EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF ABSENTEEISM AT A SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE ACADEMY

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that “Examining the impact of absenteeism at a South African Police Service Academy”, submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree Magister Technologiae (Policing) is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another institution of higher education. All sources used in this research paper have been appropriately cited or quoted, and are indicated and acknowledged in the comprehensive list of references.

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EC GRACE-IZAKS

STUDENT NUMBER: 0535-623-7

DATE: ____________________
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The participants for making themselves available for this research and sharing their experiences, insights and wisdom.

Lastly, my late mother, who would be proud as she said all that she could give me was Matric and the rest would be up to us. Mamma, thank you for your love and your words of encouragement: you are forever in my heart.
ABSTRACT

This study sought to identify and explore the contributing factors responsible for the rate of high absenteeism, as a result of sick leave, at the South African Police Service (SAPS) Academy in Paarl. The research also explored international best practices in the management of absenteeism in police organizations. Furthermore, and most importantly, the study puts forward a set of recommendations to the management of SAPS regarding improvements that could address absenteeism and, ultimately, improve service delivery.

Data was collected by means of a literature study coupled with semi-structured individual interviews. The interviews were conducted with the most diligent members of the group employees of the SAPS Academy in Paarl who had taken the least sick leave during the 2009-2012 leave cycle. A thorough literature review was conducted; this literature study focused on SAPS directives, inter alia, standing orders, regulations, national instructions and national legislation. In addition, national and international literature on absenteeism in the workplace was consulted.

The findings of the study illustrate the impact of absenteeism on service delivery at the SAPS Academy, Paarl. It was established that absenteeism impacts on the morale of diligent members and, in turn, creates innumerable challenges for managers. The recommendations made in this study could contribute towards addressing and alleviating the impact of excessive absenteeism on service delivery at the SAPS Academy, Paarl. In addition, these recommendations could contribute towards addressing these matters within the broader SAPS body in and other government organizations, since absenteeism in the workplace is a general phenomenon.
KEY TERMS:
Absenteeism, Service delivery, Sick leave, Sick leave cycle, South African Police Service, Types of absenteeism, Determinants of absenteeism, Consequences of absenteeism
# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCEA</td>
<td>Basic Conditions of Employment Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>COO</td>
<td>Chief Operating Officer</td>
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<td>FPS</td>
<td>Food Providing Services</td>
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<td>HRM</td>
<td>Human Resource Management</td>
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<td>OB</td>
<td>Occurrence Book</td>
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<td>PERSAL</td>
<td>Personnel Salary Number</td>
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<td>PERSAP</td>
<td>Personnel of South African Police Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSA</td>
<td>Public Service Act</td>
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<td>PSC</td>
<td>Public Service Commission</td>
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<td>SA</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>UNISA</td>
<td>University of South Africa</td>
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CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION
Absenteeism from the workplace is a major problem for organisations internationally as it drains productivity, profits, and the morale of personnel, thus creating innumerable challenges for managers, shareholders and those employees who are at work regularly. Managers in South Africa (SA) consider absenteeism as their most serious problem (Grobler, Warnich, Carrel, Albert & Hatfield, 2006:123). Alexanderson and Hensing (2004:321) note that absence due to illness has increasingly been recognised as a considerable public health problem with consequences to, amongst others, the workplace. According to Essop (2012:2), a large number of South African Police Service (SAPS) officials mismanage their sick leave. Hughes (2012:29) states that the high level of sick leave amongst police officers in the United Kingdom (UK) is a gross failure of management. Tang and Hammontree (1992) are of the opinion that absenteeism and stress in the workplace in the police environment in the United States of America (USA) are work-related. Tang and Hammontree (1992) further consider hardiness as another factor related to absenteeism; this relates to the attitude a person has towards work (control, commitment and challenges). Absenteeism in the workplace, with specific reference to police organisations, is thus a global problem that needs to be addressed.

1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
The SAPS Academy in Paarl, in the Western Cape, was established in January 1990. The Academy was previously known as the South African Police College for Advanced Training and was specifically established to provide programmes for candidate officers – non-commissioned officers aspiring to become commissioned officers. The Academy is a national component and resides directly under the auspices of the Divisional Commissioner: Human Resource Development, SAPS Head Office in Pretoria. In 2000, the Academy amalgamated with the Component: Leadership, Management and International Development at the SAPS Head Office and became known as the SA Police Management and Leadership Development Institute, Paarl. Currently, the institution is known as the SAPS Academy, Paarl, and presents
leadership and management development programmes for members of the SAPS from all nine provinces in SA. It currently resides directly under the Head: Leadership, Management and International Development, SAPS Head Office, Pretoria.

In July 2013, the Minister of Police announced that the Academy would, in partnership with the University of South Africa (UNISA), present a Bachelor’s degree in Policing to police officials. One hundred and twenty five students from the rank of Constable to Warrant Officer commenced with this degree as the first intake on 14 January 2014. While studying at the Academy these students work under the jurisdiction of the commander of the Academy and their leave is managed by the Academy. Currently, the Academy has 213 members (excluding those students enrolled for the Bachelor’s degree). These members consist of police officials appointed under the provisions of the South African Police Service Act, 68 of 1995 (South Africa, 1995) as well as civilian members appointed under the provisions of the Public Service Act (PSA), 103 of 1994 (South Africa, 1994). The PSA members are members who did not undergo police training; they provide support services and work in positions such as administration clerks, cleaners, grounds men and other roles reserved for support personnel.

The Academy is comprised of the following components: Training under which the trainers reside; Moderation and Evaluation, responsible for the quality assurance of the training and the support functions of the Academy; Development and Learner Support, responsible for the welfare of the learners; and, lastly, Support Services, responsible for supporting the core function, that is, the training, and all its support activities. This component’s function includes the administration, personnel services, logistical services, cleaning of residences and buildings, as well as food provision. Each of these four components is managed by a Section Head who resides directly under the Commander. Operational and Generic Management training as well as Leadership modules are presented at the Academy. The Academy hosts an average of 1500 learners per financial year (1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010).
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Welman and Kruger (1999:12) define a research problem as a difficulty the researcher experiences in the context of either a theoretical or practical situation for which he/she wants to obtain a solution. The authors explain that the researcher must know what the problem is in order to define the problem. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:14) explain that you cannot go further with data collection if you do not know the actual problem. The researcher should phrase the research problem very specifically so that the reader can understand what is asked. In turn, White (2004:40) states that it is impossible to do research without a problem that needs to be resolved. The researcher must be concerned with finding solutions to problems or to answer questions. This study sought to find solutions to the following research problem:

Members of the SAPS are allocated 36 days sick leave in each three year leave cycle. The sick leave cycle applicable to this study started on 1 January 2009 and ended on 31 December 2012. After this three year cycle, members forfeit sick leave not utilised for that particular sick leave cycle. From the researcher's experience, it is apparent that the majority of members perceive the total number of 36 days sick leave allocated per three year cycle as a right that they should utilise to the fullest.

The SAPS Human Resource Development Division sensitised members of the Academy to the fact that the management and administration of leave was not conducted according to the SAPS National Instruction on Leave 2/2004 (South African Police Service, 2004) and has to be improved and managed accordingly (Circular 5/6/2012). The purpose of this National Instruction is to regulate the management and administration of leave in the SAPS. This National Instruction further compels every employee to complete a year plan stipulating anticipated yearly vacation leave, in January each year. The plan must be drawn up with service delivery and operational needs in mind. In order to manage absenteeism at the Academy, management always provides for ten percent absenteeism at any given time. Service delivery is significantly hampered in the event of absenteeism, as a result of sick leave, being abused by members for reasons that are not legitimate.
High absenteeism rates, amongst members of the SAPS, were identified by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Police in 2012 and consequently lead to SAPS management being reprimanded. According to Dodds (2012:2), the abuse of sick leave has been identified as the number one risk to the SAPS. The police stations with the highest absenteeism rates in this regard included:

- Maitland police station in Cape Town, where 85 staff members took a total of 6 579 sick days in one year, at an average of 77.2 days each;
- Hilton police station in KwaZulu-Natal, where 39 staff members took 1 337 sick days at an average of 34.73 days each;
- Midrand police station in Gauteng, where 196 staff members took 5 935 sick days at an average of 30.3 days each;
- Silverton police station in Pretoria, where 148 staff took 3 144 sick days at an average of 21.3 days each;
- Pretoria North, where a staff complement of 169 took 3 354 sick days at an average of 19.9 days each;
- Alexandra police station in Johannesburg, where 158 staff took 3 708 sick days at an average of 23.8 days each; and
- East London police station, where a total of 402 staff took 8 538 sick days at an average of 21.27 days each.

The Chief Operating Officer of the SAPS, Lieutenant General Bonang Mgwenya, acknowledged that the abuse of sick leave in the SAPS is a problem “that makes us not proud of ourselves as an organisation, also because it impacts negatively on service delivery”. According to Essop (2012:2), it seems that the SAPS are unable to deal with absenteeism in an efficient manner and this has a negative impact on the image of the SAPS and their service delivery efforts.

The absenteeism of training personnel at the Academy, who provide operational as well as generic management and leadership courses to SAPS learners, results in multiple classes sometimes having to be combined into one. As a result, an average of 90 learners could simultaneously be present in one class, which is not conducive to efficient learning. The high rate of absenteeism amongst support personnel in the administration component results in the daily administration and operations of the
Academy not being optimised because meetings need to be rescheduled, grounds and buildings are not optimally maintained, and the provision of meals falls behind schedule.

From the researcher’s experience, it has become evident that members who work office hours tend to report off sick, especially on Mondays and/or Fridays, without the need to submit a medical certificate for one day’s absence from work. Members who work shifts, such as the personnel working in the Food Providing Services (FPS), tend to have themselves booked off sick, for example, on Thursdays if their rest days start on a Friday. By implication, a member could be “off” for an entire week. These tendencies place a huge burden on the remaining personnel to effectively provide services. Consequently, the morale of the diligent members is negatively affected which, in turn, causes personal problems and leads to the misuse of sick leave. The high level of absenteeism of members attached to the Academy thus has a negative impact on internal and external service delivery and training provision.

On 13 April 2012, the Commander of the Academy instructed that letters need to be given to members whose sick leave has been exhausted. These members were further sensitised, in personal interviews, to the mismanagement of their sick leave. The sick leave profile of members at the Academy for 2009 to 2012 indicated that 65 members, from a total of 213, had between zero and ten sick leave days left on 13 April 2012. Thirty six members had no sick leave days left (Circular 13/7/2012). Since the high rate of absenteeism became a concern for the management of the Academy, it became imperative to research the impact of absenteeism of members on service delivery. Absenteeism, with specific reference to high levels of sick leave, has become a burden on the management of the Academy instead of working as a benefit for the employer.

- The Public Service Commission (PSC) prompted an investigation into the financial and other implications of leave in order to determine the efficacy of leave management in the Public Service. Public servants tend to manipulate sick, study and other forms of special leave, therefore, managers in the Public Service have the responsibility of ensuring that these tendencies do not take
hold. The manipulation of leave can wrongfully result in substantial numbers of working hours being regarded as lost hours. This is especially true for departments that have their activities curtailed, as this tendency can also translate into a cash cost as Managers then have to appoint relief staff (at additional costs) to ensure the continuity of essential services. Leave is also a vital human resource management (HRM) tool at the disposal of employers to ensure a healthy and productive work environment, apart from its financial implications.

Data collected for this investigation included interviews with officials responsible for the administration of leave, as well as a minimum of three line managers and six line functionaries (two under each manager) per government department. The majority of the managers interviewed were of the opinion that the provisions regarding sick leave are being abused by officials. The most common problem is that officials are currently aware that they do not have to submit medical certificates for sick leave in respect of periods of absence of three days or less, up to a maximum of 10 days per annum.

There has been an increase in absence over the last couple of years, according to the managers, in the number of sick leave days taken by officials. It has become common practice for many officials to take sick leave for one or two days at a time before and after weekends and paydays without being concerned with submitting a medical certificate, as they know that they are covered by the policy. In certain cases, subordinates stay away from work without informing their supervisors, as required, of their absence. In some components, managers are trying to control these tendencies by requesting that officials submit medical certificates for all sick leaves taken (even if only for one day at a time). In other components, however, managers show a level of apathy in dealing with the abuse of sick leave.

According to a number of managers, the medical certificates issued by medical practitioners are in many instances questionable. In certain cases, the information provided by subordinates to their supervisors regarding the nature of their illness differs substantially from what is indicated on the medical certificate (Public Service Commission Report on the Management of Leave in the Public Service, 2017).
1.3.1 Researcher’s experience in the management of absenteeism in the South African Police Service

The researcher has held the position of Head of Support Services at the Academy for the past 11 years, and holds the rank of Colonel. The researcher is responsible for the management of five components, including Human Resource Management. Absenteeism is administratively managed by the Human Resource Management component. One of the key performance areas of the researcher’s position is to manage and coordinate an adequate and optimal resource establishment, namely, Human Resource Management. In this key performance area, the researcher must ensure the efficient management of leave. Leave must be captured in a specific time frame and registers need to be updated.

The management of absenteeism in the Academy is part of the researcher’s primary responsibilities. A weekly report is compiled as a control mechanism; in this report, it is verified that all types of leave have been captured. The researcher is highly skilled in the daily management of leave through her vast experience in the field of human resources. The researcher also provides mentoring and coaching to her peers through one-on-one in-service training.

1.4 AIM OF THE RESEARCH

Welman and Kruger (1999:19) state that the aim or purpose of research is to define, explain and predict phenomena, such as behaviour in the workplace, with the aim of using the information. The aim of this study was to examine the impact of the behaviour of personnel (absence from work as a result of sick leave) on service delivery at the SAPS Academy, Paarl, for the leave cycle 2009 to 2012.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Welman et al. (2005:22) describe the purpose of research as threefold: to determine how things are, why things are the way they are, and to predict phenomena such as human behaviour in the workplace. In agreement, Babbie and Mouton (2001:79) state that the three common and useful purposes for social research are exploration, description and explanation.
The purpose of this study is:

- To explore and identify contributing factors responsible for the high absenteeism rate, as a result of sick leave, at the SAPS Academy, Paarl.
- To explore international best practices on the management of absenteeism in police organizations.
- To make recommendations to SAPS management regarding improvements that could be made to minimise absenteeism and improve service delivery.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research questions are directly related to the research topic. Firstly, the researcher needs to identify a topic that is worthy of enquiry and then formulate meaningful research questions (White, 2004:40). Welman and Kruger (1999:23) state that the research problem is translated into questions which state a relationship between two or more variables in one or more populations. Subsequently, the following research questions were explored in this study:

- What is the impact of the high absenteeism rate amongst personnel at the SAPS Academy, Paarl, on service delivery?
- What are the underlying causes of the high absenteeism rate amongst personnel at the SAPS Academy, Paarl?

1.7 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

This study has been demarcated as follows:

1.7.1 Time

This study focused on sick leave taken by members in 2012, during the 2009-2012 sick leave cycles. The SAPS National Instruction 2/2004 on Leave (South African Police Service, 2004) differentiates between the different types of leave as follows:

- Annual leave,
- Unpaid leave,
- Sick leave,
- Temporary and permanent incapacity leave,
- Occupational injuries,
Family responsibility leave,
Maternity leave,
Adoption,
Union activity,
Study leave,
Sport leave and
Leave for resettlement.

This study focuses solely on absenteeism from the work place as a result of sick leave.

1.7.2 Geographical Demarcation
This study was restricted to personnel attached to the SAPS Academy in Paarl, who are appointed in the SAPS in terms of the requirements of the SAPS Act, 68 of 1995 (South Africa, 1995) and personnel appointed in terms of the requirements of the PSA, Act 103 of 1994 (South Africa, 1994). The Academy is situated in the Paarl, Western Cape.

1.8 KEY THEORETICAL CONCEPTS
The identification of key concepts is an important part of the planning process when research is done. These key concepts, or key words, are the basic terms that describe the research questions and objectives of a study (Welman et al., 2005:38-40).

The following concepts are central to this study and are thus clarified here:

1.8.1 Absenteeism
According to Grobler, et al. (2006:123), absenteeism is when an employee fails to report for, or remain at, work or duty regardless of the reason. Similarly, Mathis, Jackson and Valentine (2014:158) describe absenteeism as any failure by an employee to report for work as scheduled or stay at work when scheduled. Moorhead and Griffen (2012:80) describe absenteeism as when an employee does not come to work due to illness, injury, death or illness in the family that needs attention. These instances can be called legitimate causes. In certain instances, the employee may just present an excuse for not reporting for work. Irrespective of why an employee is absent, the quality and quantity of the output is compromised.
For the purpose of this study, absenteeism refers to sick leave taken by members of the SAPS Academy, Paarl.

### 1.8.2 Service Delivery
Effective service delivery is a fundamental factor in the successful continuation of any organisation. As a result, the efficiency of organisations is directly measured according to their adequate service provision levels (Van Graan, 2009:158).

For the purpose of this study, a distinction was made between internal service delivery and external service delivery. Internal service delivery refers to the services provided by members attached to the support components at the Academy to ensure the efficient day-to-day functioning of the Academy. External service delivery refers to the training provided by SAPS trainers from the Academy to SAPS learners.

### 1.8.3 Sick Leave Cycle
For the purpose of this study, sick leave cycle refers to the three year sick leave period that commenced on 1 January 2009 and ended on 31 December 2012.

### 1.9 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH
According to Welman et al. (2005:284), value entails a measure of research competence, it must have a problem solving ability and it must add to the body of knowledge in a field of science.

Once the impact of absenteeism, as a result of sick leave, has been identified, the study and its results will, firstly, benefit the SAPS (with specific reference to the SAPS Academy in Paarl) as an organisation that is currently experiencing high levels of absenteeism. As a result, the management of the Academy will receive first-hand information regarding which areas to specifically focus on during the management of sick leave and to utilise this impact examination as a learning curve and an opportunity to be guided towards the realisation of improved management of absenteeism. Consequently, this study could act as a management tool to support and further develop the management of absenteeism at the Academy.
Subsequently, the management of the Academy could have an improved understanding of the underlying causes of the high levels of absenteeism amongst its members. Recommendations will also be presented in this study; these recommendations will provide guidelines on how to address and prevent the high levels of absenteeism, which may have a significant impact on improved service delivery at the Academy, in a more efficient manner. Furthermore, through examining the impact of absenteeism on service delivery at the Academy, weaknesses and possible adjustments and solutions could be identified for implementation. As a result, the Academy could have an opportunity for organisational learning.

Secondly, the study and its results may benefit other SAPS training institutions that are experiencing similar trends in high levels of absenteeism. This study could also increase awareness amongst police managers and could be used to address similar challenges by providing practical advice to human resource personnel in the SAPS.

Lastly, the South African community may benefit from the study and its results, since it could contribute to the realisation of a truly professional internationally acclaimed police training institution that meets high service delivery standards, leads to improved training interventions and enhances the professionalism of police officials. In addition, the academic community could also benefit from the study and its results, since such an evaluation could be used in related studies, research and included in learning material.

1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The following methodological guidelines were followed in this study:

1.10.1 Research Design
De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (1998:142) explain research design as an integrated statement and justification for the more technical decisions involved in planning a research project. It focuses on the end product and all the steps in the process to achieve the anticipated outcome. It is a plan that details how the researcher will carry out the project. Planning the study includes not only the type of design to use but also the sampling, sources and procedures for collecting data. Similarly, Babbie
and Mouton (2001:72) describe research design as the designing of a strategy to find out about something. This is to find out what the researcher wants and the best way to do it. It focuses on what kind of evidence is required to adequately address the research question. It further states that it is a plan on how the researcher intends to conduct the research process in order to solve the research problem.

Empirical research was conducted in this study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to capture the real life experiences (absenteeism from work as a result of sick leave) of the study participants (personnel attached to the SAPS Academy, Paarl). Semi-structured interviews with the participants provided first-hand information on the phenomenon under investigation. As a result, the research questions were adequately addressed.

1.10.2 Qualitative Approach
According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:270), the approach of qualitative research is a broad methodological approach to the study of social action. It refers to a collection of methods and techniques which share a certain set of principles. Based on the nature of the problem, this study would adopt a qualitative research approach by conducting a comprehensive literature review and semi-structured interviews. The data was collected via semi-structured interviews, which offered a versatile way for the interviewer to clear up uncertainties regarding possible incomplete answers (Welman et al., 2005:167).

