# VIEWS OF PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND LEARNERS REGARDING FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO TEACHER ABSENTEEISM IN SELECTED JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

## A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT

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# Abstract

This study examined the views of principals, teachers and learners regarding contributing factors to teacher absenteeism in selected junior secondary schools in Windhoek. The following areas guided research questions of the study: Perceived factors contributing to teacher absenteeism; effects of teacher absenteeism on teaching and learning; and strategies used to mitigate teacher absenteeism. A mixed method research approach was adopted. A stratified random sampling technique was used to identify 6 schools from Windhoek and a purposeful sampling was employed to select participants comprised of six (6) principals, twelve (12) grade ten teachers, and thirty three (33) learners.

Semi-structured questionnaires for principals and teachers, and learners were used. Responses from qualitative data (open-ended questions) were analysed using content and cross case analyses, while quantitative data from structured questions were prepared for digital entry, cleaning and analysed using the Statistic Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies and statistics of Chi-square were used to test the effects of various demographic variables.

 The findings revealed that teacher absenteeism was prevalent during the time teachers who were studying were writing examinations at institutions of higher learning and winter periods due to ill-health. Further, it was revealed that leading causes of teacher absenteeism were lack of teachers' commitment and poor school management. Apart from teachers' unpaid leave, and incentives in the form of improved salaries as mitigating strategies, participants were not aware of other alternative measures for addressing teacher absenteeism in schools. In addition, participants identified, among others, learner indiscipline, failure for teachers to

complete the syllabus on time and subsequently, poor academic performance as impacts of teacher absenteeism.

Based on the findings, the study made several recommendations to various stakeholders namely, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, School Principals, Teachers and Learners. For the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, in particular, the study among others recommended the implementation of a substitute teacher system to ensure that absent teachers are replaced at the earliest possible time and help limiting the interruption of the teaching and learning time as planned in the school calendar. The study furthermore, recommended the provision of workshops, in-service training and seminars to principals and teachers for enhancing their professional ethics. In addition, it recommended that schools should put mechanisms in place to motivate learners to improve their school attendance.

The study also identified the need for further research in this area, particularly at the national level and on the effectiveness of the existing measures to mitigate teachers' absenteeism in schools.

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## *Dedication*

This project is dedicated to the following people: my wonderful family, my husband, M. Hipondoka and my daughter M. Hipondoka, my late mother, Rauna N. Shinana and my late brother Elia Shidiwe.

## *Declarations*

I, Ester P. Hipondoka, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher learning.

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Ester P. Hipondoka

# LIST OF ABBRIVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| **ADEA** | Association for Development of Education in Africa |
| **AIDS** | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| **CCTV** | Closed- Circuit Television |
| **HIV** | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| **IBIS** | International Benchmarking Information Society |
| **ICT** | Information Communication Technology |
| **LRC** | Learner Representative Council |
| **NNED** | National Network to Eliminate Disparities |
| **SACMEQ** | Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality |
| **SPSS** | Statistical Package for Social Science |
| **UNICEF** | United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund |
| **USAID** | United States Agency for International Development |
| **USC** | University of Southern California |

# CHAPTER 1:    INTRODUCTION

A number of studies have been conducted on issues that affect learners' performance in Namibian schools. Namupala (2013) for example, investigated factors that contribute to poor performance among grade 10 learners in Onamutai circuit in Oshana region, while Coombe *et al*. (2002) assessed the impact of Human Immunodeficiency Virus or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) on education in Namibia. Other studies paid attention to the relationship between learner absenteeism and academic performance, availability of teaching and learning materials, and a lack of parental involvement in their children's learning. Mwoombola (2001) showed that teacher absenteeism have a negative effect on the learners' academic performance. However, less attention has been given to a holistic understanding of the views of principals, teachers and learners regarding factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism, which is a complex phenomenon that requires an in-depth investigation.

## 1.1 Orientation of the study

This study explored views of principals, teachers and learners regarding factors that contribute to teachers' absenteeism. Several research studies explored factors that contribute to learners' poor academic performance, including teacher qualifications, peer pressure and learner absenteeism (e.g. Finlayson, 2009; Casciou, 2016). While much research has focused on how learner absenteeism affects learning, resulting in conclusions that primarily blame parents, there has been little focus on teacher absenteeism (Finlayson, 2009).

Miller, Murnane and Willet (2007) on the one hand, outlined two concerns regarding teachers' absenteeism: firstly, that a significant portion of teachers' absence is unrestricted and attainable policy changes could reduce rates of absence among teachers. On the other hand, Arnell and Brown (2012) also raised concerns about teachers' absenteeism by claiming that teacher absenteeism seriously disrupts the learning environment. Ivatts (2010, p.5) argued that there is "a widespread general agreement that teacher absenteeism has bad consequences for education systems".

According to Smith (2014), teachers in some of the school districts in America are on average absent from school about 8-10% of the time and as a result, many learners are left with no teacher or taught by a substitute teacher. Smith further argued that teacher absenteeism seriously affects the consistency of a classroom and as a result, learners' academic performance drops because schools find it difficult to attract and recruit substitute teachers. Smith linked teacher absenteeism and learners' poor academic performance by concluding that in schools where learners perform poorly, teachers tend to be absent more often.

Furthermore, in agreement with Smith (2014), Kagia and Patrino (n.d) indicated that teacher absenteeism reduces effectiveness of the school, affects the achievement of learners negatively, damages the reputation of the school and contributes to learner absenteeism. This is because, learners view their teachers as mentors and, thus give them an impression that being absent from school is the correct thing to do.

Duflo (2006), Kremer *et al*. (2005) and Dasetal (2005) cited by Kagia and Patrino (n.d) found a relationship between teacher absenteeism and learner absenteeism. This implies that when teachers tend to be frequently absent, learners follow suit.

In addition, the Association for Development of Education in Africa (ADEA, 2015) indicated that teacher absenteeism is a growing problem in Africa and one of the main contributing factors for low quality education. ADEA further states that teacher absenteeism affects learner achievement, wastes money and demoralises school culture.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

Although teacher absenteeism is reported to be high in some Namibian schools (Siririka, 2011), it is reported beyond Namibia to have no impact on learners' school performance (Miller, Murnane and Willet, 2007). However, in the Namibian context, Siririka (2011, p.7) further argues "… absenteeism is very high in Namibian schools." This raises a great need to monitor what principals, teachers and learners have to say on the subject.

Despite the foregoing observation, Arrnell and Brown (2012) proposed new measures for curbing teacher absenteeism. Even though teacher absenteeism has become a challenge that needs to be addressed particularly in Namibia, none of the studies reviewed have specifically looked at the views of principals, teachers, and learners regarding factors that contribute to teachers' absenteeism, and possible measures to mitigate them.

Among other studies, Mwoombola (2001) investigated teacher absenteeism in Namibia and reported that there was a particularly high rate of teacher absenteeism in secondary

schools in Windhoek, as well as a link between teacher absenteeism and learners' discipline and academic performance. Since Mwoombola's study concentrated only on one secondary school, it is difficult to generalise its findings. In a recent study by Dengeinge, Miranda, Nakashole and Shikongo (2012) teachers' frequent absenteeism in Namibian schools appear to be a problem since it ranged from 32.4 to 41.0% and concluded that there is a link between teacher absenteeism and learner academic performance. However, this study was only conducted at primary schools in Windhoek leaving out secondary schools and the only participants were school principals. Therefore, based on this gap in the available studies in Namibia, there was a need to undertake an in-depth investigation on the phenomenon with regard to principals, teachers and learners views regarding factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism in selected Junior Secondary Schools in Windhoek.

## 1.3 Research questions of the study

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the perceived factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism?
2. How does teacher absenteeism affect teaching and learning in the selected junior secondary schools in Khomas Education Region?
3. How could factors contributing to teachers' absenteeism be addressed?

## 1.4 Significance of the study

The findings of this study could contribute to insights and possible interventions that educational practitioners could employ to reduce teacher absenteeism. The findings of

the study may further provide direction for the revision to the existing teachers' code of conduct and policies.

In addition, principals in the Khomas region and other regions might also benefit from the findings of this study since they may come up with reforms or internal procedures and processes that could reduce teacher absenteeism in their respective schools.

Finally, the findings of this study may assist teachers to minimize or eradicate absenteeism, which would have a positive effect on learners' academic performance.

**1.5 Limitations of the study**

Ideally, the study could have explored views from several respondents in schools across many regions in the country for comparison, but this was not logistically feasible; thus, the Khomas region, where the researcher lives, was selected. Interviews for this study at times, delved into sensitive or personal information, such as teachers' reasons for their absenteeism. Consequently, there was a potential for some teachers hesitating to provide actual reasons for why they were absent. In addition, some respondents demonstrated uneasiness to participate in the study. These limitations could have affected the outcome of the study, however, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and informed consent was obtained before the actual data collection.

**1.6 Definition of terms**

The following operational concepts and terms were used prominently within the context of this study:

**Absenteeism**: According to Denteh, Monkah, Sam & Yeboah (2011) absenteeism can be divided into two parts: culpable absenteeism and non-culpable absenteeism. Culpable absenteeism refers to the lateness or absences for which an employee is responsible because, such problems are within the employee's power to correct and address, for example arriving late to work, leaving early, or one's failure to notify the administration about a planned absence. Non-culpable absenteeism is when an employee is absent due to illness or injury or other reasons beyond the employee's control.

Absenteeism in this study can also apply to teachers who are present at work but not teaching at all. They either tell the learners in their classes to keep quiet and read while attending to personal business, or they simply do not go to class to teach at all (Mwoombola, 2001).

**Substitute teacher**: As adapted in this study refers to a teacher who is hired by the school with the understanding that his/her association with the school will be on a temporary basis, as needed, because of the absence of a permanent teacher. Substitute teachers are paid at an hourly or daily rate that is determined by the school and are not eligible for insurance benefits, bonuses, and do not qualify for vacation or sick leave during the period they are employed as substitutes (IBIS and NNED, 2016).

**Career development**: Denotes the "… lifelong process of fostering and cultivating the shape of the individual's working life so as to make the best use of inherent talents, skills, knowledge and interests for that person"(Peel,1992 as cited by Tadic, 2005, p.13).

**Incentives**: "An object, item or value or desired action or event that spurs an employee to do more of whatever was encouraged by the employer" (Healthfield, 2015, p.1).

**Policy**: In the context of this study it implies "a definite course of method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions" (Merriam –Webster's online dictionary, n.d.).

## 1.7 Conclusion

This chapter provided the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, and significance of the study as well as the limitations of the study. Lastly, the key terms and concepts used were explained in the context of this study. The following chapter focuses on literature review that includes the theoretical framework of the study.

# CHAPTER 2:    LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework on which this study was based, and critically examines the relevant literature on principals, teachers and learner's views regarding factors that contribute to teachers' absenteeism. Within this context, the study examined the nature and meaning of teacher absenteeism, strategies used in schools to mitigate teacher absenteeism, how factors contributing to teacher absenteeism could be addressed as well as perceived factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism.

## 2.2 Theoretical framework

According to USC (2016, p.1) adopting a theoretical framework is important for any study because of the following reasons:

- It allows the researcher to connect to the existing knowledge because when there is a theory in place, it enables the researcher to gain some basis on his/her hypothesis and choice of research methods.
- It helps the researcher to address the how and why questions of the study.
- It also permits the researcher to make a transition from simply describing a phenomenon that he/she have observed to generalising various aspects of that phenomenon; and
- It specifically outlines which key variables influence a phenomenon of interest and points out the need to examine how those key variables might differ and under what circumstances.

This study was based on Ecological theory articulated by Bronfenbrenner in 1979. Bronfenbrenner argues that in order to understand human development, one must consider the entire ecological system in which growth occurs. The ecological subsystem is the micro system. The micro system refers to the relationship between a developing person and the immediate environment such as school and family (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Bronfenbrenner further states that the micro system has a bi-directional influence, which means that a developing person can influence or be influenced by his or her immediate surroundings.

Therefore, in a school setting, learners have a direct interaction with their teachers who are responsible for their academic work. If these teachers are frequently absent, learners will also adapt the same behaviour, which as a result will lead to poor learners' academic performance. Also, when teachers are frequently absent, learners will be left unattended resulting in poor academic performance.

Finally, this theory explains why it is a concern when teachers are absent from school, and why teachers need to be at work and ensuring that teaching and learning is taking place. The theory has further provided a broader understanding of the concept absenteeism, and it should be conceptualised in a classroom setting.

## 2.3 Factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism

Goodman & Lee (2015), Castro and Duthileul (2007) and Kwesi (2013) found that HIV and AIDS and other illness as well as maternity leave are the main contributors to teacher absenteeism. Consequently, teachers tend to be absent from school which in the end results in serious decline in productivity.

Following this line of argument, Castro and Duthileul (2007) as well as Ejere (2010) found that schools that encountered a high percentage of teacher absenteeism is due to behavioural problems such as, the abuse of alcohol and a lack of self discipline. In addition, these studies also indicated that unplanned workshops, meetings during class time, family commitments, transport problems, injuries and accidents have also contributed significantly to teacher absenteeism (Ejere, 2010). Dandapeni, Goodman and Lee (2015) in the study carried out in the Pacific region identified factors such as compassionate leave, vacations, administrative work, child care, community responsibilities, maternity leave, storms or heavy rains and study leave as contributing factors to teacher absenteeism.

In an attempt to find ways on how challenges associated to teacher absenteeism could be addressed, Rogers and Vegas (2009), Ejere (2010) and Dandapeni *et al.* (2015) argued that attending to teachers' financial incentive matters could reduce teacher absenteeism since teachers would most likely be motivated to turn up for work if they have better salaries. The same studies claimed that teachers' salaries could also be a contributing factor to teacher absenteeism because if teachers' salaries are low, then they tend to be stressed and then get ill because they depend on their meagre salaries to provide for themselves and their families.

