Black and White teachers. The three White teachers are from the nearby farms. There are also Black teachers who live in the school community. Inqubo has been producing good matric results regardless of its location. The poverty of the community has qualified the school to be categorised as quintile 2 school. It is under the leadership and governance of a traditional leader, and lies between farms and the village.

4.2.1.3 Iziko High

Iziko High is situated 45km from Pietermaritzburg, with an enrolment of 1,001 learners and 36 teachers. Out of 36 teachers there is one principal, two deputy principals and four HoDs. The school has a well-developed and well-maintained infrastructure as it has been recently renovated by the DoBE. For the past two years Iziko has produced Grade 12 results that are above the provincial percentage, which makes their results good. The poverty of the community around the school has resulted in it being categorised as quintile 2. The community in which the school is found is led and governed by a traditional leader.

4.2.2 Profiling participants

Research sites (schools)	Participants	Position	Teaching experience	SMT at current school
Indlela High	Andiswa	HOD	32 years	15 years
	Sandiswa	HOD	19 years	9 years
Inqubo High	Anele	Acting Principal	20 years	4 years as an HOD and 2years as Acting Principal
	Banele	HOD	11 years	7 years
Iziko High	Zonke	HOD	10 years	3 years
	Onke	Deputy Principal	23 years	4years

4.3 APPROACHES FOR MANAGING TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

In this section I present and discuss the approaches used by SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism as it emerged from the data. The study reveals that schools used common approaches in managing teacher absenteeism, including formulating or following the DoBE teacher attendance policies; arranging leave in advance; reporting absence timeously; keeping a record of absence; encouraging punctuality; monitoring of work and motivating teachers. Each of these approaches is discussed at length in the next section.

4.3.1 Formulating or following DoBE teacher attendance policies

In trying to understand the procedures used in managing teacher absenteeism, the study revealed two, either the schools adhere to Chapter J of the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 (RSA, 1998), that disclose the leave categories that teachers are entitled to and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education HRM No. 49 that equip the SMTs with procedures and directives of regulating teacher absenteeism, or schools design their own teacher attendance policy (KZNDoe 2009). Participants of Indlela High school acknowledged that they did not have their own teacher attendance policy in black and white. Although the school does not have a written policy it appears that teachers were clear of the reporting procedure. Understanding Chapter J of the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 (RSA, 1998), it is clear that the school does not have its own policy but follows the stipulations and guidelines as

provide by Chapter J of the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 (RSA, 1998). This document states that if a teacher is unable to report for duty she or he must immediately inform the immediate supervisor (RSA, 1998), in line with what a participant (Andiswa) from Indlela High school stated:

We don't have our own policy. It is not written in black and white but teachers know that when you are not coming to school, you have to send an SMS straight to the SMT, first to the principal or deputy principal then to your HoD.

On the other hand, there were differences in views between the participants of Iziko High and Inqubo High during interviews regarding the question about their schools having a teacher attendance policy. Statements about school attendance policy were different for both schools. From Iziko, the Deputy Principal (Onke) indicated that their school did not possess its own attendance policy but relied on the DoBE policy:

We strictly stick with the Department's policy, which is: If the teacher is absent he/she must first report to the head of the institution before ten o'clock and also he/she must be the earliest when they come back from the leave they must report to the head of the institution, fill in the leave forms.

Unlike the above claim, the HoD of the same school (Zonke) indicated that it had designed its own policy, guided by the DoBE policies.

We do have our own attendance policy. E.g. If the teacher is going to be absent and he knows that he won't be at the school, he need to leave something for the learners to do. It can either be a class work or homework which needs to be monitored.

At Inqubo High different statements surfaced when the question about teacher attendance policy was asked. The participant (Anele) was quick to say the school did not have its own attendance policy.

We absolutely depend on the one issued by the Department of Education. We do not have anything which is internally established).

On the other hand, another participant from the same school (Inqubo high) came with different view from the above claim by Anele, stating that Inqubo High had a policy internally established, with the procedures that teachers need to follow when reporting absence. Banele stated:

We do have our policy and we use a time book. We also have a procedure to report when you are absent. Every teacher is introduced in the beginning of the year. We give out policy and explain to them how to report absence.

Fortunately, the uncertainty was cleared through document analysis. I found that both schools, Iziko High and Inqubo High had an internally established teacher attendance policy. One cause of this unlike statements could be that policies were not shared with all teachers at the beginning of the year. This was confirmed by Onke from Iziko High and Anele from Inqubo High after a follow up made in order to gain clarity on why there were giving different statements:

I did not know about the policy because ever since I came to Iziko High nothing has been said about the school policy. I have to admit, I thought we were only guided by the one from the department (Onke).

Weee! I was not aware of the policy, which is why I told you that we depend on the departmental one. We have never been introduced to the policy. You can ask anyone from the school, they will tell you the same thing (Anele).

The policy of Inqubo High states that on the appointment of a new staff member he or she should be made aware of the policy and be provided with a copy. Furthermore, the other participant (Banele) confirmed what the policy stated:

Every teacher is introduced in the beginning of the year. We give out policy and explain to them how to report absence. We also explain to them the different types of leave.

SMT members might take for granted the tools that they have simply because they understand their origin. It was easy for the participants who denied the presence of school attendance policy to say: *We strictly stick with the department's policy (Onke).* The quote below appears on the Iziko High policy to clarify that as much as the school owns the policy it is in line with the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998:

NB: This policy is drafted in accordance with Employment of Educators Act No.76 of 1998 and Resolution No.7 of 2001 as amended by HRM No.97 of 2004(Iziko High Attendance policy).

I then realised that the denial from Onke was a result of these policies not having been amended. They were not addressing current problems of teacher absenteeism, and there are

more recent circulars that the school could have used to amend its policy, such as circulars KZNDoE (2008) and KZNDoE (2009), based on the implementation of revised determination to leave of absence of teachers in terms of the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 1 of 2007. This will also help schools to fall in line with Departmental policies. On the other hand, the policy that Banele from Inqubo claimed the school had is also outdated, as it still talks about primary classes while the school is no longer a combined school. Even the letterhead is the old one, as the school has been given a new name, leading Mampane (2013) to call for serious amendment of the policy, directives and instruments that regulate teacher absenteeism.

The theoretical framework (Hood's framework of public management) suggested that the remedy to deal with accountability is to have tighter procedures (Hood, 1998). Appearing in the findings is that each school has a tighter procedure to follow if one is absent from work. One way of tightening procedures is to create a policy that will be specific to the school, laying down a code of ethics specifically for the teachers of that specific school. It is the duty of the SMT to design policies to improve school quality. Data revealed that schools use policies to tighten procedures as the framework suggested. Moreover, the literature suggested that principals need to explain attendance expectations to the staff at the beginning of each school year then follow them up to monitor attendance (Finlayson, 2009). Whether it is the school policy or the departmental policy, teachers must comply with it. Okurut (2012) proposes that SMTs should encourage teachers to own the policy by proposing their own solutions to the problem of low teacher attendance.

4.3.2 Arranging leave in advance

In arranging for leave, the study shows that all schools recognise the importance of prior arrangements with the school before taking a leave. It is in bold in the policy of Iziko High that:

Although teachers are entitled to leave but it is important to understand that leave are applied for and this allows for the process of negotiation between the teacher and the supervisor for the sake of the smooth running and effective teaching in the school.

Teachers are sometimes aware that they will not attend school the following day, especially if they are taking other leave, such as for examination, study, family responsibility and adoption. Teachers should apply for leave so that the SMTs will make plans for the smooth

running of the school and so that they will be aware of distractions that might be faced by the school while one teacher is absent. Participants responded as follows on reporting absence in advance:

If the teacher is going to be absent and he knows that he won't be at the school, he must inform the HoD that the following day I will not be at school and this is what I have given my learners, may you please monitor them. That is what we usually do (Zonke).

If you know in advance that you will be absent you better report before you leave instead of reporting in the morning (Sandiswa).

In reporting absence for the teachers, prior arrangements are made the day before the teacher takes a leave the following day. In the event of the exam being written the educators produce some time tables that indicate the dates when they would not be available. So, what happens is that they will get a day off before the exam day (Anele).

It is advisable that the SMT should prevent disruption of the school programme by allowing a large number of teachers to take special leave on the same day (KZNDoE, 2009). Teachers, on the other hand, have a responsibility to correct the attendance problems and prevent absenteeism. Regardless of all leave that teachers are entitled to, and all problems in their everyday life, Andiswa believed:

We are aware that teachers have different problems but we usually tell the educators to always practice Batho Pele, "meaning they must put the learners first before themselves".

As much as teachers arrange leave in advance, they should also think about their learners. They should ask themselves these questions before arranging leave for absence: What really happens in class when they are absent? Do the learners benefit from that? Literature confirms that teacher absenteeism affects the school and learners (Stoica & Wamsiedel, 2012). The PAM document reaffirmed that teachers must account for 1,800 working hours per year, of which 1,400 are spent performing core duties and 400 on work outside the formal school day (RSA, 1999). Any shortfall has an effect on learners as they are not taught properly when teachers are absent.

4.3.3 Reporting absence timeously

In a case of emergency, schools use different methods of reporting absence. The data shows that Inqubo and Iziko High report absence by directly calling the principal. The only difference between the schools lies with time of reporting. At Inqubo High, teachers must report absence before 7h00 on the day of absence while at Iziko High the reporting time is before 10h00:

If the teacher is absent he must first report to the head of the institution before ten o'clock ...They report telephonically, direct to the principal (Onke).

In the case where there is emergency, it entirely depends on people conscious. Some will prefer using an SMS, maybe some will prefer telling some colleagues, some would prefer phoning the principal directly but there are not many. It is only of recent where it was actually dwelled on seriously, when educators stated to report to the principal directly. In the past they were reporting anyhow (Anele).

Sometimes you will see somebody reporting with an SMS, we have met and talked, you cannot report using an SMS. You need to call the principal and it has to be before seven am and that is happening now (Banele).

This has also raised eyebrows as to what was actually happening at Inqubo High. Teachers at this school were not following the school policy or the Departmental policy which stipulates that teachers should report to the principal in good time. It is clear that the acting principal of Inqubo High ended up not knowing the absentee for the particular day if teachers were reporting anyhow. To set out clear procedures would lead to fewer problems. According to the circulars KZNDoE (2008) and KZNDoE (2009), teachers are expected to personally notify the principal if there is sudden illness. Research has shown that the most effective way to manage teacher absenteeism is to implement a policy requiring teachers to speak directly to the principal when they are calling in sick (Keller, 2008). Literature confirms that the teacher should also provide reason(s) for absence and estimate the length of absence. In Ohio, the reporting time is 30 minutes prior to school starting time (Bridgeport District School, 2012).It is also evident that few teachers would prefer reporting directly to the principal. Zonke spoke about other ways of reporting absence:

Teachers start by reporting to the principal with the phone before 10:00 on that particular day when the teacher is not coming to school. They should phone before 10

o'clock. We are not allowed to report through the SMS or Whatsapp. That is not allowed.

Zonke emphasised that reporting through SMS or social media application, *Whatsapp*, was not allowed at Iziko High. At Indlela that was a normal procedure. Teachers send an SMS to the principal and the HoD to report absence. Both Sandiswa and Andiswa agreed that an SMS was the normal procedure for reporting absence at Indlela High:

Teachers have got to report to both principal and a HoD concerned by sending SMS. We usually remind teachers that they should report before seven-thirty in the morning since we have our updates at seven thirty (Sandiswa).

Teachers know that when you are not coming to school, you have to send SMS straight to the SMT, first to the principal/ deputy principal then your HoD (Andiswa).

The study revealed that teachers report absent in time directly to the principal so that arrangements will be made to ensure that learners are under supervision at all times. Reporting in time is another strategy of raising teacher accountability, since one of the origins of the Hood's public management styles is to trigger accountability. Therefore, having specific times of reporting absence is a strategy in managing teacher absenteeism whereby codes of ethics are laid down for teachers (Hood, 1998). On the other hand, literature reaffirms that teacher absenteeism decreases when teachers are required to report directly to the principal (Wisconsin association of School Boards, 2011).