A standardised interview schedule was utilised to facilitate the interviews. The interview schedule was piloted with participants from the Academy, who did not form part of the study, prior to the study. Potential shortcomings identified during the pilot interviews were addressed. The researcher has also come to grips with some of the practical aspects of establishing access and has become aware of her own level of interviewing skills (De Vos et al., 1998:349).

According to White (2004:17), qualitative research develops concepts and insights into an understanding from the collected data. Words and pictures are used, rather than numbers. The characteristics of qualitative research are that the researcher must
physically go to the people or setting in order to observe their behaviour. The researcher has gone into the research setting (SAPS Academy, Paarl) to interview the participants. In addition, national and international literature was consulted on the topic being researched.

1.11 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING

A target population is the population to which the researcher would ideally like to generalise his or her results (Welman et al., 2005:126). The ideal population for this study would have been all members of the SAPS who are responsible for the provisioning of training at SAPS Training Institutions, personnel attached to such institutions who provide support services, and SAPS learners who receive training from such institutions. Currently, there are 24 SAPS training academies in South Africa. These training academies present basic training and in-service training. The SAPS Academies in Paarl and Thabong are the only two academies that present leadership and management training.

However, it was not practically feasible for the researcher to study the entire population due to the large geographical area and large number of subjects in the population. As a result, it was necessitated that the researcher makes use of a target population and limit the study to the SAPS Academy in Paarl. During this study, the Academy had the personnel strength of 213 members.

The target population consisted of the following components:

- Training: Component under which all the trainers reside, inclusive of leadership and operational programmes;
- Moderation and Evaluation: Responsible for the quality assurance of the training and the support functions of the Academy;
- Development and Learner Support: Responsible for the welfare of the learners; and
- Support Services: Responsible for supporting the core function, namely, training, and all support activities. This component’s functions include:
• Human resource management, finance and administration: Responsible for financial management and the registration of learners;
• Supply chain management: Responsible for procurement and acquisition matters, and for maintaining an inventory of all state property;
• Maintenance: Responsible for day-to-day maintenance and the upkeep of buildings;
• Grounds men: Responsible for the upkeep of the gardens, collecting refuse and assisting with the movement of furniture, as well as cleaning of state vehicles;
• Cleaners: Responsible for housekeeping of the offices and residential quarters of senior learners on a daily basis; and
• Food Providing Services: Responsible to prepare and provide food to learners and guests.

A total of 20 Academy employees (including the Section Heads of each component) from all the different components mentioned above formed part of the sample drawn to determine the impact of absenteeism on internal service delivery. These members are appointed according to the provisions of the SAPS Act and PSA personnel (administrative and support personnel). These members’ years’ experience in the SAPS range from one year to 20 years. The researcher used non-probability sampling in the form of purposive sampling to select the sample. According to White (2004:53), non-probability sampling is not randomly made, but people are selected individually to participate in the research, because each person has certain characteristics that need to be researched. This type of sampling is also used for smaller numbers.

These members were included in the sample because they have taken the least sick leave for the leave cycle 2009 to 2012. These diligent members carry the burden of the erring officials and, thus, directly experience the impact of excessive absenteeism on service delivery. The selected sample included the following members:

• One Section Head and two members of the Training Component;
• One Section Head and one member of the Moderation and Evaluation Component;
• One Section Head and one member of the Development and Learner Support Component;
• One Section Head and twelve members of the Support Services Component:
  - Two members of Human Resource Management;
  - Two members of Finance and Administration;
  - Two members of Supply Chain Management;
  - One member of Maintenance;
  - One grounds man;
  - Two cleaners; and
  - Two members of Food Providing Services (Mess).

1.12 DATA COLLECTION
According to Fink (2014:102), researchers use a variety of methods to collect data. These methods include, amongst others, face-to-face interviews and reviewing the relevant literature. The researcher conducted a literature review and semi-structured interviews in order to collect data.

1.12.1 Literature Review
Welman et al. (2005:250) indicate that a literature review highlights the most pertinent findings discussed by other researchers. The researcher familiarised herself with the relevant literature on the topic under study in order to get a sense of what has previously been researched on the topic. Literature was gathered from national and international scholarly literature, after which it was analysed in conjunction with the data obtained from the interviews so as to get a clear understanding of the research problem and to seek solutions to it.

1.12.2 Semi-Structured Interviews
Babbie and Mouton (2001:288) are of the opinion that one of the most crucial questions to ask is where the interview data will come from. These authors describe the individual interview as one of the most frequently used methods of data gathering in the qualitative approach. Semi-structured interviews, which are versatile, can also be used to collect data from participants (Welman & Kruger, 1999:167). Welman et al. (2005:166) refer to semi-structured interviews as a list of themes and questions from which the researcher is working. Creswell (2014:190) describes that, in qualitative
interviews, the researcher would conduct face-to-face interviews with the participants, or telephonic conversations, or focus group interviews. These interviews could involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions. The goal was to obtain the opinions and views of the participants.

The opinions and views obtained from the participants formed an integral part of the study as they helped to determine and describe the underlying causes of the high level of absenteeism at the Academy, and the impact of this phenomenon on services delivered at the Academy. A standardised interview schedule was used to facilitate the interviews with the participants. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. The interview schedules were compiled and piloted amongst non-research participants prior to the interviews. The interviews were conducted until saturation point had been reached. The interviews were electronically recorded for transcription purposes, so as to assist with the data analysis.

1.13 DATA ANALYSIS
According to White (2004:72), data analysis is a process of understanding and interpreting the contents of qualitative data and finding common issues in it. Data was compared with the literature reviewed and the data collected from participants was used to analyse similarities, uniqueness, interesting facts and discrepancies.

The data analysis spiral suggested by Creswell (2013:182) was applied in this study. Creswell describes the data analysis spiral as follows:

- Managing data: Go through files and organise these files for relevant data;
- Reading and memorising: Read through notes and questions and make notes to reflect on it;
- Describing, classifying and interpreting: Build detailed descriptions, develop themes and provide an interpretation of one’s own views or perspectives in the literature;
- Interpreting the data: The process that begins with the development of codes, the formation of themes and the organization of themes into larger units of abstraction to make sense of the data; and
- Representing the data: Packaging what was found in text, tabular or figure form.
After the data analysis, the researcher approached the respondents in order to verify whether the analysis adequately represented their responses to the interviews.

1.14 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY

Validity does not carry the same connotations in qualitative research as it does in quantitative research, nor is it a companion of reliability. Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher’s approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Gibbs, as cited in Creswell, 2014:201).

The following validity strategies, as proposed by Creswell (2014:201) were implemented in this study:

- Triangulate the different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources obtained and using it to build a coherent justification for themes. Themes were established based on converging various sources of data and perspectives from participants. As a result, validity was enhanced.

- The researcher used member checking to determine the accuracy of the final report. The findings of the study were verified with participants, by means of follow-up interviews, to determine whether the participants viewed the findings as accurate. Participants had the opportunity to comment on the findings.

- The researcher used rich, thick descriptions to convey the research findings. Through this description the researcher transferred readers to the setting and gave the discussion an element of shared experiences.

- The researcher clarified the bias she brought to the study by creating an open and honest narrative of the findings of the study. The researcher commented on how the interpretations of the findings were shaped by her background and position at the Academy.
The researcher spent prolonged time in the field. As a result, the researcher developed an in-depth understanding of the impact of absenteeism amongst members at the Academy as a result of sick leave. Consequently, the researcher was able to convey detail about the site and the participants; this lends credibility to the study.

In order to determine the reliability of the study, the researcher documented the research procedures and steps followed to enable other researchers to follow this study. In addition, transcripts were verified to ensure that they do not contain obvious mistakes made during transcription, as suggested by Gibbs (as cited in Creswell, 2014:203).

1.15 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
Ethical behaviour is very important in research, as it is in any other field of human activity. Matters such as plagiarism and honesty when reporting results arise in all research and are considered ethical considerations. Research ethics are universal, and honesty and respect for all people are of great concern. Most universities have ethical codes that need to be respected, especially where research concerns the rights of humans (Welman et al., 2005:181). The researcher adhered to the Policy on Research Ethics of the University of South Africa (University of South Africa, 2007:7) as well as the following ethical considerations suggested by Welman et al. (2005:201):

- Informed consent

According to the Policy on Research Ethics of the University of South Africa (University of South Africa, 2007:12), informed consent is described as relevant and necessary personal information that can be collected and processed with the participant’s consent. This information needs to be freely given by the participant in writing and signed by them. The researcher gained the necessary written permission from the respondents and informed them in writing about the aim and purpose of the research. The researcher explained the notion of voluntary participation to the participants, and informed them of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any explanation or prejudice.
• Anonymity, confidentiality and assurance of the right to privacy
The Policy on Research Ethics of the University of South Africa (University of South Africa, 2007:15) states that all participants have the right to privacy to the extent permitted by the law. All information provided by research participants should remain confidential, and this must be made clear to them by the researcher. Anonymity should be safeguarded. When findings are published, the researcher has an obligation to protect the participants’ privacy.

Emphasis was placed on participant anonymity, the protection of identity and the right to privacy. Each participant’s personal details and responses to the interview questions were treated as confidential; they were only used for the purposes of this study and were kept in a safe that is only accessible to the researcher. Interviews were conducted privately and individually. Participants were not identified or openly approached by researcher.

• Protection from physical and emotional harm
The Policy on Research Ethics of the University of South Africa (University of South Africa, 2007:16) clearly stipulates that that researcher must be able to identify potential harm and efforts should be made for the protection of study participants.

Written permission to conduct interviews with participants was obtained from the SAPS prior to conducting the interviews. Participants were ensured that their responses will only be used for the purposes of this study and that any disclosure of any nature will not be held against them nor will they be victimised after the study has been concluded.

• Involvement of the researcher, not to treat the respondents as objects and numbers, or using unethical techniques of interviewing.
Participants were informed of the requirements of the Policy on Research Ethics of the University of South Africa (University of South Africa, 2007) and a copy of this policy was made available to them. Each participant was treated with absolute dignity and respect irrespective of their position. The researcher has thus not treated the participants as mere objects for the purpose of the study. As a result, the participants
were given the assurance that they will be indemnified against any physical and emotional harm.

1.16 SUMMARY

Absenteeism from the workplace is a major problem for the South African Police Service and organisations internationally and drains productivity, profits, and morale of personnel; created innumerable challenges for managers, shareholders and those employees who were at work regularly. A large number of South African Police Service (SAPS) officials mismanage their sick leave. Hughes (2012) states the high level of sick leave among police officers in the UK is a gross failure of management. Tang and Hammontree (1992) were of the opinion that absenteeism and stress in the workplace in the police environment in the USA were work-related. Tang and Hammontree (1992) further consider hardiness as another factor to absenteeism which related to the attitude a person had towards work. Absenteeism in the workplace, with specific reference to police organisations, is thus a global problem that needs to be addressed.
2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of the legislative and regulatory framework that manages absenteeism in the larger public service as well as the SAPS. This chapter commences with legislation that governs absenteeism in the public service. In addition, the chapter provides an outline of SAPS legislative directives and internal documents focusing on the governing and promotion of efficient absenteeism management in the Service. Official SAPS Standing Orders, Legislation, Regulations, National Instructions, Resolutions and Agreements, particularly related to absenteeism in the SAPS, provide the broad framework and foundation of this chapter.

The significance of this regulatory framework is, firstly, to identify the relevant regulatory framework that administers absenteeism in the SAPS, and, secondly, to substantiate the significance and implications of each. Particular attention was given to those regulatory enactments relating to absenteeism as a result of sick leave. This regulatory framework provides guidance on the management and the processes to follow in the event of absenteeism of SAPS members, both appointed in terms of the SAPS Act, Act 68 of 1995 (South Africa, 1995) and the Public Service Act, Act 103 of 1994 (South Africa, 1994). As a result, it is important to analyse the significance and implications of this framework.

In order to look after the well-being of SAPS members, to assist members to perform their work efficiently and to effectively manage and administer absenteeism in the SAPS, official absenteeism management measures need to be in place in the SAPS occupational environment. Due to the generally demanding nature of performing policing duties, the official absenteeism management measures provided for in the SAPS address a wide spectrum of absenteeism. These official absenteeism management measures acknowledge that members are part of families and society, and that they have different needs and lifestyles. The health of members also differs and occupational injuries, mentally and physically, are a great risk for SAPS members.
Members also participate in sports codes and compete on different levels and in different countries. The SAPS further allows for trade union activities within the organisation. Representatives of these unions within the SAPS, from time to time, require time off from their official duties to attend to tasks related to their position within the union. The SAPS further encourages members to develop themselves as professionals by furthering their studies or improving their qualifications by enrolling at tertiary academic institutions; this also requires these members to be absent from their official duties for examination purposes. In addition, Workplace Skills Development Programmes also require members to be away from their work places.

2.2 BROAD LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ENFORCING BASIC CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: ABSENTEEISM IN THE WORKPLACE

The following South African legislative framework enforces basic conditions of employment with specific reference to sick leave.

2.2.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996
Section 23(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996) gives effect to and regulates the right to fair labour practices in South Africa, by acknowledging that “everyone has the right to fair labour practices” including the right to sick leave.

2.2.2 Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997
Section 22 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997 (South Africa, 1997) establishes and enforces the regulation of sick leave within the workplace, as follows:

“Sick leave cycle” means the period of 36 months’ employment with the same employer immediately following—
(a) an employee’s commencement of employment; or
(b) the completion of that employee’s prior sick leave cycle.
(2) During every sick leave cycle, an employee is entitled to an amount of paid sick leave equal to the number of days the employee would normally work during a period of six weeks.

(3) Despite subsection (2), during the first six months of employment, an employee is entitled to one day’s paid sick leave for every 26 days worked.

(4) During an employee’s first sick leave cycle, an employer may reduce the employee’s entitlement to sick leave in terms of subsection (2) by the number of days’ sick leave taken in terms of subsection (3).

(5) Subject to section 23, an employer must pay an employee for a day’s sick leave—
(a) the wage the employee would ordinarily have received for work on that day; and
(b) on the employee’s usual payday.

(6) An agreement may reduce the pay to which an employee is entitled in respect of any day’s absence in terms of this section if—
(a) the number of days of paid sick leave is increased at least commensurately with any reduction in the daily amount of sick pay; and
(b) the employee’s entitlement to pay—
(i) for any day’s sick leave is at least 75 per cent of the wage payable to the employee for the ordinary hours the employee would have worked on that day; and
(ii) for sick leave over the sick leave cycle is at least equivalent to the employee’s entitlement in terms of subsection (2).

2.3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK MANAGING ABSENTEEISM IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

The following discussion presents regulations, policies, SAPS national instructions, and internal SAPS documents that administer the absenteeism of SAPS members.

2.3.1 South African Police Service Regulations in Terms of Absenteeism

These regulations, unless the context otherwise indicates any expression given as a definition in the Act, shall have the same meaning as in the Act. The Act refers to the Police Act, 1958(Act No 7 of 1958). SAPS members are governed by these regulations
and, for the purpose of this study; they will be discussed specifically in relation to matters regarding absence.

2.3.2 Regulation 1 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958

Regulation 1 (South Africa, 1958) refers to definitions as defined in the Police Act 7 of 1958 (South Africa, 1958). This Regulation deals *inter alia* with a “day off” which constitutes absenteeism. “Day off” refers to a day on which a member does not normally perform duties.

The SAPS Regulation 1 (South Africa, 1958) clearly defines that a member does not work 24 hours and seven days a week but needs rest, therefore, a member is entitled to a day off from work to rest.

2.3.3 Regulation 28 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958

Regulation 28 deals with medical examinations, records and boards. This regulation stipulates that every member must have a medical sheet, on a prescribed form that needs to be maintained. If a member claims or is suspected to be suffering from any ill-health or injury, the member shall be obliged to undergo a medical assessment by a registered medical practitioner. The report obtained will determine if a medical board is needed. If it is found that a member is medically unfit for further service in the SAPS, a report shall be submitted to the National Commissioner (General). The National Commissioner may convene a medical board to examine whether a member is still fit to remain in the SAPS. If the board recommends the discharge of a member, the member can make a representation within 14 days if he/she does not concur with the findings of the board. The National Commissioner can consider the representation and may, if needed, consult the Director-General of Health or an authorised medical officer to either confirm or send the member for further medical examination, or to resume duties. If the member concerned is discharged, the date of his/her discharge shall be determined by the National Commissioner (South Africa, 1958)

Regulation 28 (South Africa, 1958) stipulates certain conditions concerning medical boards. The SAPS is obliged to keep a prescriptive medical sheet on which all cases of serious ill-health and injury are recorded to ensure that members undergo a medical
assessment when required, so as to establish whether a member is still healthy enough to continue duties in the SAPS. A final finding concerning the fitness of the member will be made by the National Commissioner. The final date of employment for the concerned member is also determined by the National Commissioner. The concerned member can appeal if he/she is not satisfied with the outcome of the decision concerning the boarding (South Africa, 1958).

2.3.3.1 Regulation 28A in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958
According to Regulation 28A (South Africa, 1958), a member can within 14 days of receiving the notice that he/she is discharged, lodge a written appeal to the National Commissioner against his/her discharge. The appeal should contain the full details of the grounds on which it is based. The National Commissioner shall then hand the appeal to the Minister with the record of the board’s proceedings and all other relevant documents. The Minister will then study the documents. The Minister will not hear any *viva voce* arguments from the applicant but will make his own judgment. A non-commissioned officer who wishes to apply for appeal against his dismissal or discharge will have to follow the same route as a commissioned officer.

The South African Police Service Regulation 28A (South Africa, 1958) clearly describes what a member, irrespective of rank, should do in a case when he is not happy with the outcome of the decision made by the National Commissioner concerning the boarding. However, the final judgement lies with the Minister. The Minister will base his judgement solely on the documents he has in front of him.

2.3.4 Regulation 38 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958
Regulation 38 (South Africa, 1958) deals with the scope of application of leave regulations. Leave of absence for members temporarily appointed in terms of the Police Act 7 of 1958 (South Africa, 1958) or any other employees who are not full-time members of the SAPS, shall be covered by this regulation. Regulation 38 defines those members who are not permanently appointed in the SAPS, leave application is governed by this regulation.
2.3.5 Regulation 39 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958

Regulation 39 (South Africa, 1958) deals with leave of absence as a privilege. This regulation makes it clear that leave is a privilege and not a right. The duties of the Service need to be taken into account before any leave is granted to a member. Members who left the Service who had leave to their credit cannot claim the cash value to be paid out to them. Leave gratuities, as approved by the Treasury, shall not be precluded as recommended by the Commission of Administration. The SAPS Regulation 39 (South Africa, 1958) promulgated that leave is a privilege and not a right. Service delivery is regarded to come first before any leave can be granted to a member, even though leave is indicated as a benefit to all members. When exiting the SAPS, members are also not entitled to a cash pay-out if they have accrued leave.

2.3.6 Regulation 40 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958

Regulation 40 (South Africa, 1958) deals with the granting and withdrawal of leave and leave application forms. The National Commissioner must approve all leave of absence before it is granted to any member. The Minister grants leave to the National Commissioner. The National Commissioner can at any time withdraw the leave already granted and the Minister can withdraw the leave granted to the National Commissioner. No member can leave, or absent himself from, work unless an application for leave has been approved or he/she has suddenly fallen sick, been injured or has been suspended.

The prescribed form must be completed in writing by the member when applying for leave. In the case of application for sick leave, the prescribed form also needs to be completed. A medical certificate must be presented in support of the sick leave, where necessary. Any member may, if required by the National Commissioner, be requested to furnish his address during leave of absence of whatever nature. Members living in the quarters can request to remain there during their leave of absence as a result of injury, illness or disposition.

Regulation 40 (South Africa, 1958) indicates that the National Commissioner, at any time, can withdraw the leave of a member even though the leave has already been approved. The Minister can also at any time withdraw the leave of the National
Commissioner. The prescribed application form for leave must be approved before a member can enjoy his/her leave. Members can be requested to furnish their home addresses to the National Commissioner during any type of absence, including members living in the Police quarters.

2.3.7 Regulation 41 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958

Regulation 41 (South Africa, 1958) focusses specifically on leave registers. Head Office must keep a leave register of all members; in this register, all periods of absence must be recorded. Regulation 44 deals with the different classifications of all periods of absence. The National Commissioner may direct an audit on all leave applications. Commanders shall also keep a leave register of all members under their command.