In this regard, Dandapeni *et al* (2015) noted that teacher absenteeism is higher at public schools in comparison to private schools in Nigeria and some of the Sub- Saharan countries due to over populated classrooms, high student poverty as well as poor school planning.

Citing Usman *et al.,* (2004, p.56), Mampane (2013) takes a gender dimension, and claim that in lower income countries, men tend to be frequently absent compared to woman because of insufficient income. On a contrary however, other studies such as Scott and McClellan (1990) as cited by Mampane (2013) indicate that women tend to be frequently absent in high income countries in comparison to men. This is because women have to fulfil duties such as caring for sick children and dependent adults as these are regarded as women's responsibility and not men's.

On the other hand however, Denteh, Monkah, Sam and Yeboah (2011), Smith (2014), Wills (2014), Ainslie (2013), and NNED and IBIS (2015) indicated that the following professionally related factors contribute to teacher absenteeism: a lack of proper teacher training, student-teacher ratio and strikes. Strikes are among the most critical contributing factors to teacher absenteeism in Africa (Wills, 2014). Wills further stated that when labour unrest occurs, as it happened in September 2007 in South Africa, teachers were reported absent for 19 days on average per annum. Furthermore, Ainslie (2013) indicated that the reasons why teachers long absence from work occur is because teachers felt undervalued, disrespected, and unsupported due to the negative stereotypes of teaching. Most people view the teaching career as an "all comers job" or "a career for second–rate civil servants" (Ainslie, 2013, p.1).

Putting an emphasis on teachers' training and learner-teacher ratio, Ainslie (2013) explained that teacher training provided by high education institutions is off-the-cut since it lacks depth and not in a coordinated manner. Thus, there is a gap between theory and practice during teacher training that consequently leads to low teacher morale and high absenteeism. This implies that, when teachers are not properly trained, they are likely to fail interpreting the syllabus correctly or handling disciplinary issues among learners; thus, resulting into frustrations and then absenteeism. In addition, the student-teacher ratio contributes to teacher absenteeism because when teachers are faced with a bigger group with behavioural problems, they are faced with a challenge of disciplining such a group at the expense of teaching. At times, learners might interfere with teaching and learning, resulting into teachers being frustrated and in the end not turning up for work (Chingos and Whitehurst, 2011).

Other factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism include inadequacy of attendance audit and job dismay, overworked (Denteh, *et al*. 2011) and poor school infrastructure (NNED and IBIS, 2016). Job dismay implies that teachers are constantly worried, disappointed or upset about their job. In this case, therefore, they develop a tendency of absenteeism as a coping mechanism through a voidance of the school environment.

NNED and IBIS (2016), Ainslie (2013), and Smith (2014), claimed that the following social factors are reasons for teacher absenteeism: Improper nutrition, abuse, and lack of accommodation. According to NNED and IBIS (2016), such factors are contributing to teacher absenteeism in rural primary schools in Northern and Upper East Regions in Ghana.

**2.4 The effects of teacher absenteeism on teaching and learning**

Some researchers including Finlyson (2009) identified teacher absenteeism as a serious problem within the teaching fraternity. Finlayson (2009, p.15) states, "statistical evidence shows that students whose teachers miss more days of class have lower scores on state achievement tests." This implies that students who were taught and studied have a greater advantage than those who studied on their own without being taught since their teachers were absent regularly. According to Badcock-Walters and Heard (2007, p.2) "in many communities in developing countries affected by AIDS, schools are closing due to the absence of teachers. "It is apparent that teacher absenteeism when excessive will impact negatively on student academic achievement as a student learning is disrupted when a teacher is repeatedly absent from the classroom" (Ejere, 2010, p.115).

Teacher presence in school does matter and there is no doubt that it has a negative effect on the achievement of students (Miller *et al.* 2007). Miller *et al.* claimed that student performance decreased by 1-2 percent for every ten days that a teacher did not go to work. Their findings were confirmed by Charles, Ladd and Vigdor (2009) who illustrated that within ten days of a teacher's absenteeism, a decline of 1.7 percent of a standard deviation specifically in Mathematics and a nine percent in reading was recorded.

Miller *et al.* (2007), Arnell and Brown (2012) concluded that when a teacher is on leave and is replaced by a substitute teacher, learners' academic performance is negatively affected because substitute teachers might not make the necessary connections between knowledge gained by the regular teacher and that of the substitute teacher. Additionally,

Bruno e*t al.* (2007) as cited by Finlyson (2009) pointed out that a substitute teacher will not know the individual learners' skill levels which makes it difficult for them to provide instructions that addresses the needs of individual students. A similar concern was raised by Smith (2014) who claimed that lack of substitute teachers and the effectiveness of substitute teachers negatively affect teaching and learning.

Miller *et al.* (2007, p.7) provides a practical example, "if a teacher is absent, it does not only affect the academic performance of the students of which he or she is teaching but also those of his or her colleagues, because it reduces collaboration between teachers and increases the workload for teachers who are not absent". In Ghana for example, teacher absenteeism has become critical issue. According to the National Network to Eliminate Disparities (NNED) and the International Benchmarking Information Society (IBIS) (2016), present teachers are required to accommodate learners of the absent teachers. This is not an easy practice since classes tend to be too overcrowded. Another implication is that teachers who are always present and willing to accommodate other teachers' learners experience fatigue as a result develop the same attitude so that regular absentees also feel the pinch as well (IBIS & NNED, 2016). In all these antiques, the learners are at the receiving end.

In addition, the majority of teachers who are frequently absent find it very challenging to finish their syllabi on time. If they manage to finish the syllabus however, it would be because teaching and learning was done hastily. As a result, thereof, learners are left hanging, as there would be no time for revision so that they can impend on materials, which were not clear to them during lessons (IBIS & NNED, 2015).

Bruno (2002), USAID (2015) and Kwesi (2013) citing Ehrenberg *et al.* (1991) examining effects teacher absenteeism on learners, argued that learners' motivation is damaged in the process. They also argued on the adverse effects it has on learner absenteeism that would increase resulting in their missing important lessons and skill development. Conversely, Ehrenberg (2005) cited by Ivatts (2010) concluded that as teacher absenteeism decreased, decreases in learner absenteeism followed. According to Chaudhury *et al.* (2005) cited by Ivatts (2010, p.9) "…children experience a successful education when they are exposed to a high- quality learning environment". In addition, research shows that teacher absenteeism in African countries is higher compared to that of teachers in America. Statistically Schierhout *et al.* (2004) cited by Castro, Cailods and Duthileul (2007) indicated that 1.6% and 2.6% of staff employed  in two South African provinces were absent from school for more than 30 consecutive days in a year. This high rate of absenteeism influenced learners' absentee rates, which were between 7 and 11% during the two weeks that the study was conducted.

Furthermore, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Global Campaign for Education India Resources (2010) cited by Ivatts (2010) shows that teacher absence leads to learners prematurely dropping out of school. According to that report, India has a learner dropout rate of 52.79%, which their Prime Minister attributed such a situation to teacher absenteeism, a lack of adequate facilities and inadequate supervision by local authorities.

In addition, Badcock-Walters and Heard (2007, p.2) raised a serious concern about the number of leave days taken by teachers, specifically in Erongo region as well as in the Northern part of Namibia. They found that in 2005, 46.3% of teachers in Erongo region

have taken sick leave while funeral attendance in the north stood at 60%. Another concern the study raised is that teacher absenteeism cost the Ministry of Education a lot of money. "In Erongo region, absenteeism is estimated to have cost N$2, 659 130 in 2005, due to 9737 days of absence being reported". "If this estimation is extrapolated across the country, the cost of teacher absenteeism in 2005 could have exceeded N$60, 000, 000".

**2.5 How factors contributing to teacher absenteeism could be addressed**

Unlike in the United States where substitute teachers are provided to schools if a teacher is absent, the scenario in Namibia is rather different. Relief teachers in Namibia are only provided to schools if there is a long absence due to chronic illness for instance, and new teachers can only be recruited if there is a vacancy (Castro *et al.* 2007). Further, Castro *et al*. (2007) claim that if a teacher is absent, the only way to accommodate the unattended learners is to ask another teacher to oversee the class, or have the learners join another class or learners are left unattended. According to Badcock-Walters and Heard (2007) and Bellamy (2007), the then the Ministry of Education did not have a relief teacher strategy in place, which still is the current situation. Thus, without a guiding framework in case of teacher absenteeism, learners are left unattended or placed under the supervision of older learners if not community volunteers.

The Public Service Staff Rules Misconduct and Disciplinary Action, section (25 to 29) of the Public Service Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995) of the Namibian government stipulates that "abusing of sick leave as well as repeated absence from the work place while on duty, repeated un-authorised and/ un-communicated absenteeism" are regarded as serious offenses. This implementation at a school level however has been a challenge.

Despite the fact that Section 26 (1) of the Education Act, no. 16 (2001, p56), which is undergoing amendment lays out procedures to be followed for example, an offender should be given first written, and second written warning, the third offence is charged as misconduct and appropriate action could be taken against such an offender.

According to Dandapeni *et al*. (2015), citing Kremer et al. (2005), in some countries such as India excessive absenteeism could lead to teacher dismissal from work. However, Dandapeni further noted that, only one head teacher from a public school in India was fired among 3,000 teachers due to excessive absenteeism. Similar situation could be observed in South Africa, where teachers could be charged with misconduct whenever they are absent for 14 consecutive days without a valid reason and without permission as per section 18 (i) (j) of the Employment of Education Act no.76 of 1998 (Mampane, 2013, p.36).

Implication from the foregoing observations is that excessive teacher absenteeism is a serious offense by law the world over, and many countries have put legal frameworks to mitigate the problem. Given the severity of the problem and the implications it has in the teaching and learning particularly in developing countries, ADEA (2015) proposed ways to mitigate teacher absenteeism in Africa such as: improving the working condition of teachers, introducing teacher allowances/bush allowances for the teachers working in remote areas as a way of keeping teachers in schools. Another proposal ADEA made was that, there should be an "ICT based application to report teacher absenteeism on a daily basis by schools and undertake analysis of patterns of absenteeism by individual teacher and schools" (ADEA, 2015, p.6). Implementation of an information management system in the education sector to coordinate the reporting mechanisms

concerning teacher absenteeism and other educational activities is key in enhancing effective and efficient management of schools.

In contribution to the same discussion, Rogers and Vegas (2009) also listed ways in which teacher absenteeism could be reduced namely, by providing necessary facilities and teaching materials, career improvement, pension, health insurance and internal motivation. Rogers & Vegas 2009, p.19-20, further attest that:

> .…the best method for combating teacher absence and encouraging better performance in any given school system will depend on the context-including the profile of teachers, the general quality of governance in the country or region, the amount of support and monitoring the education ministry, and the extent of community involvement in school management.

It is evident that proper management of schools and provision of teacher incentives have a role to play in addressing teacher absenteeism in schools. In support of this observation, Mampane (2013, p. 48-50) citing Smith (2000, p.12), and Usman *et al*. (2004, p.15) proposed a list of strategies that could be used to mitigate teacher absenteeism in schools:

- In case of teachers who opt to teach overtime, there should be financial incentives available for them in order to keep them in schools.
- Increasing teacher morale so that they feel valued and appreciated by giving them recognition for the job well done. Employers should also warmly welcome back the absent teachers who were on sick leave so that they feel valued and needed, by asking them how they are feeling, physically and emotionally, in order to assess their readiness for work. Absent teachers should be made aware

that their presence left a gap in the school among the colleagues and learners so that they feel missed and valued.

- Reduce time spent attending to regular school as well as classroom duties. Teachers can be sent by the school management to go for workshops or school related meetings to get some time away from the day-to-day activities at school. When teachers return to schools, they will be energised, motivated and have gained additional subject knowledge.
- There should be a central database in schools that would be used to record leave for official business. This will enable the school to have a proper record of the leave days taken by teachers and have concrete evidence why such teachers skip work. This provides concrete evidence of frequency teacher absenteeism.

Additionally, Kwesi, (2013) and Nyirenda, (2014, p.1) also proposed ways which schools can follow in order to mitigate teacher absenteeism taking the attention completely away from financial incentives. Their suggestions are as follow:

- There should be an employee assistance programmes in place to ensure that employers are providing support to their employees in order to avoid a stressful staff.
- There should be an unquestionable leadership in the work place.
- In case of a staff member who has a serious problem and the employer is aware of it, such a problem should be dealt with forthwith.
- All management members should receive proper training in their field.
- Both education stakeholders should collaborate so that they can have a favourable working environment.

Furthermore, citing King and Ozler (2001), USAID (2015) indicated that one of the effective strategy used in Nicaragua to tackle teacher absenteeism especially in rural area is the involvement of parents in their children's education as well as in administration matters. However, in Uganda, district officials occasionally monitor the school day to day activities to ensure that teachers get additional training and minimize student-teacher ratio in order to curb teacher absenteeism (USAID, 2015). Since this strategy seems to be effective in Uganda, Smith (2014) suggested that other district officials in other regions globally should follow suit.

Smith (2014) also suggested other strategies that schools can put in place to mitigate teacher absenteeism as follow:

- Installing a monitoring camera - Teachers are required to take pictures of themselves and their learners during the start of the day, and when school closes. Such cameras should have a "tamper-proof date and time" (Banerjee and Duflo, n.d., p.6). In return, teachers get a bonus upon their payday if they have a good attendance record.

- Giving rewards for performance instead of presence- Awards should be given to top performing schools as well as most improved schools so that teachers will be eager to turn up for work, work hard and look forward to receiving their awards end of the year.

- Community participations- Even if members of the community have no right to dismiss teachers, they should be involved in school activities by being school board members and giving out awards to teachers. Such an involvement will

make teachers feel that they have support from the community and in return, they will feel motivated to attend to teaching and learning every working day.