4.3.4 Keeping a record of absence

The study revealed that teachers fill in the leave forms without being followed, since they are aware that when one has been absent the first thing one does on one's return is to submit the leave form. This is evident on the leave registers of Indlela High and Iziko High, where the registers indicate whether leave forms have been returned or not. The register indicated that all leave forms were submitted. The time book comments of absence correlate with the leave register. It was clear that teachers submitted leave forms after absence, confirmed by Sandiswa:

As you know that if you did not attend for whatever reason you are bound to fill in the leave forms. That is another document that serves as proof that so and so has been absent for such time).

Filling a leave form is not an option but compulsory if one has been absent. On the other hand, there was a concern that Inqubo High does not keep the leave register but only copies of leave forms that are submitted by teachers. Leave forms are kept in a box, but not even in order. According to the circular (KZNDōE, 2009), accurate leave records are maintained in the form of a leave register in respect of each educator. The number of leave forms found in the box does not match managers' comments of absence on the time book. This painted a picture that not all absentees submit leave forms. Teachers do not fill the leave forms or sometimes even produce proof of their absence. Most leave forms are submitted without evidence for leave, such as family responsibility leave, and the form must be accompanied by evidence. This is a sign that leave is not being monitored properly. Literature confirms that unmonitored use of leave in a school can affect the behaviour of the employees, leading to more leave (Finlayson, 2009). It is clear that leave forms are also taken for granted by most educators at Inqubo High.

In South Africa, the teacher can be absent for two days without tangible proof as long as she claims s/he has been sick. This is according to Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 (RSA, 1998), which goes along with the condition that one is not allowed to take other sick leave without proof unless it is after eight weeks. Even SMT members are aware of this rule, which Banele showed a clear understanding of:

We also explain to them the different types of leave. Teachers understand how many days are allowed for sick leave, how many days is family responsibility. So, they take it according to that information. E.g., for sick leave you have to report to the principal before seven o'clock when you feel that you are sick as sickness is unforeseen. If it is something that you have planned you must make sure that you apply for that leave before. Sick leave is two days without proof (medical certificate) and if it is the third day you have to bring the proof. Based on that again there is another eight-week rule where you cannot be absent without a proof until this eight weeks lapse. So, if you become sick you are forced to bring the doctors certificate even if you took one or two days. Family responsibility is five days and you have to bring in the proof, e.g. if there is death in the family you have to bring a proof for that or maybe your child is sick you must also bring proof.

What Banele is saying is not put into action at Inqubo High because the pile of the leave forms analysed was not supported by medical certificates. Teachers were taking one day normal leave, two days of normal leave without attaching proof, whereas the leave was

repeated within the eight-week cycle. Indlela High and Iziko High kept a record of absenteeism in the form of leave register, which shows the type of leave taken by an individual (reason for absence), the total days taken, leave forms issued, returned dates and whether the leave was approved or not. Evidence from the leave register of Indlela High reveals that the principal did not apply the eight-week rule, as one day sick leave taken by teachers is approved without medical certificate, even when it falls within the eight-week cycle. On the other hand, the leave register of Iziko High shows that the eight-week rule is applied. Managers' comments tell a story of submissiveness of the principal to the eight-week rule. There are comments such as *leave not recommended, submit medical certificate (within 8 week cycle) and days exhausted*.

The leave policy of Iziko High clearly states that

When the teacher is absent or for part of the day, the principal should manually record such time-offs until a full day (8 hours) is completed as sick leave and then a leave form will be issued. This applies to late coming and early departure.

The policy of Inqubo High does not say a word about recording time lost, only that if an educator leaves the school during teaching time and returns to resume duties he or she should be back within the planned time. Therefore, it is the duty of the SMT to discuss attendance records and quarterly attendance reports with the staff and to motivate staff to attend regularly (Khalabai, 2012).

4.3.5 Encouraging punctuality

The data shows that punctuality is encouraged for all educators by the use of time book. All the schools keep a time book, an official document that they sign in the morning and when they leave (Mampane, 2013). The first page of one of the time books analysed has rules, one of which was: "All members of staff must enter times of arrival in the time book promptly on arrival and sign next to the entry the same procedure applies with the time of departure." I noticed that most teachers signed in and out at the same time, which raised a question of whether they were all at the office of the Administration Clerk at the same time, as this is where all the time books of the researched schools were kept, and it is not moved except on the instruction of the principal. At Indlela High all teachers sign in at 7h30 and sign out at 15h00 while at Iziko High teachers sign in at 7h15 and sign out at 14h15. At Inqubo High they sign in at 7h40 and sign out at 14h40. This looked like just a fill-in exercise rather than

capturing teacher's record of the actual coming and going time. Andiswa said punctuality was always encouraged by condemning late-coming:

We have made it a point that every teacher should be here by seven thirty because that is when we have updates (morning briefings). If it happens that you come after seven thirty, you are told there and then that you are late and you must never again.

All the time books were up to date except for the one at Inqubo High. Teachers of Inqubo High did not sign the time book. On the day of the visit, only eight teachers made an entry on the time book out of 19 names on the list. Most teachers had signed in during visiting days at Iziko and Indlela High, except for one or two individuals who had left blank spaces. I wanted to get clarity on why they had not signed and there was no manager's comment next to their names. I got the response that the manager was going to comment after receiving calls or immediately after 10h00 (Iziko High). I noticed that all time books had manager's comments, such as *absent (reported)*, *absent (no report)*, *workshop*, *sick leave* and *resigned* or *transferred*.

There were also other rules on the time book first page, such as *“Forgetting to make entries in the time book is inexcusable and no member of staff may make entries on behalf of another member of staff.”* This reminded me of what Andiswa said during the interview, that the time book is a legal document so if one does not sign it one is considered absent even if present. Teachers are breaking rules by forgetting to sign the time book:

It is rare for teachers not to sign the time book. They are always reminded but we do not take the time book to the teachers. It is a principle that you always start in the office and sign the time book. We do not draw a red line to the names of those who did not sign but we remind them (Andiswa)

In a case of the time book of Inqubo High teachers did not sign it. Maybe that could be the reason Motshegka (2013) planned to replace the manual attendance register with the biometric log-in system. She believes that data collected from time book is not real. The time book of Inqubo High had many blank spaces, especially for certain teachers. These teachers were also the ones with more manager's comments. In a cycle of two weeks the teacher did not bother to sign in and out and on the next cycle would only sign three days. There were no comments made by the manager, who must have skills of managing teacher absenteeism without saying a word. The moment the manager comments next to the teacher's name the teacher will understand that the manager is monitoring absenteeism, therefore, the

empowering and re-skilling of principals and SMTs will ensure they are capable of managing teacher absenteeism (Mampane, 2013).

The Minister of Basic Education, Motshegka (2013) claims that South Africa still has lazy teachers who do not report to work in time, knock off early and skip classes. Sometimes SMT members are seen running around the school to see if all classes are occupied. In a case where there is a class that is not occupied, the HoD concerned has to go to the staff room to remind that particular teacher of his duties. Absenteeism is not only about not coming to school but also about being at school and not going to class, or going to class and doing nothing. Teachers must not be visible only to their learners but also must be available. This is managed by recording the event in the log book that a teacher was not in class during the time s/he was scheduled. Banele revealed that punctuality could be managed by logging in events:

You have to be strict sometimes. You have to log in the book sometimes. When you check if someone is in the classroom, as HoDs sometimes we run around the school to see if all classes are occupied. If some are not, we will run to the staffroom; so and so you supposed to be in class. I know it is not nice but sometimes we have to do it because we have to think about the future of an African child. That is our responsibility.

Therefore, it is of vital importance that the time book or the attendance register is well kept (Okurut, 2012), whether in the administration clerk's office or in the principal's office. As it is a tool with much information, as mentioned above, it is also vital in managing teacher absenteeism. Keeping and controlling the time book is the duty of the principal (Reddy et al., 2010). The information on the time book or attendance register is first-hand and gives a vivid picture of what is really happening in the school in terms of teacher attendance. The picture can only be vivid if the time book or attendance register is well kept and controlled. In a case of administrative records of teacher attendance not being accurate it could be difficult to study teacher absenteeism (Rogers & Vegas, 2009).

4.3.6 Monitoring work and motivating teachers

The data reveals that SMTs use monitoring of work to manage teacher absenteeism. They make sure that teachers teach when they are at school and they follow the annual teaching plans as they are. Monitoring of exam papers and monthly tests play a huge role in keeping teachers at school. The writing of papers set from the clusters encourages educators to cover

all the work on the annual teaching plan. The best way to cover all the work is to be at school. Andiswa and Sandiswa stated that monitoring of work impacted positively on teacher attendance at Indlela High:

The key issue here is, we have to finish the curriculum and we also write monthly tests. We always come and ask where you are in terms of the curriculum. If you haven't finished or covered the syllabus it is easy to see because we monitor the work. You cannot set one and the same thing in two consecutive months.

If a teacher has been absent he has to cover for the lost time (Saturdays, winter and spring classes). Teachers have to cover because the work schedule always put them in a corner. We do check the work schedule and it is easy since it has dates to trace progress. Teacher absenteeism is reduced by monthly tests, written work (learners work). We do check learners work. All in all we monitor them, so it is not easy to play hide and seek (Andiswa).

The other thing is that we do monthly tests (two tests per term) besides the ones that are required by the assessment policy. E.g. Let me talk about May test. It covers the work that has been done from April up to May. When we moderate a question paper, it should cover all that work. Again, June test question paper should cover everything for that term. Educators are forced to cover work in time and that motivates them to be always at school. Fortunately, we have clusters, so the use of cluster papers pushes the teachers to cover all work since they do not know what is set on that paper (Sandiswa).

Besides monitoring of work, teachers are also motivated by the SMT, being told about the importance of coming to school every day and the repercussions of not doing so. Sloan (2007) observes that education is the single most important family investment and parents deserve quality education for their children. If education is seen as an investment it calls for the SMT as well as teachers to take good care of children by making a point that they grow while they are at school. Therefore, teachers must come to school every day and teach. Zonke said teachers are motivated to come to school regularly by showing the negative side of their absence:

Usually the principal together with the SMT, we continually remind teachers during our updates or meetings about the effects of not coming to school, repercussions of not coming to school.

It is the duty of the SMT to show they care about their subordinates by boosting their moral (Obeng-Denter et al., 2011). Sometimes teachers are motivated by the results produced by other teachers. It is embarrassing to be the missing link in the success of learners so departmental meetings conducted within the school in order to review results quarterly are also helping. These meetings call for teachers who are not performing well to sit down and reflect on their practice. Teachers are now going to start competing against each other, as Hood (1998) states that introduction of competition could be a remedy to the problem of teacher absenteeism. Furthermore, Hood (1998) claims that incentives for good results help in managing teacher absenteeism as teachers strive for better results. Nesane (2008) also recommends the use of performance related incentives to motivate outstanding teaching. This was found happening in one of the schools. Banele from Inqubo High school stated:

Through incentivising those that are doing well, it encourages people to get along and pull up the socks. We do have incentives such as certificates from our SGB. They are encouraging us to excel in our subjects and that also motivates to come to school and ensure that learners are taught properly.

Schools should set standards for themselves and meet them by encouraging competition amongst educators. A new culture will be developed, one of competing. This will also raise the level of accountability. Teachers would be accountable to the SMT who are on the spot in school for professional management on behalf of the government (Burrett, 2008).

4.4 CHALLENGES IN MANAGING TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

As much as SMTs are doing their best to manage teacher absenteeism, challenges surface. In this section the study unveils the challenges faced by SMTs when they are managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context. The SMT's task is tested by teachers who lack a passion for teaching, different personalities amongst teachers, teachers who are sick, the increase of workload for teachers and teachers who travel on daily bases from home to the school. These challenges are discussed under the following sub-themes.