Regulation 41 (South Africa, 1958) directs the Head Office to keep a leave register wherein all types of leave must be recorded for all members of the SAPS. Leave registers for all members shall also be maintained by their Commanders. Leave audits of all SAPS members can, at any time, be requested by the National Commissioner.

2.3.8 Regulation 42 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958

Regulation 42 (South Africa, 1958) deals with the lapse of granted leave on termination of service. Any paid leave already granted to a member shall lapse when he/she resigns and, if the member is absent from work after the date of notice of resignation received by his Commander, will be regarded as vacation leave without pay. Except, if the absence is during a member’s last 30 days of service and it is not applicable to sick leave or special leave in terms of regulation 52(1) or already granted leave in terms of regulation 50(6). Granted leave to a member for a specific timeframe shall lapse after his/her service termination, if the service of a member is terminated for one or another reason. The date of the member’s termination cannot be extended in order for the member to take the granted leave.

Regulation 42 (South Africa, 1958) makes it clear that no member can, after termination, for whatsoever reason, from SAPS insist on the leave that has already been authorised by his/her Commander. Members can also not insist that their leave must be taken into consideration when their duty to the SAPS is terminated. Leave to the member’s credit will lapse when terminated from the SAPS, for whatsoever reason.
2.3.9 Regulation 43 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958

Regulation 43 (South Africa, 1958) deals with the payment of allowance during leave. Services rendered by the State to a member in a period whilst they are on leave shall be subject to the directions issued by the Treasury on recommendation of the Commission of Administration or the National Commissioner. Continuation or discontinuation of allowances or remuneration for services rendered by the member, other than his salary, to the State, shall be subject to the same directions as in above paragraph.

Regulation 43 (South Africa, 1958) states that any allowance shall be subjected to instructions given by the Treasury concerning the payments thereof. The Treasury works on the instruction of the Commission of Administration who issue directions regarding how remuneration should be made.

2.3.10 Regulation 44 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958

Regulation 44 (South Africa, 1958) deals with the payment of an allowance during leave.

The following are classifications of all absences from duty while on leave:

a) Vacation leave(accumulative) on full pay
b) Non-accumulative leave on full pay
c) Vacation leave without pay
d) Sick leave on full pay
e) Sick leave on half pay
f) Sick leave without pay
g) Special sick leave on full pay
h) Special sick leave on half pay
i) Special sick leave without pay
j) Special leave on full pay
k) Special leave subject to the conditions of pay as approved by the Commissioner on recommendation of the Commission of Administration.
The granting of leave of any of the above categories shall not be affected by any other type of leave mentioned elsewhere in the regulations. Disciplinary action will be taken against the member for unauthorised periods of leave. It will be regarded as leave without pay unless the National Commissioner decides otherwise. In the case of unauthorised absences, there will be no need for a written application as normally prescribed.

Regulation 44 (South Africa, 1958) deals with the payment of all types of absenteeism in the SAPS. The National Commissioner works on instructions received from the Commission of Administration for the granting of special leave. A member will also be disciplined when absent from work without the necessary authorisation of his Commander. This absence is regarded as unpaid leave.

**2.3.11 Regulation 45 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958**

Regulation 45 (South Africa, 1958) defines the groupings of members appointed on a certain date and members with certain years of service in the SAPS.

Members appointed before 1 July 1966 are eligible for leave (accumulative) as per the following groups:

- Members with 15 years or longer service will be in the group who will receive 38 days per annum.
- Members with 10 years or longer service but less than 15 years will be in the group who will receive 36 days per annum.
- Members with less than 10 years’ service will be in the group who will receive 30 days per annum.

Members appointed on or after 1 July 1966 are eligible for leave (accumulative) as per the following groups:

- Members with 10 years or longer service will be in the group who will receive 36 days per annum.
- Members with less than 10 years’ service will be in the group who will receive 30 days per annum.
- Members receive 120 days with full pay for sick leave and 120 days with half pay in a sick leave cycle.

Any accumulative leave shall lapse when a member retires or relinquishes a permanent appointment or when his service is terminated for whatsoever reason. If a member is re-appointed into the Service it shall be regarded as a new appointment, and the member will receive no credit for previous years in the Service for leave purposes.

2.3.12 Regulation 46 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958
Regulation 46 (South Africa, 1958) deals with leave granted in excess of leave credit. When excess leave was granted in good faith, with the authority of the Commissioner, and the member terminated their duties without having enough leave credits to cover the granted leave, it will be determined to be an over payment. This payment can be recovered or written off.

Regulation 46 (South Africa, 1958) defines excess leave as that which was granted while under the impression that the member had enough leave credits to cover the authorised leave. When this happens the overpayment can either be recovered or written off, as authorised by the National Commissioner.

2.3.13 Regulation 47 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958
Regulation 47 (South Africa, 1958) focusses on days off. When a member takes leave and has days off in between his leave, then all the days off shall not be recorded or regarded as leave. If a member becomes sick whilst on leave, it shall be regarded as leave unless the member can provide evidence to the effect that he/she was sick. In this case, it shall then be recorded as sick leave in the register.

Days off between periods of authorised and unauthorised leave shall be regarded as leave. If the member has no leave to his/her credit it shall then be regarded as leave without pay. If a member is on sick leave with days off in between then it shall be regarded as leave on full pay. To avoid leave without pay, the member must produce a sick note; this will then be regarded as sick leave with full pay.
When a member is called to perform duties on a day off and fails to do so it will be regarded as grounds for disciplinary action. This failure to report for duty will also result in unpaid leave unless the member can produce evidence that he/she was prevented from reporting for duty, as acceptable to the National Commissioner.

Regulation 47 (South Africa, 1958) defines how days off in between leave or sick leave should be regarded. In the case of leave, the rest days between the official days taken as leave will not be regarded as leave. If a member becomes sick whilst on leave, then the days will remain as leave unless the member provides a sick certificate to this effect. When the member provides a sick certificate only then shall the annual leave be changed to sick leave. If a member’s duty was required on a day off, and the member failed to report for duty, then it shall be regarded as unpaid leave and this member will be disciplined in accordance with the disciplinary regulations. This can only be reversed if the member can produce evidence of what prohibited him from reporting for duty, as acceptable to the National Commissioner.

2.3.14 Regulation 48 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958

Regulation 48 (South Africa, 1958) stipulates vacation leave granted in terms of the repealed regulations or in respect of persons transferred from another department of state, the South African Transport Services or other similar services as a member of the Service. Any person who is appointed or transferred from any State Department into the Police Service shall retain their leave credit. There must be no break in service. If this person is taking up their post on a day other than the first day of the month, the leave to their credit shall stand on the last day of the month preceding the month in which their appointment or transfer is affected. If a member must complete a certain period before he/she becomes permanent and such a period is incomplete, then the period of leave can be calculated proportionally.

Regulation 48 (South Africa, 1958) states that when a member from another state department becomes a member of the SAPS, either by transfer or promotion, there should not be a single day’s break in service.
2.3.15 Regulation 49 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: General Provisions – Vacation Leave

Regulation 49 (South Africa, 1958) stipulates that, for each completed month of service, a member shall accumulate leave at a rate of one-twelfth as per provision of regulation 45 (1) (a). If a member in a group defined in regulation 45 is transferred he/she shall retain their accumulated leave as it was accrued whilst in the other group. Leave credits are transferable from one group to another. From the first day of the month, as soon as member becomes a part of the new group, his/her leave starts to accumulate, however, regulation 45 (2) needs to be taken into consideration where applicable. A portion of the whole leave of a member may be required from the National Commissioner at any time, and the Minister can expect the same of the National Commissioner. The maximum period of leave shall not be exceeded.

A member can have a period of 18 calendar months taken up to, but not exceeding 184 days of leave. If a member exceeds this period and needs to take more leave, then it shall be regarded as unpaid leave. On the 1st of January of each year the credits of a member’s leave shall be recorded in the register. If the member is absent for any portion of the day then it shall be regarded as one day's leave. The South African Police Service Regulation 49 (South Africa, 1958) defines that members who form part of a group and are transferred to another group retain their leave credit as is.

The National Commissioner can, however, at any time, request some of the leave. The Minister can request the same of the National Commissioner. Although the members accumulate leave in their new groups, as from the first day of the month, the agreed upon leave as per year could not be exceeded. This implies that if a member exceeds this period and needs more leave, this leave will be regarded as unpaid leave. Members in this group, who took a portion of the day and booked off early from work, will have one day’s leave deducted from their leave credit.
2.3.16 Regulation 50 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: General Provisions – Sick Leave

According to Regulation 50 (South Africa, 1958), a member is entitled to a full cycle of sick leave if all provisions of leave regulations are complied with. A newly appointed member is only eligible for sick leave after 30 days of actual service. A member who is transferred during a sick leave cycle is entitled to the days of sick leave on his credits at his new station. Sick leave days not used by a member in a cycle cannot be transferred to the next cycle. These days will lapse. A member with more than 10 years of service who has taken all his sick leave accredited to him in a cycle due to sickness may apply for additional sick leave with full pay, to the Commissioner.

The National Commissioner can recommend this application to the Commission of Administration, with the approval of the Treasurer. The National Commissioner may grant a member further sick leave if his leave credit has been exhausted and the member is not yet able to resume duties due to sickness, but the member must submit a satisfactory sick certificate by a registered doctor or dentist. The member must be able to resume duties at a later stage and must not be permanently unfit for duty. A member may submit an application to apply for vacation leave which is still on his credit, to have his sick leave with half pay or without pay, not later than 3 calendar months after he has resumed duty. Leave granted shall not exceed 365 days in any cycle. The member must still be able to resume duties and must not be permanently unfit for duty. If a member falls ill whilst on vacation leave, the portion of days sick may be converted into sick leave if a certificate is issued by a registered medical practitioner or dentist. The National Commissioner must approve this change. Sick leave granted cannot be converted into vacation leave without pay.

Regulation 50 (South Africa, 1958) makes it clear that a member does not get sick leave credit from day one of employment in the SAPS, but only after one month of actual service. Any member transferred from one station to another during the leave credit cycle, does not forfeit any credit, but will continue with the same credit they had at their previous station. Members cannot transfer any leave to their credit when a new leave cycle is started. Sick leave not taken during a cycle is forfeited by the member. If a member who has 10 years’ service needs more sick leave than provided for in a
specific cycle, then he/she may apply to the National Commissioner for more days, if the need arises. The Commission of Administration, in consultation with the Treasurer, is responsible for approving such an application with full pay. Members must, however, have obtained a sick certificate from a registered doctor or dentist in order to qualify for such an application. There is one condition attached to this and it is that the member must not be permanently disabled for further duties in the SAPS. When a member is on vacation leave and falls sick during this period, he/she can apply to the National Commissioner for the conversion of their vacation leave to sick leave. In order to qualify for this, a sick certificate must be issued by a registered doctor or dentist.

2.3.17 Regulation 51 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: Granting of Sick Leave

In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 51 (South Africa, 1958), members’ absence in lieu of illness, indisposition or injury - and not as a result of their own failure to take reasonable precautions - shall be granted as sick leave. The National Commissioner may grant a member sick leave if he/she is satisfied that the condition incapacitates the member for duty and is not on account of failure to take vacation leave; examples for this instance are nervous complaints, insomnia, disability and similar ill-defined illnesses.

Sick leave may only be granted in the case of three days continuous absence from work if the member furnished a satisfactory certificate issued by a registered doctor or dentist.

The certificate must clearly state the following:
- The nature of illness, disposition or injury
- The member is not capable of performing any duties, and
- The period for recuperation.

Absence due to injuries sustained on or off duty must be accompanied by a sick certificate. A sick certificate for three days or less may be required by the National Commissioner at any given time. If there is good reason for the non-submission of a certificate for the prescribed period, and the National Commissioner is satisfied that
the failure is bona fide, the National Commissioner may waive the submission of such certificate in respect of sick leave; the days of said sick leave may, however, not exceed 14 continuous days. This exemption must be endorsed on the leave application form (SAPS 26). If a certificate is not submitted in respect of sick leave with or without pay, a total of 10 days’ sick leave during any year (1 January to 31 December) may be granted. Any further absence must be covered by vacation leave or, if vacation leave has been exhausted, leave without pay. The National Commissioner can still refuse to grant sick leave at his/her discretion and such period of sick leave shall be regarded as unauthorised absence. The National Commissioner can, at his/her discretion, also grant vacation leave, if the member has leave to his/her credit, to cover the period of absence.

Regulation 51 (South Africa, 1958) clearly states that sick leave will be authorised if the absence is not due to or the result of a member’s own failure to take reasonable precautions. The National Commissioner must ascertain whether the member took precautions for taking leave to rest. Any injuries on or off duty must be accompanied by a sick certificate obtained from a registered doctor, even when the absence is less than three days. The National Commissioner can, if the member’s leave has been exhausted, at his/her own discretion, decide to authorise vacation leave to cover the period of absence (sick leave), when he/she studies the member’s application documents.

2.3.18 Regulation 52 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: Special Leave with Full Remuneration

In accordance with Regulation 52 (South Africa, 1958), if a member is absent from duty due to the fact that he/she wrote an examination at a recognised institution within the Republic, special leave with full pay may be granted to such a member. A member who is quarantined or isolated by a registered medical practitioner, or who has been in contact with or is suspected to be in contact with an infectious or contagious disease, can be granted special leave with full pay. This absence must be accompanied by a sick certificate from a registered medical practitioner. The certificate must state the reason for the isolation and the period of absence.
When a member is charged before a court with an offence, or when a member of a semi-official institution is required to attend a meeting, or when selected by a recognised sports group as a competitor, referee, official, judge, coach or manager, or represents South Africa in such a capacity, special leave shall be granted to such a member. This period of absence shall also cover the necessary travelling days.

Regulation 52 (South Africa, 1958) focusses on the conditions under which a member can apply for special leave. Inter alia such conditions include when a member is registered at an authorised institution, such as UNISA, to write examinations, or a member has a contagious disease or is expected to have a contagious sickness and is placed under quarantine by a registered medical practitioner, or when a member has to appear before a court after having committed a criminal offence, or when a member is selected for, or needs to represent South Africa at, any recognised sports event such as a manager, coach, competitor, judge, or a member of a controlling body of a certified canteen or mess (known as semi-official) and when such member is required to attend a meeting of such body, and is, as a result of such attendance absent, then this period of absence, including any travelling days, will be covered by special leave with full pay.

2.3.19 Regulation 53 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: Special Sick Leave
Regulation 53 (South Africa, 1958) orders a member who sustains an injury on duty and as a result of duty, or owing to a disease or indisposition or any illness resulting from vaccination contracted as a result of duties, in the opinion of a medical practitioner, shall receive special sick leave with full pay for the period for she/he is unfit for duty. If the case falls under the Workman’s Compensation Act of 1941 (South Africa, 1941), special sick leave with remuneration equal to the difference between his/her full pay and any compensation payable to him/her shall be granted. Special leave shall not be granted if the National Commissioner is of the opinion that the accident is wilful the fault of the member.

Regulation 53 (South Africa, 1958) stipulates that an application for special sick leave is only granted when the National Commissioner is above doubt certain that any injury sustained by a member whilst on duty is not wilfully and intentionally the fault of the
member him/herself. Injuries on duty are dealt with under the Workman’s Compensation Act of 1941 (South Africa, 1941). Members who sustain diseases, or indisposition or any illnesses due to vaccinations, are entitled to special sick leave which covers all the days of their absence with full pay.

2.3.20 Regulation 54 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: Vacation Leave without Remuneration
For a member who has no leave credits, vacation leave without pay not exceeding 184 days in an 18 month calendar cycle may be granted. The National Commissioner can waive this regulation in exceptional cases. A member shall not have any leave to their credit before leave without pay will be granted to him/her.

Regulation 54 (South Africa, 1958) stipulates that a member can apply for vacation leave without remuneration only when he has no vacation leave to his credit. This can only be granted by the National Commissioner. The authorisation of this special leave has certain conditions, *inter alia* that the member cannot use this leave to do work where he will receive payment. The National Commissioner can at any time, at his/her own discretion, wave this regulation where she/he deems it exceptional.

2.3.21 Regulation 55 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: Sick Leave without Remuneration
Regulation 55 (South Africa, 1958) prescribes that, in the event of a member who has no sick leave credits, sick leave without pay not exceeding 365 days in any particular cycle may be granted with the submission of a valid medical certificate. The National Commissioner’s approval is required for any further leave of whatever nature to cover his/her absence as a result of illness.

Regulation 55 (South Africa, 1958) states that a member can apply for sick leave without remuneration if the need arises, however, these days cannot exceed 365 days in a specific leave cycle. All instances of leave or further leave, if applicable, must be approved by the National Commissioner; the member must supply a medical certificate at all times, as required by this regulation.
2.3.22 Regulation 56 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: Leave which counts as service for the calculation of leave and the determination of salary increments

Regulation 56 (South Africa, 1958) prescribes that leave without pay exceeding 15 days in the aggregate in any month for the purposes of leave accrual shall count as service. Should it exceed the maximum days then it shall not count as service for the purposes of accrual. This leave shall be reduced by one-thirty-sixth in respect of each such excess from the available leave on the member’s credit. For the purposes of salary increments, all types of leave shall count as service.

Regulation 56 (South Africa, 1958) defines how leave accrual and the salary increments of a member are calculated after a member was absent from duty with leave without pay, exceeding 15 days in any month during that specific leave cycle. This regulation further explains that a member will also be penalised with his/her leave accrual by reducing his/her leave by one-thirty-six percent. In effect, a member will have less leave as a result of the penalty instituted.

2.3.23 Regulation 72 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: Personnel Affairs, Discipline, Absence

Regulation 72 (South Africa, 1958) provides clear instructions regarding instances in which a non-commissioned officer is on sick leave. This regulation emphasises that such member shall not leave his/her place of residence, even when living in single quarters, unless he/she has permission from the Station Commander. A medical practitioner must recommend the absence. Such absence must not be lightly refused. The Station Commander can, if necessary, mobilise all members, even those staying in the single quarters, to stand by in case of an emergency.

Regulation 72 (South Africa, 1958) stipulates that in the case of a state of emergency in the specific area in which the member is stationed, or in South Africa in general, the Station Commander can at any time mobilise the members of his station to report for duty. Therefore, it is essential that a member requests permission to leave her/his place of residence, even when she/he stays in a single quarter or in official SAPS housing. This regulation is only applicable when a member is on sick leave and not
when a member is on vacation leave. It is imperative, however, that the member gains permission from her/his medical practitioner before approaching the Station Commander with a request to leave her/his place of residence when booked off sick.

2.4 SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE DIRECTIVES WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ABSENTEEISM IN THE ORGANISATION

The following SAPS directives focus on the management of absenteeism in the form of rest days, leave of temporary or contract members who render a service in the SAPS, the sick book in which all sicknesses must be recorded, as well as the different types of Leave and Entitlement to which a member of SAPS is entitled.

2.4.1 Standing Order (General) 77 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958:
Personnel Affairs, Discipline, Rest Days

Standing Order 77 (South Africa, 1958) defines rest days as those days on which a member does not perform duties. Unlawful absence from a member on the day/s preceding the rest days which would normally be due to him/her will also be considered unpaid leave (absent from duty without leave).

A member shall forfeit her/his rest days if she/he is absent from duty, as a result of his/her own fault, on the day preceding her/his rest days. A member can only enjoy her/his rest days if he/she is found medically fit for duty on the day preceding the rest days or on the rest day itself. The Commander must be convinced that the member was indeed sick. The member must inform the Commander that s/he is medically fit and an entry must be made into the Occurrence Book (OB) to such an effect, in order to enjoy her/his rest days.

Standing Order 77 (South Africa, 1958) stipulates that all members of the SAPS are entitled to rest days after working a certain amount of hours as per their allocated shifts. However, this standing order places certain obligations on members by emphasising that if a member was off sick on the day/s preceding their rest days and did not book off, proclaiming that he/she is healthy enough to commence duties, he/she cannot enjoy his/her rest days. Any unlawful absence of the member before his/her rest days and during his/her rest days will run continuously and all these days
will be captured as unpaid leave. In instances such as these, members must communicate with their Commander and inform him/her about their state of health. An OB entry must be made to this effect; only then can the member take his/her rest days.