- Smith (2014, p.3) advised schools to design a comprehensive plan of action to tackle factors that lead to teacher absenteeism. Other methods on how factors contributing to teacher absenteeism can be addressed according to Smith (2014, p.4) include:

- There should be guidelines for attendance as well as an attendance audit, which schools should try out and see how effective it is.
- Personal counselling should be provided to the teachers who are absent due to stress.
- An awareness of the abuse of sick leave should be created among teachers so that they will know the consequences of such an abuse.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented the theoretical framework on which the study was based and critically examined the relevant literature on factors regarding teacher absenteeism and the effects it has thereof on learner's academic performance. While teacher absenteeism was identified as a chronic disease in schools in Africa including Namibia, this chapter discussed mitigation strategies that could be employed by the school management to address teacher absenteeism in schools in Windhoek. The next chapter describes the research methodology that was adopted in data collection and analysis.

# CHAPTER 3:     METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design (mixed method) that was adopted based on the nature of the study. It further presents the methodology employed, in the collection and analysis of data. In addition, it explains the population, sample, data collection procedure, research instruments, and ethical issues that were taken into consideration.

## 3.2 Research design

Johnson and Christensen (2004) define a research design as a plan that one is determined to use in order to look for answers for his or her research problem. It is a logical model of proof that enables the researcher to draw conclusions concerning relationships among variable being investigated (Johnson and Christensen, 2004).

This study employed a mixed method approach, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches in collecting and analysing data. The merit of using mixed methods research is that it facilitates a more comprehensive study from which more information is acquired in order to develop more hypotheses and to enable the collection of more data for future discussion and research (Moss, 2016).

Qualitatively, a case study design was adopted to enable the researcher to undertake an in-depth study from the six identified schools (Patton, 2002); while quantitatively about half of the 25 Junior Secondary Schools in Windhoek were randomly selected using stratified random sampling for the study as a representative sample as further elaborated below.

Furthermore, comparative analysis was adopted to compare interviewees' responses based on school sites.

## 3.3 Population

Bryman (2001) defined a population as a universe of units from which a sample is selected. In agreement with Bryman (2001), Gay *et al*. (2009) defined population as a bigger group from which one draws a sample.

In this research, the target population consisted of all principals, teachers and learners in all state secondary schools in Windhoek (25 schools in total) who made up the population.

## 3.4 Sample

Shark (2006) defined sampling as a process of selecting participants of the study. In this study, information from the Ministry of Education reports on the schools that perform below, around and above the national average in grade ten was used in the selection of the sample.

Quantitatively, a stratified random sampling was used to select a sample from the lowest, highest as well as intermediate performing schools. The advantage of using stratified random sampling in this study was that it allowed the researcher to provide each performing school category a proportional representation in the sample selection (Patton, 2002).

The researcher was obtained a report on the Khomas region grade 10 performance rankings results for the 2014 academic year from the regional office and then randomly

selected schools from each sub-group (the highest, intermediate and lowest). The lottery method was used to draw the sample (Hunt and Tyrrell, 2001). Each school was assigned a unique number, which was placed into a box, mixed thoroughly and then randomly picked the required number. Consequently, a sample of 24% of schools in the Khomas region, all situated in Windhoek, was drawn (which gave a total of 6 schools).

Qualitatively, purposeful sampling was used to select respondents who participated in the study. Participants included six (6) principals from the six (6) selected schools and twelve (12) grade ten classrooms register teachers who have recorded high failure rates among their learners. In addition, thirty-three (33) learners who were part of the Learners' Representative Council (LRC) and serve in the disciplinary committee from six identified schools in Windhoek. Purposeful sampling enabled the researcher to select information-rich respondents for an in-depth study of the phenomenon (Patton, 2002).

### 3.5 Research instruments

Semi-structured questionnaires using open-ended questions (see Appendix 6) were used to collect data from school principals and teachers. According to Patton (2002), the advantage of using open-ended questions is that it allows researchers to understand and capture the view points of their participants without being biased through prior selection to questionnaire categories.

Semi structured questionnaires (see Appendix 5) were used to collect data from the learners. The questionnaires were handed out to learners at the six participating schools. Most questions required a response in the form of five point Likert Scale. The grade 10 learners filled in the questionnaires with no interference from the researcher to avoid

influencing their responses. However, the researcher gave the instructions to the respondents and independently allowed then to complete the questionnaire. At each school, an assigned class teacher who voluntarily administered the questionnaires collected them after they have been completed by the respondents. The researcher collected questionnaires after a day or two in some cases. The advantage of using questionnaires was that it was cheaper and affordable, and it required less time to administer when compared to other methods of data collection. Furthermore, responses from structured questionnaires were easy to analyse (Gay *et al*. 2009).

**3.5.1 Pilot study**

The researcher conducted a pilot study in order to test the validity and reliability of instruments. The study was conducted in the junior secondary schools in the Khomas region among the group of 16 respondents that comprised of 3 principals, 3 teachers and 10 learners to pretest the instruments. This smaller number of respondents had similar characteristics to those of the target group of respondents. The pilot study was carried out in the same manner outlined in the data collection procedure (see Appendices 5 and 6).

There are six major reasons as identified by Robson (1993, p. 164 – 65); and Brace (2004, p. 164) as to why it is important to conduct a pilot study before the actual research is carried-out. Using these reasons the pilot study was undertaken to determine whether:

- there were  ambiguities  in any of  the items;

- the instrument would elicit the type of data anticipated by the researcher;

- the respondents understood the questions;

- the interview questions captured the attention of the respondents throughout the interview session;

- the respondents understood the instructions in the questionnaire; and whether

- the type of data collected could be meaningfully analysed in relation to the stated research questions.

As an indication of the assessment of the reliability of the instruments, the results of the pilot study are indicated in the following section.

**3.5.2 Results of the pilot study**

The results of the pilot study demonstrated that the instruments were valid and reliable for the present investigation, and that the majority of the items were understood by the respondents. Just as Babbie (2001) cited by Vos, Strydom, Ouché and Delport (2005, p. 210) has observed, "…no matter how carefully a data-collection instrument is designed, there is always the certainty of possible error, and the surest protection against the error is pretesting the instrument". Consistent with this, the pilot study revealed that there was a need to revise some parts of both instruments (Appendix 5, for the learners and Appendix 6, for the teachers and principals.

**3.6 Data collection procedure**

After clearance was obtained from the University Ethical Clearance Committee, permission was sought from the Ministry of Education to collect data at the schools prior to beginning research activities (see Appendix 3). Before handing out questionnaires, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to respondents and assured them of the confidentiality of the information collected that it would not be used for any other

purpose apart from research. In order to avoid disruption or interference with the teaching and learning activities data collection was done after school hours. Semi-structured questionnaires were administered to the learners, school principals and teachers.

## 3.7 Data analysis

Information obtained through open-ended questions was analysed using cross-case analysis. Patton (2002, p.440) defines cross-case analysis as "a method of grouping together all the answers from different people to common questions, or "analysing different perspectives on central issues". In addition, cross-case analysis enhanced the search for patterns or themes. Direct quotations of respondent's views were used to illustrate the findings. The researcher prepared questionnaires that contained all the data collected during fieldwork by dividing them into meaningful segments. Themes that occurred frequently were put together and then discussed.

Quantitative data obtained from structured questions was prepared for computer entry, cleaning and processing using the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Chi-square was used to test the effects of various demographic variables on views regarding teacher absenteeism and also "to create meaning and make sense of the Likert scale data" (Likando, 2008, p.127). Demographic information was presented in a form of tables.

## 3.8 Ethical considerations

Resnik (2015) indicated several reasons why it is important to adhere to ethical norms in research. First, ethical norms promote truth and knowledge, which helps against

falsifying or misinterpreting research data. Second, it helps in promoting values that are important to collaborative work, including trust, accountability, mutual respect as well as fairness. Finally, it assists in the building of public support for research because people as individuals or companies are more likely to fund a research project if they can trust the quality as well as the integrity of research.

Participants were informed of the nature of the study and informed consent was obtained prior to the interviews. Informed consent was obtained when the researcher orally communicated to participants about their willingness to participate in the study in a simple and direct language. Also, the researcher explained to the participants that they had the right to decline or withdraw from the study any time they felt pressured by time or questions asked without any consequence. Participants were assured that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained by limiting access to anyone who could expose individual identities and by not reporting any individual data but rather reporting the data in a group form. Participation in this study was voluntary since participants were not forced to take part. Collection of data was done in such a way that it did not interfere with the respondents' work or disrupt the teaching and learning. Hence, data collection was done only when respondents were free from their day-to-day duties or activities.

### 3.9 Conclusion

This chapter explained the research methodology employed. It outlined the research design, population, sample, research instruments, techniques used in data collection and analysis, and ethical issues taken into consideration. The results of the study will be presented in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 4:     RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

## 4.1 Introduction

Results of this study are presented according to the items in two data-collection instruments employed that were semi- structured questionnaires for school principals and teachers and semi-structured questionnaires for learners. These enabled the researcher to draw conclusions from the data collected. The conclusions drawn from results offer solutions to the three research questions.

The first section presents the biographical data of participants (school principals and teachers). It further presents and discuses the findings on how principals and teachers conceptualise the concept 'teacher absenteeism', their views on times when teacher absenteeism usually occur; and strategies put in place to address teacher absenteeism.

The second section presents and discusses data from semi structured questions (learners' responses) in the following manner: gender, school ranking and grade performance rate. Results of closed-ended questions were presented in a form of frequencies and descriptive statistics using Cross Tabulations and Simple ratios also by using chi-square.

## 4.2 TEACHERS' AND PRINCIPALS' VIEWS REGARDING FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

### 4.2.1 Participants' biographical information

Ten (10) of the eighteen (18) participants were female teachers and four (4) of the eight (8) male participants were principals. Based on the gender category there were more female teachers than male, while the situation was reversed at management level. This lack of representation of women at management levels has been a general phenomenon at all levels in the public and private sector. In relation to qualifications, only one participant indicated having not yet obtained an education qualification. However, this participant was pursuing a Bachelor Honours degree at the time of the study. The rest had qualifications ranging from a diploma, bachelor's and honour's degrees in education.

Except for one student teacher, all participants were permanently employed. Eleven participants were between the age of 20-30 and seven were in the age category of 40-50 years. All participants taught grades (8-12) of which four each were part of the science, commerce, and language departments, while the social sciences department had six participants. Ten participants had more than five years of teaching experience, while the rest had less than five years of experience. Finally, on average, participating schools had a maximum teaching staff of 35 to 39.

### 4.2.2 Understanding of the concept teacher absenteeism

The responses on teacher absenteeism have been used to understand teachers' conceptualization of the concept 'teacher absenteeism'. Here are some of the responses:

- "Teacher being absent from work without a valid reason and learners are left alone without anybody teaching them."

- "When teachers take time away from work this can be due to sickness or for personal reasons."

- "Teacher absenteeism is when teachers stay away from duty without any proper authorization or without proper arrangements."

- "Teacher absenteeism is the pattern of teachers not attending school without any valid reason for being absent and without informing colleagues, learners and management beforehand."

- "It is the culture of staying away from work willingly or unwillingly with or without a valid reason."

The respondent's responses indicate that they have a common idea on the understanding of what teacher absenteeism means. However, these responses show that teachers only have a single-dimensional understanding of the concept 'teacher absenteeism'. Teacher absenteeism can also be referred to teachers who are physically present at work but not engaging in actual teaching (Mwoombola, 2001). These limitations however, result into teachers being at school but not actively engaged in the actual teaching. This may negatively affect learners' performance as teachers though physically present at school, no teaching is taking place, and as a result the syllabi might not be completed.

**4.2.3 Experiences of teacher absenteeism**

All eighteen (18) participants had experienced teacher absenteeism at their schools. One respondent commented that "… absenteeism is a normal phenomenon, everybody falls sick or needs to attend to private family matters once in a while".

Ten out of eighteen participants indicated that they know that teacher absenteeism is common at their schools and that at least two or three teachers are absent on a daily basis, and thus present teachers have to receive a group of learners to supervise or accommodate them in their classes due to their teacher's absence. Some respondents said "… yes, we experienced teacher absenteeism at our school since we often receive supervision"; "… almost every day there is a teacher or two teachers absent". In agreement with teacher responses, Badcock-Walters and Heard (2007) reported that the Namibian Ministry of Education does not have a formalised teacher-relief strategy and, thus, schools usually just place learners whose teachers are absent under temporary supervision. The implication of teacher absenteeism at these schools is that, if no measures are taken to mitigate it, teaching and learning will be negatively affected.

Sixteen (16) of the eighteen (18) participants reported that learners whose teachers are absent are sent for supervision to their colleagues' classes that are present. One respondent claimed that they hire relief teachers in case of long absences and pay them using the school funds. Another indicated that "although one can apply at the Ministry for a relief teacher, we find private people ourselves since the bureaucracy is very time consuming". These findings are consistent with those of Castro *et al.* (2007) who indicated that relief teachers in Namibia are only provided whenever there is a long absence due to chronic illness. However, what this implies is that in the events where a

teacher is only absent for a short period the teaching and learning is not seriously taken into consideration since learners are sent to other teachers' classes to be monitored, but not taught.  What the foregoing argument entails is that the continuous absence of a teacher on an irregular basis may not be considered as a long absenteeism to qualify for a relief teacher. This is because, a teacher may be absent twice every week but since he or she appears at school occasionally, even though no active teaching and learning is taking place the situation is not considered as acute since the teacher does show up.

Consistent with the reasoning above is one participants' response that "teachers who are present are usually busy with their day to day activities, and learners whose teachers are absent are sent either to the lecture hall or the amphitheatre". In case of supervision, respondents noted that it is ample time that is lost during supervision because they have to keep the learners busy in one way or another, which in some cases the tasks provided might not tally with the syllabi requirements. Therefore, this exercise makes them neglect their regular work in order to pay attention to the learners. One respondent said: "I usually play classroom games or do short quizzes if I have to supervise a class of students whose teacher is absent".

**4.2.4 Critical times when absenteeism usually occur**

Teachers and principals were asked to state the times they thought teacher absenteeism at their schools was more common. Table 1 below illustrates their responses.