4.4.1 Lack of passion for teaching

The essence of a profession lies in the attitude individuals hold towards their work (Ingersoll & Perda, 2008). Teaching is a vocation and if one takes it as a career it must be because one likes it, not because one is running away from poverty. The data has revealed that many

teachers do not have a passion for teaching, and so may absent themselves or be at school with no commitment to teaching. This was confirmed by Anele from Inqubo High:

People who are actually employed by the department, they don't see teaching as the profession of much value.

A teacher will think about learners, aim for good results, and strive to fly the flag of his or her school high. A teacher will protect his/her integrity and that of the school. Banele refers to teachers who lack passion for teaching as new teachers or young teachers.

Most of these new teachers are not professional teachers. Most of them have done different degrees and they are attaining their profession through correspondence. So they did not feel the drive. They are teachers because they had nowhere to go. They want money, they are doing this thing because qualification is a requirement not that they have passion.

The SACE (2011) has been criticised for not delivering adequately on its mandate for ensuring that teachers are accountable and professional, which makes them commit to their work as teachers. It is even easy for the so-called new teachers or young teachers to forget their duties but be quick to claim they have rights. Anele emphasised that whenever there is a right responsibility follows. If teachers know their rights they should not forget their responsibility to teach as rights are respected when responsibilities are looked after. The literature confirms that teachers tend to forget that they are accountable for learning to take place (Maphosa et al., 2012), but some spend more time in the staffroom, especially if they are supposed to be in class. Data states that sometimes one finds HoDs running around the school trying to locate teachers who are supposed to be in class but are not. It is not easy for SMT members. Banele confirmed that teachers who lack passion for teaching are better with words than doing what they are supposed to do, which is teaching learners:

Lots of the challenges some will back chat at you when you are requesting to them. They tell you to get off because you are also employed and you are not my employer.

In the case of Inqubo High, the same teacher who does not go to class also lacks skills. Literature confirms that teachers have a critical role in making sure that future citizens are properly raised by conveying to them essential skills, knowledge and values (Maphosa et al., 2012). This could not be done if the teacher lacks skills to deliver knowledge to the learners as he or she will also lack the motive to go to class. Data shows that teachers who lack skills run away from learners because learners challenge them. When teachers are running away

with their problems they disadvantage learners too, as the curriculum will not be covered properly. On the other hand, Onke affirms that a lesson not properly taught today will impact negatively tomorrow or in the near future:

Children loose teaching/ contact time with the educator and that has got a long term effect. You find that some sections of the syllabus are not correctly covered. They may be covered throughout the year but not given the attention they should have been given. That will impact on a later stage.

Literature has also confirmed that if teachers are not in class teaching, syllabus coverage will not be correctly covered. Teachers who do not come to school regularly do not finish the syllabi and examination results are poor (Gynsah et al., 2014). In trying to develop educators' skills, the DoE organises workshops for teachers to develop teachers' skills. Ingersoll and Perda (2008) regard the essence of the profession as advanced training; hence, the best way to professionalise teaching is to upgrade teachers' knowledge and skills through professional development. On an opposite note, workshops take teachers away from school. During document analysis at Indlela High I noticed that the time book had more 'workshop' as the manager's comment than 'absent'. This means that most teachers were away from school because of workshops. Andiswa reaffirmed that:

Most of the time teachers are absent because of workshops. Sometimes teachers report to us saying that they have received an SMS from their subject advisors to attend workshops.

Sometimes teachers have attended cluster moderations, where teachers who teach the same subject from different schools come together after every term to moderate tasks for one another and verify learners' marks. Sometimes they even discuss challenges in that particular subject and give one another some tips. According to Chapter J of the Employment of Educators Act No.76 of the Republic of South Africa (1998), a teacher cannot be considered as on leave if she or he attends or participates in training programme required by the employer. This means that teachers who attend cluster moderations will also not be considered as absent. On the other hand, literature has confirmed that teacher absenteeism is understood as teacher who is not physically present at school (Mampane,2013). The point here is that an absent teacher will not perform core duties of teaching in class.

4.4.2 Teachers' personalities

People are different with different beliefs and opinions. At a school level those differences need to be put aside so that the goal of the organisation can be achieved. It is the duty of everyone is to influence the behaviour of others for the benefit of the school. Personality differences are noticed in the way teachers behave. Some do not care how learners, parents and other teachers perceive their behaviour. Some do not care about their own dignity or that one of the school. Teachers behave in a way that they even develop patterns of absenteeism. Literature states that the South African newspapers have published parents handing petitions to the DoBE in which they complain about teachers who do not come to school (*Daily Sun*, 22 August 2011). This is what participants have to say about teachers personalities:

It also impact on the school moral, when other educators make every effort to be always there every day, sometimes sick but some people take it for granted. They just get a cough and they request sick leave. The moral of the school is affected and even team spirit will be broken (Onke).

Some of the teachers are coming from the community, so learners know everything about the teachers' lives. That poses a problem to the dignity of that teacher; teacher will not be respected by learners (Banele).

I can pick one or two incidences here at school of teacher with a pattern of absence. Educators won't come to work e.g. those who drink possible on Monday do not come to school because of hangover, or a friend does not come on Wednesday and the other friend does not come on Friday. They don't take it seriously (Anele).

Obviously, educators are different, sometimes there is quite a huge change on when does the pattern start again. Some you talk to them now and you notice that the pattern is recurring (Onke).

It is not only teachers who drink alcohol who develop patterns. Some teachers have a pattern of two days before holidays and after holidays. Others have a pattern of getting sick on every sixteenth day of the month. It is also evident in a study conducted in Israel that teachers use their absence to extend their weekends and holidays (Rosenblatt, 2010), therefore, it calls for the SMTs to use the management approach that look at teachers not only as part of the problem but also as part of the solution (Narayan & Mooij, 2010). Teachers can come with a solution to patterns of absenteeism developed by teachers, if only the SMT can decentralise power, as Hood (1998) states. On the other hand, it is not going to be easy to identify those

patterns if records are not well kept. Khalabai (2012) affirms that poor management and lack of accountability is a challenge towards managing teacher absenteeism. Anele reveals that background of teachers is a challenge for SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism.

There are sometimes challenges of personal differences because these people come from different background. You see here in our school we have got people with different background. We are dealing with two constructive cultures, traditionally. So, the way the whites will conduct themselves is so different from the way blacks would conduct themselves. Fortunately, I am black as well but you can easily see the distinction between the two. Some are committed, really committed. They do their things according to the schedule, unwaveringly. Unlike most of them who take it for granted. There is still this element of skin difference; it doesn't end).

What Anele meant above is that Black teachers and White teachers still fail to work together. Black teachers absent themselves more than White teachers, as evident even during document analysis at Inqubo High. The rate of absenteeism is higher for Blacks than Whites, especially Black males. McGuirk (2013) found that ethnic diversity increases teacher absenteeism at high levels, either decreasing teacher absenteeism or having no effect at all.

The challenge is mostly with Black teachers who do not want to do things according to the book. It is the duty of the SMT to ensure that everything is done correctly in a school. Management is maintaining efficiently and effectively school arrangements (Bush, 2008). If they do not want to follow procedures they end up absenting themselves. If personality differences are not managed properly in a school it can escalate quickly from productive to destructive (Kozin, 2015). Anele added that if one calls teachers to order they become bitter. They do not take it as constructive criticism but think of it as destructive to their image so it is vital that teachers come to school on a daily basis and execute their duties. Teachers should be aware that they are not doing the work for themselves only but have colleagues, parents, learners and the whole profession to account to (Maphosa et al., 2012). It is the duty of the SMT to instil an ethos of public service and a sense of professionalism among teachers. Personality differences can help the school gain a competitive advantage by considering multiple ideas and perspectives as well as different approaches to problem solving.

4.4.3 Teacher sickness

According to data from the study, out of all leave taken by teachers, sick leave is the most popular. The circulars KZNDoE (2008) and KZNDoE (2009) are based on the implementation of revised determination on leave of absence of teachers in terms of the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 1 of 2007, which states clearly that teachers are entitled to the full 36 days sick leave in the three-year cycle. Approximately, in a year, a teacher is entitled to at least 12 days because of sickness. Based on the leave registers of Indlela High and Iziko High and the leave forms of Inqubo High, the study clearly shows that most teachers do not come to school because of sickness. I noticed that Iziko High had about two teachers who had been away from school for more than three months. Inqubo High also had one teacher who has been away for the past two weeks. Indlela had a teacher who has been away for more than a year until that teacher has been labelled as deceased. This is what even participants are saying about teachers being sick.

Many teachers do not come to school because of sickness. Occasionally is family responsibility where a teacher needs to take a child to the doctor, sometimes a parent is sick, so they take the parent to the doctor (Onke).

Teacher reasons for being absent are; I am not well, I will take 2 days leave

This year we have had problems of teachers who have not been well (Zonke).

Most of the time people are not feeling well, they are sick. We heard that lately where one of us is hospitalised and some will have problems in their families: extended family problems, death in the family, they had to attend some sudden family issue (grandmother is sick or need to be taken somewhere) (Banele)

Absenteeism is not common, but they do take leaves when they are sick.

Teachers do take sick leaves, those one day sick leave without a proof (Andiswa).

There is nothing that the SMT can do if one says one is sick, except for following the procedure. The SMT, especially the principal, should apply the rules as they are. As much as schools keep records of absenteeism there are also loopholes. According to Chapter J of the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998) and KZNDoE (2008) HRM No.35 and KZNDoE (2009) HRM No. 49, a teacher cannot be absent twice or more within the 8-week cycle. If it happens, teacher will be required to submit a medical certificate for every absence, even if it is one day. I noticed that it happens and the

leave is also approved without a proof. The circulars KZNDoE (2009) and KZNDoE (2008) specify that SMTs have the responsibility to maintain accurate sick leave records of their subordinates. Therefore, the SMT must ensure that all sickness absence is recorded on time and accurately so as to avoid other challenges that surface because of inaccurate records.

Estyn (2013) argue that long-term teacher absenteeism tends to be more of an issue than short-term absenteeism because that makes it difficult to recruit supply teachers. The attendance policy of Iziko High states clearly that irregular attendance is discouraged since it disadvantages the school from getting a substitute educator. The policy suggests that teachers should apply for temporary incapacity leave of not less than 30 days. If one teacher is sick the whole school does not function properly, as affirmed by Zonke:

We do have problems that are experienced especially when the teacher is going to be absent for two to three months. It takes time for the DoE to give a substitute teacher. We therefore find ourselves reshuffling the load. One teacher finds himself teaching Grade Eight this week, then next week he will find himself teaching Grade Nine.

There are other cases in which teachers are now taking advantage of a weak management system. Teachers are different in that there are genuine reasons for taking leave and others are not genuine. This calls for tight procedures as Hood (1998) states that they are a remedy in a problem that started because of weak management systems. Getting sick every Monday can easily prevented from becoming a pattern by requesting the proof the second time the person does not come to school. It is the duty of the SMT to give meaning to all the records they keep so that teachers will also feel the impact of absenteeism. Anele reported that teachers saw no meaning in filling in leave forms:

We have noticed that the leave forms are not as effective as they supposed to be. For most of the teachers, leave forms appear as just a mere paper that is filled. They have never felt the impact of absenteeism themselves. They don't really respect being at work.

Teachers do not respect being at work. Onke made an example of some of the reasons that are seen as not genuine for teachers being absent:

Umalume(the man who takes our kids to school with a van) did not come in the morning. That is a reason for absence. I think you would normally take the child to school and also come to work. Sometimes you notice that this could have been done before ten and the educator come back to school.