2.4.2 Standing Order (General) 78 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958:

Personnel Affairs, Discipline and Attendance Register

Standing Order 78 (South Africa, 1958) places an obligation on the Commander of an office by prescribing that the personnel under his command must comply with the prescribed working hours. An attendance register (Z8) must be kept in the offices, in which the names of all non-commissioned officers must be written, every second week, as well as all Public Service personnel who perform administrative duties. Each personnel member must enter their time of arrival and departure followed by their initials with an ink or ball point pen, in the relevant columns, on a daily basis.

The Commander must appoint a Sergeant or Warrant Officer, as supervisors, to ensure that the Z8 is available at the beginning and end of the work day in order that arrival and departure times are written in by the members themselves. The Z8 must be presented daily to the Commander for the purpose of inspection, to report any irregularity; ensure that the periods of absence noted in the Z8 are covered by approved leave. When a member has not signed when his/her duties commenced, the supervisor shall make a note in red ink in the relevant space opposite the name of the member on approved leave, or may be absent for any other reason.

The supervisor can draw a red line on the line below if a member did not sign at the prescribed time and the reason for absence is unknown. The absence of the member must be investigated. The member shall enter the exact time of arrival when reporting late for duty and must provide the reason for being late. When a member who has permission to do so leaves the office before the end of the working day, not presuming duty, he/she needs to enter the exact time of departure in the applicable column with red ink.

The supervisor needs to make sure that all members sign off at the end of the working day. When it so happens that a member did not book off duty, the supervisor must
draw a red cross in the applicable space and he/she must follow up the following day to ascertain why the member did not book off duty. The attendance register must be inspected regularly to determine trends amongst staff and to take action, when needed, in cases of habitual unpunctuality. In the case of sick leave, the sick book register must be entered in the remarks column of the Z8, against the name of the member concerned.

Standing Order 78 (South Africa, 1958) compels all Commanders to keep a record of all members who reside under their command and to ensure that their members comply with the prescribed working hours. These hours are recorded in the Z8 register. There are specific prescriptions on the completion of the Z8. The Commander can appoint a supervisor to manage this register. The Commander must inspect this register regularly to assure that all prescriptions are adhered to. When a member is booked off sick the supervisor must make an entry in the sick book register; this reference number is then recorded in the Z8 register.

2.4.3 Standing Order (General) 161 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: Personnel Affairs, Leave and Leave Regulations – Scope and Application, Service Taken into Account for Leave Purposes

Standing Order 161(South Africa, 1958) provides guidelines on the meaning of “service”. This standing order explains that service can either be temporary or on a contractual basis, and that it could include periods of suspension, provided that the applicable Regulation is complied with. A temporary member, without any interruption in his/her Service, when appointed as a permanent member shall retain the leave on their credit. A member who is reappointed after a period of interruption in Service shall not have any leave accredited to him/her.

Standing Order 161 (South Africa, 1958) defines, and outlines the scope of, the leave of temporary or contract members who render a service in the SAPS. According to this Standing Order, any re-enlisted member will not have any leave prior to their interruption in service credited to him/her. He/she forfeited all leave when they left the Service.
2.4.4 Standing Order (General) 167 in terms of the Police Act, 7 of 1958: Personnel affairs, Leave, Sick book

It is compulsory for every station to have a sick book and where it is deemed necessary, they can have separate books for different units with the approval of the Cluster Commander. These books need to be inspected promptly by the Inspecting Officer. When a member is unable to perform their duties due to sickness, they must report it immediately or have it reported. Where applicable, a medical certificate must be submitted as soon as the member resumes duty. The Commanding Officer must report the case to the Divisional Commissioner when an officer is sick. When a Commander is sick for five or more days, the Divisional Commissioner must personally appoint an officer to proceed with the duties of the Commander and inform Head Office accordingly.

The member who received the report shall enter the name of the sick member, except an officer, in the sick book when unfit for duty, or when said member requires medical attention. For each year, starting on the 1st of January, the numbering of the sick book shall start at one. The inspecting officer, when inspecting the full sick book prior to filing it, must be satisfied that: each completed entry in the sick book has a receipt for the SAPS 26 form; that the dates on the receipt correspond with the sick book entry; members whose sick leave forms are not yet sent to the Divisional Commissioner and not yet being fit for work, names shall be carried forward to a new sick book., These names must be entered in red pen, but must retain the same serial numbers. This also applies to civilian members who are unfit for duty or who receive medical treatment. Standing Order 167 (South Africa, 1958) defines further that it is compulsory to have a sick book at all SAPS stations so that all sick leave taken by the members of each station can be recorded. When members call their stations to report that they are sick and will not be able to perform any duties for that specific day, or shift, then an entry needs to be made to this effect.

The sick book must be completed in a specific manner. Every year, starting on 1 January, the numbering of the sick book must begin at one and run continuously till 31 December of that specific year. When a sick book is full, then the inspecting officer must make sure that all entries are fully completed and that all SAPS 26s received
from the members are filed accordingly. SAPS 26s are forms completed every time a member is absent from work, in this instance, for sick leave. When a sick book is full and there are still open places in the register where the member’s documents are not yet finalised, then these names are carried over to the new sick book; in this instance, the member’s particulars must be written in red pen with the same serial number as the original entry.

2.4.5 National Instruction 2/2004 in terms of the Police Act, 68 of 1995
This National Instruction controls the administration and management of all leave in the South African Police Service:

- **Planning of Annual Leave**
  Every member must, during the month of January each year, complete a Planning of Leave form, considering the leave credits available to him/her for that specific year. The dates of the planned leave must span from the 1st of January in the one year to the 30th of June the following year. This completed form must be submitted to the Commander. The Commander must draw up a plan, with the service delivery demands in mind, of all the employees under his/her command. All members must have the opportunity to take their leave as planned.

If the planned leave cannot be taken due to service delivery demands, then the leave must, with consultation, be rescheduled. The Commander must ensure that members do not forfeit their leave. Members can also reschedule their leave if the need arises, however, they must inform their Commander timeously (National Instruction 2/2004). National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) compels all members in the SAPS to have completed a leave plan for 18 months. Leave plans must contain all the leave credits that the member has for that year and leave must be scheduled in a manner that suits the member’s needs. It can happen that, due to the service delivery needs of the SAPS, a member’s leave needs to be rescheduled. Members need to be consulted on these changes before any leave is cancelled. The Commander is responsible for ensuring that a member took the leave scheduled by him/her, as best as possible.
- **Types of Leave and Entitlement**

  - **Annual leave**
  
  Members are entitled to 22 to 30 days of annual leave, depending on their years of service. Members are encouraged to take at least ten consecutive working days’ leave in an annual leave cycle.

  National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) defines the different types of leave and entitlement that a member has. Annual leave is one of the entitlements a member has and it varies from 22 to 30 days dependent on a member’s years of service in the SAPS. It is compulsory for a member to take at least 10 days of consecutive leave in a year in order for that member to rest sufficiently.

  - **Unpaid leave**
  
  Members can apply for 184 calendar days of unpaid leave in an 18 month cycle and, in exceptional circumstances, may take more days. This can be done only if service delivery requirements allow for it and if it is not used to perform work for remuneration elsewhere.

  National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) defines that a member can, if he wants or needs to, apply for unpaid leave for up to 184 days in an 18 month cycle. This member must have no annual leave to his/her credit. Said member must confirm that the unpaid leave is not to perform work for remuneration; further, this leave will only be approved if service delivery allows.

  - **Sick leave**
  
  A member is entitled to 36 working days sick leave in a sick leave cycle, with full pay. Members forfeit unused days after the three year cycle. Sick leave is granted when a member is absent from duty due to illness, injury, incapacity or rehabilitation. When absent for three or more days, the member must submit a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner. Members can apply for temporary incapacity leave when they have exhausted their 36 days of sick leave in the sick leave cycle.
National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) indicates that a member is entitled to 36 working days of sick leave in a three year cycle. This sick leave is taken with full remuneration on condition that a member submits a sick certificate, issued by a registered medical practitioner, for any absences of three days or longer due to sickness, injury, incapacity or rehabilitation. When a member has exhausted their 36 days before the leave cycle is over then the member can apply for incapacity leave to be granted by the National Commissioner or his delegate.

- Temporal incapacity leave
If a medical practitioner requires a member to be absent from work due to an incapacity which is not permanent, the member can then apply for temporary incapacity leave. This application is sent to the National Commissioner for approval.

National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) stipulates that when a member’s 36 days of sick leave are exhausted before the leave cycle is over, such a member can apply to the National Commissioner, or his delegate for incapacity leave. Incapacity leave is when a doctor requires the member to be absent from work temporarily, and not permanently, due to an incapacity.

- Permanent incapacity leave
A member can be granted up to 30 days of permanent incapacity leave, with the approval of the National Commissioner, when the Service requires the fitness of the member for continuation in the Service. Before this can happen, the Service must ascertain whether the member can be placed in an alternative position or whether he/she can be accommodated through the adaptation of his/her duties or work. Only after this process can the Service then consider medical retirement for the member. This process must be finalised within six months.

National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) makes it clear that the National Commissioner can approve a member’s application for medical retirement when it is required for the SAPS to determine the fitness of such a member of SAPS to continue their duties. A member can be granted up to 30 days of permanent incapacity leave before their medical retirement is finalised. The SAPS will, before a final decision is
taken to put a member on medical retirement, explore ways to accommodate the member in an alternative position or by adapting their work circumstances in order to suit the needs of the member. This process must be finalised within six months of the application, until the actual retirement of the member.

- Occupational injuries and diseases leave
A member is entitled to occupational injuries and diseases leave with full pay, if they sustained an injury on duty. Members must submit the documents required for temporary incapacity leave for the period of absence, to the health risk manager for verification and validation.

National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) stipulates that a member who is injured whilst on duty is obliged to receive leave with full pay. The application for temporary incapacity leave has to go to the Health Risk manager, as defined by the SAPS. These documents are then verified and validated in order to determine whether the dates for the period of absence are correct.

- Family responsibility leave
The following number of working days may be granted to a member for family responsibility leave with full pay:

- Three working days, if the spouse or life partner gives birth, or five working days when a spouse, life partner or child is sick.
- Five working days when a spouse, life partner or child dies; or an immediate family member dies.

National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) defines family responsibility leave and outlines what it entails for a member to qualify for this leave, as well as the conditions attached to it. A member is entitled to three working days of family responsibility leave when, firstly, a spouse or living partner has given birth and, secondly, five working days when the member's spouse, living partner or child is sick. If the member's spouse, living partner or child or immediate family has died then the member will receive five working days of leave. All these applications for leave must be accompanied with proof prior to approval by the Commander.
• Maternity leave

Four consecutive uninterrupted months of maternity leave with full pay will be granted to a female member for each confinement. If the baby is born prematurely and hospitalised during maternity leave, or becomes sick and is hospitalised for more than a month during maternity leave, then the maternity leave may be interrupted and the member can resume duties. The remainder of the leave can be taken when the baby is discharged from the hospital. If the member experiences a miscarriage, still birth or termination of pregnancy during the third trimester of her pregnancy, she is then enabled to six weeks of maternity leave. If the baby is stillborn or dies within six weeks after the birth, then the member will only be entitled to family responsibility leave. If it so happens that the mother dies within two months after the birth of the baby, then the father will be entitled to 45 working days of paid special leave.

National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) defines maternity leave for female members of the SAPS. Four calendar months are granted for maternity leave, with full remuneration. If the baby is born before the predicted time and is hospitalised, then the member can resume duties and return to work until the baby is discharged from the hospital. As soon as the baby is discharged, the member can continue maternity leave. If anything happens with the unborn baby in the third trimester of pregnancy, then the member will receive six weeks of maternity leave.

• Adoption leave

When a legally adopted child, younger than two years old, is placed in the permanent care of the member, then the member will be entitled to 45 consecutive working days of adoption leave. When both parents are in the Service then the leave of both, if combined, may not exceed 45 working days.

National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) defines adoption leave as that which is taken when a member adopts a child younger than two years old. Said member is entitled to 45 consecutive working days of leave. If both parents are members of the SAPS, then they will share the 45 days.
- Leave for union activities
Ten working days special leave will be granted to an appointed shop steward of a recognised Employee Organisation, for duties to related union activities.

Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) stipulates that appointed shop stewards are entitled to ten working days of special leave for union activities and related duties.

- Examination or study leave
When an employee sits for an examination, towards an applicable qualification in the Service, one day of special leave with full pay will be granted to the employee. The member will also be granted leave for the day before the actual sitting, called the preparation day. Only one day will be granted when the member has to write a supplementary exam.

National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) states that a member who writes an examination towards a qualification will be granted one day’s leave with full remuneration. The member also receives one day’s leave prior to the exam, for preparation. When the member must write a re-examination then only one day’s leave will be granted to the member; there will be no preparation day in such cases.

- Sports leave
Five days of sports leave will be granted to a member who participates in a recognised South African Sports Commission sport as a competitor, coach, manager or an official at an international sporting event in South Africa or abroad. This leave will also be granted to any member who accompanies a foreign team as a representative or competes at the provincial or national level in South Africa.

National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) states that when a member participates in a recognised South African sport as a competitor, coach or manager on an international level in South Africa or abroad, then such member will be entitled to sports leave.
• Leave for resettlement

A member who resettles due to a transfer is entitled to two days of special leave in order to supervise the packing and loading as well as the unpacking and unloading of their personal effects.

National Instruction 2 of 2004 (South Africa, 1995) stipulates that a member can apply for two days of resettlement leave when said member is transferred. One day is allocated to the supervision of the packing and the second day is to be used to oversee the unpacking of the member’s furniture and personal belongings.

2.5 OFFICIAL INTERNAL DOCUMENTS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ABSENTEEISM: SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

The Compliance with Management of Absenteeism: South African Police Service Circular 4/9/1 dated 2015-02-24 stipulates that the management of absenteeism is a concern to the senior management of the organisation, the internal auditors of the SAPS, as well as the auditor general and the portfolio committee of Parliament. Therefore, the National Commissioner decided to intervene and improve the management of the level of absenteeism. Provincial and Divisional Commissioners, as well as National Components, will be required to submit reports at National Management Forum meetings. These reports will be included in the performance assessments of all Commissioners in order to ensure compliance with this instruction from the National Commissioner. The following measurements were introduced: Leave planning, unused leave 2013/2014 cycle. Leave planning should be finalised in accordance with National Instruction 2/2004.

The Strategic priorities, according to the SAPS’s annual plan, are to improve the health and wellness of its members. All members must take 10 days of consecutive leave in order to rest adequately in a leave cycle, and the Commissioners must ensure that members do indeed take these 10 days of leave; it is thus compulsory for members to take this leave. The planning of different operational needs during the holidays and major sports events, or elections, must be taken into consideration when the planning of leave is done for the members, and possible rescheduling when it is an organisational need. Commissioners are also sensitised to not unreasonably withhold
the leave of any members. Commanders must also motivate members to spread their leave over the whole 18 months wherein they are allowed take their leave to ensure that the service delivery needs will consistently be met with sufficient resources.

The leave plans of all members must be kept at the stations and must at all times be available for audits and inspection. Commissioners and Commanders must avoid payment being made to members for unused leave; further, this will only be considered in exceptional cases, and only members whose leave has been cancelled due to service delivery requirements will be considered for this pay-out. Management tools such as PERSAL/PERSAP and performance charts must be used to ensure the management of absenteeism.

Proper control over leave capturing must be ensured. Constant training, retraining and inspections must also be ensured as part of the management of leave so that absenteeism does not impact negatively on service delivery.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the legislative and regulatory framework that manages absenteeism in the larger public service, particularly in the SAPS. This chapter concentrated on the legislation that governs absenteeism in the broader public service and not in the SAPS specifically. The chapter provided an outline of SAPS legislative directives and internal documents focused on how absenteeism is managed in the Service.

The relevant regulatory framework that administered absenteeism, specifically sick leave, in the SAPS was identified and discussed in depth. In order for the SAPS to fulfil the demands of their duties and to deliver a service to the public, absenteeism needs to be monitored. This chapter discussed the various types of leave in the SAPS in depth: it outlined the regulatory framework that administers absenteeism in the SAPS and substantiated the significance and implications of each legislation.
The health of members of the SAPS poses a great risk, which can hamper the execution of effective service delivery to the public. In order to look after its members, official absenteeism management measures need to be in place in the SAPS occupational environment. The SAPS further encouraged the professional development of its members through furthering their studies or improving their qualifications, by enrolling in tertiary academic institutions; this also requires that members are absent from their official duties for examination purposes.
CHAPTER 3 AN OVERVIEW OF ABSENTEEISM IN ORGANISATIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a discussion of the global context of absenteeism within national and international police organisations will be provided. The chapter will focus on the different types of absenteeism into to draw the indicators back to the SAPS Academy in Paarl as the focus of this study. The links between national and international trends in the phenomenon of absenteeism will clarify whether there are any direct or indirect costs linked to absenteeism.

This chapter will reflect on the Strategic Plan of the SAPS and will define the impact of absenteeism on service delivery, and ascertain whether it causes a problem in the management thereof. This review will explore the quality of service delivery, if absenteeism remains a problem in the SAPS, and the management thereof by the remaining diligent members.

Furthermore, this chapter will outline the different definitions of absenteeism. The neglect of an employee to report for work, or at least remain at work, for any reason is described as absenteeism. This chapter will discuss the different legitimate reasons for absenteeism. Absence from work must have evidence to the effect thereof in some instances. Absenteeism is divided into three basic categories, namely, sick absence, authorised and unauthorised absence. The cost of absenteeism will be described, together with its negative and positive effects. The chapter will also outline possible personal factors that could causes absences, which employers must be aware of. Members withdrew themselves when dissatisfied with working conditions. Absence beyond an employee’s control, like certified sickness, will also be discussed herein.

In addition, the chapter provides a discussion of job satisfaction, and the effect of the absence caused by dissatisfaction; further, attention will be given to reasons why employees absent themselves. The role played by age and gender in absenteeism will also be discussed in this chapter. The chapter also puts forward that most recorded illnesses for absenteeism are minor, like flu and colds, as well as low morale.
This chapter will explore the role of management and their importance in reducing absenteeism in general.

The aspects of job satisfaction identified by Steers and Rhodes (1978:181) will be discussed together with the motivation that employees have for attending work and the unavoidable limitations that they experience. The causal model, and the framework thereof, and the determinants of absenteeism will be introduced in this discussion. It will also be discussed on how employees see their managers as role models and intend to follow after their absence behaviour in their daily tasks. The economic approach to absenteeism will also be focussed on in this chapter’s discussion of who covers the high costs and the fact that the Public Sector as an organisation has experienced a significantly high absenteeism rate.

The influence of inequity experienced by employees and the resultant absenteeism, versus that of employees who feel that they are treated fairly, will be discussed in this chapter. The chapter also points out that employees in higher positions are seldom absent from work and that women are likely to be more absent than their male counterparts, while male employees older than 55 are more absent than women of this same age.

The Steers and Rhodes (1978:182) model of employee absence describes two very important variables, namely, the motivation and ability of an employee to attend work. Absenteeism as a “shared” responsibility will be discussed in this chapter, together with how it can become an acceptable tendency (Kruger, 2008:13). The critical distinguishing between an absence problem and the problem absentee, as well as the definitions thereof will be described in this chapter. Part of the discussion also focusses on the fact that sick leave is not always accompanied by a doctor’s note as the employee can be absent for at least two days without a doctor’s note, and can opt to seek medical assistance at a pharmacy.

Various literature sources were consulted for this review, inter alia the UNISA repository, scholarly journals, text books, SAPS documents, dissertations and library
sources. International journals were also consulted in order to establish whether there are global trends in absenteeism in general.

3.2 TYPES OF ABSENTEEISM

According to Grobler et al. (2006:123), absenteeism is the neglect of an employee to report for, or remain on, duty regardless of the reason. Similarly, Mathis et al. (2004:158) describe absenteeism as neglect by an employee to report for duty or stay at work. This manner of absenteeism is recorded in a register, called the hourly register, where the member needs to book out if they have left the premises non-work related (non-official business). In this instance, if the member is not feeling well or needs to go the doctor then both the employee and immediate supervisor sign the book (hourly register), if permission is granted. When the member returns to work, the time of their return is duly recorded. When these hours add up to a full day, then one day’s sick leave is taken and deducted from the member’s sick leave credit.