**Table1: Times of teachers' frequent absenteeism (N=18)**

| Times of absences | Winter | Institutions Higher Learning exam time | Mondays & Fridays | Pay day | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **N** | *6* | *8* | *2* | *2* | *18* |
| **%** | 33% | 53% | 7% | 7% | **100%** |

The data in table 1 show that most teachers tend to be absent during the time of high institution exams. This is because 53% of participants indicated that teacher absenteeism at their schools occurs around this time due to professional development. However, teachers also tend to be absent during wintertime as 33% of participants have indicated. They pinpointed wintertime since they believe that when it is cold, teachers tend to be sick and thus resulting in absenteeism.

In agreement with the findings of this study, McMenamin (2010) and Arquette (2015) found that in the United States, workers' absences attributed to illness, injury, or medical appointment occur frequently during winter season. Sometimes these workers are absent due to coughs, colds and flu or other seasonal illnesses that are common during the winter months.

Additionally, Fridays and Mondays and Paydays constitute 67% of teachers' absenteeism. Other participants indicated that teachers tend to be absent on Fridays and Mondays. This finding is similar to that of Juan, Moletsane, Netshitangeni, Prinsloo,

Reddy and Rensberg (2010) who reported that in high and low income countries, teachers are more frequently absent on these two days of the week and when they are attending professional development workshops. Miller (2008) and Juan *et al.* (2010) indicated that the reason why teachers' absent rates are higher on Mondays and Fridays is simply to prolong their weekend.

### 4.2.5 Root causes of teacher absenteeism

Teachers and principals were also asked to indicate their views on the root causes of teacher absenteeism. Their responses are summarized in figure 1 below.
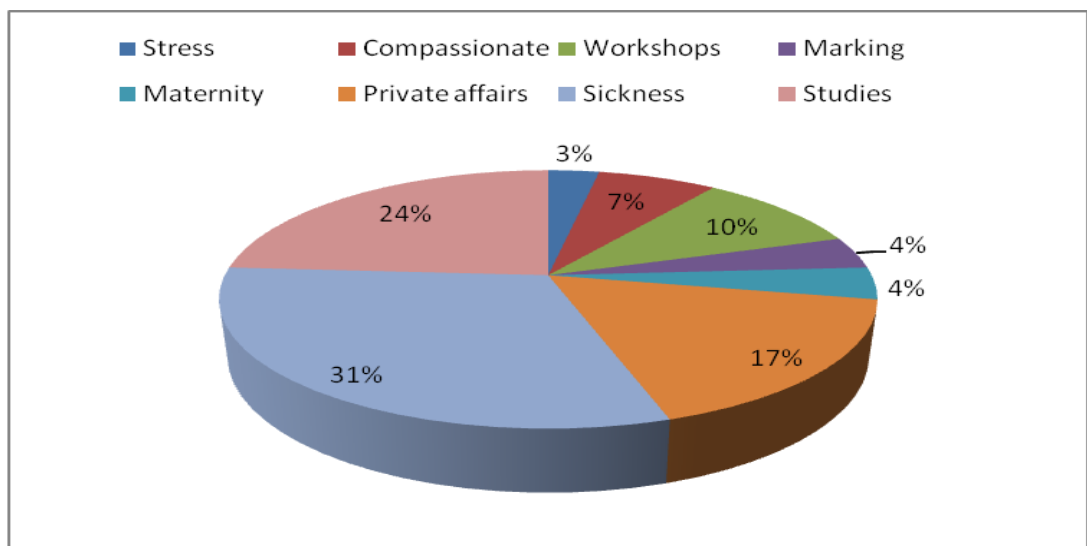


*Figure 1: Root causes of teacher absenteeism*

Figure 1 shows that 31% (majority) of respondents indicated that the root cause of teacher absenteeism at their schools is sickness. With one respondent saying, "we have many teachers who are not so young and they fall ill more often". Twenty-four percent (24%) of respondents indicated that professional development is the root cause of teacher absenteeism at their schools. This is because teachers normally stay away from

work during examination times of the higher institutions of learning where they are studying. In this regard, it needs to be mentioned that researchers such as Dandapeni, Goodman & Lee (2015), Castro *et al.* (2007), and Kwesi (2013) concur with the finding of this study since they found that HIV and AIDS and other illness contribute immensely to teacher absenteeism. In the same vein, Bowers (2010) in North America, Mampane (2013) and Musyoki (2015) in South Africa and Miller (2008) in Peru also found a link between ill-health and teacher absenteeism.

Some other root causes of teacher absenteeism according to respondents were private matters, maternity leave, marking, workshops, compassionate leave and stress. Stress, marking and maternity were the least commonly named causes of teacher absenteeism at 3 and 4 percent respectively, which is consistent with Ejere (2010) and Wills (2014) who found that these factors are always the least causes of absenteeism.

Some respondents indicated that a lack of commitment and lack of motivation are the root causes of teacher absenteeism at their schools. These findings are in agreement with Musyoki (2015), who indicated that teacher absenteeism could be attributed to a lack of motivation and commitment in Kenyan schools. Musyoki found that schools with good motivation programmes have a lower teacher absenteeism compared to those with poor motivation programmes. This also seems to be the case in some Sub-Saharan African countries and some countries in Asia since Bennel (2004) found similar results: many teachers are poorly motivated and this leads to bad behaviour, including teacher absenteeism.

However, one respondent said, "… a lack of awareness on the logistics of the usage of leave is one of the main causes of teacher absenteeism". Another respondent outlined

that "emotional exhaustion may cause absenteeism". Additionally factors such as school management and a lack of teaching and learning materials also share the blame on causing teacher absenteeism. Musyoki (2015) and Kawana (2007) found that a lack of regular supervision and assessment of teachers by principals, and school assessment by Ministry officials could aggravate teacher absenteeism. Similarly, Bennel (2004) further claims that poor human resource management seriously de-motivate employees and a lack of formal administrative control over teachers in Kenyan schools, mostly in rural areas, contributed to teacher absenteeism. As a result, Bennel (2004) reached a conclusion that effective management training programmes for head teachers can lead to noticeable improvements in teacher behaviour and performance in Kenya and Botswana.

Bennel's findings can be helpful in improving teacher's attendance in Namibian schools if the idea of introducing effective management training programmes is adopted by the Ministry of Education Arts and Culture. It would mean that principals and Head of Departments would get additional training on how to manage schools properly and how best they can avoid bad behaviour like teacher absenteeism among teachers at their respective schools.

Finally, Chaudhury, *et al*. (2006) found that average schools with best infrastructure and equipment had far lower absence rates than those schools with worst infrastructure. Also, Glewwe & Kremer (2006), proposed that if schools improve their infrastructure and start using proper teaching and learning equipment, they might experience smaller absence rates.

**4.2.6 Awareness of strategies put in place to address teacher absenteeism**

Respondents were asked whether they were aware of any strategy at their schools, regional or the ministry level to address teacher absenteeism. The data in Figure 2 captures the participants' responses.
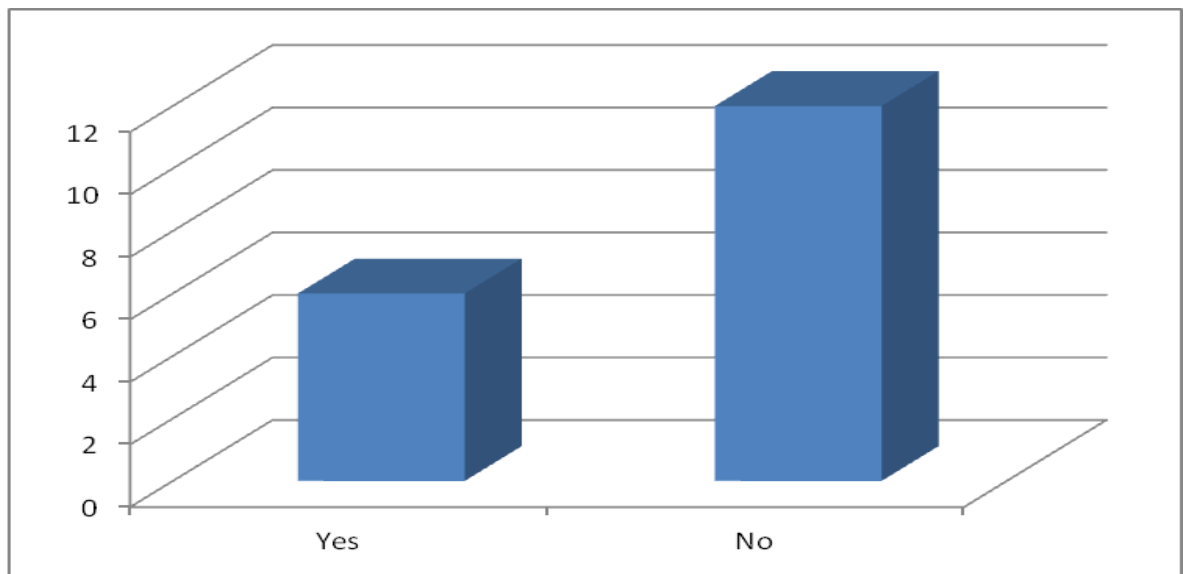


*Figure 2: Awareness of strategies put in place to address teacher absenteeism*

The data in Figure 2 show that the majority of respondents were not aware about any departmental strategies to address teacher absenteeism. This is because twelve (12) out of eighteen (18) teachers indicated, "no" except for 'unpaid leave' while six (6) who indicated "yes", also cited the same strategy 'unpaid leave" as one of the main strategies used to mitigate teacher absenteeism. This strategy seems to be the one commonly used since eleven (11) out of the eighteen (18) respondents including some of those who indicated 'no' highlighted this common strategy. One respondent also indicated that at the school level, teachers were "informed about the consequences of being absent without a reason".

Seven other respondents said that teachers are given warning letters for frequent absenteeism that is not reported in accordance with the regulations of the Namibian Education Act 16 of 2001. Respondents also mentioned that other strategies that they were aware of are "transferring teachers who are usually absent, signing a class captain book at the end of each lesson, or signing in an attendance register". There are however, shortcomings in signing a teacher attendance register as a way of mitigating teacher absenteeism. As Rogers and Vegas (2009) observed, teachers could come in, sign, and after that leave the school premises. While principals could be covering them as a result, this does not show a true reflection of teachers' absenteeism in schools which eventually affects the teaching and learning.

Six respondents who indicated about the awareness of strategies put in place to mitigate teacher absenteeism were then asked to state whether such strategies were effective. Three of them indicated that strategies at their schools were very effective. However, the other two indicated that strategies at their schools were not effective because teacher absenteeism persisted.

One respondent said that signing of the attendance register is not effective "because the staff attendance register is not filed everyday and can be forged". These results concur with Castro *et al.,* (2007) who also found that bad record keeping in the Caprivi (now Zambezi) and Kavango (now Kavango East and West) regions resulted in ineffective efforts to mitigate absenteeism.

When respondents were asked whether the implementation of strategies to mitigate teacher absenteeism was effectively monitored, ten (10) out of eighteen (18) indicated that they did not think monitoring was effective. One of the respondents said, "Some

teachers do not fill in leave forms and no one follows up". Other eight (8) respondents felt that the strategies were effectively monitored by principals, Heads of Departments (HODs) and by the Ministry of Education. Some respondents commented that: "Our teachers know that application for leave must be filled in for the ministry immediately when they return to work". "Principals and HODs monitor whether teachers turn up on a regular basis".

### 4.2.7 Effects of teacher absenteeism on teaching and learning

Eight (8) of the eighteen (18) respondents were aware of the fact that teacher absenteeism results in disciplinary problems, because learners of absent teachers are left unsupervised, which can lead to bad behaviour and a lack of commitment for their schoolwork. One of the respondents disclosed:

> *Absenteeism disrupts the smooth running of a normal school day especially when there is no invigilation for a class. Learners then walk around or are extremely loud and valuable teaching time is lost.*

This points to the challenges teacher absenteeism may create in relation to maintaining effective teaching and learning in schools. Six respondents said that teacher absenteeism leads to a syllabus not completed on time and thus resulting into teachers rushing through to cover the content within a short period. Four respondents professed that due to teacher absenteeism, there is no sufficient time for proper teaching at their schools. IBIS and NNED (2016) confirm these findings by indicating that time is lost when teachers are absent and thus absent teachers mostly do not complete the syllabi by the end of the year neither do they get time to revise with their learners.

### 4.2.8 Measures that schools and the regional office may put in place to address teacher absenteeism

Participants were asked to state the measures that they thought schools and the regional education directorate could put in place to address teacher absenteeism. One of the eighteen (18) participants, a principal, suggested that the regional office could "formalise a performance appraisal system via the Public Service Commission that is linked to attendance". Three teachers have suggested that if teachers do not have proper reasons for frequent absenteeism, deductions should be made from their salaries or that they "be called in to the inspector's office and state reasons for their absences". Similarly, Castro *et al*. (2007) also suggested that in order for schools to mitigate teacher absenteeism, serious steps need to be considered, including issuing teachers with unpaid leave for the days they have been absent for no apparent reason. This will serve as a wakeup call for other teachers who wish to practice frequent absenteeism. Two respondents have indicated that "..for each invalid and unreasonable absence, written warning should be issued". One respondent said "teachers should adhere to the leave days stipulated by the Ministry". A written warning might however not be successful because if it is not followed consistently for all employees, it could appear discriminatory (Bruce, 2014).

Five respondents thought that the best way to address teacher absenteeism is "to have more unannounced visits from the regional office". Other ideas included "suspension and dismissal, limit the number of acceptable absent days in a term, improvements to teacher motivation and a proper monitoring of the attendance register". Attendance registers should be monitored effectively because usually they are placed in the staff

room and there is no monitoring of who is signing, allowing teachers to sign in and out for the days they were not present without the knowledge of the school principals.

According Kwesi (2013), there are several strategies like increasing teacher monetary incentives, involving parents in their children's education as well as administration matters, which could be adopted by the schools and the ministries of education to curb teacher absenteeism.