Looking at what Onke stated above made me realise that sometimes teachers are abusing the system. This is also allowed by the SMT of that particular school by having a weak system of authority to elicit accountability (Hood, 1998). Even Zonke had the same views as she stated, “*some of us we are abusing the system because we know nothing will be done.*” According to KZNDoE (2009), teachers who do not comply with their period of leave could be covered by granting unpaid leave. In the USA, if teachers abuse their leave disciplinary action is taken. Disciplinary procedures start by counselling the teacher to discourage the bad behaviour. If counselling fails a teacher can be given an oral warning, followed by written warning then dismissal if the behaviour persists (Bridgeport District School, 2012). In such a case of teachers abusing their leave, teachers should feel the effect of their absenteeism by going through all disciplinary procedures. That could only be possible if SMTs keep an accurate record of absence for each teacher (Ejere, 2010), so that it will be easy to sanction absentees. Cilliers et al. (2013) emphasised that principals should punish absence by submitting truthful reports since they have power to recommend leave without pay.

4.4.4 Increased workload

The data shows that one teacher who is absent increases the load of not less than four teachers a day. This was evident on the substitute timetable of Indlela High. There was a day when three teachers were absent. Most teachers of Indlela High were allocated as substitute teachers on that particular day. Others were located in more than one class. Even the participants themselves said that teacher absenteeism put pressure on teachers and SMT members.

It does have an impact at the school because teachers are complaining. Teachers complain about the workload which is too much for them (Andiswa).

Yes, we have the substitute time table but that puts more pressure on present teachers because the load for that day increases. Everyone is going to comment about your absence in an informal way (ubuyephi? wasibulala ngomsebenzi!) (Sandiswa).

Firstly, the HoD is affected in the sense that he has to look after the classes in the absence of that educator (Anele).

Sometimes you sit in the office there, you overwork yourself because you want to make sure that the school is running smoothly and all the learners are attended too. You will find yourself leaving the important staff, going to class, sitting there just

because teacher so and so is absent. When you hear the reason, it is not a good reason that can result into him being absent (Banele).

Teacher absenteeism does have a great impact in a sense that you end up as an SMT, not doing what you are supposed to do on that particular day, monitoring these loitering learners (Zonke).

It is clear that even in schools that do not have a substitute timetable like Iziko and Inqubo High; teachers feel the pressure when a teacher is absent, especially SMT members. In each school, all teachers have his or her duties but problems arise when they have to carry out duties for other teachers. The findings above is also confirmed by several authors (Wadenga 2010; Ivatts 2010; Abelas 2009; Khalabai, 2012), who reveal that teacher absenteeism increases the workload for others. In a situation in which the teacher is absent, the SMT leave the office work and attend to learners who are unattended. To leave the office means that work is at a standstill at the office. Sometimes it is not about leaving office work but not being able to continue with office work because one teacher is absent. Teacher absenteeism costs SMT management time as most time is spent dealing with support and processing of leave (Khalabai, 2012). Banele and Onke explain how teacher absenteeism exerts pressure on them as SMT members.

You find that there is an imbalance between what you are supposed to do as a HoD and what the teachers are supposed to be doing. You end up doing what teachers are supposed to be doing. Sometimes you have to occupy learners with some work whereas you have files to check, moderations to do and you find that your work is being left behind because you had to attend to teacher absenteeism (Banele).

When teachers are absent there is no submission which can take place. There are always submissions to be done almost on daily bases. So, when the educator is not at school that part of submission is out. It makes all the submission of the school to come to a standstill because of one educator who is absent. E.g., Absentee statistic of learners at the end of the term, when we collect those records and one educator is absent, you cannot make the whole thing up. So, you have to stop and possibly obtain the attendance register and start counting the number of days learners have been absent. It impact heavily on our submission as well as on our reporting. We need to write reports and we cannot report if certain part of submission is not done (Onke).

Teachers do not only go to class but they also need to plan work beforehand. In cases when they are asked to attend and teach other teachers classes, do teachers go there with confidence or they just go just because the timetable instructs them, or do learners benefit from substitute teachers? That is a question that rose after what Sandiswa said, *It is also difficult for substitute teachers to do work in class since they will not be prepared.* Gyansah et al. (2014) reveal that substitute teachers do not always measure up to the regular classroom teachers' routine and methods to stimulate learners to learn. As a substitute teacher for that day, a teacher goes to class unprepared. Maybe it is about making sure that learners do not loiter around or do not make noise for classes that are occupied. Challenges for present teachers increase when one or more teachers are absent. Sandiswa explains the distraction is caused by absent teachers to those who are present.

The setup also destructs other teachers' plans because the teacher had some work to do in the staffroom not in the class, but because of one teacher who is absent, she cannot since she will be allocated to someone else class.

Teachers use their free period to do paperwork such as preparing files, marking and sometimes paper setting. It makes it difficult for teachers to continue with activities of that day once the substitute timetable orders them to fill the gaps. The pressure that teachers feel today because of one teacher who is absent is not going to end today but will continue until teachers catch up with their own load that was at standstill.

4.4.5 Commuting

Participants reveal that transport that takes them from the city of Pietermaritzburg to their schools is not reliable and is expensive. As much as teachers would love to be at school in time teaching, unreliable transport impedes it. Sometimes transport is the cause of teacher absenteeism. Okurut (2012) reveals that lateness and early departure is common among teachers who live outside the school community and makes the management task of reducing teacher absenteeism a huge challenge. Sandiswa, Andiswa and Onke blame transport as the challenge faced by SMTs when managing teacher absenteeism:

In some other cases teachers are absent because of transport. Take for an example those that are staying in town, they use taxis and taxis are the only means of transport. So, once you miss it, it will be very difficult to come to school. It happens

that teachers come to school late because of arranged transport but they do not leave early because of transport (Sandiswa).

Transport is not right. That is why most of the teachers choose to go and seek for medical certificate especially when they do not have the transport. The transport is also expensive (Andiswa).

Most teachers do not stay here. The easy of commuting from their homes to rural schools would make it much better. I have talked about being able to do something before 10am and coming to school to finish off the day. If you know you have to go to a taxi rank and wait about 2 hours, you just say, I will be at school at one pm and the school would be almost over. That is the challenge (Onke).

Teachers travel long distances to and from school because of lack of accommodation for teachers within the school vicinity (Gyansah et al., 2014). Houses are there but not at the standard for teachers, hence teachers are commuting. Sandiswa made clear that accommodation in the community they work is very poor.

Teachers don't like to rent houses in the close proximity of the school because the accommodation that we get from elders (ogogo) in the community is not up to teacher's standard. Teachers who stay in town travel daily and they have guaranteed that they will never rent these houses provided to us by ogogo in the community because the standard is very poor (Sandiswa).

The data reveals that poor accommodation and unreliable and expensive transport; sick teachers; personal differences; increase workload and lack of passion for teaching are the main challenges that are faced by SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the SMT to create and maintain a culture which does not tolerate excessive absenteeism by condemning the undesirable tendency (Ejere, 2010)

4.5 SMTs' RESPONCES TO THE CHALLENGES

Challenges that SMT face in managing teacher absenteeism have been identified and discussed above. This section of the study will present and discuss strategies that are used by SMT to address challenges they face in managing teacher absenteeism. SMTs make sure that gaps that are opened are filled, they tighten managerial grip by ensuring that educators comply with the rules, ensure that the work schedule is covered and work together with all

stakeholders. Strategies of addressing faced challenges in managing teacher absenteeism are discussed under the following sub-themes: filling the gaps; greater managerial grip; catch up with the schedule and involving stakeholders.

4.5.1 Filling the gaps

Every teacher has a role that s/he plays in the school. If a single teacher is absent a gap will be opened on that particular day. A gap could be classes that are not occupied or administrative work that is not done, such as marking the learner attendance register. The SMT have a clear obligation to identify and address problems in the school (Glasgow City Council, 2013), therefore it calls for the SMT to be strategic. It will have to come up with the idea that will make the school achieve their goals, after it is sold well to the teachers. Public management is attributed by formalised roles of authority when duties are clearly stated (Narayan & Mooij, 2010).

The data obtained reveal that schools can have a policy on filling the gaps and everyone will be part of the action, or the school can work according to departments that are within the school, or it can just be the duty of the SMT. During my conversations with the participants it was clear that Indlela High was the only school that had a substitute timetable. Iziko High and Inqubo High had nothing on paper that they used in filling in the gaps. The substitute timetable of Indlela High worked as follows: Each teacher is given a code. During the morning update teachers are informed of who is absent. So that they will also be aware that the day might not be a normal day for some they will be allocated to some of the classes. One member of the SMT will make the substitute timetable for the day. S/he will then take it to all teachers who will be affected on that day so that they will sign. Asked why they signed the response was to accept the special duties allocated to them on that day. Sandiswa explained the procedures on the substitute timetable:

We usually remind teachers that they should report before seven thirty in the morning since we have our updates at 7h30seven thirty. We need this information so that we can make arrangements to fill the gaps before school start at eight. Here is an exercise book (picking it up), this exercise is called substitute time table. Once we know there is someone who is absent during an update between seven thirty and seven forty five, by that time we can identify who is absent since the principal does report during updates. Even an HoD concerned knows since they have received an SMS. You

see today, these are the codes that we use, so in the morning code twenty two has been reported absent. Before classes resume this teacher (pointing at the timetable) has been allocated to Grade Ten - c. We also make sure that the substitute teacher also teaches those learners. We don't just take any teacher. It also favours the school that we have a number of teachers. Sometimes it happens that it is not easy to fill that gap but we always make sure that learners are not left unattended (Sandiswa).

The substitute time table has five columns following each other like this: The code of the absentee; substitute teacher; grade; period and signature. I noticed that the length of a column depends on the number of teachers who are absent. If there are many teachers who are absent the length also increases and more teachers are affected. Teachers who are substitutes do not just go to classes to supervise but to teach. It cannot be any teacher but a teacher who also teaches that class. Andiswa emphasises that substitute teachers teach in class:

The teachers are told so that they will not complain when they have been put on the substitution time table. They will be aware who is absent. Maybe the teacher who is absent is from a language department so I am the first to know that so and so is absent in my department so that I can make means, of assisting learners with something to read. The substitute teacher might be given something to do in class. It might be something for learners to read, since our learners are having a problem when it comes to reading. Learners can't read. A teacher who is a substitute does not go to the class to do his work but to do the work given by a HoD.

This also raised a question whether the HoDs give work according to the annual teaching plan or just give any work related to the subject taught by the absent teacher. My question was quickly answered by Andiswa: *"I have noticed that when they come back they even want to know who took their period when they were away so that if you took it you must pay back."* It means that they are allowed to continue with their own work since they also teach that class. If teachers are given a chance to participate on any decision they are not pushed when it is time to put plans into action. Teachers are motivated by the ownership of the policy so it is important that they also participate in decision making (Okurut, 2012). That is evident in what was said by Sandiswa:

I won't mention any challenge because we haven't reached a stage where we come across challenges. Even with substitute time table, all teachers are willing since it is

an agreement that we have made together. Here we are working as a family. So we feel that are all bound to teach or to work.

While still at Indlela trying to compare the substitute timetable and the time book I noticed that the codes used on the time book did not correspond with the ones used on the substitute timetable. Some days the substitute time table was not dated and the teachers were not absent according to the codes present on the time book. Records were faulty so the story told by these two documents did not correlate.

The study also revealed that Iziko High addressed the challenge by also delegating teachers from concerned departments to go and supervise learners. Onke explained the process of filling the gaps:

We used to have a system where we said we are filling the gaps. If an educator is absent, the HoD of that particular department where the educator belongs would delegate members within the department to supervise the classes.

Zonke added that sometimes she did not delegate but filled the gaps herself if available:

As an HoD I don't do it every day if there is a teacher who is not at school but I usually pop in that class and check the lesson plan for that particular teacher because we usually prep for two weeks cycle. So I check what is it that the teacher was supposed to do than I take over. I take over if only I am available; if I am not available I just monitor the class. I just do this consciously; it is not in black and white.

I realised that the emphasis for both participants of Iziko High was on supervising learners, unlike participants of Indlela High where it was on teaching learners. Teachers occupy an unattended class, just to ensure there is no chaos at school. Learners are executing the given task if there is any. Learners are not loitering around or they do not make noise that will destruct other classes. If teachers do not attend than learners do not learn (Stoica & Wamsiedel, 2012). It is important for the SMT to ensure that learning is taking place at school.