Moorhead and Griffen (2012:80) describe absenteeism as when an employee does not come to work in instances such as illness, injury, death or illness in the family need attention. These instances can be called legitimate causes. In certain instances, the employee may just present an excuse not to report for work. Irrespective of why an employee is absent, the quality and quantity of the output is compromised. These types of absenteeism are recorded as family responsibility leave but the member must provide a sick certificate related to the illness of the specific family member. This binds the member to providing evidence to the effect that he/she will be absent from work.

Van der Merwe and Miller (1988:11) classify absenteeism into three broad categories: sick absence, authorised absence and unauthorised absence.

3.2.1 Sick Absence

Sick absence means that an employee report being sick as the reason for his/her absence. Certain requirements concerning doctor’s certificates are determined by company policy or the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997 (BCEA). This Act stipulates that a certificate needs to be produced after two days of sickness absence. Most managers have found that a doctor’s certificate is not a guarantee of
genuine illness because it has become easy for people to gain access to medical certificates (Anderson, 2009:13).

3.2.2 Authorised Absence
An employee is absent with permission when they provide proof for their absence, for example, vacation, study leave and special leave. Normally such permission is included in the absence policy (Van der Merwe & Miller, 1988:11).

3.2.3 Unauthorised Absence
Absences that are not categorised in the abovementioned categories, and for which no reason is provided or accepted, are regarded as unauthorized. When a member’s absence becomes problematic, the employee needs to be sensitised in order to bring his/her absence in line with acceptable norms. Employees who arrive at work later in the day, or who leave earlier, are normally not recorded on the leave records of employers, and the supervisor is usually aware of such absences; these absences are not recorded as unauthorised absences (Wolmarans, 1994:14).

3.3 CONCEPTUALISING ABSENTEEISM
The importance of the management of absenteeism is an aspect of the human resources function that is often poorly understood. Organizational efficiency and productivity is mostly challenged by the absence of employees (Deery, Erwin, Iverson & Ambrose, 1995:825). “Non-Appearance for scheduled work,” traditionally defined as absence, occurs when an employee is physically absent from his/her work. With the rapidly changing technology by means of which employees can telecommunicate and work in virtual offices, the concept of traditionally defined absence may become less meaningful and it may become more difficult to establish a meaningful measurement of capturing absenteeism (Kristensen, JørnJuhl, Eskildsen, Nielson, Frederiksen & Bisgaard, 2006:1646)

Absence can be divided into two parts, namely, involuntary and voluntary (Sagie, in Lokke Nielsen, 2008:1331). Absence beyond the employee's control, such as certified sickness or funeral attendance, is classified as involuntary absence, whereas voluntary absence refers to that which is under the direct control of the employee and
is often based on personal aims, for example, uncertified sickness and laziness. Absences that are more or less controlled by an employee are classified as voluntary absences and those beyond one’s control as involuntary absences (Geurts, Buunk & Schaufeli, 1994:230). According to Lokke Nielsen (2008:1331), there must be a clear distinction between voluntary and involuntary absence.

Certain aspects of attendance motivation, of both job satisfaction and the working environment, includes voluntary absence. These motivations are directly linked to the employee’s ability to attend work or not. Similarly, distinctions have been made between several types of absenteeism, such as excused or unexcused, and voluntary or involuntary, absenteeism. A form of excused absenteeism can be described as a type of sickness. This type of sickness must be medically certified, then the overall health and social behaviour of employees must be considered in order to determine their capacity to manage stress and conflict (Bekker, Rutte & van Rijswijk, 2009:405). According to Walker and Irons (1997:18-19), there are essentially two types of absences: planned and unplanned. Short term leaves of absence, sick leave for affective surgery, and study leave all constitute planned leave. Where injuries on or off the job occur, or an employee or family member is suddenly sick or a family member passes on, then these absences are classified as unplanned leave. Camden and Ludwig (2013:166) state that missing work for recognised holidays, family vacations, bereavement, etc. does not include absenteeism, but certain absentees can be involuntary absenteeism. When an employee has a choice to work but decides to take the day off, this is described as voluntary absenteeism. Scheduled, authorised leave is voluntary absenteeism or it can also be unscheduled or unauthorised in advance: “It is impossible to separate absence in a voluntary and an involuntary part, especially when using the registered data, where merely the days and episodes are recorded and not the reason for being absent (Camden & Ludwig: 2013:166). Employees can be absent from work when they take annual planned leave or on a public holiday (this usually does not apply to shift workers). Voluntary and involuntary absences are part of unscheduled absences. An employee’s lack of motivation to attend work is part of voluntary leave, while their inability to attend work due to illness or injury is defined as involuntary leave (Brooke & Price, 1989:1-19).
Bierla, Huver and Richard (2013:1537) differentiate between absence and absenteeism by claiming that absence is classified as leave when the employee is sick while absenteeism is leave when, for instance vacation leave, the employee is healthy. Furthermore, it is noticed that presence is when an employee is going to work when experiencing symptoms of sickness. When the employee recovers from health problems, it is commonly known as absence, whereas when an employee voluntarily stays home for reasons unrelated to their health it is known as absenteeism. According to Whitston and Edwards (1990:289), absence and absenteeism are neglected; further, it does not mean that there is an absenteeism problem if the absence rate is high. These authors further argue that both absence and absenteeism is often used to imply that absence is without a good cause.

Bierla et al. (2013:1537) are of the opinion that older employees are expected to be absent more often, because of the need to pay attention to their health, than younger ones. In cases when younger employees are more absent than mature employees, absenteeism is supported. Therefore, absence leave can only be analysed by taking into consideration the different variables between the absent rates of older and younger employees. Xu and Jensen (2012:4592) agree with this opinion that work absence, due to an employee’s specific ill-health, is related to absenteeism and that it is not the same as absenteeism for any reason. Unavoidable and involuntary absenteeism, as describe by authors such as Brown and Sessions (1996) and Alexanderson (1998), refers to illness related absenteeism as the physical inability of employees to perform duties rather than an unwillingness to work. However, Xu and Jensen (2012:4592) exclude reasons such as stress, child care and spousal need for assistance, personal errands, or the worker simply holding onto a sense of entitlement to illness related absenteeism.

3.4 DETERMINANTS AND CASUAL EFFECTS OF ABSENTEEISM

The employee makes it more costly for the employer when absent or by making schedules more flexible in order to influence the frequency of absenteeism. Actions taken by the employer and the characteristics thereof are determinants of the supply of absenteeism (Lokke Nielson, 2008:1647). Public sector organisations, particularly those in local government, are of the view that now more than ever they have to deal
with the ever-increasing demands of a hostile and raging operating environment concerning absenteeism.

These organisations experience enormous challenges in trying to respond effectively to these demands, and their existing policies need to undergo radical revision because all policies are interwoven to deeply rooted cultures (McHugh, 2001:43). McHugh (2001:43) conducted a study of employee absenteeism within a local government in Northern Ireland between August 1999 and March 2000; he found that 88% of the respondents who reported the cause for their absenteeism did not actually reflect the real reasons for their absence.

Interviewees had to indicate their perceived causes of illness. The most common reasons for absenteeism were minor illnesses such as colds and flu. Other reasons for absenteeism that were noted were low worker and organisational morale (92%) and a boring job, which constituted the real reasons for their absence. Lack of employee commitment and lack of motivation were cited by 48% of the interviewees as the perceived reasons for their absence. Problems and family responsibility were cited by 88% of the respondents as the real reason for their absenteeism. This is noteworthy for the management of local government as it has significant implications if one can argue that these perceived “real” reasons are true, because these issues can be described as the heart of organisational health because they strike at the core of the manner in which organisations are managed.

Excessive workplace absenteeism is well recognised as being very costly to organisations; therefore, it is quite important for them to reduce absenteeism by making it one of their goals. The management of the organisation targets factors that causes possible employee absenteeism; one factor that received a great deal of attention is workplace strain, because of its strong relationship with workplace absenteeism (Culbertson, 2009:77-78).
The following six classes of variables are hypothesised to be causes of absenteeism (Harrison & Martocchio, 1998):

- Personality
- Demographic variables as a long term cause
- Job satisfaction
- Organisational commitment
- Social context as a mid-term cause
- Decision making mechanism as the short cause

3.4.1 Personality

According to Aamont (2004), absenteeism can be described as a result of an individual personality trait. Hogan and Hogan (1989) stress that employees with high levels of antagonism, irresponsibility, social insensitivity and alienation are most likely to display behaviour such as absenteeism. Researchers about this study have suggested for decades that enduring personality traits account for absenteeism’s moderate stability over time and situations. “Absence proneness” emerged as a term describing this idea (Harrison & Price, 1993). Ferris, Bergin and Wayne (1989) presented a more differentiated view, proposing that personality dimensions also moderate situational and attitudinal relationships with absenteeism.

Morelli (2012) states that any company should be aware that the personal issues of its members are often the higher causes of absenteeism. Morelli (2012) further states that Van der Merwe and Miller (1988) argue that absenteeism is poorly defined, and that there is a lack of uniformity in measurement. They propose that the three key factors related to absence are: personal, organisational and attitudinal. If a member is dissatisfied with their work conditions, she/he withdraws him/herself by being absent from work. Morelli 2012) identified a trend in the members’ absence, particularly on a Monday and Friday, and that productivity is much lower than in the middle of the week. Furthermore, it is states that certain types and levels of absence are ignored by organisations and that this trend then becomes an unspoken “practise” which employees starts to see as part of their work benefits.
3.4.2 Demographic Variables

Goldberg and Waldman (2000) used demographic variables widely in their study of absenteeism. Steers and Rhodes (1978) introduced that variables can indirectly affect absenteeism through their analysis of sets of variables such as an individual’s inherent behaviour, personal circumstances, family characteristics, gender and race. Expectations and job satisfaction have an indirect effect on absenteeism and constructs such ability to attend, as well as attendance motivation.

3.4.2.1 Gender variable

Anderson (2009:20) stated that absenteeism is likely to be prejudiced by gender stereotypes despite gender being treated as a group category instead of an individual trait. Women in the workplace often have two jobs: one as a remunerated occupation and the second shift is at her home. Women are likely to put their family needs first and often consider caring for their families as their primary role, as tradition expects this from them (Field & Bramwell, 1998). Women display a higher rate of sick absence than men, according to a study conducted by Van der Merwe and Miller (1988).

In their study, Van der Merwe and Miller (1988) found that women in the age category of 55 years and older, had fewer sick absences than men in the same category. They state that the responsibility for child rising is a possible key factor influencing for higher sick absences amongst females in the workplace. It is found that single women between 20 and 34 years old were absent more than men in the same age category.

According to Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt (2003), the traditional role of women as child carers has changed since men in this generation took over this role. In contemporary society, men participate in taking responsibility for childcare matters. Therefore, the traditional role for women will disappear as more women pursue their careers. However, Ichino and Moretti (2009:186) do not agree with this view; they state that absenteeism with an illness-related indication is higher amongst female workers than it is amongst their male counterparts. Since men are absent from work because of health and shirking reasons, while women face an additional exogenous source of health shocks due to menstruation, the signal extraction based on absenteeism is more informative about shirking for males than for females (Ichino & Moretti, 2009).
3.4.2.2 Number of dependants

It has been found that relationship between the number of dependants that an employee has and his/her absenteeism varies. According to Hoqou and Islam (2003), absenteeism and the number of dependants have an insignificant relationship; they attributed this insignificance to the observation that employees invested in aftercare and day-care facilities for their families/dependents. Voss, Floderus and Diderichsen (2001) suggest that there is a moderate association between absenteeism and number of dependants.

According to Voss et al. (2001), higher rates of absenteeism were recorded amongst respondents who had small children between the ages of 0 and 6, than amongst those with older children. Parents normally stay at home when small children are ill in order to care for them or take them to the doctor (Robbins et al., 2003). Increased absenteeism and significant work limitations while on the job were recorded amongst those employees who need to take care of ill dependents (Burton, Chen, Conti, Pransky & Edington, 2004).

3.4.2.3 Marital status

Married employees have lower levels of absenteeism than their unmarried co-workers (Robbins et al., 2003). The increased responsibilities that come with marriage make the job more valuable and important, and could be considered as one of the reasons why married employees select not to miss work. This, however, remains unclear because unmarried employees might also display low levels of absenteeism, because of the question of causation. Factors influencing the rate of absence for individual workers, and the quantification of their significance, were studied by Barmby, Orme and Treble (1991). These authors found that personal characteristics, especially gender and marital status, determined the incidence of absenteeism amongst workers.

3.4.2.4 Age

Younger employees have a higher absenteeism rate, whilst job commitment is greater amongst older employees. Siu (2002) does not agree with this statement and puts forward that absence by older workers is higher than that of young workers. Robbins
et al. (2003) state that because of the deterioration of older employees’ health, they take longer to recover when injured and, therefore, their absenteeism rate is higher.

### 3.4.2.5 Job satisfaction

There are different opinions regarding the likelihood of absence by men and women, for family reasons, specifically in reference to job satisfaction. The reasons for women’s absences related to family issues are more often associated with their ability to work rather than their motivation to attend work. The question that arises here: is how do men deal with a sick family member? Men who are more motivational and experience job satisfaction are more likely to attend work each day and are less likely to stay absent in order to care for ill family members (Van den-Heuvel, 1997).

Kruger (2008:41) states that the number of employees who are completely classified as this could constitute a relatively small percentage of the workforce in order to determine if this can lead to high levels of absenteeism. Kruger (2008:41) further states that global measures of job satisfaction are inadequate, as it is possible that an employee who is regarded as a satisfied employee could find that s/he is overloaded on the job.

### 3.4.2.6 Organisational commitment

Organisational commitment can be described as the degree to which an employee is loyal to his/her employer (Muchingsky, 1999). Organisational commitment can be directly linked to absenteeism as it depends on the employee’s commitment to the organisation (Burton, Lee & Holtom, 2002). In the workforce planning process outlined in “South African Human resource management, Theory and Practise”, Swanepoel, Erasmus, van Wyk and Schenk (2007:241) state that when analysing the workforce and jobs in an organisation, factors that need to be taken into consideration are: projected turnover, absenteeism and retrenchment. These factors can influence the organisation’s workforce productivity.

Dressler (2013:453) indicates that, under benefits and services in Human Resource Management, the employer must formulate his/her vacation policy with care so that he/she if needed it in a case of production, demand can either reschedule or cancel
the leave of an employee. Sick leave should also be defined, in this policy, as when employees are not at work due to illness, but this type of absenteeism is covered with full pay. Employers do experience problems related to employees taking sick leave whether they are really sick or not.

“Organisation” is defined as the structuring and shape of a department. Duties and responsibilities, as agreed to and associated with administration at a workplace, can be regarded as organisation or management. People intend to use the words ‘organisation’, ‘management’ or ‘administration’ synonymously, although each word could have a different meaning. The placement and size of units within a police department determine the act of organising in the most effective way to suit the needs of the community it serves. In an organisation such as the SAPS, hierarchy plays a very important role; the hierarchy directs the members’ duties and responsibilities through the issuance of directives and prescribed orders (Gaines, 2011:139).

Singh, Chetty and Karodia (2016) define organisational culture as a shared but different understanding of the meaning thereof amongst its members. It included the members’ different characteristics, values, norms and even behaviours which can impact upon the minds of the members to a common understanding of each other, which can even reduce absenteeism. It can also increase performance which leads to improved service delivery. The leadership of an organisation plays a vital role in absenteeism, however if they are managed effectively and efficiently members may think twice before they absent themselves incorrectly.

3.4.2.7 Social Context
Social context as an influence on absence is defined by Harrison & Martocchio (1998:313), in their work on so-called “absence cultures”, as absence legitimacy; the understanding thereof could offer insight into employees’ absence behaviour and how it is controlled.

3.4.2.8 Decision making
To be at work or to be absent from work on a specific day can be a choice between at least two alternatives: mid-term and long-term absence. Organisational commitment,
job involvement or job satisfaction can be linked to the employee’s attitude towards attendance at work. The organisation’s absence culture might affect a group’s work subjective norms in terms of absenteeism (Anderson, 2009:27).

3.5 CONSEQUENCES OF EMPLOYEE ABSENTEEISM
Van Der Westhuizen (2006:45) indicates that cost as a consequence of absenteeism is one of the most pressing concerns for organisations. Organisations are interested in understanding the phenomenon because the cost is quite substantial, and they therefore seek to manage absenteeism. The enormous impact of absenteeism on productivity has the capacity to shock any human resource manager out of any self-satisfaction they might have regarding absenteeism, and the extent of the cost thereof. It is found that for every 1% of the workforce that is absent, production levels can decrease by 2,5% (Hamilton-Atwell, 2003).

3.5.1 Productivity
- Waiting for temporary staff delays production
- Alignment of temporary staff causes production lost
- Management time and supervision are diverted
- Inexperience of temporary staff causes increased waste.

3.5.2 Relationships
- Frequent workers and absent ones have conflict amongst themselves
- Groups experience morale problems
- Increased resistance between management and employees
- Destruction of discipline.

3.5.3 Service Quality
- Deliveries are late
- Displeased customers
- Taunted image and reputation
- Weakened quality of finished goods.
3.5.4 Attitudes

- Absence becoming accepted
- Employees develop boldness in their belief that they have a ‘right’ to take time off
- Employees who are regularly at work are ‘expected’ to be absent in order to fit in with the rest of the group
- Values of performance in the organisation drop.

Goodman and Atkin (1984) identified both the positive and negative consequences of absenteeism, as listed in Table 3.1, below:

Table 3.1: Consequences of Absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>POSITIVE</th>
<th>NEGATIVE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>• Decrease of stress that is job-related</td>
<td>• No income</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Non-work role responsibilities meetings</td>
<td>• Discipline, formal or informal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Remuneration from paid non-work activities</td>
<td>• Bigger incidents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Submission with norms to be absent</td>
<td>• Altered job perception</td>
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<td>Co-workers</td>
<td>• Job variation</td>
<td>• Enhanced work load</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Skill expansion</td>
<td>• Undesired overtime</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Payment in the form of overtime</td>
<td>• Increased accidents</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Struggle with absent workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work group</td>
<td>• Bigger flexibility in responding to absenteeism and to making problems</td>
<td>• Low quality productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• More accidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational</td>
<td>• Greater job knowledge base of employees</td>
<td>• Lower productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>• Greater employee flexibility</td>
<td>• Increased costs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• More unhappiness</td>
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<td>• More accidents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>POSITIVE</td>
<td>NEGATIVE</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Union Stewards</strong></td>
<td>• Outspoken and reinforced power position</td>
<td>• Weakened power situation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased cohesion among members</td>
<td>• Higher cost in processing unhappiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extended Family</strong></td>
<td>• Chances to deal with health or illness problems</td>
<td>• Lower income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Chances to manage marital problems</td>
<td>• Weakening in work reputation</td>
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### 3.5.5 Service Delivery

In his study, “Implementation of the SAPS Policy and Five Year (2000-2005) Strategic Plan on HIV and Aids”, which sought to provide an overview of these matters in the Johannesburg Policing area, Masuku (2007) wrote that absenteeism has an impact on service delivery, which causes a problem for the SAPS. Masuku (2007) further states that the days of absenteeism increased from seven to nine days in a leave cycle of three years. It can, however, be seen as a result of the improved management of absenteeism in the SAPS that more and more members took fewer sick leave days in a single leave cycle.
It must, however, be mentioned that not all sick leave is accompanied by a sick certificate from a registered medical doctor. Sick certificates are compulsory when a member takes more than two days of sick leave. The implication is that for a day or two members do not need to consult a medical practitioner. It has been found that not all members, in order to produce a sick note to their employer, always seek conventional medical treatment; it seems that members relied on non-medical remedies for their illnesses. Medical aid also made provision for a member to buy medicine over the counter at any registered pharmacy. Members, thus, did not always need to go to a doctor.

The quality of service delivery is jeopardised if absenteeism is not properly managed, and it can result in members who are on duty experiencing burnout and stress as they work under pressure with their increased workloads. Burnout can be the result of these circumstances and is described as not only an individual’s negative outcome within the organisation; it can also include loss of motivation, fatigue, depression or a sense of failure. All these factors can lead to absenteeism, high turnover rates and reduction in productivity (Wiese, Rothman & Storm, 2003:71). Therefore, it is of utmost importance for absenteeism to be properly managed by both the employee and the employer in order to ensure quality service delivery and to avoid burnout. Burnout can lead to long periods of absenteeism and it could become an inhuman cycle, which is not good for the working relationship. Employers need to have a plan in place to maintain high productivity, which is good for the country’s economy. It is important that the organisation retains its good name concerning service delivery and high productivity.