### 4.2.9 Shortcomings in the implementation of proposed measures to address teacher absenteeism

Most respondents (ten) indicated that they had no ideas about the shortcomings or they did not respond to the question at all. Eight (8) of those who responded said management has little authority to implement the strategies due to the fact that they are only supervisors and have no authority to give teachers final written warning letters. The only measure that the principals are allowed to implement is to dismiss an application for private leave, but teachers are entitled to have these leaves. Time consuming, teachers refusing to sign written warnings, and a lack of proper monitoring were some of the shortcomings teacher respondents have indicated. What respondents may have not been aware of however is that employees subjected to disciplinary action sometimes mistakenly believe that if they refuse to sign a written warning it means the disciplinary action never occurred (Mayhew, 2016). Mayhew further stated that any time a supervisor or manager conducts a disciplinary hearing meeting and produces a written warning, the document goes into the employee's personnel file, regardless of whether the written warning contains the employee's signature or not. However, it is recommended that the supervisor should note the employee's refusal to sign and give him or her copy.

## 4.3 PRESENTATIONS OF RESULTS FROM THE LEARNERS' RESPONSES ON THEIR VIEWS REGARDING FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTES TO TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

### 4.3.1 Participants' biographical information

Data collected through questionnaires indicated that thirteen (13) of the thirty-three (33) learners who participated in the study were female and twenty (20) were male.

### 4.3.2 Learners' weekly school attendance in relation to teachers' absenteeism

With regards to learners' daily school attendance in relation to teachers' absenteeism, respondents were asked to state how frequently they turn up for school. Figure 3 depicts their summarized responses.
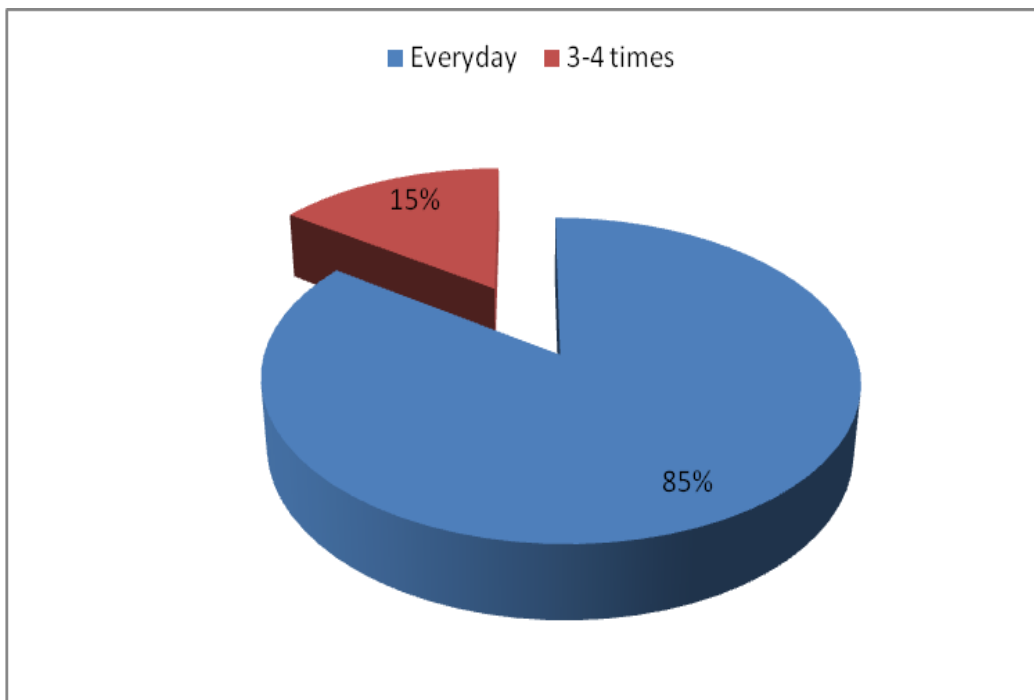


*Figure 3: Weekly school attendance*

Figure 3 shows that learner responses attend school nearly everyday. However, other learners have a much lower attendance, with a 15% of them only attending 3-4 times per week. Overall, learners' attendance is satisfactory. In relation to the previous responses from teachers, one can deduce that there is a strong relationship between teachers absenteeism and learners school attendance.

### 4.3.3 Teacher absenteeism in relation to poor academic performance

With regard to teacher absenteeism, participants were asked about whether teacher absenteeism contributes to poor learner academic performance.

**Table 2: Teacher absenteeism's contribution to poor learner academic performance**

| Schools | Extent of agreement or disagreement with the view | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly agree | Agree | Strongly disagree | Disagree | **Total** |
| | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** |
| School A | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | **6** |
| School B | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | **6** |
| School C | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | **6** |
| School D | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | **5** |
| School E | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | **5** |
| School F | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | **5** |
| **TOTAL** | **4** | **20** | **8** | **1** | **33** |
| **%** | **16** | **56** | **24** | **4** | **100** |

The information in Table 2 show that 56% of respondents agreed that teacher absenteeism contributes to learners' poor academic performance. Also, 16% of respondents strongly agreed that the reason behind the poor academic performance of learners was teacher absenteeism. However, 24% of learner respondents strongly disagreed that failure for teachers turning up for work regularly contributes to teacher

absenteeism. Finally, only 4% of respondents disagreed that teachers' absences contribute to learners' failure. Miller *et al*. (2007) are in agreement with these findings since they found that teacher absenteeism negatively affects the academic performances of school learners in America.

These findings however only concentrated on one factor that contributes to learners' failure, which is teacher absenteeism while there could be many other factors that would equally share the blame. Casciou (2016) and Karande and Kulkarni (2005) for instance found that the following factors contribute to learner poor academic performance:

- Student related factors - learners with learning disabilities such as autism or hearing disorder will find it difficult to grasp the subject content.

- Teacher related factors - when teachers lack teaching experience or have no passion in teaching; they end up not teaching the right content or not teach at all.

- School related factors - when classes for instance are overcrowded; teachers spend more time on class management than on teaching.

- Family related factors - when parents are too busy or are not interested in monitoring their children's schoolwork, the children lose academic focus. Poverty is also to be blamed because children concentrate more on finding means of survival than school.

While other factors are critical in influencing learners' performance, teachers' absenteeism seem to be more prominent as this has demonstrated that teaching and learning could be adversely affected when this practice persists.

### 4.3.4 How teacher absenteeism can be addressed

Learner respondents were asked to indicate what they thought would be the best way to address teacher absenteeism. Figure 4 reflects the findings.
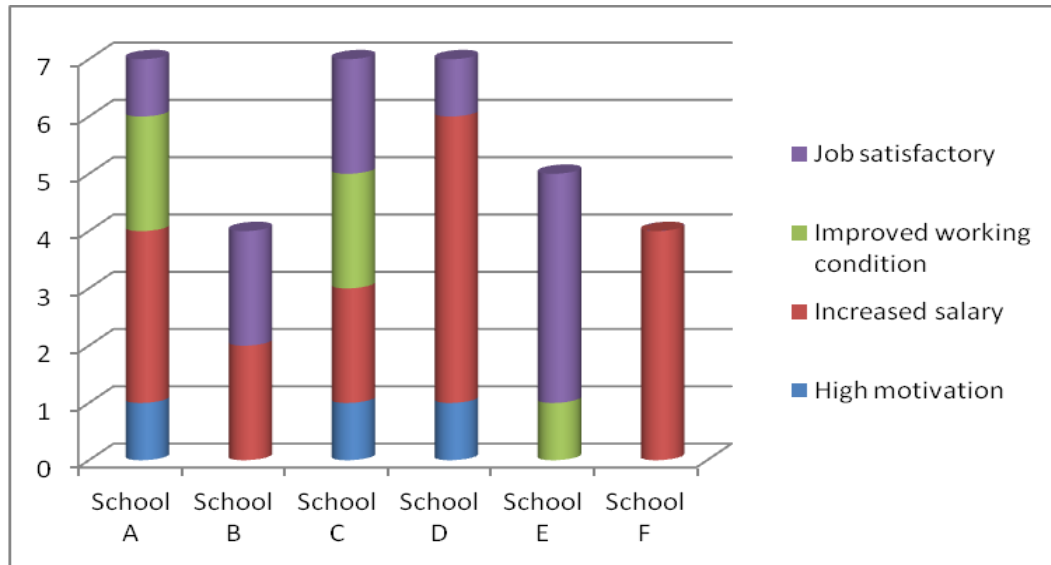


*Figure 4: Learners opinions on the best way to address teacher absenteeism*

The information in Figure 4 shows that learner respondents are of the opinion that the best ways to address teacher absenteeism is through job satisfaction and increased salaries, followed by improved working conditions. Learner respondents did not think enhanced teacher motivation could address teacher absenteeism.

These findings contradict Roger and Vegas (2009) who concluded that internal teacher motivation and job satisfaction could mitigate teacher absenteeism. Overall, Figure 4 shows that the majority of learners believe that the best way to address teacher absenteeism is by increasing teacher's salaries. In contrast with these results, Castro *et al*. (2007) outlined that Namibian teachers are the best-paid teachers in Africa, thus ruling out teacher salaries as a major contributing factor to absenteeism.

### 4.3.5   How likely teachers turn up for work

Learner respondents were asked to indicate how likely their teachers turn up for work.

Figure 5 below reflects the findings.
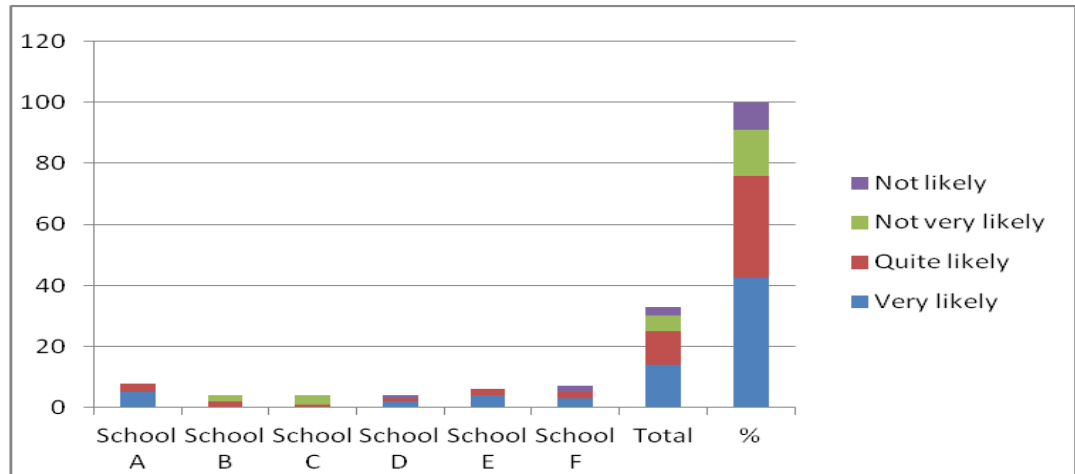


*Figure 5:  Learners' views on how likely their teachers turn up for work*

The information in Figure 5 reflects that respondents generally assumed that their teachers do turn up for work for most days. However, only 15.2% respondents have indicated that the probability of teachers at their schools turning up to work was very unlikely. Moreover, only 9.1% learner respondents said that their teachers would unlikely turn up for work. These results do not agree with the findings of Chaudhury *et al*. (2005), which indicate that educator's absence is an issue of serious concern that deserves global attention.

**4.3.6 Strategies to mitigate teacher absenteeism**

Respondents were asked about their views on strategies to mitigate teacher absenteeism. Table 3 below reflects the findings.

**Table 3: Learners' views on strategies to mitigate teacher absenteeism**

| Schools | Strategies to mitigate teacher absenteeism | | | | |
|---------|---------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------|
|         | Rewards | Training and Workshops | In-service Training | Wellness programme | **Total** |
|         | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** |
| School A | 1 | 6 | 0 | 1 | **8** |
| School B | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **6** |
| School C | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | **4** |
| School D | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | **5** |
| School E | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **7** |
| School F | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **3** |
| **TOTAL** | **15** | **15** | **2** | **1** | **33** |
| **%** | **40** | **40** | **16** | **4** | **100** |

Learner respondents have indicated that rewards as well as training and workshops, at 40% each, were the best strategies that can be used in schools to mitigate teacher absenteeism. Castro *et al*. (2007) and Juan *et al*. (2010) found some similar results. However, unplanned workshops can cause disruption. Only school C respondents believe that in-service training is the best way to mitigate teacher absenteeism. Also, as shown in Table 5, only 4% of respondents (1 learner from school A) indicated that wellness programme is the best way to mitigate teacher absenteeism.