4.5.2 Greater management grip

In a situation in which there is poor compliance with rules and procedures the SMT should be active and visible in order to deal with teacher absenteeism (Hood, 1998). The SMT should

control teacher absence by laying down clear rules and procedures that should be followed by teachers. It is the duty of the principal to conduct return-to-work interviews, as these would also help the principal update the leave register. The data shows that Principals do conduct such interviews just to be clear of the reason for absence. It is also evident that teachers' affairs are protected, as Sandiswa reported:

In some other cases, other matters are too personal for everyone to know. We try by all means to avoid teacher's affairs to be scattered, that is why the principal is the one who conduct those return to work interviews.

To tighten the management grip, managers will tell educators that one has exhausted one's normal sick leave days or has to bring a certificate from the doctor next time one is absent, if the eight-week cycle has not elapsed. Cilliers et al. (2013) suggest that SMT should punish absentees by submitting truthful reports. This means that if the leave is not recommended it should be like that even when making submissions. This was evident on the leave register of Iziko High, where some leave taken by teachers was not recommended by the manager. Khalabai (2012) confirmed that principals have power to recommend leave without pay in order to punish teachers who are frequently absent.

Teachers should also be aware that their behaviour has been noticed, calling them and have a one-on-one talk. Onke spoke about calling teachers and condemning bad behaviour:

Once it becomes obvious that a trend is being established of a certain type of absenteeism. We call the teacher and tell him that the school is not functioning to its optimum because of his absence. We also tell him that the pattern of his absence is questionable and there are consequences of absence from work from the employer. We really make them aware that we are watching them as management. We won't turn a blind eye when we see the patterns.

According to Glasgow City Council (2013), discipline for an unacceptable level of attendance may take the form of a warning, withdrawal of self-certification, and withdrawal of sickness allowance or dismissal. The SMT should also conduct hearings and give warnings to teachers who do not comply with rules. This can only be effective if records are correctly kept. Rogers and Vegas (2009) disclosed that it may be difficult to be sure of the underlying tendency for absence if each teacher's attendance is not tracked frequently. Anele revealed that talking to teachers alone is not enough, and sometimes they should be given warnings.

We have also called some of the teachers when we really see that it has gone out of hand, give them some warnings. We have called them for a hearing and also warned them not to be absent.

Banele added that talking to teachers and alerting them that their behaviour damages their integrity helps improve teacher attendance in the rural context:

We call the person and talk to him that you see what is happening here, every Monday you are not at school. That presents a bad picture for you not only on the management but also to the children that you are teaching.

So, we do talk about that (damaging their dignity) and it seems as if some are getting the great fix. I have seen a great improvement especially this term. They have improved a lot in attendance (Banele).

We as SMT also do a follow up on that. This is how they say it: so and so we are not going to work for you, you were absent twice in a week and we are tired!" In a friend manner, in a friendly manner! We than sit down with that particular person, so that he would see that he is not doing the right thing. He is putting the pressure to other teachers (Andiswa).

Andiswa above revealed that talking with teachers will also open the chance for other staff members to condemn bad behaviour in a school. But if the SMT is not saying a word everyone would be quiet and the problem of teacher absenteeism will persist. Lack of SMT attention to teacher absence creates a culture that does not value good attendance (Tracy, 2012).SMT need to be active and ensure that all procedures are followed regularly to raise accountability, including the signing and submission of leave forms.

4.5.3 Being in line with the teaching plan

Teachers have a plan that defines the work that needs to be done in class in a year called the work schedule or annual teaching plan. Teachers plan their daily lessons from the annual teaching plan. The study reveals that if teachers are absent the implication would be that the syllabus will not be covered properly. Most participants emphasise that they motivate teachers to come to school. One of the aims of the attendance policy of Inqubo High is to enable teachers to continue with their planned learning programme. Participants also encourage teachers to leave work for learners if they knew in advance that they will not come

to school. Zonke outlined what they did at Iziko High to ensure that even when teachers were away the syllabus was covered.

If the teacher is going to be absent and he knows that he won't be at the school, he need to leave something for the learners to do. It can either be a class work or homework which needs to be monitored. He must inform the HoD that the following day I will not be at school and this is what I have given my learners, may you please monitor them. That is what we usually do (Zonke).

On the other hand, when teachers return to work from whatever leave they have taken they are asked to devise a plan to cover for lost time. Sandiswa admitted that, as a HoD one have to devise a strategy to motivate that particular teacher to cover for lost time. Furthermore, he said it motivated him to come to school if he knew that there was a work schedule that needed to be covered. Andiswa affirms that a cover plan is required from teachers to cover lost time.

If a teacher has been absent he has to cover for the lost time (Saturdays, winter and spring classes). Teachers have to cover because the work schedule always put them in a corner. We do check the work schedule and it is easy since it has dates to trace progress. Teacher absenteeism is reduced by monthly tests, written work (learners' work). We do check learners work. All in all we monitor them, so it is not easy to play hide and seek.

The attendance policy of Iziko High states clearly that time lost while the teacher is on leave must be paid. The procedure is as follows: when the teacher returns he or she will meet with the relevant HoD to make an arrangement for covering for the days lost, in writing and to a timeframe

Extra classes are not only for Grade Twelve's as most teachers think but for all grades that you did not teach (Sandiswa).

However, it is not always easy for HoDs to trace teachers' progress on the work schedule if they do not monitor the work. At Indlela High they control and monitor teachers and learners' work so one cannot hide since monitoring is continuous.

Support can be provided to teachers but according to Komani (2015) the challenge to the SMT is that in-service training is conducted during working hours. The data also revealed that with education system that is changing, teachers need to be well versed so that they will also be motivated to come to school. Teachers need to be drilled in content knowledge.

Okurut (2012) reveals that teachers do not prepare lessons because of difficulties and limited time, some are untrained and do not even know how to prepare a lesson plan and end up absenting themselves. Therefore, it is the duty of the SMT to show they care about their subordinates by boosting their moral (Obeng-Denter et al., 2011).

4.5.4 Involving other stakeholders

Data obtained revealed that community members around Inqubo High also play a role in managing teacher absenteeism since there are other teachers who live in the community. They are aware of what is happening after work hours and alert the SMT about teachers who do not behave like teachers in the community because their behaviour touches the image of the school. School managers do not have to do everything by themselves as leadership often exists through a group of people working closely together. Hood (1998) states that SMTs need to empower other school stakeholders so that they can also play an active role in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context. SMTs should make it clear to the SGB, traditional leaders and other concerned community committees that they are monitoring teacher attendance. In a case of truancy and abuse of leave their duty is to complain to the higher authorities not to discipline teachers (Narayan & Mooij, 2010). The SGB also plays a vital role in motivating teachers to come to school and do their best. Banele outline the role of SGB in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context:

Through incentivising those that are doing well, it encourages people to get along and pull up the socks. We do have incentives such as certificates from our SGB. They are encouraging us to excel in our subjects and that also motivates to come to school and ensure that learners are taught properly.

Narayan and Mooij (2010) suggest that management approaches should be based on acting *with* teachers not *on* them. The data also suggest that when teachers are attached to the school they feel responsible about things that take place in it. They give SMT much support and make it easier to manage the school. Teacher absenteeism in schools would be reduced if teachers felt responsible, their ideas were appreciated and they saw themselves as part of the solution.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to present the data and discuss the findings emerging from the study focusing on the management of teacher absenteeism in three schools. The management of teacher absenteeism by SMT is clear as participants tell their experiences and as documents also confirm what participants state in most instances. The challenges faced by SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism were also a concern for some of the participants. Furthermore, participants outlined some of the strategies they have put in place to address the challenges they face in managing teacher absenteeism in their particular schools. Following this chapter is chapter five, which presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided a detailed presentation and discussion of the data generated through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. This chapter summarises the findings that are drawn from the data generated from the study. Conclusions and recommendations are made from the findings. The chapter starts with the study summary, followed by a summary of findings using the key research questions of the study. Lastly, conclusions and the recommendations for managing teacher absenteeism will be presented.

5.2 STUDY SUMMARY

This study aimed to explore the approaches used by the SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism in schools in the rural context. The interest was triggered by my experience as a teacher as I had been observing my colleagues and the way SMT managed teacher absenteeism. Being a student in Educational Leadership and Management and Policy assisted me in gaining more understanding on the importance of managing teacher absenteeism. I explored management of teacher absenteeism in a school context in which the study focused on the approaches SMTs used to deal with teacher absenteeism. The challenges and the SMTs responses to them were also examined.

To reach desired objectives and to perceive the intended meaning of teacher absenteeism and its roots I visited literature. In Chapter Two I discussed teacher absenteeism from the international, continental as well as local perspectives. In the literature the key debates were on the approaches used by SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism in South Africa and other countries. The challenges faced by SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism were also part of the debate. Lastly, a closer look was at their role in addressing the challenges they face in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context. The chapter further explored management of teacher absenteeism in the light of Hoodsø framework of public management styles, to determine how public management styles as proposed in the framework might inform the way SMTs deal with teacher absenteeism.

In Chapter Three I presented the research paradigm, design and methodology used in the study. Here discussions were centred on the interpretive paradigm, the qualitative research approach and the case study methodology used in this study. The chapter also included issues of trustworthiness, ethical issues and methodological limitations of this study.

Chapter Four presented and interpreted data generated from the study. The key questions of the study were the basis upon which it hinged. The findings have been presented under three main themes. Under the first theme of approaches, sub-themes included formulating or following the DoBE teacher attendance policies; arranging leave in advance; reporting absence timeously; keeping a record of absence; encouraging punctuality; monitoring of work and motivating teachers. On the second theme of challenges faced in managing teacher absenteeism, sub-themes were the lack of passion for teaching; teachers' personalities; teacher sickness; pressure on other teachers and commuting. On the third theme of strategies of addressing faced challenges in managing teacher absenteeism sub-themes were filling the gaps; greater managerial grip; catching up with the schedule and involving stakeholders. Out of the exploration of these themes I was able to produce the findings as summarised below.

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

As stated in the previous section, research questions are used as main themes under which discussion of the findings is carried out. The research questions were as follows:

- What are the approaches that the school management teams in the rural context use to manage teacher absenteeism?
- What are the challenges school management teams in the rural context face in managing teacher absenteeism?
- How do the school management teams in the rural context address the challenges they face in managing teacher absenteeism?

5.3.1 What are the approaches that the school management teams in the rural context use to manage teacher absenteeism?

The findings of this study reveal that SMTs use policies to manage teacher absenteeism, internally established and reliant more on the departmental policy. It was clear that though schools have policies they are not communicated to all staff members, as evident from Anele

from Inqubo High and Onke from Iziko High, who declared that they had not been introduced to the school teacher attendance policy. The effectiveness of the policy of managing teacher absenteeism is not monitored and evaluated. If procedures and directives provided on the policy to regulate teacher absenteeism in school were put in action by the SMT they would realise the need to amend the policies as they were not effective. Whether the school had its own policy or not, but procedures on the departmental policy were applicable to all schools. Therefore, it calls for the SMTs to constantly explain and remind teachers of the attendance expectation. Furthermore, it should be monitored to ensure that teachers comply with existing policy.

The findings of the study reveal that all schools recognise the importance of arranging leave in advance, so that the SMTs will make plans for the smooth running of the school in the absence of a particular teacher. Moreover, SMTs remind teachers to put learners first before themselves, as it was clear that teacher absenteeism disrupts the effectiveness of the school. Schools were having different procedures of reporting absence in a case of emergency but all encouraged direct contact with the principal or SMT members concerned. The difference lies in methods and times of communicating with the principal. The first called for teachers to report absence with a text message before 7h30. The second required teachers to telephone the principal before 10h00, with texts not allowed. The last school changed the method of reporting as teachers were reporting differently (texts or sending a colleague to report), to directly calling the principal before 7h00. This helped the school in identifying absent teachers early in a day.