To be a police official, as a career, is normally perceived by the broader community as very stressful. Burnout can easily overwhelm a police official because of the nature of police work and the difficult situations that they are exposed to on a daily basis. Burnout is not necessarily the only outcome in instances when police officials are diagnosed as depressed or regarded as a failure or experiences a loss of interest, however, it can have a negative influence on the organisation in the form of absence from work and little to no productivity. This can be detrimental to the organisation and can cause a threat to productivity, as the core function of the organisation is to serve
and protect. Factors that are often considered as contributing to the burnout syndrome are: work overload, lack of support from superiors or professional help, out of comfort zone when shifts are rotated, communication gaps, and lack of resources. Because of the seriousness of this phenomenon, the organisation needs to put measurements in place in order to control the absenteeism of police officials, especially in KwaZulu-Natal where the study of police officials who experienced burnouts was done. It is also recommended that the SAPS Management should attend to shortages of manpower as members not performing well and they receive an insufficient salary (Wiese et al., 2003).

Because of the uniqueness of the different buildings at the SAPS Academy in Paarl, the cleaners, specifically, are rotated on a regular basis. Some workplaces are bigger than others and put a lot of strain on members to provide an efficient service. In order to keep them from burnout they are rotated so as to ease the work while others are given the opportunity to work in the bigger areas. It is found that this keeps morale high, however, it is still evident that absenteeism is a problem amongst these workers. Service delivery also known as Batho Pele, was introduced by the government with the purpose of striving towards moving public servants to become service orientated, to pursue excellence and to continuously improve service delivery. Service delivery is viewed as the mechanism by which to activate the communication strategy in order to address different levels of operational duties (Pretorius & Schurnk, 2007).

3.6 CONCEPTUAL MODELS OF ABSENTEEISM

3.6.1 Steers and Rhodes’s Process Model of Employee Absence
Steers and Rhodes (1978, 1984) delivered one of the most acknowledged contributions to research and academic literature on absenteeism; their model incorporated both voluntary and involuntary absenteeism (Steers & Rhodes, 1978). An employee’s attendance has two very important variables: (a) an employee’s motivation and (b) an employee’s ability to attend work as stated in the model developed by Steers and Rhodes (1978). To study the avoidance behaviour of an employee, the Steers and Rhodes (1978) model can be used for its decision-making or expectancy elements.
Employee attendance is largely a function of two important variables, as suggested by Steers and Rhodes (1978): attendance motivation and ability to attend. Steers and Rhodes (1984) identified seven aspects of job satisfaction.

These seven aspects are:

- Positive co-worker relationships;
- Smaller work group sizes;
- Greater opportunities for advancement;
- Increased job scope;
- Considerate leadership;
- Reduces stress; and
- Increased job level.

Job satisfaction is determined by individual values and expectations within the working environment. Companies have the same expectations regarding job. The personal characteristics and backgrounds of employees have shaped these values and expectations, as they have changed over various career stages. Organisations should try to match individual and organisational expectations during their selection of new employees, in order to enable them to measure job satisfaction.

Steers and Rhodes (1978) have recognised that attendance motivation is enhanced by the following five major “pressures to attend”:

- Reward and incentives systems;
- Personal and ethic;
- Economic and marketing conditions;
- Work-group norms; and
- Organisational commitment.

Even if an employee has a high attendance motivation, there will be moments in which attendance is impossible for him/her. The choice of attendance may not always reside with the employee, as there are those unavoidable limitations on attendance: (1) family responsibility; (2) illness and accidents; and (3) transportation problems (Steers & Rhodes, 1978).
3.6.2 The Brook and Price model
The Steer and Rhodes (1978) conceptual framework was modified and extended by Brook and Price's (1989) casual model of absenteeism. This model includes job satisfaction, organisational commitment, pay, routinisation, kinship responsibility, organisational permissiveness, centralisation, distributive justice, work involvement, role ambiguity, health status and alcohol involvement as determinants of absenteeism. According to Brook and Price (1989:14), the casual model has shown considerable promise as a basis for investigating multivariable relationships amongst the determinants of absenteeism.

3.6.3 Adjustment Model
The organisation and employee’s relationship is renegotiated as the job conditions change over the time. Adjustment models are described by Gibson (1966) as well as Hill and Trist (1953). Compensation for unattractive aspects of the job can cause absenteeism; furthermore, in their control of absenteeism, they identify cultural and social expectations. The concept of an “absence culture” was introduced by Hill and Trist (1953, 1962) who described how workers must adjust their behaviour to a stress related work environment while remaining employed (Riordan, 1997).

3.6.4 The dynamic attendance model of Fichman
Fichman (1989:125) studied the hazard rate (h(t)) in his assessment of absence and attendance. Going from work attendance to work absence in a unit of time = hazard (h(t)). Given that the individual has been in attendance, a unit of time = “t”. Fichman (1984) suggested that the longer the employee works for a company, the employee can be absent from work. Furthermore, Fichman (1984) is of the opinion that the absence of an employee is not necessarily a withdrawal from work conditions that are not cohesive but rather an approach to a more attractive non-work situation.

3.6.5 An integrative model of absenteeism
The integrative model of absenteeism is a combination of the individual approach, social psychological approach and the economic approach.
3.6.5.1 The individual approach

The motivation to be absent from work is determined internally by the individual, and it is influenced by personal circumstances like demographics or individual responses to stimuli in the work or non-work environments. The decision to be absent from work is the individual’s personal choice and is not at all influenced by the employer (Steers & Rhodes, 1978).

3.6.5.2 The social psychological approach

Johns and Nicholson (1982) assume that absence is a social phenomenon and should therefore be classified under the social psychological approach. The definition of an absence culture is “the set of shared understanding about absence legitimacy in a given organisation and the established custom and practice of employee absence behaviour and its control (e.g. worker’s belief and supervisory predominance about co-workers attendance behaviour)” (Johns & Nicholson, 1982:136). The individual observed the absence of managers and colleagues and made the decision to be absent based on this observation; individuals used this knowledge while learning what is acceptable in adjusting their own absence behaviour (Chadwick-Jones, Brown & Nicholson, in Rentch & Steer, 2003).

Morelli (2012) notes that workers came to the erroneous acceptance that sick leave is an entitlement, and indicated that they needed to be educated in the form of training interventions. It is also important that members must be protected from any harm in terms of Safety Regulations, and that an Employee Assistance Programme, now called the Employee Health and Wellness programme, needs to be implemented. Singh, Chetty and Karodia (2016) define absenteeism as the failure to report for duty as per shift roster, irrespective of the reason. Moreover, they state that it is an incident that is disruptive, unplanned, and unjustifiable that causes the member to not be physically present at the workplace. They continued by suggesting that even when a member is physically at the workplace, they can display withdrawal behaviour when circumstances are not in their favour.

This statement is supported by Westman and Etzion (2001) who indicate that, in Israel, employees’ significant withdrawal from work is evident in their absenteeism. This
absence is seen as avoiding stress and employees are more likely to call in sick in order to cope with this symptom. This occurrence can be seen as dysfunctional in the organisation, as employees refrain from work in order to recharge their batteries so as to cope with their work situation.

3.6.5.3 The economic approach
Barmby et al. (2004) assumed, in their economic approach, that the individual has a positive value in that time away from work. Individuals, who want to maximize their benefit, by increasing the amount of leisure in preference to time at work, will experience that the utility of leisure exceeds what they can earn as a substitution (Kaiser, 1998). Therefore, being absent can lead to a lower incentive or a higher probability of discharge; missing returns by undergoing on-the-job training; and work costs in terms of share of daily earning not covered by sickness insurance, where applicable (Brostrom, Johansson & Palme, 2002). Absence is associated with higher risk of discharge and the loss of future earnings increase by wage rate, as does the marginal cost of absence, which discourages absence (Kaiser, 1998). There are high levels of absence in the public sector because the risk of discharge is very low. Public organisations are not profit driven and the determinant of absence is not calculated, as in the case of absence which is only regarded as an outcome, which could be a reason for the high level of absenteeism in public organisations (Lokke Nielson, 2008:1333).

In his discussion of the extension and costs of absenteeism, Kruger (2008) claims that absenteeism is not only negative but can also have a positive side in the sense that members can come to work revived after a leave of absence. He also indicates that there are hidden costs involved in the productivity drop, poor quality and management dissatisfaction. Kruger (2008) argues that a person can decide on any day to either attend work or not to attend work. This absence can be recorded as absence under the member’s control, or medically certified absence in cases in which the member consults a doctor. Landy, Vasey and Smith (1984) compared the complexity and measurement of absenteeism and mentioned that careful consideration must be given to the different definitions, as per all the studies undertaken in this field. Kruger (2008) studied absenteeism at the Airports Company of South Africa because of staff
shortages where the company needed to hire personnel or paid overtime to staff who was at work. This situation caused an overdraft of their budget, which the company could not afford. He found that the high level of absenteeism is caused by job dissatisfaction and suggested disciplinary action against such staff members; furthermore, he promoted rewards as an incentive for absence-free staff.

Rajin (2012) argues that in the daily execution of their duties, SAPS members need to attend all types of scenes ranging from motor accidents to rape, and these have a negative influence on the individual employees which could lead to absenteeism from work. Employees can frequently book off sick as they experienced it as stressful and it has a negative influence on their work productivity. Rajin further argues that the SAPS as an employer has a responsibility towards its members to oversee their physical health as well as their mental fitness to render an effective and efficient service to the community that they serve. It needs to be mentioned here that members at a Police Academy do not directly work with the broader community; rather, they work with police officials as their clients. The Academy is a training institution and members do not attend to community complaints except when working special duties.

In the “Ability Gap”, Foegen (1990) describes that the world is currently experiencing an increase in “gaps”. Workers are happy to do just the bare minimum and vent dissatisfaction very easily, in a loud manner. Workers are doing just enough and have an attitude that creates negative productivity. Workers in such situations stay away by absenting themselves from work. According to the author, this absenteeism assisted them in building a tolerance towards uncomfortable and unfair situations. This is their way of reducing stress, however, it produces stress for the employer when the desired outcome of productivity suffers due to absenteeism.

3.7 ABSENTEEISM THEORIES

Kruger (2008:13) states that exchange between employees, as a group, and the employing organisation can be interpreted as absenteeism. The author continues by stating that employees want to make their absence legitimate and acceptable by, firstly, sharing it (checking for who was absent for that day) and, secondly, the employee is becoming absent from the workplace and it can be seen as a form of
negative exchange between employee and the employer. Workload pressure, boredom or the enormous artificiality of fixed work schedules are possible factors that these employees “trade off” by their absence. The employee’s ability and motivation to attend work is primarily determined by his/her attendance.

An employee’s satisfaction with the job situation and the pressure he/she feels to attend work is influenced by his/her motivation to be present at the workplace (Kruger, 2008:14). It is critical to distinguish between an absence problem and a problem absence, when one talks about absenteeism. Effective service delivery in an organisation and the pressure on other employees in the workplace can be negatively impacted upon by an absence problem, whilst an employee who is frequently absent from work is a problem absence. These are in contrast with each other (Kruger, 2008:14).

The following absent behaviours are discussed using the existent theories:

3.7.1 The Informal Contract
An informal contract is being made between the organisation and the individual; Gibson (1966) focusses on the informal contract in his explanation of some of the main features of absent behaviours. Formal procedures could not have been taken against individuals with an informal contract as they were not absent from work for long enough; Gibson (1966) had a keen interest in these types of absences. Gibson (1966) pointed out that it is easier for people to justify their absence from work if it identifies with their value – which refers to a person’s positive or negative view of a work situation – and that the organisation’s absenteeism level is influenced by the quantity of employees’ absence. Longer serving employees identified themselves with the organisation and felt that the organisation must show that it offers the individual a fair deal; they further stressed the importance of an “authentic” work contract. An individual is more likely to feel obligated to be at work if he/she feels that they are offered a fair deal (Gibson, 1966). Adams (1966) stated that absent behaviour is more likely to increase with employees who may believe that they are subjected to inequity, that is, if they are treated unfairly or discriminated against, or if they believe that an imbalance exists in the organisation. If the employer does not reduce workplace inequality, employees are likely to absent themselves from work.
3.7.2 Resolving Perceived Inequity

If ways of reducing inequity are not available then the probability of absent behaviour will increase, therefore, Adams (1965) suggests that employees perceive inequality in the workplace and that their absences may be a means of resolving it. Patchen (1960) tested of the hypothesis that when employees feel that they are treated fairly in terms of pay and promotion they are more likely to attend work. In this study, Patchen (1960) found that a relationship exists between absence and perceived fairness of pay.

3.7.3 Withdrawal from Stress of Work Situations

Hill and Trist (1962) developed a theory which suggests that an employee withdraws from a stressful work situation by choosing to be absent from work. Their study investigated absenteeism over a period of four years at a large steel company, with a specific focus on the accident rates and patterns of absenteeism within this company. Hill and Trist (1962) found that withdrawal from work is a concept that is central to the explanation of absenteeism. Individuals tend to express their dissatisfaction, that cause conflict between satisfaction and feel obliged to resign from work, or members can cause accidents, or decide to stay away from work without any form of permission. Employees in this company investigated express their dissatisfaction based on the employee/organisation relationship (Hill & Trist, 1962).

When absences, which are recognised as valid by the employing authority, became insufficient, accidents happened at the workplace as employees expressed their hostility towards the job. In addition, these employees expressed their hostility towards their workplace by being absent without permission. Hill and Trist (1962) further state that they noted a rise in the number of accidents under the control of specific individuals but that the decline in the accident rate, with length of service, were concealed by these individuals. An increase in uncertified sickness absence was recorded, which can easily mean “coping with stress” as these behaviours represent a depressive mode of feeling by the employees.

3.7.4 Dynamic Conflict

The result of complex incentives and stresses is conflict, which is located within the individual, and the result thereof is whether a person stays or withdraws (Gadourek,
1967). Employees with certain personality profiles may declare their withdrawal from the work situation, as indicated in the dynamic conflict theory (Gadourek, 1967).

3.7.5 Social Exchange

A pattern of behaviour in the work situation that includes absences and other factors constitutes a formal or informal contract between employers and employees. This is a type of social exchange between employers and employees (Chadwick-Jones et al., 1982). Formal factors include working hours, key performance areas, pay, potential promotion lines and disciplinary rules. Supervisory style and peer group relations include informal factors, as outlined by Chadwick-Jones et al. (1982), as absences from work. In respect of this, Chadwick-Jones et al. (1982) indicate that employee or employee groups, especially those with a higher status, such as factory supervisors or bank managers, are seldom absent from work.

The social exchange within an organisation reflects the level of absenteeism that is the “agreed upon” type of behaviour. An employee’s decision to be at work or to be absent from work can be based on their understanding of what type of absenteeism is acceptable and what is not; this type of behaviour can conform to a normative frequency level (Chadwick-Jones et al., 1982). It can thus be expected that employees know whether their absences are appropriate and whether or not the frequency and duration thereof are taken into account. Employees can thus be expected to know how often they have been absent in a particular month or year, and not only absent for that specific day (Chadwick-Jones et al., 1982).

According to Camden and Ludwig (2013), absenteeism usually does not include missing work for recognised holidays, family vacations, jury duty, bereavement, sick leave, and family emergencies, which may be termed involuntary absenteeism (i.e. the employee does not have a free choice to attend work). In contrast, voluntary absenteeism includes absences for which an employee has a choice to attend work but chooses to take a personal day off. Voluntary absenteeism can be scheduled and authorised in advance (vacation) or it can be unscheduled and not authorised in advance. It is impossible to clearly separate absence into voluntary and involuntary parts, especially when using register data, in which only the episodes and days are
recorded but not the reason for the absence. Two distinct absence metrics might, however, be useful indicators of voluntary and involuntary absence, namely, frequency and duration. Duration is the simple count of days absent from work, whereas frequency is the number of absence episodes (Lokke Nielsen, 2008:1331). Similarly, Brooke and Price (1989:826) distinguish absenteeism from other forms of non-attendance (such as public holidays and annual leave) that are arranged in advance. In turn, unscheduled absences can be divided into voluntary and involuntary absences.

Whitston and Edwards (1990:288-289) believe that “this distinction between ‘absence’ and ‘absenteeism’ is important and neglected”; they highlight that even if the number of absences is high, “this does not mean that there is an ‘absenteeism problem’”, which is a term often used to imply that the absence is without good cause. Bierla et al. (2013:1537) explain that absence and absenteeism are therefore not distinguishable ex ante: firms are actually not able to identify whether a worker is absent because she/he is ill or because she/he shirks. However, an ex post analysis allows one to make such a distinction. For example, if younger employees are found to be more absent than older ones, absenteeism should be suspected. Age has been acknowledged as a cause for the lengthening of absence (owing to health deterioration); younger employees should, therefore display lower absence levels. Thus, absenteeism can solely be inferred from an absence level analysis and from the nature of the variables involved.

Similarly, Xu and Jensen (2012:4592) explain that illness-related absenteeism refers specifically to work absences due to a worker’s own ill health, and it is not the same as absenteeism for any other reason. Authors such as Brown and Sessions (1996) and Alexanderson (1998) also suggest that illness-related absenteeism is often described as unavoidable or involuntary absenteeism, as it arises from a physical inability to work rather than from an unwillingness to work. Xu and Jensen (2012:4592), however, elucidate that workers may be absent from their jobs for other reasons, such as stress, childcare, a spouse’s need for assistance, a worker having personal errands to run, or the worker simply having an entitlement mentality. Illness-related absenteeism excludes absence for any of these reasons.
3.8. INTERNATIONAL TRENDS IN ABSENTEEISM

Allen and Bourgeois (2015) refer to Morneau Shepell that states the true picture of absenteeism. In their study it is found that absenteeism has considerable direct and indirect costs. Managers acknowledge the magnitude of the problem of absenteeism and the bottom line effect it has on their companies. The SAPS, as a public entity, does feel the financial impact of absenteeism, even though not as vividly as the private sector. In the United States of America, managers found that almost one in every ten workers were absent when they were expected to be at their workplace. Senior members of these organisations must come on board concerning their knowledge of what absenteeism means to their companies, in order to meet their work demands.

In the study of Allen and Bourgeois (2015) which refer to Morneau Shepell absenteeism is described as scheduled and unscheduled absences, be they vacation leave or sick leave. Partial shift members absented themselves by either taking longer lunches, arriving late at work or leaving earlier than the agreed times. This can lead to unsatisfactory work performance on the part of the employee and a loss of productivity for the employer (i.e. absenteeism as the bottom-line killer).

Sommerfeldt (2010) studied motivational factors, and the influence these had on Police members—who wanted to feel appreciated and motivated in their work environment—in Australia. This became an enormous task as the employees became more complex, demanding and sophisticated in their approach towards their employment. Employers were encouraged to have regular reviews in order to improve themselves, as employees used absenteeism as their scapegoat. This type of behaviour is actually evidence of a lack of commitment on the part of the employees. These characteristics were observed throughout the Australian Police force.

It was found that the Turkish police are of the belief that job satisfaction has to be strongly associated with organisational and individual outcomes. Individual outcomes can become negative behavioural symptoms that people display in relation to their workplace, and stress can be experienced. It was further found that this negative behaviour resulted in high absenteeism. Moreover, it was found that a high level of job satisfaction leads to police officials feeling more positive and psychological well. The
higher the job satisfaction, which is considered as the strongest indicator of a valued organisation outcome, the higher the likelihood of the police official becoming a healthy, improved performer and being satisfied in his/her job (Kara, Sunger & Kapti, 2015:88).

Research was also conducted on absenteeism at an emergency call centre of the London Metropolitan Police (Metropolitan Police Absenteeism, 2014) it was found that the employee absence rate was problematic and that this unit had the highest level of absence in all the industrial sectors. The Metro police then approached the researchers and requested their assistance in tracking the reason for the absence at the organisation’s call centre, and that they provide strategies to reduce workplace absence. This research led to a reduction in the absence rate and higher levels of productivity.