## 4.4 LEARNERS' RATINGS AND FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

Learners were asked to rate how different factors contribute to teacher absenteeism. Their ratings are presented in Figure 6 below. The ratings are ranging from 1 to 5, (1 being lowest and 5 the highest).
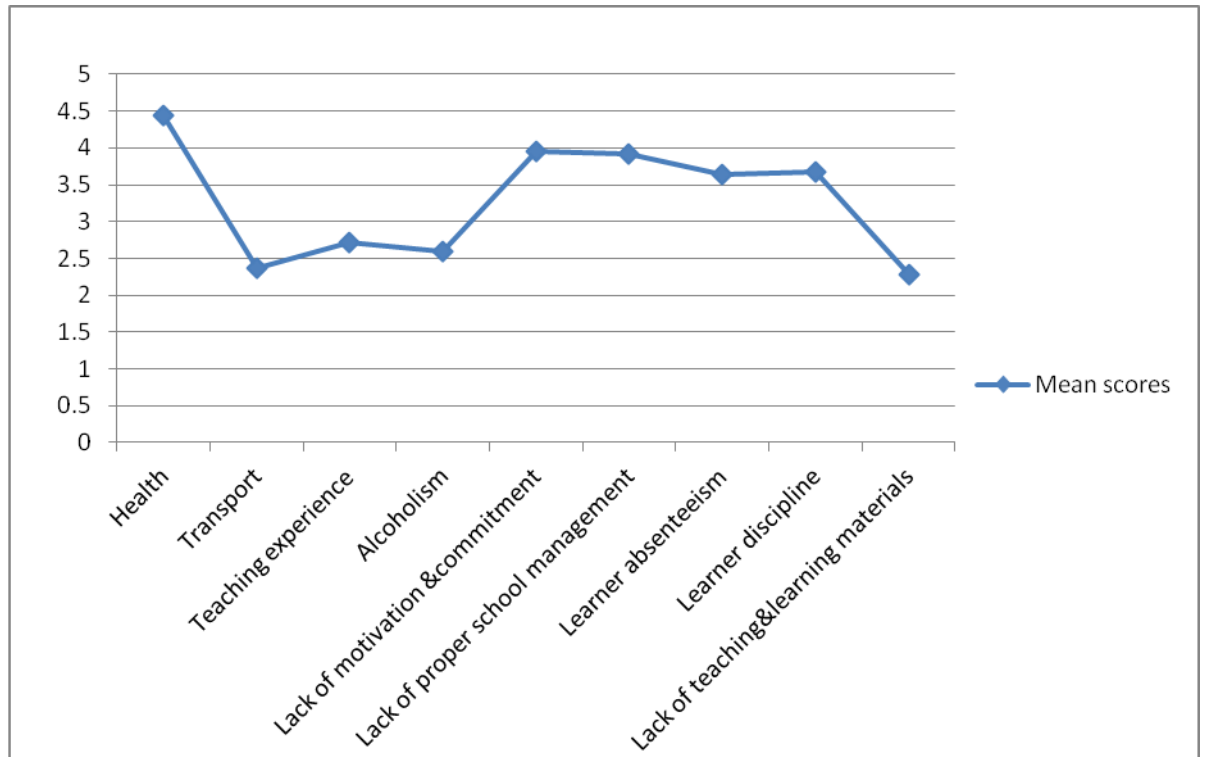


*Figure 6: Ratings on how different factors contribute to teacher absenteeism*

Ill-health is rated as the most contributing factor to teacher absenteeism in some Windhoek schools according to the majority of respondents whose scores stood at 4.4, followed by a lack of motivation and commitment and then a lack of proper school management (see Figure 6). It is interesting to note that health reasons are not just contributing factors to teacher absenteeism in Namibia, but also in other developing and developed countries globally as indicated by Juan *et al*. (2010) and Castro *et al*. (2007).

In agreement with the results of this study, Bennel (2004) and Mampane (2013) found that a lack of teacher motivation contributes to absenteeism. Also, Castro *et al*. (2007) and Dandapeni *et al*. (2015) findings are in tandem with the findings of this study since they found that management problems or leadership styles of principals contribute to teacher absenteeism. If an autocratic principal heads a school for instance, teachers avoid coming to school for fear of being ordered around and not given a chance for their views to be heard.

Furthermore, information in Figure 6 provides a positive view on the respondents' views on the contribution of alcohol consumption and transport problems on teacher absenteeism. Only a few respondents indicated that a lack of teaching experience as well as alcohol consumption contribute to teacher absenteeism. This is because, their mean scores on all the two factors stood at 2.36 to 2.60 respectively.

However, Castro *et al*. (2007) and Ejere (2010) found that in some Namibian and Nigerian schools, teacher absenteeism is blamed on excessive alcohol consumption as well as a lack of teacher training. Castro *et al*. (2007) further found that some teachers are assigned to teach subjects that they are not properly trained to teach and, thus, tend to miss work to avoid teaching.

Additionally, only a few respondents strongly viewed learners' frequent absenteeism and learner discipline as causes to teacher absenteeism. This observation cements the argument that frequent learner absenteeism and learner discipline has no effect on teacher absenteeism in some schools (see Figure 6).

## 4.5 LEARNER'S RATINGS AND EFFECTS OF TEACHER ABSENTEEISM ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Respondents were also asked to rate how different factors related to teacher absenteeism affect teaching and learning. Figure 7 presents their views. The ratings are ranging from 1 to 5, (1 being lowest and 5 the highest).
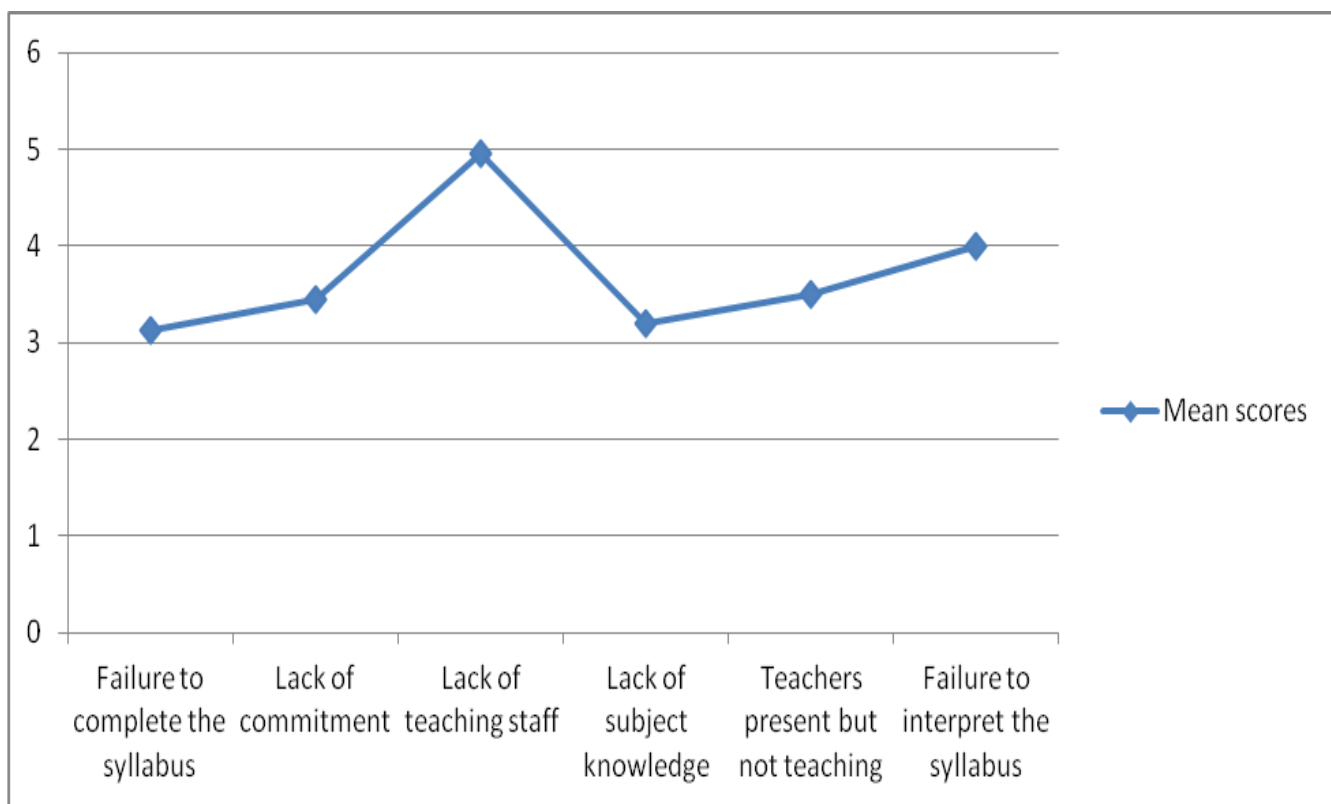


*Figure 7: Whether different factors related to teacher absenteeism affect teaching and learning*

Figure 7 shows that respondents were of the opinion that when teachers fail to complete the syllabus, teaching and learning will be affected since their ratings stood at the mean score of 4.00. In agreement with these results, Musasia *et al*. (2012) found that syllabus

coverage has a significant effect on student performance in mathematics in Kenya, since schools that cover 100% of the syllabus perform better than those that cover less than 50% of the syllabus.

It is evident in Figure 7 that the majority of respondents if not all, strongly think that if there is a lack of teaching staff at any given school, then teaching and learning will be affected negatively. These findings seem to correspond with the views of Hammond (2011) who noted that there are enough teachers in the United States; nevertheless, such teachers are not willing to work for low salaries or poor working conditions. Since this is the case, learners are left with no teachers or unqualified teachers which negatively affects teaching and learning.

Teachers' lack of subject knowledge however does not really affect teaching and learning as per learners' responses since their mean score stood at 3.2. These findings are supported by the views of Sherpherd (2013) that it does not mean that all teachers with poor subject content are inefficient and not all teachers with good subject knowledge are effective. Nonetheless, if a teacher lacks subject knowledge, such a teacher will have no proper information to teach the learners, and that learners will study the wrong content and thus will end up failing. These findings are in contradiction with the findings of Altinok (2013), Jadama (2014), Metzler and Woessmann (2010).

Metzler and Woessmann (2010) found that the effect of teacher subject knowledge on student achievement in Peru is statistically significant and found that a one standard deviation in teachers' subject knowledge raises student achievement by ten percent. On the other hand, Altinok (2013) found that teacher knowledge has a strong impact on pupil's achievement in South Africa and Namibia.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that respondents were of the opinion that even if the teacher is not teaching, as long as that teacher is present at school, then teaching and learning will not be affected (see Figure 7).

In agreement with these findings, Lanier (1997) stated that learning is not necessarily an outcome of teaching, for instruction does not really consist of teaching to learners who sit in rows at desks, listening, and writing or recording what they hear. Learning is rather offering every child a rich and rewarding learning experience. This means that for as long as the child has all the learning materials he or she needs and the school as a whole offers a conducive and comfortable learning environment, then that child will obviously pass by studying whether taught or not taught.

Finally, respondents were asked to rate whether, teachers' failure to interpret the syllabus affects teaching and learning, of which the majority of respondents thought that it affect teaching and learning, since their mean scores stood at 4.00.

## 4.6 THE CONTRIBUTION OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLES ON TEACHER ABSENTEEISM USING CHI SQUARE

### 4.6.1 Analysis according to gender

Using the $\chi^2$, at the alpha level or p-value of 0.05, results on factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism according to the gender variable are presented as follows:

**Table 4: Learner's views on whether failure to complete the syllabus affects teaching and learning, from a gender perspective**

| Gender | Extent of agreement or disagreement with the view | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Not sure | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | | Total | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Female | 2 | 15.4 | 2 | 15.4 | 3 | 23.1 | 3 | 23.1 | 3 | 23.1 | **13** | **100.0** |
| Male | 3 | 15.0 | 4 | 20.0 | 6 | 30.0 | 4 | 20.0 | 3 | 15.0 | **20** | **100.0** |
| **Total** | 5 | 15.2 | 6 | 18.2 | 9 | 27.3 | 7 | 21.2 | 6 | 18.2 | **33** | **100.0** |

Note: $\chi^2$ (4, N=33) = .55, P= .969

For learners, (Table 4; $\chi^2$ (4, N= 33) = .969, p > 0.05) there is no significant difference between gender and teachers' failure to complete the syllabus. This may not be surprising because learners are not always well positioned to judge whether a syllabus was indeed completed. Using empirical data, Musasia Nakhanu, and Wekesa (2012), Muliro, and Shikuku (2012) have, however observed that failure to complete the syllabus affected teaching and learning negatively in Kenyan Secondary Schools, particularly on student performance in Mathematics. Examining the similar situation in Madagascar, Malazamanana, Rajhonson, Ratompomalala and Razafimbelo (2009) reached the same conclusion.

In order to tackle this issue therefore, Malamanana et al. (2009) suggested that the responsible authority should pay more attention to issues that contribute to the non-completion of syllabus such as standardizing teaching time to enable teachers to manage it effectively and providing enough teaching and learning materials to schools.

**Table 5: Learners' views on whether a lack of teaching staff affects teaching and learning, from a gender perspective**

| Gender | Extent of agreement and disagreement with the view | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Not sure | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | | Total | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Female | 1 | 7.7 | 5 | 38.5 | 4 | 30.8 | 1 | 7.7 | 2 | 15.4 | 13 | 100.0 |
| Male | 0 | 0.0 | 6 | 30.0 | 7 | 35.0 | 4 | 20.0 | 3 | 15.0 | 20 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | 1 | 3.0 | 11 | 33.3 | 11 | 33.3 | 5 | 15.2 | 5 | 15.2 | 33 | 100.0 |

Note: $\chi^2$ (4, N=33) = 2.54, P= .638

The data in table 5 show that there is no significant difference between genders or amongst learners regarding a lack of teaching staff and its impact on teaching and learning. In disagreement with the findings of this study, Moorhead (2016) found that a lack of teaching staff affects teaching and learning in the United Kingdom. Moorhead discovered that there were many qualified teachers leaving the teaching fraternity (about 43%) mostly those from the Science department. The implication of employing teachers who are not qualified to teach is that it has an impact on the quality of education offered to the learners and results into poor performance (Moorhead, 2016). Statistically, according to Table 5, more respondents (11) agreed that a lack of teaching staff affect teaching and learning compared to 5 each of those that disagreed and strongly disagreed with the view.

Additionally, there was also no significant difference between genders regarding the following: lack of subject knowledge and teachers' failure to interpret the syllabus. This

is because their *p*-values were greater than 0.05. Such results were also unexpected. Brent and Telder (2003), for example highlighted that teachers can only be effective if they are knowledgeable about the content that they teach. They further indicated that it is better for a teacher not to teach, instead of teaching the wrong information because in the end, learners' academic performance will be negatively affected. The implication of these findings is that schools have to overcome factors that delay syllabus coverage such as teacher absenteeism by impressing teachers to cautiously hasten syllabus coverage if they hope to improve teaching and learning.