The findings also revealed that schools kept a record of absence to manage teacher absenteeism in the rural context. Teacher absenteeism is recorded first in the time book, then on the leave registers using leave forms. The leave registers displayed that there was regular monitoring of teacher absenteeism, as shown by the comments by the manager, whereby some leaves were not recommended as teachers had exhausted all leave days. Sometimes leave was not recommended because the leave form was not accompanied by proof of absence. The study finds that teachers filled in the leave forms without being followed, but not all schools made clear meaning of them since some were not accompanied by required proof of absence. Even the way they were filed did not indicate that they were taken seriously by the teachers or the SMT. This calls for the SMTs to monitor the usage of leave by laying down clear procedures.

The study findings also showed that SMTs manage teacher absenteeism by encouraging punctuality in all teachers. It was noticed that teachers signed the time book at the same time in all schools. It portrayed a fill-in exercise rather than capturing the actual coming and going time for teachers. It was also clear there were teachers who did not even bother themselves about signing the time book. Some teachers at Inqubo High had a two week cycle of unsigned time book. The loophole was created by a weak management system, as it was the duty of the principal to keep and control the time book. If SMTs turned a blind to the issue of teachers who did not sign the time book, the school would not have accurate records of punctuality. There were teachers who did not honour their timetable and sometimes had to be reminded to go to class and teach. SMTs should be strict when managing teacher absenteeism so that teachers avail themselves to learners rather than being visible. That would also ensure that teachers were punctual when going to class.

The study also found that the SMTs managed teacher absenteeism by monitoring work of the teachers and motivating them to come to school regularly. SMTs monitor monthly test and exam paper to ensure that all work is covered. Teachers have been motivated by the writing of papers set externally to come to school and cover work. Teachers were also given performance-related incentives to motivate outstanding teaching and good results, which alone had also raised a culture of competing for best within the school and encouraging teachers to attend school regularly.

5.3.2 What are the challenges school management teams in the rural context face in managing teacher absenteeism?

The findings of the study reveal that SMTs faced the challenge of teachers who lacked passion for teaching. Schools have teachers who do not have a love for teaching but who have one for money. This is evident in teachers who absent themselves and those who come to school with no commitment to teaching. These teachers do not think about learners and good results, and do not care about their own dignity or that of the school. The only thing they put forward is the rights that they have, forgetting that rights go hand-in-hand with responsibilities. They lack skills to deliver matter to learners and end up absenting themselves.

The study findings also show that SMTs have to deal with personality differences in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context. Teachers develop pattern of absenteeism

whereby they do not come to school on Mondays or on the sixteenth day of the month since teachers are paid on the fifteenth day of the month. The background of teachers is also a challenge since Black teachers in one of the research sites (with Black and White teachers) did not want to do things accordingly. They did not want to follow procedures and ended up absenting themselves. It is the duty of the SMT to instil an ethos of public service and sense of professionalism among teachers.

Findings revealed that teachers are sick, which makes it difficult for SMTs to manage absenteeism. Schools have teachers who have been on sick leave for more than two months; hence one of the school's policies discouraged irregular attendance for sick teachers by advising them to apply for temporal incapacity leave so that the school will get a substitute teacher from the Department of Basic Education. On the other hand, teachers misuse their sick leave if they realise that rules and procedures are not enforced. SMTs should apply the eight-week rule in order to terminate the abuse of sick leave.

The findings of the study reveal that teachers who are absent increase the load of the other teachers who have to carry out extra duties. One absent teacher costs other teachers time to do paper work, and even SMTs leave office work in order to make sure that classes are occupied. Submissions will not be made on time because of teacher absenteeism.

The last challenge faced by SMTs in managing teacher absenteeism is that teachers are commuting. The study revealed that transport to school from town was unreliable and expensive. Teachers were forced to travel because accommodation in communities is poor. The SMT should condemn undesirable behaviour in teachers regardless of the circumstances.

5.3.3 How do the school management teams in the rural context address the challenges they face in managing teacher absenteeism?

The study findings reveals that a system of filling the gaps has been developed to make sure that learner are not left unattended. Gaps are filled using a substitute timetable that has been developed within the school. In schools that do not have the substitute timetable, it is the duty of the SMT to delegate teachers to supervise unattended classes. The motive for filling the gaps is different for schools. In one the motive is to make sure that learners are learning while in others it is to make sure that there is no chaos in the school.

The findings also reveal that SMTs tighten the management grip in order to make sure that teachers comply with the existing rules and procedures in addressing the challenges they face

in managing teacher absenteeism. Principals made it clear in their comments that a teacher is absent and did not report. Sometimes the leave register indicates that management procedures are tight because of leaves that are not recommended. SMTs call up teachers with absenteeism problems and condemn bad behaviour. If behaviour persists teachers are given warnings.

The findings further revealed that teachers were encouraged to be in line with the teaching plan. If absent from school they have to arrange covering plan for time lost, with morning or afternoon classes, sometimes with Saturday classes.

Involving other stakeholders in managing teacher absenteeism eases the duties of the SMT. This management approach calls for community members, SGB members and other staff members to be part of the solution in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions of the study are made based on the findings summarised above.

Policies should be made available to all teachers and discussed with them so that they will familiarise themselves with rules and procedures followed in the school.

Keeping records of managing teacher absenteeism is the first step in managing this problem. Schools keep a time book, leave register and leave forms. These should have meaning to the teachers who should understand why they sign it so that they will enter the correct times. It is the duty of the SMT to give meaning to every record kept. Leave forms should be properly filed not put in a box with the leave forms. The complete meaning of leave forms is on the leave register, so a school that does not keep a leave register does not manage teacher absenteeism properly. From the leave register the manager will be able to draw conclusions about the leave taken, whether recommended or not. Therefore, tools that record teacher absenteeism should tally and complement each other.

SMTs create more challenges in managing teacher absenteeism by not monitoring it properly and by loosening the managerial grip. If teacher attendance is managed well, there would be fewer patterns of absenteeism such as leave forms without proof and teachers going for days without signing the time book. Managers would deal with these issues immediately.

The DoBE has an impact on the increased level of teacher absenteeism by conducting workshops during time teachers are supposed to be in class teaching. If teachers can cover for

lost time during Saturdays they can also attend workshops on Saturdays. The DoBE should not be a reason for the increase in teacher absenteeism.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

I make three recommendations that are directed to the Department of Basic Education, the schools and the school management teams and the researchers.

5.5.1 Recommendation directed to the Department of Basic Education

With regard to the findings of the study that explored SMTs approaches in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context, there is a need to develop SMTs on the monitoring tools of managing teacher absenteeism, to identify problems when they surface and attend to them immediately. The DoBE should consider ways of screening teachers who enter the system for training on the content, proper skills to deliver subject matter and motivation to come to school. The DoBE should consider incentivising teachers with a rural transport allowance to counter expensive transport, which de-motivates them to come to school and causes excuses.

5.5.2 Recommendations directed to the schools and SMTs

There is a need for the schools to keep accurate attendance records but that cannot be done by the principal only. It calls for the SMTs to manage teacher absenteeism, starting from the time book, signing of leave forms and leave register. They should ensure that teachers go to class on time and teach. Teachers themselves should correct their behaviour by complying with rules and procedures in a school. Policies to manage teacher absenteeism should be owned by all teachers so that teachers will not complain when it is time to act. Policies should also be amended so that they will address current problems.

5.5.3 Recommendations directed to the researchers

There is a need for further study on the approaches used by SMTs to manage teacher absenteeism on a large scale that will involve a number of schools and a number of SMT members, especially the principals. The study should use qualitative or mixed research

methods. I recommend this because this study was based on three schools and six participants. The SMTs in this study may not have produced all approaches used to manage teacher absenteeism.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The study was conducted to explore the approaches used by the school management teams in managing teacher absenteeism in the rural context. The study sought to explore the perspectives of the teams in the approaches used, the challenges faced and the ways of addressing them. It emerged during data generation that the approaches used in managing teacher absenteeism included formulating or following the DoBE teacher attendance policies; arranging leave in advance; reporting absence timeously; keeping a record of absence; encouraging punctuality; and monitoring of work and motivating teachers. The SMTsø task has been tested by teachers who lack passion for teaching, different personalities amongst teachers, teachers who are sick, the increase of workload for teachers and teachers having to face high travel expenses or timetabling difficulties on a daily basis. Although there are challenges, SMTs make sure that gaps that are opened are filled, tightening managerial grip by ensuring that educators comply with the rules, ensure that the work schedule is covered and work together with all stakeholders.

REFERENCES

- Abelas, J. (2009). *Adult learning theories and medical education*. University of Malta.
- Adams, J. & Smith, T. (2009). *Qualitative methods in radiography research: a proposed framework*. Radiography 9, 193-199.
- Armstrong, P. (2009). *Teacher pay in South Africa: How attractive is the teaching profession?* Stellenbosch, Economic working Paper 04/09, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- Arnott, A. (2013). Policy Brief: *Reducing Teacher Absenteeism: Solutions for Africa*, Association for the Development of Education in Africa.
- Attwel, P. (2014). *Department considering biometric to curb absenteeism*. Cape Argus March 6.
- Babbie, E. (2007). *The practice of social research (11th Ed)*. Belmont: Thomson Wardworth.
- Ball, S. J. (1990). *Political and Policy Making in Education*. London: Routledge.
- Ballard, K. & Bates, A. (2008). Making a connection between student achievement, teacher accountability and quality classroom instruction. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4) 560-580.
- Basit, T. N. (2010). *Conducting research in educational contexts*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Bassey, M. (1981). Pedagogic research on the relative merits of search for generalization and study of single events. *Oxford Review of Education*, 7(1), 73 ó 94.
- Bertram, C. & Christiansen, I. (2014). *Understanding research: An introduction to reading research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Bhamani, M. (2012). *The Difference Between Leadership and Management Schools of Thought*. Athabasca University, Centre for Innovative Management.
- Blaikie, N. (1993). *Approaches to social inquiry*. Amazon, UK.
- Bridgeport District Schools, (2012). *Teacher Attendance Policy*, Bridgeport Public Schools.
- Bryman, A. (2003). *Social research methods*. Amazon's Book: UK.
- Burrett, T. (2008). *Market online*. B & T magazine, 58 (2682), 44-45.
- Bush, T. (2008). *Leadership and Management Development in Education*. Sage

- Cape Argus (6 March 2014). *Department considering biometric to curb absenteeism.*
- Chaudhury, N., Hammer, J., Kremer, M., Muralidharan, K. & Rogers, F. H. (2006). "Missing in action: Teacher and health worker absence in developing countries." *Journal of Economic perspectives*, 20:1, pp.91-116.
- Chikoko, V. & Khanare, F. (2012). School management teams conceptualisation of school assets in addressing the needs of children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS: Evident from *South Africa Journal of Social Science*, 32: 23-36.
- Cilliers, J. & Kasirye, I., Leaver, C., Serneels, P. & Zeitlin, A. (2013). *Improving teacher attendance using a locally managed monitoring scheme: Evidence from Ugandan Primary schools.*
- Clotfelter, C. T., Ladd, H. F. & Vidgor, J. L. (2009). Are teacher absences worth worrying about? *Education Finance and Policy*, vol.4, no.2 Spring, pp.115-149
- Coe, R. (2012). Qualitative Methods. In R. Coe, J. Arthur, M. Warring & L. V. Hedge (Eds.) *finding your theoretical position in research methods and methodologies in education*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Cohen, L., Manion, I. & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. (7th ed). London: Routledge.
- Cole, M. (2006). *Qualitative research journal of infection prevention.*
- Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social Research Theory, Method and Techniques*, Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among the approaches* (2nd Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (3rd Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research; Planning, conducting, and evaluating research quantitative and qualitative* (4th Ed.). Boston: Pearson.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundation of social research*. Sage Publications Ltd
- CSACEFA, (2013). Every Child Needs a Teacher, Kwara. VSO, Nigeria.
- Daily News, (2013). Zuma warns errant teachers. 19 February.
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2003). *The discipline and practice of Qualitative Research*.