3.9. SUMMARY
This chapter focussed on the literature concerning the topic of absenteeism at a police academy, and the international trends in the absence of members within a police environment. Examples of the different types of absenteeism, nationally and globally, were provided herein, together with a discussion of the behaviour related to this phenomenon and the effect thereof. Different definitions of absenteeism were highlighted in this chapter. Absenteeism was inter alia described as the failure of an employee to report for work or stay that the workplace for the duration of their shift or their working hours. The chapter dealt with the legitimate reasons why employees were absent from duty, and made it clear that not all absences required a sick note/certificate. Absenteeism was divided into three basic categories for the absence of an employee from the workplace.

It discussed the awareness of employers regarding employees’ reasons for their absence, and considered whether they were aware of possible personal factors related to this. This chapter provided a description on of employee dissatisfaction and their intent to withdraw themselves from the work environment, by being absent. The chapter also positioned that age and gender indeed play a role in absenteeism, while
deducing that most absences were caused by minor illnesses such as colds and flu. Low morale was also identified as a significant contributory factor to absenteeism.

The chapter also focussed on the importance of management’s role in reducing absenteeism in general. It also dealt with the importance of management as a role model, and revealed how employees followed particular absence behaviours. It showed that the public sector experienced highest higher absenteeism rate than the private sector. It was also revealed that women were likely to be absent more often than the men, but that women over the age of 55 were absent less often than men in this same category.
CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter presents, discusses and interprets the results of the qualitative data collected from semi-structured interviews conducted with members of the SAPS Academy in Paarl (as discussed in section 1.12.2 of Chapter 1 of this study). These results are presented and discussed under the themes emerging from the data, to answer the research questions, and indicate the achievement of research aims and purpose of this study (see sections 1.4 to 1.6 of this study). The identified themes specifically relate to the experiences of SAPS Academy employees in Paarl (including the Section Heads of the various components) (see section 1.11 of this study) to determine the impact of absenteeism on service delivery at the Academy.

This chapter further infers meaning from the experiences of the participants by associating such experiences with the literature presented in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of this study. Subsequently, differences and similarities that may exist between the literature and the experiences of the participants will be demonstrated herein, and the likely implications of such differences and correlations will be explored. The results of the semi-structured interviews, in comparison with the reviewed literature, follow for discussion.

4.2 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEWS
In this section, the results of the semi-structured interviews are compared with the literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this study. The results of the semi-structured interviews are presented according to the identified themes derived from the interview questions to indicate SAPS Academy Paarl, employees’ perceptions, viewpoints and experiences of the impact of absenteeism on services delivered at the Academy. The questions presented to the participants are illustrated, followed by their replies to the questions, which will be supplemented by the direct verbatim views of the responses.
4.2.1 Exploring challenges associated with excessive absenteeism at the SAPS Academy in Paarl

Absenteeism in the workplace can bring about various challenges. These challenges can take the form of a decrease in services rendered and productivity, an increase in the workload of diligent members, resulting in burnout of such members, and diminishing relationships between frequent employees and absent ones.

From the literature presented in Chapter 3, the challenges associated with employee absenteeism are accentuated. As illustrated in section 3.5 of this study, Van der Westhuizen (2006:45) indicates that the consequences of absenteeism are one of the greatest concerns for an organisation. Van der Westhuizen further identifies a decrease in productivity, diminishing relationships amongst diligent employees and absent ones, decline in service quality and attitudes of employees (such as absence) becoming accepted, and employees developing boldness in their belief that they have a ‘right’ to take time off. In support of Van der Westhuizen, Goodman and Atkin (1984) identified the following negative consequences of absenteeism: increased work load on co-workers, low quality productivity, lower productivity, and increased unhappiness, weakening of work reputation, as well as intensified marriage/family problems. Masuku (2007) confirms that absenteeism has an impact on service delivery, which causes a problem for the SAPS. Wiese, Rothman and Storm (2003:71) further illustrate the challenges associated with absenteeism. These authors are of the opinion that burnout is described as not only an individual’s negative outcome towards the organisation but can also include a loss of motivation, fatigue, depression or a sense of failure. All these factors can lead to absenteeism, high turnover rates and a decrease in productivity.

After analysis of the responses provided by the participants to the under mentioned question, it was obvious that an overwhelming number of participants experienced absenteeism as a result of excessive sick leave at the SAPS Academy in Paarl, as challenging. In this study participants were asked to respond to the following question:

“In your opinion, is absenteeism from the workplace, as a result of sick leave among personnel, at the SAPS Academy in Paarl, problematic?”
The purpose of this question was to explore whether, and to what extent, absenteeism at the SAPS Academy in Paarl is a challenge, as a result of the excessive sick leave taken by non-diligent members.

It appears, from the responses drawn from semi-structured interviews, that personnel at the SAPS Academy in Paarl experience absenteeism from the workplace, as a result of sick leave amongst personnel, as challenging. From a total of 16 participants, 12 participants responded positively by asserting that absenteeism from the workplace as a result of sick leave definitely creates increased challenges for the diligent members of the Academy. One respondent echoed the sentiments of the majority of the participants who consider absenteeism from the workplace as a result of sick leave as problematic, by saying:

[“Yes, it can be problematic. If a member is sick, the others must do his work”.]

Similarly, another respondent confirmed the impeding effect that excessive absenteeism has on service delivery and the increased workload it leaves for the diligent members:

[“Tasks cannot be finished because of sickness/illness of members. A replacement to do the job is not always available.”]

Correspondingly, another respondent expressed that the intensified workload of diligent members is direct a result of the excessive absence of those members who have taken sick leave. This increased workload on those ever-present members’ results in conflict with members who are continuously absent:

[“It increases workloads on other employees. Conflict with absent worker”.]

Another respondent explained the problematic nature of absenteeism from the workplace as a result of the excessive sick leave taken by some members:
[“If members are sick the other members have more pressure on them. Don’t take lunch breaks. The members are overtired.”]

Another two participants were of the view that absenteeism from the workplace was the result of sick leave:

[To some extent”.]

Interestingly, one respondent who viewed absenteeism from the workplace as a result of the excessive sick leave taken by some members indirectly suggested that those workers were disrespectful towards their employer and that they did not realise the prestigious nature of their work:

[“The way they book off sick is saying that they are disrespecting the fact that they have a job, working for the state; disrespecting the state and [not] realising that they are in a position, that they are in a decent job and working for a decent environment.”]

It also became evident that absenteeism from the workplace as a result of excessive sick leave negatively impacts on internal service delivery and on relationships amongst members:

[“Problematic. No meetings are held and there is no working relationship”.]

One respondent suggested that alcohol abuse amongst certain members as a possible contributing factor for the excessive absenteeism from the workplace due to sick leave:

[“Minor alcohol abuse of some members can be the reason for absenteeism.”]
Furthermore, it was expressed that those members who are continuously absent from work as a result of sick leave regard sick leave as a privilege that they need to take maximum advantage of:

[“Some think that they must use these sick leave credits because it is given to them”.]

Another respondent felt that some members depleted their sick leave prematurely:

[“Personnel utilised all their sick leave in the first quarter of the three year cycle”]

It was further suggested that excessive absenteeism amongst members, as a result of sick leave, is more prevalent amongst the younger members since some younger members lack devotion and have an inconsiderate outlook:

[“Tendency is more in younger members because not all have the loyalty and have a careless attitude”.]

Intriguingly, another respondent insinuated that personal challenges, exploitation from their employer, being overworked and exhaustion as the reasons for the excessive absenteeism amongst certain members as a result of sick leave:

[“It is problematic. Members feel misused and also have problems at home. They feel too tired to work”.

On the contrary, two participants did not view the excessive absenteeism amongst certain members as a result of sick leave as problematic. One respondent was of the opinion that members should put their well-being first, when the need arises, in order to function optimally:

[“No, if a person is sick, he/she needs to take care of themselves and get better to be full productive again”.]
It is significant to note that the overwhelming majority of the participants are of the opinion that absenteeism as a result of the excessive sick leave taken by certain members is problematic at SAPS Academy in Paarl. The responses from the participants further suggest that the increased pressure on the diligent members can become unbearable and cause low morale amongst them. In addition, absenteeism as a result of excessive sick leave taken by certain members hampers effective service delivery.

4.2.2 Determining the impact of excessive absenteeism on service delivery at the SAPS Academy in Paarl

Absenteeism in the workplace has a negative impact on service delivery at the SAPS Academy in Paarl. The impact on service delivery at the Academy ranges from poor quality services delivered to undesired but essential overtime, in order to complete tasks and to adhere to due dates.

From the literature presented in Chapter 3, the impact associated with excessive absenteeism is highlighted in section 3.5.5 of this study. Masuku (2007) states that the quality of service delivery is jeopardised if absenteeism is not properly managed, and it can result in members experiencing burnout and increased stress as they now have to work under increased pressure and heavy workloads. Pretorius and Schurnk (2007) view service delivery as the mechanism to activate the communication strategy to address different levels of operational duties. Rajin (2012) argues that employees book off sick from work as they experience it stressful, which has a negative influence on their work productivity. Rajin (2012) further argues that the SAPS as an employer has a responsibility to oversee the physical and mental health of its employees, in order that they are able to render an effective and efficient service. Organisational commitment can be described as the extent to which an employee feels a sense of allegiance to his or her employer, according to Muchingsky (1999), as illustrated in section 3.4.2.6 of this study.

After analysis of the responses given by the participants to the under mentioned question, it was clear that 98 percent of the participants experienced the impact of
excessive absenteeism on service delivery at the SAPS Academy, Paarl, as a result of sick leave, as negative.

Participants were asked to respond to the following question:

“From your experience, does excessive absenteeism, as a result of sick leave, among personnel at the SAPS Academy, Paarl, have an impact on your daily official duties and on service delivery in your particular component?”

The purpose of this question was to explore what impact excessive absenteeism, as a result of sick leave, has on the daily duties of specific components at the SAPS Academy in Paarl. From the results of semi-structured interviews, it appears that personnel at the SAPS Academy in Paarl believe that absenteeism from the workplace, as a result of sick leave among personnel, has a negative impact on service delivery.

From a total of 16 participants, 15 participants indicated that absenteeism as a result of sick leave taken by members has an impact on service delivery. The participants agreed that sick leave has an impact on service delivery but, when expected of them, they do execute their daily official duties. It became noticeable from the responses that the different components at the Academy experiences challenges related to services rendered. The respondents confirmed the impeding workload that is placed upon those diligent members who are regularly at work. One participant responded as follows:

[“Daily official duties suffer because you can either not delivers the service of the person that is on sick leave or you have to ask somebody else to assist.”]

Different respondents echoed these sentiments:

[“Extra and increased workload and responsibilities. Undesired overtime to meet deadlines.”]
The ever-increasing demands on the diligent members’ causes’ conflict, as affirmed by one respondent:

[“Conflict between colleagues.”]

Administrative staff responded that the diligent staff members need to perform extra duties in order to complete their daily tasks. Due dates need to be adhered to irrespective of how many members are on duty.

It became evident that the extra work that the diligent members need to perform in the absence of the members, who are on sick leave, causes additional pressure that is not conducive to the health of these diligent members:

[“The stress and rushing is not good for the members.”]

Similarly, other participants confirmed that they need to rush their work in order to fulfil all the additional obligations placed upon them:

[“Has an impact on the component and service delivery. Also has an impact on the due dates of documents that must be sent from the Commander’s office to Division: HRD.”]

This practice is in contrast with what is expected from a leadership and management institution.

In the Support Services component, the impact on service delivery as a result of excessive absenteeism is experienced as participants stated:

[“Cleaners work in different buildings on different premises. They must learn to prioritize because one cannot do everything at the same time.”]
Academy consists of three buildings which need to be serviced and cleaned on a daily basis. In one of the buildings, senior officers are hosted when visiting the Academy. As a result, their apartments need to be serviced by support service personnel on a daily basis. Excessive absenteeism result in support service personnel being sent from one building to another building in order to assist with housekeeping duties:

"It is a decrease in quality work performance and cleaners get tired. The cleaner is doing the best she/he can to serve the learners in the residence and at the end of the day she/he must ensure that the environment is clean."

In addition, another respondent agreed that absenteeism definitely has an impact on service delivery and reiterated the fact that when one member is off sick the others must do their work; the consequence of this is that the:

"Job gets rushed and leads to poor quality of work."

Training is regarded as the core business of the Academy. Participants attached to the Training component place significant emphasis on this core function. It became evident, from the participants’ responses, that when they experience a shortage of trainers, because of absenteeism as a result of sick leave, their workload increases:

"Assessments must be done according to assessment and training programmes, other trainers have to mark additional scripts, take scripts home and work overtime to mark scripts."

"It is problematic because the rest of the members are not able to do all the work, their own and the absent member’s work."

It is interesting to note that the participants employed as grounds men lamented that they experience challenges in service delivery, especially at the end of a month:
[“Yes, is a problem? During the month, especially on the 1st or end of the month.”]

[“No one takes responsibility for grounds, grounds are dirty. Complaints from learners and personnel: yes complaints are received.”]

[“On Mondays the learners complain.”]

Another participant from this environment agreed by responding:

“[Absenteeism has an impact on the component and service delivery”.

Participants from the Food Providing Services (Mess) component also confirmed that excessive absenteeism has an impact on their service delivery.

[“FPS members stressed each other while running around to do all the work. Members get stressed although they do not take it out on each other. With three members absent on a shift it is hectic”]

The Food Providing Services component is responsible for providing the learners with three meals per day, thus resulting in time constraints. The effectiveness and quality of the services rendered in terms of food provision to visitors’ to the Academy is, therefore, entirely reliant on members’ availability and commitment. Participants from this component echoed these sentiments by stating that, because of the excessive absenteeism as a result of sick leave taken by certain members, service delivery is not at the level it is supposed to be, and is definitely a concern for the diligent members.

It is further evident from the experiences of participants ‘from the Learner Support component that absenteeism as a result of sick leave has a huge impact on their daily official duties, and service delivery, at the SAPS Academy in Paarl:
“When a colleague in Learner Support book off sick it will have an impact in our office and on service delivery. This tendency placed tremendous work load on the ever diligent members as the result of those who absent themselves regularly.”

It is evident that all participants are of the opinion that absenteeism as result of sick leave does have an impact on the daily official duties and on service delivery in the different components of the Academy. These participants described the absence of members as problematic because of the extra workload placed on them as diligent members. It has also negatively influenced the working relationship amongst members, and causes unnecessary conflict. The participants also expressed their belief that it is wrong to misuse the privilege of sick leave. All the participants affirmed that absenteeism as a result of sick leave has a significant impact/influence on their daily tasks, and they felt that it definitely hampered service delivery.

4.2.3 Exploring contributing factors responsible for high absenteeism

Contributors to absenteeism in the workplace can range from a number of factors, and they could consequently bring about various challenges. These challenges can take the form of personal, organisational and attitudinal factors related to absence. They could increase the high absence of members and *inter alia* have a negative influence on the diligent members.

According to Deer, Erwin, Inversion and Ambrose (1995), the importance of the management of absenteeism is an aspect of the human resources function that is often poorly understood. The researcher submits that the efficient management of absenteeism entails addressing the contributing factors of employee absenteeism. Organizational efficiency and productivity is significantly challenged by the absence of employees. In agreement with this view, as outlined in section 3.4 of this study, Harrison and Martocchio (1998) state that there are six classes of variables that are hypothesised to be causes of absenteeism: personality, demographics, variables as a long-term cause, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and social context as a mid-term cause. Morelli (2012) states further that Van der Merwe and Miller (1988) argue that absenteeism is poorly defined, and that there is a lack of uniformity in
measurement. They present personal, organisational and attitudinal aspects as the three factors related to absence.

In light of the above, the study participants were asked to respond to the following question:

“According to you, what are the underlying causes or contributing factors responsible for the high absenteeism rate, as a result of sick leave, among personnel at the SAPS Academy in Paarl?”

The aim of this question was to explore the underlying causes of, or contributing factors responsible for, the high absenteeism rate as a result of sick leave, amongst personnel at the SAPS Academy in Paarl.

It appears from the semi-structured interviews that personnel at the SAPS Academy in Paarl attribute absenteeism in the workplace, as a result of sick leave among personnel, as a result of a combination of internal and external contributing factors. From a total of 16 participants, four members indicated that absenteeism as a result of sick leave is work-related, while five members indicated that it is both personal and work-related and seven members stated that it is not work-related at all. One participant explained:

[“The members doing extra tasks get stressed, sick, go to the doctor and get booked sick.”]

In this regard, Hill and Trist (1962) developed a theory that explains absence from work as a sign that an employee is withdrawing from a stressful work situation.

It is also worth noting that in their private capacity, participants are also members of a household and they have to deal with private/personal challenges in addition to work-related stressors. It also became evident that those non-diligent members experience
challenges within their private lives, which contribute to their absenteeism. One participant explained as follows:

[“Accessing the absenteeism shows that members have a lot of responsibilities at home which infiltrates to the work environment.”]

Another participant confirmed that non work-related factors contribute to members being absent from work:

[“We do have regulars regarding absenteeism and their problems are not work-related.”]

Another participant regards alcohol abuse as a contributing factor to the absenteeism among members:

[“Minor problem of alcohol abuse. Members are off sick on Fridays, Mondays and month end.”]

In confirmation of the above, the literature reviewed in section 3.6.2 of this study includes the aspects mentioned by participants here. Brooke and Price’s (1989) causal model of absenteeism modifies and extends the conceptual framework established by Steers and Rhodes (1978) to include routinisation, centralisation, pay, distributive justice, work involvement, role ambiguity, conflict and overload, kinship responsibility, organisational permissiveness, job satisfaction, job involvement, organisational commitment, health status and alcohol involvement as the determinants of absenteeism.

According to Kruger (2008), as outlined in section 3.8.2.5 of this study, job dissatisfaction undoubtedly contributes to high levels of absenteeism, but the measurable contribution it makes is relevantly small in proportion to employees in any organisation who are completely dissatisfied. Overall or global measures of job satisfaction are deficient, because they mask the possibility that a satisfied employee
may find some aspects of the job boring or may experience overload at certain times of the week or month.

It is also noteworthy that a number of participants were of the view that all the internal challenges experienced by the members of the Academy definitely have an influence on a conducive work environment. As a result of these internal challenges, members become emotionally fragile and tend to book themselves off sick more readily than they would in the past. This results in an increase in absenteeism:

["Work environment: the SAPS Academy Paarl went through a rough time and it could be seen immediately in the sick leave. People book off more easily."]

It is significant to note that the respondents are of the opinion that attitude plays an important role in both personal and work-related absence from the workplace. The majority of the participants agreed that absence from the workplace is not work-related, but related to personal issues. These participants placed great emphasis on the attitudes of employees towards their employer. Participants further explained that certain employees regard the annual allocated sick leave days as a right and believed that they should take full advantage thereof:

["Not work related. Members have personal problems at home and book off sick for personal reasons."]

["Attitude of members has an influence on the work”. There are a number of employees that will during the last six months of a sick leave cycle make sure that they use every available sick leave credit.”]

It further emerged that other factors that contribute to absenteeism are the non-acknowledgement of employees, which is evident in the lack of any promotions or other reward systems:
Negative attitude towards work and workplace because of not being acknowledge and rewarded for several years of service (no promotion)."

Section 3.6.1 of this study also focuses on the literature related to the attitudes of employees. The work of Steers and Rhodes (1978) is in agreement with the participants; these authors state that absence becomes accepted, and employees develop boldness in their belief that they have the ‘right’ to take time off. Diligent employees are ‘expected’ to be absent from the workplace in order to fit in with the rest of the group. As a result there is a drop in the performance values of the organisation. Moreover, Steers and Rhodes (1978) are of the opinion that the decision to be absent from work is an individual's personal choice and is not at all influenced by the employer.

From the literature presented in section 3.2.1 of this study, it is clear that managers have found that medical certificates issued by some doctors are not always a guarantee of genuine illness, since it has become easy for employees to gain access to medical certificates (Anderson, 2009:13). In the interviews with the study participants, it also became evident that medical certificates are easy to obtain from the majority medical practitioners. This practice could be a contributing factor to high rates of absenteeism:

"The current leave dispensation makes it difficult to question medical certificates. It is not difficult to obtain a medical certificate from a doctor. If you submit a medical certificate the employer is happy."