### 4.6.2 Analysis according to school ranking

Using the $\chi^2$, at alpha level or p-value of 0.05, results on factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism according to the school ranking variable are presented as follows:

**Table 6: Learners' views on whether teacher absenteeism affects teaching and learning, from a school ranking perspective**

| School ranking | Extent of agreement or disagreement with the view | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Not sure | | Disagree | | Disagree strongly | | Total | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| High | 3 | 25.0 | 6 | 50.0 | 1 | 8.3 | 2 | 16.7 | 0 | 0.0 | 12 | 100.0 |
| Intermediate | 2 | 22.2 | 3 | 33.3 | 3 | 33.3 | 1 | 11.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 9 | 100.0 |
| Low | 2 | 16.7 | 3 | 25.0 | 4 | 33.3 | 2 | 16.7 | 1 | 8.3 | 12 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | 7 | 21.2 | 12 | 36.4 | 8 | 24.2 | 5 | 15.2 | 1 | 3.0 | 33 | 100.00 |

Note: $\chi^2$ (6, N=33) = 30.37, P= .000

Information in Table 6 shows that using $\chi^2$ (6, N= 33) = p < 0.05) there is a significant difference between school ranking and learners' views whether teacher absenteeism affects teaching and learning. Statistically, more than half (58%; n=19) agreed with the statement compared to those (18%; n=6) who disagreed with it. In addition, 9 of 12 respondents from high performing schools indicated that teacher absenteeism affects teaching and learning negatively, while only 5 out of 12 respondents from low performing schools had agreed with the statement. With 5 out of 9 learners who agreed with the statement, respondents from intermediate performing schools are essentially split in half. In agreement with the results of this study, Etsey (2005) found that, teachers of learners from high achieving schools in some schools in Ghana were more likely to go to school every day compared to learners from low performing schools.

**Table 7: Learners' views on whether failure to interpret the syllabus affects teaching and learning, form a school ranking perspective**

| School ranking | Extent of agreement or disagreement with the view | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Not sure | | Disagree | | Disagree strongly | | Total | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| High | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 4 | 33.3 | 8 | 66.7 | 12 | 100.0 |
| Intermediate | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 11.1 | 1 | 11.1 | 1 | 11.1 | 6 | 66.7 | 9 | 100.0 |
| Low | 2 | 16.7 | 7 | 58.3 | 3 | 25.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 12 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | 2 | 6.1 | 8 | 24.2 | 4 | 12.1 | 5 | 15.2 | 14 | 42.4 | 33 | 100.0 |

Note: $\chi^2$ (8, N=33) = 28.44, P= .000

The information in Table 7 reveals that there is a significant relationship between school ranking and learners' views on teachers' failure to interpret the syllabus, $\chi^2$ (8, N= 33) = p < 0.05. Table 7 further indicates that 9 out of 12 respondents from low performing schools strongly agreed that teachers' failure to interpret the syllabus affects teaching and learning, whereas, none of the respondents from high performing schools have agreed with the view and only 1 respondent from intermediate performing schools had agreed.

In other words, 7 out of 9 respondents (learners) from intermediate performing schools strongly disagreed that teachers' failure to interpret the syllabus affect teaching and learning. In agreement with the findings of this study, Etsey (2005), found that teachers from high performing schools in Ghana could interpret their syllabus well and complete it on time compared to low performing schools.

Finally, chi-square results showed no significant relationship between school ranking and teachers' subject knowledge since its p-value was greater than 0.05.

**4.6.3 Analysis according to learners' academic performance**

The analysis of views of principals, teachers and learners regarding the effects of teacher absenteeism to learners' performance yielded the following results at alpha level or *p-*value of 0.05.

**Table 8: Learners' views on whether teachers not turning up for work affects teaching and learning, from learners' academic performance perspective**

| Learners' grade performance | Extent of agreement or disagreement with the view | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Not sure | | Disagree | | Disagree strongly | | Total | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Excellent | 1 | 25.0 | 2 | 50.0 | 1 | 25.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 4 | 100.0 |
| Good | 0 | 0.0 | 6 | 31.6 | 9 | 47.4 | 2 | 10.5 | 2 | 10.5 | 19 | 100.0 |
| Better | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 22.2 | 1 | 11.1 | 3 | 33.3 | 3 | 33.3 | 9 | 100.0 |
| Bad | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 100 |
| Total | 1 | 3.0 | 11 | 33.3 | 11 | 33.3 | 5 | 15.2 | 5 | 15.2 | 33 | 100 |

Note: $\chi^2$ (9, N=33) = 20.55, P= .015

For learners, information in Table 8, ($\chi^2$ (9, N= 33 = .015, p > 0.05), shows that there was no significant difference. Significantly, two (2) of the learners whose performance was excellent agreed that if few teachers turn up at schools, then teaching and learning would be affected negatively. While the majority of learner respondents (9) whose school performance was good indicated that they were not sure as to whether a lack of teaching staff affected teaching and learning.

In contrast to the findings of this study, teacher absenteeism brings major consequences on the organisation of the teaching process and learners' learning opportunities in Namibian schools (Castro et al., 2007). Finlyson (2009) found the same results in American schools. In the same vein, Miller et al. (2007), found that a lack of teaching staff had a negative impact on teaching and learning in developing

countries like India and Uganda. Rogers and Vegas (2009) however noted that if teachers are absent due to training or personal leave that is aiming at improving their productivity while at work, such absence may not slow student learning.

# CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions based on the findings of the study and the recommendations. The recommendations are made for the various stakeholders, namely Schools, the Regional Education Directorate, and the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

## 5.2 Conclusions

This study set out to explore views of principals, teachers and learners regarding factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism in some selected Windhoek schools. The following three questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the perceived factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism?

2. How does teacher absenteeism affect teaching and learning in the selected Junior Secondary Schools in the Khomas Education Region?

3. How could factors contributing to teachers' absenteeism be addressed?

This study applied both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Semi structured questionnaires were used to collect data from school principals and teachers and enough and relevant information was collected (see Appendices 8), Also, semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect data from learners (see Appendices 7).

Quantitative data was analysed using the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies and statistics of Chi-square were used to test the effects of various demographic variables on views regarding teacher absenteeism.

The following were some of the major findings of this study:

- Teacher absenteeism is a problem at all the schools where the study was conducted and it has been established that absenteeism creates disorder because learners are often left unattended. The study also found that teacher absenteeism mostly occurs during high institutions of learning's exams periods and during wintertime.

- The study also showed that most respondents among the learners identified illness to be the major root cause of teacher absenteeism. In addition, the study found that the majority of principals and teachers were not aware of strategies put in place by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to mitigate teacher absenteeism. Those that indicated awareness stated that at their schools, teachers who are frequently absent for no apparent reason are issued with unpaid leave. Principals and teachers generally believed that absenteeism leads to learner disciplinary issues and failure to cover the entire syllabi.

- Findings from the learners' perspective show that most learners strongly agreed that teacher absenteeism contributes to poor academic performance. Learners generally felt that the best way to address teacher absenteeism is to improve job satisfaction and to increase teachers' salaries. Learners who completed questionnaires indicated that their teachers were not frequently absent. Furthermore, learners also indicated that giving rewards and sending teachers for workshops are good strategies to mitigate teacher absenteeism. However, failure to complete and interpret the syllabus well, and a lack of teaching and learning materials affected teaching and learning. Finally, the study revealed that ill-

health, lack of commitment and motivation, lack of proper school management and learner absenteeism and poor management are the most contributing factors to teacher absenteeism from the learners' perspective.

## 5.3 Recommendations for Various Stakeholders

The following recommendations are made to various stakeholders as presented in the following sections of the study.

### 5.3.1 Recommendations to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

Based on the findings of this study several significant recommendations were made derived from the findings, discussions, as well as results of this study. Respondents generally believed that the root causes of teacher absenteeism are ill-health, lack of commitment and motivation, and poor school management which led to too many learners being left unattended because there were no substitute teachers available. As a result, the following recommendations are made to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture:

Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture may consider the following:

a) Allocate a sufficient budget for paying substitute teachers in order to avoid learners being left unattended to in case their teachers are absent.

b) Consider implementing a *'Relief Teacher Policy'* to mitigate the effects of teacher absenteeism in schools.

### 5.3.2 Recommendations to School Principals

The following recommendations are made:

1) It is recommended that school principals should provide teachers with opportunities to build capacity by motivating them to attend workshops to help them understand new curriculum and innovative ways to teach learners effectively.

2) In order to keep teachers in schools it was recommended that school principals should effectively monitor the attendance register book by overseeing that teachers sign in during morning sessions and at the end of the school day.

3) It is also recommended that principals should also investigate the possibility of using technology to monitor whether teaching and learning is taking place in class for example the use of Closed-Circuit Television cameras (CCTV). In return, teachers should be incentivised for good attendance and effective teaching.

4) Furthermore, it is recommended that at school level, principals should put innovative mechanisms to reward good performing teachers in order to motivate them to improve performance.

### 5.3.3 Recommendations to Teachers

1) It was recommended that teachers should value teaching and learning as important aspects in the lives of learners. Therefore, they should demonstrate high level of commitment and dedication to work.

2) Furthermore, teachers should be encouraged to observe the existing policies and procedures when dealing with teacher absenteeism in schools.

### 5.3.4 Recommendations to Learners

1) In order to mitigate teacher absenteeism, it was recommended that learners should be encouraged to improve on their school attendance.

2) It is also recommended that learners could change their attitude towards learning and put more effort in their studies even in the absence of teacher in a classroom.

### 5.3.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the findings another recommendation for further research was made, particularly on the effectiveness of the existing measures to mitigate teacher absenteeism in schools. The following areas may be interesting to investigate:

1) Examining the effectiveness of substitute teachers in Windhoek Schools as a strategy for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to mitigate teacher absenteeism;

2) The effects that teachers' failure to interpret the syllabi has on learners' academic performance.

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**APPENDIX 1: Letter requesting permission**

13 July 2015

Khomas Regional Council

The Directorate of Education

Private Bag 13236

Dear Mr. Vries

Re: Requesting permission for conducting research in the Khomas Education Region

I am a registered student at the University of Namibia pursuing M. Ed programme in the department of Educational Foundation and Management. I am currently in a final year; and as part of the curriculum, I am expected to conduct research in the area of Education. The title of my research is: Principals, teachers and learners views regarding factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism in selected Junior Secondary School in Windhoek, Namibia.

I therefore would like to request your good office to grant me permission and support to conduct research in the following schools: Hochland High School, Jacob Marengo TUT. College, Windhoek High School, Delta Secondary School, A. Shipena Secondary School and Concordia College.

Attached please find copies of my clearance letter from UNAM as well as research instruments.

I am looking forward to your kind response in this regard.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Ester Shidiwe

Student: University of Namibia

Cell: 0814007010

## APPENDIX 2: Ethical clearance letter

![University of Namibia logo — UNAM, UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA]

### STUDENT ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

**Ethical Clearance Reference Number: SONPH/34/2015**　　　　**Date: 27 May 2015**

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's **Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical** approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

**Title of Project**: Principals, Teachers and Learners' Views Regarding Factors That Contribute To Teacher Absenteeism In Selected Junior Secondary Schools In Windhoek, Namibia
**Nature/Level of Project**:　　　　Masters

**Principal Researcher**:　E.P. Shidiwe

**Student Number :**　　　200611275
**Host Department & Faculty**:　　Faculty of Education

**Main Supervisor** : Dr. G. Likando (Main) Dr. N. Kadhila(Co)

Take note of the following:
(a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
(b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
(c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
(d) The UREC retains the right to:
(i). withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
(ii). request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

UREC wishes you the best in your research.

Prof. I. Mapaure
UNAM Research Coordinator
ON BEHALF OF UREC

**APPENDIX 3:  Permission letter from Permanent Secretary**

**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**KHOMAS REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE**

Tel:  [09 264 61] 293 4356
Fax: [09 264 61] 231 367/248 251
*Enquiries: Ms T.L. Shivute*
**File No: 12/3/10/1**

Private Bag 13236
WINDHOEK

July 13, 2015

Ms Ester P. Shidiwe
UNAM

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KHOMAS REGION**
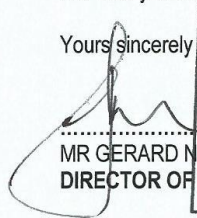
Your letter dated 13 July 2015 on the above topic refers.

Your request to administer questionnaire for research for your Master Degree in Secondary Education, about "Principals, teachers, and learners views regarding factors that contribute to teacher absenteeism in selected secondary schools in Windhoek" at Hochland High School, Jacob Marengo Tutorial College, Windhoek High School, Delta Secondary School, A. Shipena Secondary School and Concordia College in the Khomas Education Directorate has been approved with the following conditions:

➢ The School Principal must be contacted before time and agreement will be reached between you and the principal.
➢ The school programme should not be interrupted.
➢ Principals, teachers and learners who will take part in this exercise will do so on voluntarily basis.
➢ Khomas Education Directorate should be provided with a final copy of the findings of your report.