- Department of Education (DoE), (1999). *Personnel Administration Measures (PAM)*. Government Gazette No.19767.Pretoria .Government Printers.
- Department of Basic Education (DBE), (2009). *Quality Learning Campaign*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Department of Basic Education (DoBE), (2010).*Integrated Strategy on HIV/AIDS 2011-2015.Full Report*.Department of Basic Education.Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), (2008). *Human Resource Management Circular No.35 of 2008*.
- Dieltiens,V. & Meny-Gibert, S. (2012). *In class? Poverty, Social exclusion and school access in South Africa*.*Education Journal* no.55.
- Diko, N. N. & Letseka, M. (2009). *Policy appropriation in teacher retention and attrition; The Case of North West Province Perspectives in education* 27(3): 228-236.
- Duflo, E., Hanna, R. & Ryan, S. (2010). *Incentives Work: Getting teachers to come to school*.
- Dundee City Council, (2013). *Procedurefor Managing Sickness Absence and Promoting Attendance for Teachers and Associated Professionals*
- Edersheim, E. H. & Druckar, P. F. (2007). *The Definitive Druckar*,New York, McGraw-Hill Professional.
- Edge, K. (2008). *Teacher quality and parental participation: What research tells us abouttheir influence on student outcome*.
- Edmonds, W., & Kennedy, T. M. (2013). *An applied reference guide to research designs: Qualitative and mixed method*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Ejere, E. I. (2010).Absence from work. A study of teacher absenteeism in selected primary schools in Uyo, Nigeria.*International Journal of Business and Management*, Vol.5 No.9, September 2010.
- Employment of Educators (Act 76 of 1998). *Chapter J, Leave measures*. Pretoria, Government Printers.
- EPRC. (2010). *Public spending in the education sector in Uganda: Evidence from the program Budgeting Analysis- Paper submitted to the Global Development Network*.

- Erlandson, D. A., Harris, E. L., Skipper, B. L. & Allen, S. D. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: a guide to methods*; London: Sage
- Estyn. (2013). Impact of teacher absence.
- Finlayson, M. (2009). The impact of teacher absenteeism on student performance. The case of the Cobb County school District. Dissertations, Theses and Capstone projects Paper 4.
- Firnham, D. & Pimlott, J. (1995). *Understanding industrial relations*. 6th Edition. London Cassell.
- Freimuth, H. (2009). Educational Research: An introduction to basic concepts and terminology. *UGRU Journal*: Spring, Vol. 8.
- Gardiner, M. (2008). *Education in rural areas*. Issues in education policy no.4, CEPD.
- Gelb, A. & Clark, J. (2013). *Identification for Development: The Biometrics Revolution*. Center for Global Development 1800 Massachusetts Ave, NW Washington, DC 20036.
- Gillham, B. (2000). *Case study research methods (continuum research methods)* Bloomsbury academic
- Glasgow City Council. (2013). *Supporting Attendance: The Policy of the Control and Management of Absence for Teachers*. Management Circular No.73
- Gray, D. E. (2004). *Doing research in the real world*. Sage. Social Science.
- Grix, J. (2004). *The foundation of research*. Pelgrave MacMillan
- Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Competing paradigms in qualitative research*. The handbook of qualitative research (pp.105-117) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2013). The constructivist Credo
- Guerrero, G., Leon, J., Zapata, M., Sugimaru, C. & Cueto, S. (2012). *What works to improve teacher attendance in developing countries? Systematic review*, Department for International Development
- Gynsah, S. T., Esilfie, G. & Atta, A. (2014). Teacher Absenteeism and its Impact on Quality Education: A Case Study of the Public Schools in the Abesim Circuit of the Sunyani Municipality Vol.2 (1).
- Hackett, R. S. (2009). *Teacher absenteeism*. School of Education, UWI, St Augustine.

- Herrmann, M. A. & Rockoff, J. E. (2010). *Worker absence and Productivity: Evidence from Teaching*, NBER Working Paper No. 16524.
- Hirschheim, R., Klein, H. K. & Lyytinen, K. (1995). *Information systems and development and data modelling: Conceptual and philosophical foundations*.
- Hlalele, D. (2012). Social Justice and Rural education in South Africa. *Perspectives in Education*,30: 111-118.
- Hood, C. (1998). *Public management styles*. New York: Oxford University Press 1998.
- Ingersoll, R. M. & Perda, D. (2008). *The Status of teaching as a profession*. Chapter 12,pp 106-118 in the School of Sociology; A sociological Approach to Education:Los Angeles: Pine Forge Press.
- Ivatts, A. R. (2010). *Literature review on "Teacher Absenteeism*.Commissioned by Roma Education Fund.*Journal of Education*.
- Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. (2008). *Educational Research Quantitative,Qualitative and Mixed approaches*. Sage.
- Joseph, N., Waymack, N. & Zielaski, D. (2014). *Roll Call: The Importance of teacher attendance*, National Council Teacher Quality project.
- Kang, H. S. & Hong, S. Y. (2008). *Sensitivity of the simulated East Asia Summer monsoon climatology to four convected parameterzation schemes*.
- Kaweesi, D. (2012). *Improving Education in Uganda:Effective school inspection as a tool*.
- Keller, B. (2008). *"District's experiment with cutting down on teacher absenceö*. Education Week 27.
- Khalabai, M. E. (2012). The impact of teacher absenteeism on the effective management of selected schools in District 15, Soshanguve, Gauteng Province.
- Komani, I. M. (2015). Key factors influencing teacher absenteeismin public secondary schools in Nzavi Sub county Makueni County, Southern Eastern Kenya University.
- Kozin, N. (2015). *Working through professional differences in the workplace*.
- Kozol, J. (1991). *Savage Inequalities,Children in American Schools*.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviews*, Thousand Oaks,CA: Sage

KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, (2005). *Traditional leadership and governance Act No.5 of 2005*. Pietermaritzburg, government printers.

KZN DoE. (2008). *Implementation of revised determination on leave of absence of education in terms of PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2007*. Human Resource Management Circular No. 35 of 2008.

KZN DoE. (2009). *Implementation of revised determination on leave of absence of education in terms of PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2007*. Human Resource Management Circular No. 49 of 2009.

Lee, M., Goodman, C., Dandapani, N. & Kekahio, W. (2015). *Review of international research of factors underlying teacher absenteeism*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, regional Education Laboratory Pacific.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*, Beverly Hills: Sage.

Maile, S. (2002). *Organisational management*. Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria

Mampane, K. B. (2013). *Educators' experiences and perceptions of teacher absenteeism*, Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria.

Management Circular No.73, (2013). Supporting attendance: The policy for the control and management of absence for teachers, Glasgow City Council.

Maphosa, C., Mutekwe, E., Machingambi, S., Wadesango, N. & Ndofirepi, A. (2012). *Teacher Accountability in South African Public Schools: A Call for Professionalism from Teachers*, *Anthropologist*, 14(6): 545-553.

Maree, K. (2007). *First step in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. (1999). *Designing Qualitative research*: Amazon.co.UK

Masuku, E. (2010). *School principals experience of the decentralisation policy in Zimbabwe*.

McGuirk, E. F. (2013). Teacher absenteeism and the Salience of local ethics diversity: Evidence from African Districts, CEGA, University of California, Berkeley.

McKenzie, P., Nugroho, D., Ozolins, C., McMillian, J. & Sumarto, S. (2014). *Teacher Absenteeism in Indonesia*: Policy Brief.

Melville, S. & Goddard, W. (1996). *Research methodology: An introduction*

- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis* (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Miller, R. (2008). Tales of teacher absence: Newsresearch yield patterns that speak to policy makers. USA: Centre for American Progress.
- Miller, R. (2012). Teacher absence as a leading indicator of student achievement. USA: Center for American Progress.
- Miller, R. T., Murnane, R. J. & Willett, J. B. (2007). *Does teacher absenteeism impact student achievement?* Longitudinal evidence from one urban school district. Working Paper. No13356. Massachusetts. Cambridge. <http://www.nber.org>.
- Moody, D. (2002). *Empirical research methods*. Retrieved Nov.11/08 from www.idi.ntnu.no/~ekaterip/dif8916/Emperical%20Research%20Methods%20Outline.pdf
- Morrison, K. (2012). *Understanding Methodology*, In A. R. J. Briggs, M. Coleman & K. Morrison (Eds.), *Research methods in educational leadership and management* (pp. 14-28). London: Sage.
- Morrow, S. L. (2005). *Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research*
- Motshekga, A. (2013). *Electronic clocking –in plan to combat absenteeism*, Post-State of the Nation Address media briefing, Cape Town
- Mthombeni, J. S. (2010). *Teacher absenteeism in schools within the Ekurhuleni, South District Education Department*. Master's Dissertation (Labour Law and Employment), University of Johannesburg.
- Muralidharam, K. & Sundararaman, V. (2008). *Teacher Performance Pay: Experimental Evidence from India*
- Myende, P. E. (2012). School-Community Partnership in Education: A South African rural context. Possibilities on Asset-based Approach.
- Myende, P. & Chikoko, V. (2014). School-University Partnership in a South African Rural Context: Possibilities for an Asset-based Approach. *J Hum E* Vol 46(3): 249-259.
- Myers, M. D. (2009). *Qualitative Research in Business and management*. London: Sage.
- Narayan, K. & Mooij, J. (2010). Solution to teacher absenteeism in rural government primary schools in India: a comparison of management approaches. *The open Educational Journal*, Vol. 3:63-71.

- Nesani, N. A. M. (2008). *Selected school-related reasons why teachers abandon the teaching profession: an Educational Management perspective*. Pretoria University of South Africa.
- Neuman, W. L. (2006). *Social Research Methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches* (6th Ed). New York; Pearson.
- Nkosi, O. (2013). Education: Absentee teachers are a thorn in our side, *Mail & Guardian* (10 March 2013)
- North Ayrshire Council, (2014). *Maximising Attendance Policy & Procedure (Teachers)*. Version: 1.1 Comhairle Siorrachd Air a Tuath.
- Nsubuga, Y. K. (2008). *Analysis of leadership styles and school performance of secondary schools in Uganda, Kampala*. Uganda.
- Obeng-Denter, W., Yeboar, E. A., Sam, C. & Monkah, J. E. (2011). The impact of student and teacher absenteeism on student performance of the Junior High School: The Case of the Kumasi-Metro school District. *Continental J. Education Research* 4(1):7-17.
- Okurut, H. E. (2012). *Build Africa: Nature, causes and magnitude of teacher absenteeism in the rights, education and development (READ) Project schools in Uganda*, Makerere University.
- Omokhodion, J. O. (2008). Assessing the preparedness of Nigeria for the universal basic Education Program. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 5,9,866-870.
- Orlich, D. C., Harder, R. J., Callahan, R. C., Trevison, M. S. & Brown, A. H. (2010). *Teaching strategies: A guide to effective instruction*. Boston: Wedsworth.
- Palmer, S. & Cooper, C. (2010). *How to deal with stress*. UK: Kogan Page.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002) *Qualitative research and evaluative methods*. London: Sage Publications.
- Pitts, K. L. (2010). *Teacher Absenteeism: An examination of Patterns and Predictors*. Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia.
- Prinsloo, C. & Reddy, V. (2012). *Educator leave in the South African public schooling system*; Policy Brief: Human Sciences Research Council.
- Reddy, V., Prinsloo, C. H., Netshitangani, T., Moletsane, R., Juan, A. & VanRensburg, J. (2010). *An investigation into educators leave in the South African ordinary public schooling system*. UNICEF report. Pretoria: DoE.

- Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students*.
- Rockoff, J. E. (2008). *Does Mentoring Reduce Turnover and Improve Skills of New Employees? Evidence from Teachers in New York City*. NBER working Paper No13868. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Rogers, F. H. & Vegas, E. (2009). *No More Cutting Class; Reducing Teacher Absence and Providing Incentives for Performance*. Policy Research Working Paper, 4847, World Bank, Washington DC.
- Rosenblatt, Z., Shapira-Lishchinsky, O. & Shirom, A. (2010). *Absenteeism in Israel school teachers: An organisational ethics perspective*. Human resource management review 20(2010)247-259.
- Republic of South Africa. (1995). *Basic conditions of Employment Act No.66*, Pretoria, Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa, (1998) Employment of educators Act 76; Chapter J., *Leave measures*. Pretoria. Government Printers
- Republic of South Africa. (2007). Determination on leave of absence in Public service. Resolution 1 of 2007, Pretoria, Government Printers.
- Rule, P. & John, V. (2011). *Your guide to Case Study Research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- SACE. (2011). *Redefining the Role and Functions of the South African Council for Educators*. Position Paper
- Saloojee, S. (2009). *“Portraits of rural schooling - What does it mean to be a teacher in a rural school?”*
- SASA Act 84 (1996). Chapter 3. *Roles of school governing bodies in public school*. Pretoria, Government Printers
- Scotland, J. (2012). *Exploring the philosophical underpinnings of Research: Relating Ontology and Epistemology to the Methodology and Methods of the Scientific, Interpretive, and Critical Research Paradigms*. English Language Teaching; Vol 5 (9).

- Scott, L., Vaughn, C., Wolfe, M. & Wyant, C. (2007). *Reducing Teacher Absences in North Carolina*. A Report for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy, Duke University.
- Seale, C. (1999). *The quality of qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). *Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects*
- Sloan, K. (2007). *Holding schools accountable: A handbook for educators and Parents*. Westport CT:Paraeger.
- Sowetan. (2013). Angie plans to deal with lazy teachers. 11 February.
- Spaull, N. (2012). *Learning outcomes, teacher content knowledge and teacher absenteeism*. Stellenbosch University.
- Spaull, N. (2013). *Poverty and Privilege. Primary School Inequality in South Africa*. International Journal of Educational Development, Vol. 33.
- Stake, R. E. (2005). *Qualitative case studies*, In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 443-462). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Stoica, C. A. & Wamsiedel, M. (2012). *Inequity and Inequality: Teacher absenteeism, Romani pupils and Primary schools in Romania*.
- Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. M. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Technique and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Sage.
- Stufflebeam, D. L., Madaus, G. F. & Kellagham, T. (2000). *Evaluation models: Viewpoints on Educational and human services evaluation*, 2nd Edition. KluwerAcademic Publishers, Boston/ Dordrecht London.
- Suryahad, A. & Sambodho, P. (2013) *Assessment of policies to improve teacher quality and reduce teacher absenteeism*. Working Paper. The SMERU Research institute, Jakarta.
- TerreBlanch, M. & Durrheim, K. (1999). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the Social Science*.
- The Nelson Mandela Foundation. (2005). *Emerging Voices: A report of education in South African rural communities*. Cape Town, HSRS Press.
- Thomas, H.V. (2013). *Covering teachers' absence*. Report presented by the Auditor General for Wales to the National Assembly for Wales.

- Thomas, G. (2011). *A typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse and structure*. Birmingham, UK.
- Thompson, C. B. & Walker, B. L. (2002). *Basics of research(part 12), Qualitative research*. Air Medical Journal 17(2), 65-70.
- Toyamah, N., Sulakson, B., Rosfadhila, M., Devina, S., Arif, S., Hutagulung, S. A., Pakpahan, E. & Yusrina, A. (2009). *Teacher absenteeism and remote area allowance, Baseline Survey*. Research report Jakarta: The SMERU Research institute.
- Tracy, R.C. (2012). *Teacher Absence at Portland Public schools: Opportunities for Savings. Performance Audit*.
- Tylor, B., Kernade, S. & Roberts, K. (2007). *Paradigm scribes as designers*.
- UNICEF. (2012). A study on teacher absenteeism in Papua and West Papua
- USAID. (2009). *Teacher Education and Professional Development in Indonesia: A Gap Analysis*. Jakarta: United states Agency for International Development.
- Van Deventer, I. & Kruger, A. G. (2012). *Educators guide to school management skills*. 12 Edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Van Nuland. (2009). *Teacher codes: Learning from experiences*. International Institute for educational planning. Paris, France.
- Van Tonder, C. L. & Williams, C. (2009). *Exploring the origin of burnout among Secondary educators*. SA Journal of Industrial.
- Vaughan, D. K. (2013). *Supporting Teachers through Stress Management, Principal Leadership, Student Service* 12-16.
- Wallen, N. E. & Fraenkel, J. R. (2001). *Educational research: a guide to the process*, 2nd Edition.
- Wandega, A. (2010). *Teacher absenteeism in the Iganga District of Uganda, ANPPCA, Uganda*.
- Wisconsin Association of School Boards. (2011). *Addressing Teacher Absenteeism; 2009-2011 Bargaining goals*. WASB Position Paper Series.
- Weaver, K. & Olson, J.K. (2006). *Understanding paradigms used for nursing research*.

Wills, G. (2014). The effects of teachers strike activity on student learning in South African Primary Schools. ERSA working paper 402.

World Bank. (2006). *Mongolia: Public Financing of Education: Equity and Efficiency Implications*. World Bank, East Asia and Pacific Region, Washington DC.

World Bank. (2008). *Teachers for Rural Schools: Experiences in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda*, African Development Series, World Bank, Washington DC.

World Bank. (2010). *African Development Indicators 2010: Silent and lethal. How quiet corruption undermines Africa's development efforts*. Washington DC.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and Methods*. Sage Social science.

Zuma, J. G. (2009). State of the Nation Address by His Excellency, President of the Republic of South Africa, Joint Sitting of Parliament, Cape Town.

Zuma, J. G. (2013). Address by His Excellency, President of the Republic of South Africa at Gallagher Estate in Midrand.

Appendix A: Letter to the principal

P.O. Box 14079

Merrivale

3291

15 January 2014

The Principal

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

I am a student at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, in the Discipline Educational Leadership, Management and Policy. I am conducting a research in which I explore approaches used by school management teams to manage teacher absenteeism in rural schools.

Your school is invited to participate in a research project entitled **“Exploring school management teams approaches for managing teacher absenteeism in rural schools”** I am looking for two SMT members from your school to interview, preferably, the Principal and the Deputy Principal or Head of Department. The periods of interviews will be between half an hour and one hour, by no means these periods will be scheduled in a way that will impede the progress of teaching and learning. I am also going to need attendance registers and the summary of attendance register in order to do document analysis. Please note that this is not an evaluation of competence of your SMT and not also a commission of enquiry.

There is no direct benefit to your school, if you participate in this research, but your participation is likely to help generate knowledge and greater understanding of the actions put in place and challenges that school management teams face in managing absenteeism in rural schools of uMgungundlovu District. Application for Permission to Conduct Research in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has also been forwarded to The Research unit in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and I am awaiting approval.

The name of your school will be protected at all times. Pseudonyms to replace real names will be used to maintain confidentiality and anonymity all responses in the form fields notes will be sealed and stored in a locked cabinet at UKZN (PMB) for a period of 5 years after all information will be shredded.

If you require any additional information, please feel free to contact:

Faculty of Education: University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg)

Ms Karen Sophie	0332606189	Administrator	Sophie@ukzn.ac.za
Dr Phumlani E Myende	0739912392	Supervisor	myendep@ukzn.ac.za
Miss Sithembile R Gabuza	0721290469	Project leader	sthegabuz14@gmail.com

Yours faithfully

SR Gabuza
(Project leader)

Declaration

I _____ (Full names of the participant) hereby confirm that I understand the content of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT _____

DATE _____

Appendix B: letter of informed consent to participants

P.O. Box 14079
Merrivale
3291
14 January 2014

Dear Participant

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPANTS

This letter serves to inform you that I, **Miss Sithembile Rejoice Gabuza** am a student at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, in the Discipline Educational Leadership, Management and Policy. I am conducting a research in which I explore approaches used by school management teams to manage teacher absenteeism in rural schools.

You are being invited, because of your experience to participate in this research project entitled **“Exploring school management teams approaches for managing teacher absenteeism in rural schools”** You will be once off interviewed on an interview that will be scheduled in a way that will not interrupt your precious time with learners. The period of interview will be between half an hour and one hour.

There is no direct benefit to you, if you participate in this research, but your participation is likely to help generate knowledge and greater understanding of the actions put in place and challenges that school management teams face in dealing with absenteeism in rural schools of uMgungundlovu District. Application for Permission to Conduct Research in Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education Institutions has also been forwarded to The Research unit in Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Education and I am awaiting approval.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from this research at any given time and will not be disadvantaged in any way.

Confidentiality

Your name and the name of your school will be protected at all times. Pseudonyms to replace real names will be used to maintain confidentiality and anonymity all responses in the form

fields notes will be sealed and stored in a locked cabinet at UKZN (PMB) for a period of 5 years after all information will be shredded.

Source of Additional Information.

If you require any additional information, please feel free to contact:

Faculty of Education: University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Pietermaritzburg)

Ms Karen Sophie	0332606189	Administrator	Sophie@ukzn.ac.za
Dr Phumlani E Myende	0739912392	Supervisor	myendep@ukzn.ac.za
Miss Sithembile R Gabuza	0721290469	Project leader	sthegabuzal4@gmail.com

Declaration

I _____ (Full names of the participant) hereby confirm that I understand the content of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT _____

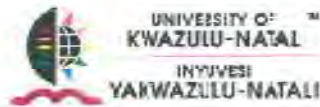
DATE _____

Appendix C: Interview schedule

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Based on your experience, what is the extent of teacher absenteeism in your school?
2. Does the school have its own teacher attendance policy beside the one given by the Department of Education?
 - If yes, explain the procedures that are there to deal with teacher absenteeism.
 - If no, what is the procedure involved in arranging for leave or reporting absence?
 - Is it working?
3. What are some of the reasons that are given by teachers for being absent?
4. What have you done/ are you doing as SMT to increase teacher attendance?
5. Are the actions that you have put in place working?
 - If yes, how your strategies support teachers with the problem?
 - If no, what are the challenges you face in dealing with the problem?
6. Are you doing enough as the Principal/ HOD/DP in managing absenteeism in your school?
7. To what extent the absence of teachers impact on your work and of the school at large?
8. In your opinion, what can be done to increase teacher attendance?

Ethical Clearance from UKZN



17 March 2016

M/s SR Gakuzi 208525256
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Gakuzi

Protocol reference number: 155/1907/016M

New Project Title: Exploring school management teams' approaches about absenteeism in rural schools in Umgungahlovu District

Approval condition – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application for amendment dated 16 March 2015 has now been granted **Full Approval**.

- Change in Title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol (i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent form, Title of the Project, location of the study) **MUST** be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. **PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 5 years from the date of issue. Therefore, Re-certification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research project!

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Shereva Singh (Chair)
Humanities/Social Science Research Ethics

/s/m

Supervisor: Dr Phumlani Nyende
Academic Leader Research: DR. SB. Choza
School Administrator: M/s Tyzer Khumalo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shereva Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X5-4001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 2657/2622/4857 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4859 Email: ethics@ukzn.ac.za / scs@ukzn.ac.za / ethics@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

199 - 2016
19 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Pinetown Campus Pietermaritzburg Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Permission to conduct the study from KZNDOE



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Nontengisi Ngubane

Tel: 033 392 1004

R/f: 2/4/8/534

Ms SR Gabuza
PO Box 14079
MERRIVALE
3291

Dear Ms Gabuza

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM'S PERCEPTIONS ABOUT ABSENTEEISM IN RURAL SCHOOLS IN THE UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
5. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 10 September 2015 to 30 September 2016.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kekologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

UMgungundlovu District

Nkhesinathi S.P. Sishi PhD
Head of Department: Education

Date: 09 September 2015

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004
EMAIL ADDRESS: khehlopile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za / Nontengisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za
CALL CENTRE: 0850 596 163; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: www.kzndoe.gov.za