Five participants were of the opinion that demanding responsibilities that are unrelated to the work environment, however, filter through to the workplace:

"Accessing the absenteeism shows that members have a lot of responsibilities at home which infiltrates to the work environment."

In this respect, the literature presented in section 3.4.2.1 of this study highlights that women in the workplace often have two jobs, namely, one as a remunerated
occupation and the second shift at her home. Women are likely to put their family first and consider caring for them as their primary role, as tradition expects this from them (Field & Bronwell, 1998).

From the opinions of the participants, the researcher has gathered that employee attitudes are an important factor in both personal and work-related absence from the workplace. Further analysis of the participants’ responses confirms that absenteeism is not always work-related, and is primarily of a personal nature.

4.2.4 Determining awareness of measures to address excessive absenteeism at the SAPS Academy in Paarl

Every organisation needs to implement and communicate measures to effectively manage absenteeism in the workplace. These measures should direct employees in relation to their responsibilities, so as to manage their absence from work accountably. The importance of good communication cannot be over emphasised, as it could make the governance of absenteeism more effective. It is evident that most of the participants are aware of the current measures, as implemented in their different components, to address excessive absenteeism as a result of sick leave. The desired goal is that all members of the SAPS Academy in Paarl should be aware of the measures that have been implemented to address excessive absenteeism as a result of sick leave.

Gaines (2011:139) describes the hierarchy directing members’ duties and responsibilities in terms of absenteeism through issuing directives and prescribed orders.

The following question posed to participants gave rise to awareness of any possible measurements for absenteeism at the Academy:

[“Are you aware of any current measures implemented in your component to address excessive absenteeism among personnel, as a result of sick leave?”]
The aim of this question was to explore the extent of the participants’ awareness of current measures implemented in their different components to address excessive absenteeism as a result of sick leave.

After analysis of the participants’ responses to the above question, it was obvious that the overwhelming number of participants at the SAPS Academy in Paarl agreed that they are aware of the measures that have been implemented to address excessive absenteeism amongst personnel as a result of excessive sick leave. The majority of the participants did not only acknowledge the measures implemented in their work environment to address absenteeism, but also suggested how they believe absenteeism should be addressed.

However, four members stated that they are not aware of any measures that are currently being implemented in their components to address excessive sick leave taken by members:

[“No, nothing that I am aware off. Don’t think that it is necessary.” “There are no measures implemented at this office.”]

It became apparent that these members are not directly involved in the daily planning of the Academy. In contrast, 12 members responded positively to this question, and stated that they were aware of the measures implemented to address excessive absenteeism in their components. The participants who responded to this question in the affirmative mentioned a number of measures that concur with the prescribed National Instruction 2/2004 on Leave (South African Police Service, 2004). According to this National Instruction, a member who is absent as a result of sick leave should be subjected to certain procedures. One participant explained this procedure as follows:

[“Interview the member(s) upon their return to work to determine if assistance must be given (e.g. Chaplain, Social worker).”]
One suggestion provided by the study participants was that members need to be visited at their respective homes when booked off sick, in order to ascertain the member’s wellbeing. Participants were of the opinion that such visits to the homes of ill members will be to the benefit of the Academy, as members intend to communicate more freely in a safe space like their own homes. It became further evident that certain members have the tendency to regularly book themselves off sick on Fridays, Mondays and at end of the month. One participant emphasised the need for supervisors to institute increased control as a measure to address absenteeism:

[“Supervisor must determine the reason for being absent”.
]

The participants further suggested that members who regularly absent themselves by booking off sick must be closely monitored and, depending on the outcome of an investigation, should be disciplined. Members need to be encouraged not to make themselves guilty of habitual absenteeism as a result of sick leave. Some of the participants’ responses suggested that supervisors need to be proactive and put measurements in place in order to decrease absenteeism as a result of sick leave:

[“Sometimes the supervisor visits the members after being sick for three days.”“Medical evaluation review is done after 30 days (consecutive) absenteeism.” “Supervisor must determine the reason for being absent”.
]

Interestingly, some participants mentioned that a doctor’s certificate cannot be mistrusted and that the supervisor has no choice but to accept the certificate:

[“If the doctor books one off sick the employer must accept it because one cannot go against a decision made by the doctor.”
]

Participants agreed with the National Instruction 2/2004 on Leave (South African Police Service, 2004), which stipulates that a member who is booked off sick needs to be visited by a superior. When a member is booked off sick she/he is obliged to stay at his/her place of residence, if not hospitalised, and can only leave her/his place of residence with the permission of a doctor. Participants also strongly suggested that
personal visits by a supervisor, which incorporate discussion between the booked off member and the supervisor, should be implemented as a measure to address absenteeism. Participants suggested that such a measure to address absenteeism could have significant positive results, as it would promote better understanding and trust between the member and their supervisor:

"If members are off sick for more than two days the supervisor must visit them at home and discuss the problem."

"Visit them at home, monitor them with regards to the different times of absenteeism, will interview them and sensitize them regarding their absenteeism."

Participants were also of the view that members who continuously absent themselves by way of sick leave must be sent for a medical evaluation to determine whether they are fit for further duty in the Service:

"Medical evaluation review is done after 30 days (consecutive) absenteeism."

The following opinions illustrate the responses of the four participants who were not aware of the measures currently employed to address excessive absenteeism in their components within SAPS Academy in Paarl:

"No, nothing that I am aware off. Don’t think that it is necessary. “There are no measures implemented at this office.""

When analysing the responses provided by the participants, it became apparent that participants are aware of the different measures that are implemented in their components of the Academy. Participants emphasised the assistance that must be given to members who regularly absent themselves as a result of sick leave. This suggests that these members’ supervisors must motivate them to come to work instead of staying home for fairly insignificant reasons, be it personal or official.
4.2.5 Determining additional measures to address excessive absenteeism relating to sick leave at the SAPS Academy in Paarl

The management of absenteeism related to sick leave became a national priority in the SAPS due to the importance and seriousness thereof. Therefore the research participants were asked to suggest additional measures to address excessive absenteeism as a result of sick leave in order to make recommendations to the management of the Academy, so as to minimise absenteeism and improve service delivery.

Edwards (1990) is of the view that absenteeism in the workplace is neglected and that is does not necessarily mean that there is an absenteeism problem if the absence rate is high. Edwards (1990) further argues that the term is often used to imply that absence is without a good cause.

The following question posed to participants gave rise to this response.

"In your opinion, what proactive measures, over and above the already existing processes and procedures could be implemented to decrease excessive absenteeism, as a result of sick leave, at the SAPS Academy in Paarl?"

After analysis of the participants’ responses to the above question, it was obvious that the overwhelming number of participants experienced absenteeism at the SAPS Academy in Paarl as a result of excessive sick leave as a challenge, and they need to drastically assist with the management thereof. The purpose of this question was to explore the participants' views of additional measures that could be proactively implemented to address absenteeism at the SAPS Academy in Paarl.

According to the literature reviewed in section 3.3 of this study, Xu and Jensen (2012:4592) are of the view that absence from work due to an employee’s ill health is not the same as absenteeism for any reason. Xu and Jensen (2012) are of the opinion that the employee should make it more costly for the employer to be absent, or should
make schedules more flexible in order to influence the frequency of absenteeism. Lokke Nielson (2006:1647) further stipulates that the actions taken by the employer, as well as the characteristics of such actions, are determinants and effects of absenteeism. In agreement with this, Culbertson (2009) states that excessive workplace absenteeism is well known to be very costly to organisations, therefore, it is quite important for organisations to prioritise the reduction of absenteeism as one of its goals. One factor that should receive a great deal of attention is workplace strain because of its strong relationship to workplace absenteeism.

Steers and Rhodes (1978) recognise five major “pressures to attend”: reward and incentives systems, personal ethics, economic and marketing conditions, work-group norms, and organisational commitment to enhance attendance motivation. Sommerfelt (2010) found an answer for the motivational factor and the influence it had on police members in Australia: members wanted to feel appreciated and motivated in their work environment.

The majority of the participants responded to this question quite positively, thus conveying the sense that diligent members really want to assist the management of the Academy in decreasing the issue of absenteeism as a result of sick leave. The suggestions put forward by the study participants ranged from monetary rewards, a sickbay, and additional rest days. It was suggested that the monetary rewards are awarded to those members who are least absent from work in a particular sick leave cycle:

[“The loyal trainers must be appreciated more by giving them monetary incentives/certificates to motivate them.”]

[“Must implement monetary rewards for members who do not take sick leave.”]

[“Reward our personnel for not being sick. It can be of monetary value or rest days or something small.”]
It was evident that the participants took this question seriously as they further suggested that, when discussions between the supervisor and the ill member take place, the seriousness of the problem needs to be made clear to the member. It was also suggested that the supervisor should also determine any underlying causes for absenteeism:

[“Discuss problems with members to determine seriousness of reasons for absenteeism.”]

One participant placed emphasis on the *esprit de core* among members:

[“Encourage a team spirit amongst your personnel.”]

An interesting response from the participants was that the Academy should provide a sickbay with a nurse. It is notable that the majority of the participants are in search of additional measures to reward diligent members:

[“A sickbay can be implemented with a nurse to take blood pressure and apply birth control. If a member feels sick, he/she can visit the nurse and on her proposal visit the doctor.”]

[“Academy must employ a nurse. We have sick people with diabetes and the work pressure makes them sicker.”]

Furthermore, it was suggested that the management of the Academy should host regular information sessions on the topic of absenteeism; it was also proposed that the related problems and challenges can be ironed out at such a forum. It was further suggested that all supervisors and members should be invited to this platform:

[“Have regular information sessions with personnel explaining National Instruction on Absenteeism.”]
Participants also suggested embracing those members who regularly absent themselves. In this regard, one participant was quite sincere in their efforts, by responding:

"Make always time for an employee, even when you are in a hurry."

Further analysis recommends that monetary rewards must be considered for members with little to no sick leave taken during a leave cycle. It is significant that participants placed an emphasis on monetary rewards, information sessions, team spirit and the need for a sickbay with a nurse. It is clear that the members of the Academy are in search of ways to reward diligent members.

4.3 SUMMARY
This chapter presented, discussed and interpreted the results of the qualitative data gathered during semi-structured interviews conducted with members of the SAPS Academy in Paarl (as discussed in section 1.12.2 of this study). These results were presented and discussed under the arising themes, to indicate the achievement of the research aims the purpose of this study (see sections 1.4 to 1.6), and to answer the research questions. The identified themes, which were specifically related to the experiences of employees of the SAPS Academy in Paarl (including Section Heads) from the various components (see section 1.11 of this study), explored the impact of absenteeism on service delivery.

This chapter further provided meaning to the experiences of the participants by associating such experiences with the literature presented in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of this study. Subsequently, the differences and similarities that may exist between the literature and the experiences of the participants were demonstrated in this chapter, together with a discussion of the implications of such differences and similarities. The results of the semi-structured interviews, and a comparison of the reviewed literature, were outlined in this chapter. An improved understanding of the views and experiences of the participants (the members who are actually executing the daily official duties and who carry the burden of the non-diligent members) were
obtained in order to gain an understanding of the impact of absenteeism at the SAPS Academy in Paarl.
CHAPTER 5  SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter provides a summary of the dissertation from Chapter 1 to Chapter 4 after which the interpretations made in Chapter 4 were studied, and the relevant findings and conclusions were drawn from the data collected during the interviews. In this chapter, recommendations will be made based solely on the findings from Chapter 4.

5.2 SUMMARY
Chapter 1 provided an overview of absenteeism in the workplace as a major problem for organisations, nationally and internationally. It was marked that absenteeism drains productivity and profits, as well as the morale of personnel, which in turn creates innumerable challenges for managers, shareholders and those diligent employees who are at work on a regular basis. A problem statement was provided in this chapter, followed by the purpose of this study and an indication of the importance of this study. Thereafter, the aim and objective of the study were discussed.

The purpose of this study was:
• To explore and identify contributing factors responsible for the high absenteeism rate as a result of sick leave at the SAPS Academy in Paarl.
• To explore international best practices in the management of absenteeism in police organizations.
• To make recommendations to the management of the SAPS about improvements that could address absenteeism and, ultimately, improve service delivery.

Subsequently, the following research questions were explored in this study:
• What is the impact of the high rate of absenteeism amongst personnel at the SAPS Academy in Paarl on service delivery?
• What are the underlying causes of the high rate of absenteeism amongst personnel at the SAPS Academy in Paarl?
The target group, who formed the participants in this study, were also identified in Chapter 1. All of the research participants were members of the SAPS Academy in Paarl. The research methodology was outlined in the introductory chapter, together with a discussion of the steps that would be taken to address the research problem effectively. The geographical demarcation of the study was also outlined as part of this discussion. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the ethical considerations of the study.

The discussion in Chapter 2 focussed on the regulatory framework managing absenteeism in the SAPS. It commenced with an overview of the legislation that governs absenteeism in the public sector, as well as SAPS legislative directives and internal documents. Special attention was given to SAPS Standing Orders, Regulations, National Instructions, the Constitution and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. In addition, all the different types of leave to which employees are entitled were discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 3 presented an overview of absenteeism in organisations. This discussion included an outline of the types of absenteeism, the determinants and casual effects of absenteeism, conceptual models of absenteeism and the different theories of absenteeism. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the international trends in absenteeism.

Chapter 4 focussed on the presentation, discussion and interpretation of the research findings, based on the data collected from the semi-structured interviews conducted with members of the SAPS Academy in Paarl. These results were presented and discussed under the themes that emerged from the interviews, so as to answer the research questions and achieve the aims and purpose of the study. This chapter also illustrated the participants’ responses by means of verbatim quotations, in combination with the relevant literature from the literature review presented in Chapter 3. This highlighted the similarities in each, in relation to the universal problem of absenteeism in the workplace, while analysing the impact thereof on service delivery and its underlying causes.
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS DERIVED FROM THE FINDINGS

The findings made in this study necessitate recommendations on how absenteeism, as a result of sick leave, could be addressed more efficiently. The recommendations are based on the responses received during the individual interviews, and are directed at how the management of absenteeism at the SAPS Academy in Paarl could be improved to alleviate the negative impact it has on service delivery at this institution.

The research indicates that absenteeism in the SAPS is regulated by a comprehensive legislative and regulatory framework, however, excessive absenteeism, as a result of sick leave, amongst members attached to the SAPS Academy in Paarl remains a challenge for the operational functioning of the Academy. Consequently, excessive absenteeism has a significant impact on the service delivery of all components of the Academy.

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are made:

It is recommended that members are interviewed on their return to work, irrespective of the number of days taken off, especially when a habit is recognised by the supervisor/manager, in order to determine whether the member requires assistance. The supervisor must take tendencies such as booking off sick on a Monday, Friday and before or after a shift (e.g. amongst Security and FPS workers) seriously at all times; furthermore, these matters need to be investigated with a view to disciplinary action.

It is further recommended that supervision should play a more important role in controlling absence by motivating members not to stay home if it is not really necessary. Supervisors should be proactive and put measurements in place to decrease absence as a result of sick leave. It is recommended that supervisors discuss possible problems with members in order to determine the seriousness of each member’s reasons for absence and to keep a record thereof.

Members must be visited at their respective homes as they are obliged to stay at their home and can only leave their place of residence with the permission of the doctor.
Reward and incentive systems should be implemented as a motivational factor, in order for members to feel appreciated and motivated in their working environment. These rewards can be monetary or they could be awarded as rest days to members who took little to no sick leave within the three year cycle of sick leave.

The establishment of a sickbay is suggested at the SAPS Academy in Paarl. This sickbay should be manned by a registered nurse who should take blood pressure, apply birth control, provide employees with referrals to doctors when needed, and who can offer assistance to the diabetics on staff. Although there are medics at the Academy, the participants felt very strongly about the establishment of this unit.

5.4 CONCLUSION
The aim of this study was to determine the impact of high absenteeism on service delivery amongst personnel at the SAPS Academy in Paarl. The findings of the study revealed that service delivery is indeed jeopardised if absenteeism is not properly managed. The extra workload that is passed onto diligent staff members puts them under immense pressure, and causes unnecessary conflict between diligent and absent members. In order for the Academy to render an effective service, it is reliant on the commitment of all members. An important finding to emerge from this study is that absenteeism is related to the personal, organizational and attitudinal behaviour of staff members. Good communication can be established to manage absenteeism effectively, and should not be taken lightly as the desired goal is that all members of the Academy must be made aware of the actions necessary to address and decrease excessive absence as a result of sick leave.
LIST OF REFERENCES


Circular 13/7/2012 see South African Police Service. 2012(b).

Circular 4/9/1 dated 2015/02/24 see South African Police Service. 2015.


Fink, A. 2014. *Conducting research literature reviews: From the internet to paper*. 111


APPENDIX A: UNISA ETHICS APPROVAL

COLLEGE OF LAW RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2015-02-24

Reference: ST 24
Applicant: E. Grace-Izaks

Dear E. Grace-Izaks

DECISION: ETHICS APPROVAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>E. Grace-Izaks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>Examining the impact of absenteeism at a South African Police Service Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>M.Tech</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the College of Law Research Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Final approval is granted.

The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics.

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics which can be found at the following website:


2. Any adverse circumstances arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the College of Law Ethical Review Committee.

University of South Africa
P.O. Box 392, Unisa 0003, South Africa

Open Office
An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.

3. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.

Note:
The reference number (top right corner of this communique) should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication (e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, letters) with the intended research participants, as well as with the UREC.

Kind regards

DR B HAEPFELI
CHAIR PERSON: RESEARCH ETHICS
REVIEW COMMITTEE
COLLEGE OF LAW

PROF R SONGCA
EXECUTIVE DEAN:
COLLEGE OF LAW
APPENDIX B: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH – SAPS

SUID-AFRIKAANSE POLISIEDIENS
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

Reference No: 30462

Nomine: L Col Jnt-Net
SAC NA Nyama

Enquiries
Telephone: 012-303-3118/3398
Fax number: 012-303-3378

The Divisional Commissioner
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(Attention: Col Hynde/ Lt Col Symons)

RE: RESEARCH REQUEST: EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF ABSENTEEISM AT A SAPS ACADEMY; UNISA: M-TECH; RESEARCHER: EC GRACE-IZAKS

1. The research request of Lt Col EC Grace-Izaks, pertaining to the above mentioned topic, refers.

2. The aim of this research is to examine the impact of personnel’s absence from work, as a result of sick leave, on service delivery at the SAPS Academy.

3. The researcher is requesting permission to conduct semi-structured interviews with 20 employees from various sections. In addition, 10 learners who receive training at the Academy will also be included in the sample.

4. The proposal was perused according to National Instruction 1 of 2006 by this office and it is recommended that permission be granted for the research subject to the final approval and further arrangements by the office of the Divisional Commissioner: Human Resource Management and that the undertaking be obtained from the researcher prior to the commencement of the research that:

4.1. the research will be at her exclusive cost;

4.2. she will conduct the research without any disruption of the duties of members of the Service and where it is necessary for the research goals, research procedure or research instruments to disrupt the duties of a member, prior arrangements must be made with the commander of such member;

4.3. the researcher should bear in mind that participation in the interviews must be on a voluntary basis, and

4.4. the information will at all times be treated as strictly confidential, and
RE: RESEARCH REQUEST: EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF ABSENTEEISM AT A SAPS ACADEMY; UNISA: M-TECH; RESEARCHER: EC GRACE-IZAKS

4.5 The researcher will provide an annotated copy of the research work to the Service.

With kind regards,

[Signature]

MAJOR GENERAL
HEAD: STRATEGY, RESEARCH MONITORING AND EVALUATION
M MENZIWA

Date: 2015/11/04
09 October 2017

To Whom it May Concern

I herewith confirm that I have proofread the following dissertation:

Title of Study: EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF ABSENTEEISM AT A SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE ACADEMY
Student Name: Elise Cecilia Grace-Izak
Student Number: 0535-623-7
Institution: University of South Africa (UNISA)
Qualification: MAGISTER TECHNOLOGIAE (POLICING)

I suggested relevant changes, where I saw fit, using the “Track Changes” function in MSWord; the student could thus either accept or reject the suggested changes at her own discretion.

I trust that this is in order.

Kind regards,

Nancy Morkel
MA English (NMMU), PGCHE (UFH), BA Hons English (UPE), BA MCC (UPE)
Editing Methodology (SU), Editing Practice (SU)
nancy.morkel@mandela.ac.za

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