We wish you a success in your study

Yours sincerely

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
ARTS AND CULTURE
PRIVATE BAG 13236 WINDHOEK

1 5 -07- 2015

DIRECTOR

MR GERARD N. VRIES
**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE**
**KHOMAS REGION**

## APPENDIX 4:  Khomas region 2014 grade 10 performance ratings

| | = RANKING IMPROVED |
|---|---|
| | = DETERIORATED RANKING |

| REGIONAL | | | NATIONAL | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2014 | INCREASE / DECREASE | 2013 | 2014 | DECREASE | 2013 | SCHOOL |
| 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | -1 | 2 | ST. PAUL COLLEGE |
| 2 | 0 | 2 | 6 | +2 | 8 | WINDHOEK GYMNASIUM |
| 3 | 0 | 3 | 10 | 0 | 10 | DELTA SS |
| 4 | 0 | 4 | 16 | +1 | 17 | TUCSIN |
| 5 | +3 | 8 | 21 | +11 | 32 | ST GEORGE DIOCESAN |
| 6 | +20 | 26 | 22 | +98 | 120 | DHPS |
| 7 | +2 | 9 | 32 | -4 | 36 | HAGE GEINGOB SS |
| 8 | -3 | 5 | 37 | -17 | 20 | ST. JOSEPTH'S REC |
| 9 | -2 | 7 | 43 | -18 | 25 | WINDHOEK HS |
| 10 | 0 | 10 | 47 | +10 | 37 | JAN MOHR SS |
| 11 | +4 | 15 | 49 | +8 | 57 | ACADEMIA SS |
| 12 | +11 | 23 | 59 | +42 | 101 | COSMOS HS |
| 13 | 0 | 37 | 63 | 0 | 0 | AMZING KIDS |
| 14 | +2 | 16 | 65 | +5 | 70 | CJ BRANDT HS |
| 15 | -9 | 6 | 66 | -44 | 22 | COMBRETUM TRST HIGH SCHOOL |
| 16 | +19 | 35 | 70 | +93 | 163 | WELWITCHIA PRIVATE SCHOOL |
| 17 | -3 | 14 | 71 | -15 | 56 | JAN JONKER AFRIKANER SS |
| 18 | -6 | 12 | 76 | -33 | 43 | IMMANUEL SHIFIDI SS |
| 19 | +3 | 22 | 82 | +7 | 89 | KHOMAS HIGH SCHOOL |
| 20 | +1 | 21 | 85 | +2 | 87 | A SHIPENA SS |
| 21 | -10 | 11 | 89 | -50 | 39 | CENTAURUS SS |
| 22 | -4 | 18 | 95 | -16 | 79 | ROCKY CREST HIGH SCHOOL |
| 23 | +4 | 27 | 103 | +18 | 121 | CONCORDIA COLLEGE |
| 24 | +7 | 31 | 107 | +38 | 145 | DAVID BEZUIDENHOUT SS |
| 25 | +5 | 30 | 110 | +30 | 140 | AUGUSTINEUM SS |
| 26 | -2 | 24 | 112 | -1 | 111 | HIGHLINE SS |
| 27 | -2 | 25 | 113 | +4 | 117 | WALDORF SCHOOL |
| 28 | -9 | 19 | 121 | +41 | 80 | WINDHOEK TECH. H.S |
| 29 | -1 | 28 | 131 | -1 | 130 | HOCHLAND HS |
| 30 | +2 | 32 | 138 | +9 | 147 | ELLA  DU PLESSIS SS |
| 31 | -11 | 20 | 139 | -57 | 82 | ELDORADO SS |
| 32 | -15 | 17 | 143 | -65 | 78 | KHOMASTURA SS |
| 33 | -4 | 29 | 149 | +6 | 135 | ACASIA SS |
| 34 | -1 | 33 | 170 | -19 | 151 | TANBEN COLLEGE |
| 35 | -1 | 34 | 171 | -9 | 162 | JACOB MARENGO TUT. COL |
| 36 | 0 | 36 | 172 | +1 | 171 | MOTACS COLLEGE |
| 37 | -24 | 13 | 175 | -126 | 49 | EROS GIRLS |

TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS: 176

IGSSE
KHOMAS REGION                                    1/12/2015                                    CEO

■ = RANKING IMPROVED
■ = DETERIORATED RANKING

| CIRCUIT | REGIONAL | | | NATIONAL | | | SCHOOL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2014 | INCREASE / DECREASE | 2013 | 2014 | DECREASE | 2013 | |
| 1 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 16 | +1 | 17 | TUCSIN |
| MR. P. LEWIN | 7 | +2 | 9 | 32 | -4 | 36 | HAGE GEINGOB SS |
| | 11 | +4 | 15 | 49 | +8 | 57 | ACADEMIA SS |
| | 17 | -3 | 14 | 71 | -15 | 56 | JAN JONKER AFRIKANER |
| | 23 | +4 | 27 | 103 | +18 | 121 | CONCORDIA COLLEGE |
| | 24 | +7 | 31 | 107 | +38 | 145 | DAVID BEZUIDENHOUT SS |
| | 32 | -15 | 17 | 143 | -65 | 78 | KHOMASTURA SS |
| | 36 | 0 | 36 | 172 | +1 | 171 | MOTACS COLLEGE |

| CIRCUIT | 2014 | INCREASE / DECREASE | 2013 | 2014 | INCREASE / DECREASE | 2013 | SCHOOL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | -1 | 2 | ST. PAULS COLLEGE |
| MR. YA OTTO | 8 | -3 | 5 | 37 | -17 | 20 | ST. JOSEPHS' REC |
| | 10 | 0 | 10 | 47 | +10 | 37 | JAN MOHR SS |
| | 15 | -9 | 6 | 66 | -44 | 22 | COMBRETUM TRUST SCHOOL |
| | 18 | -6 | 12 | 76 | -33 | 43 | IMMANUEL SHIFIDI SS |
| | 19 | +3 | 22 | 82 | +7 | 89 | KHOMAS HIGH SCHOOL |
| | 20 | +1 | 21 | 85 | +2 | 87 | A SHIPENA SS |
| | 30 | +2 | 32 | 138 | +9 | 147 | ELLA DU PLESSIS SS |
| | 35 | -1 | 34 | 171 | -9 | 162 | JACOB MARENGO TUT. COL |

| CIRCUIT | 2014 | INCREASE / DECREASE | 2013 | 2014 | INCREASE/DECREASE | 2013 | SCHOOL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 10 | 0 | 10 | DELTA SS |
| MR. KAHIVA | 5 | +3 | 8 | 21 | +11 | 32 | ST GEORGE'S DIOCEN |
| | | +20 | 26 | 22 | +98 | 120 | DHPS |
| | 12 | +11 | 23 | 59 | +42 | 101 | COSMOS HIGH SCHOOL |
| | 16 | +19 | 35 | 70 | +93 | 163 | WELWITCHIA PRIVATE |
| | 21 | -10 | 11 | 89 | -50 | 39 | CENTAURUS SS |
| | 22 | -4 | 18 | 95 | -16 | 79 | ROCKY CREST SS |
| | 25 | +5 | 30 | 110 | +30 | 140 | AUGUSTINEUM SS |
| | 28 | -9 | 19 | 121 | +41 | 80 | WINDHOEK TECH. HS |
| | 33 | -4 | 29 | 149 | +6 | 135 | ACACIA SS |

| CIRCUIT | 2014 | INCREASE / DECREASE | 2013 | 2014 | INCREASE / DECREASE | 2013 | SCHOOL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 6 | +2 | 8 | WINDHOEK GYMNASIUM |
| MS. GQWEDE | 9 | -2 | 7 | 43 | -18 | 25 | WINDHOEK HS |
| | 13 | 0 | 37 | 63 | 0 | 0 | AMAZING KIDS |
| | 14 | +2 | 16 | 65 | +5 | 70 | CJ BRANDT HS |
| | 26 | -2 | 24 | 112 | -1 | 111 | HIGHLINE SS |
| | 27 | -2 | 25 | 113 | +4 | 117 | WALDORF SCHOOL |
| | 29 | -1 | 28 | 131 | -1 | 130 | HOCHLAND HS |
| | 31 | -11 | 20 | 139 | -57 | 82 | ELDORADO SS |
| | 34 | -1 | 33 | 170 | -19 | 151 | TANBEN COLLEGE |
| | 37 | -24 | 13 | 175 | -126 | 49 | EROS GIRLS |

TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS: 176

IGSSE
KHOMAS REGION                    1/12/2015                                   CEO

**APPENDIX 5: Semi - structured questionnaire for learners**

**Introduction**

I am a University of Namibia Masters of Education student (200611275), specialising in Leadership, Management and Policy Studies. I am conducting a research study to explore views of principals, teachers and learners regarding factors contributing to teacher absenteeism in Junior Secondary Schools in Windhoek, Namibia. Thank you very much for availing time and your willingness to take part in this research. I assure you that your responses will be treated confidential and no records of your responses will be kept for any purpose other than research.

**Instructions**

- There is no right or wrong answers to questions contained in this study, hence, feel free to respond to all interview questions.
- To guarantee confidentiality, your responses will be handled anonymously.
- Identification codes will be used instead of names thus you are not required to provide your name on this questionnaire.
- Please answer all questions to the best of your ability.
- Your personal opinion is highly valued in this interview.

**SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

In this section, I would like to know a little about you. Please respond by ticking in an appropriate box to the following questions:

1. Gender

| Male | |
|------|---|
| Female | |

2. Grade

| 8-9 | |
|------|---|
| 10-11 | |
| 12 | |

3. Grade performance rating

| | |
|---|---|
| Excellent | |
| Good | |
| Better | |
| Bad | |

*4.* Your school attendance

| | |
|---|---|
| Everyday | |
| 3-4 times a week | |
| Less than 2 days | |
| Not sure | |

SECTION B:  FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTES TO TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

1. How often is your teacher been absent from school?

| | |
|---|---|
| Everyday | |
| 3-4 times a week | |
| 1-2 times a week | |
| Not sure | |

2. Rate the following factors in terms of their contribution to teacher absenteeism at your school

| Factors | Rating Scale (1 lowest - 5 highest) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Health reasons | | | | | |
| Transport | | | | | |
| Teaching experience | | | | | |
| Alcoholism | | | | | |
| Lack of motivation & commitment to work | | | | | |
| Lack of proper school management | | | | | |
| Learners' absenteeism | | | | | |
| Learners' discipline | | | | | |
| Lack of teaching & learning material | | | | | |
| Poor infrastructure (classrooms) | | | | | |

3. What other factors do you think contribute to teacher absenteeism at your school?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

SECTION C: EFFECTS OF TEACHER ABSENTEEISM ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. Teacher absenteeism contributes to learners' poor academic performance. How far do you agree with this statement?

| | |
|---|---|
| Strongly agree | |
| Agree | |
| Not sure | |
| Disagree | |
| Disagree strongly | |

2. Rate how the following factors related to teacher absenteeism affect teaching and learning at your school.

| Factors | Rating Scale (1 lowest - 5 highest) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Failure to complete the syllabus | | | | | |
| Lack of commitment | | | | | |
| Lack of teaching staff | | | | | |
| Lack of subject knowledge | | | | | |
| Teachers present but not teaching | | | | | |
| Teachers' failure to interpret the syllabus | | | | | |

3. How likely do your teachers turn up for work?

| | |
|---|---|
| Very likely | |
| Quite likely | |
| Not very likely | |
| Not likely at all | |

4. Which of the following do you do more often?

| | |
|---|---|
| Sit in class with the teacher teaching | |
| Sit in class with the teacher but not teaching | |
| Sit in class with no teacher | |

## SECTION D:  EXISTING STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

5. Which of the following strategies are put in place to mitigate teacher absenteeism at your school? (tick the appreciate answer (s)

| | |
|---|---|
| Rewarding hardworking teachers | |
| Teacher's empowerment through training & workshops | |
| Enhance professionalism through in-service | |
| Developing wellness programme | |
| Other (Specify……………………………………..) | |

SECTION E:  HOW FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO TEACHERS' ABSENTEEISM
COULD BE ADDRESSED

6. Which of the following do you think is the best way to address teacher absenteeism? Tick the appropriate answer (s)

| | |
|---|---|
| High motivation | |
| Increased salaries | |
| Improved working conditions | |
| Job satisfactory | |
| | |
| Other (Specify…………………………) | |

7. Any other comment on how factors contributing to teacher absenteeism could be addressed

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

THE END

*Thank you very much for your time and contribution*

**APPENDIX 6: Semi-structured questionnaire for teachers and principals**

**Introduction**

I am a University of Namibia Masters of Education student (200611275), specialising in Leadership, Management and Policy Studies. I am conducting a research study to explore views of principals, teachers and learners regarding factors contributing to teacher absenteeism in Junior Secondary Schools in Windhoek, Namibia. Thank you very much for availing time and your willingness to take part in this research. I assure you that your responses will be treated confidential and no records of your responses will be kept for any purpose other than research.

**Instructions**

- There is no right or wrong answers to questions contained in this study, hence, feel free to respond to all interview questions.
- To guarantee confidentiality, your responses will be handled anonymously.
- Identification codes will be used instead of names thus you are not required to provide your name on this questionnaire.
- Please answer all questions to the best of your ability.
- Your personal opinion is highly valued in this interview.

**SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

In this section, I would like to know a little about you. Please respond appropriately to the following questions:

1. Please indicate your age category

   _____

2. Gender

   _____
   _____

3. Grade (s) you are teaching:

   _____
   _____

4. Teaching subjects:

_____

_____

5. Highest teaching qualification:

_____

_____

6. Occupational Status:

_____

_____

7. Years of teaching experience:

_____

8. Employment condition:

 Permanent _____

Relief
Teacher_____

Other

_____

SECTION B:  FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTES TO TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

1. What is your understanding of Teacher absenteeism?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Do you experience teacher absenteeism at your school?

_____

_____

_____

(Motivate your answer).

_____

_____

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. In your opinion, when does teacher absenteeism usually occur?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. How many teachers are at your school?

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. On average per month how many teachers are absent from your school?

_____
_____
_____
_____

6. What do you think are the root causes of teacher absenteeism at your school?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

SECTION C:  EXISTING STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

7. Are you aware on any strategies at school, regional or Ministry level to address teacher absenteeism?

_____
_____
_____
_____

8. If yes to question 5 please mention those strategies.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. How effectively are those strategies (if any) implemented?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

10. Do you think the implementation of these strategies is effectively monitored? Motivate your answer.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

SECTION D: EFFECTS OF TEACHER ABSENTEEISM ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

10. How does teacher absenteeism affect the teaching and learning?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

11. How do you attend to learners whose teachers are absent?

_____
_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

## SECTION E:  HOW FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO TEACHERS' ABSENTEEISM COULD BE ADDRESSED

12. What measures do you think the school or /and the regional office could put in place to address teacher absenteeism at your school?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

13. What do you think would be the shortcomings the school management might experience in implementing the proposed measures?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

14. Please provide any other comments or suggestions on how factors contributing to teacher absenteeism could be addressed at your school.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

 THE END

*Thank you very much for your time and contribution.*