

MED: Dissertation by LL MAFUNDA

**FACTORS THAT MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO ABSENTEEISM AMONG TVET
STUDENTS AT A COLLEGE IN MATLOSANA DISTRICT.**

by

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DECLARATION

I, **Luleka Llewellyn Mafunda** hereby declare that the **FACTORS THAT MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO ABSENTEEISM AMONG TVET STUDENTS AT A COLLEGE IN MATLOSANA DISTRICT** is my own work in design, in execution and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been duly acknowledged by means of references.



26/05/2021

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DATE :

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late little brother, Loyiso Mafunda, my late beloved dad, Thozama Mafunda, my forever strong rock mother Thandeka Mafunda, forever informative big brother Lonwabo Mafunda as well as forever inquisitive daughter, Zimi Mafunda. Not forgetting to mention my partner in crime fiance' Tsholofelo Jeannette for the support and encouragement they gave me during this journey.

I also give special thanks to all the students of Vuselela TVET college in Matlosana district as well as two student support officers who took part in the study.

To God almighty my creator for providing me with strength as well as determination to never give up.

“Whatever God has pre-determined to happen, will come to pass. No devil in hell has ever been able to abort the mission of God. Not even once”

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ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at determining the factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district. One hundred and sixty-one (161) respondents were selected from students in two campuses (Klerksdorp and Jouberton) in the Matlosana district who enrolled for business studies and engineering in N6 and Level 4 respectively. There were 58 level 4 students that enrolled for engineering and 55 students were enrolled for business studies. Forty eight Nated N6 students enrolled for business studies. For triangulation purposes, two student support officers of the college also participated in the study from the two campuses. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods of data collection. Respondents for quantitative study were selected through stratified sampling. Qualitative data was obtained through semi-structured interviews. Data collected from the questionnaires were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 18). Data collected through semi-structured interview was analysed thematically.

The Cronbach's test was used to ensure validity and reliability of the study. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of South Africa and Ethics committee and the permission to conduct the study was granted by Vuselela TVET college principal. Students' participation consent was also obtained to conduct research. Findings of the study revealed that factors such as lack of financial support from students' families, lack of parental support and lack of awareness of counselling procedures contribute a lot towards student absenteeism in Vuselela TVET college in Matlosana district. The study further shows that students' attitude and lack of motivation also contributes to the absenteeism in the college. The study recommends that TVET colleges should focus on increasing students' commitment to college in order to reduce student absenteeism. Efforts must be made to ensure that students are aware of the support services rendered by the college. Thus, their attendance level will increase, unwanted behaviours will decrease and academic success will improve. In addition, parental involvement will increase commitment of the students and will play a role in the reduction of absenteeism.

KEYWORDS

- Absenteeism rate
- Semi-structured interviews
- Cronbach's test
- Financial support
- Parental support
- Counselling procedures
- Attitude
- Motivation

DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Absenteeism According to Weideman, Goga & Lopez (2007), absenteeism refers to a situation where a student is not at school for an entire day.

Report 191 It is a group of students who are referred to as Nated students. These students are post matric students that are studying different courses under business studies (Nzimande, 2011).

Memo 46(2) of (2015) Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET, 2015) Policy document to legislate student attendance.

Student Support Officer These are staff members who are dealing with student issues from educational to social issues of students within the college. (Konovalov, Sealey and Munns, 2017).

Technical and Vocation Education and Training

It is a tertiary institution that provides transformative and developmental in addressing unemployment, inequality and poverty (DHET, 2012).

Level 4 students Students who attend TVET college as well as doing Vocational subjects such as Life Orientation, Mathematics and English (Nzimande, 2011).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- **NSFAS** National Student Financial Aid Scheme
- **DHET** Department of Higher Education and Training
- **SSO** Student Support Officers
- **NCV** National Certification Vocational
- **QMS** Quality Measuring System
- **I.T.S SYSTEM** Integrated Tertiary System
- **NDP 2030** National Development Plan 2030
- **TVET** Technical Educational and Training
- **N6** Nated 6

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

According to Paisey and Paisey (2004) and Teasley (2004), absenteeism of students has dominated discourse in both national and international literature. This means that absenteeism does not only affect South African students alone, but also international students. According to Department of Higher Education and Training Government Gazette (DHET 2019), there is a positive correlation between class attendance and both student retention and achievement. This means that if students attend classes, they might be successful in their studies.

The study conducted by (Van der Berg, Taylor, Gustafsson, Spaul & Armstrong, 2011) showed that the highest dropout rate among college students were in Level 2 of the National Certificate. Legislation was instituted and requires TVET colleges to enhance the attendance of their students in order to increase their financial support from the government. In 2002 in terms of FET Act 98 of 1998 the Technical and Vocation Education and Training (TVET) college sector in South Africa was established. Former education minister Kader Asmal presented the annual report on the Department of Education establishing FET colleges from former technical colleges that provided technical and vocational education (DOE, 2001). The Higher Education minister, Blade Nzimande introduced memo 46(2) of (2015) Document from the policy document of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to legislate student attendance. The purpose of the memo 46(2) of (2015) is to monitor the absenteeism of TVET college students. According to the policy document of the Department of Higher Education and Training DHET (2015) memo 46(2) of (2015):4-5 document, when student's attendance is below 80% in one or more sessions within a week or month or in any four-week period, it would constitute for formal absence and requires attention on the part of the student review meeting.

According to former minister Trevor Manuel (19 February 2013), in the Government Gazette, of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, Chapter 9, page 270, educational institutes have a dropout rate of between 13 percent and 25 percent per annum. The former minister further argues that the course of Level 2 of National

Certificate Vocation has the highest absenteeism due to students leaving high schools to go to colleges for the first time where they find freedom of not being monitored constantly, unlike what is done in high schools.

The Department of Higher Education and Training with the Revised Strategic Plan (2015/16-2019/20) explains that student absenteeism is regarded as one of the most important issues to be dealt with.

Teasley (2004) states that absenteeism is defined as the practice of regularly staying away from work or school without a valid reason. The definition above does not distinguish between different categories of absenteeism which are authorised and un-authorised absenteeism. Goga, Lopez, Mayet and Macun (2007) assert that there is a specific difference between these two types of absenteeism. Weideman et al. (2007) further state that authorised absenteeism is absenteeism with a reason from parents/guardian or teacher, while unauthorised absenteeism can be explained as absenteeism that has no reason given from the parents/guardian nor teacher. Teasley (2004:1820) further defines student absenteeism as when students do not attend school for a period of time. This could be due to countless reasons such as lack of finance in the household, student being sick, lack of transport money and lack of motivation to attend class, to mention a few.

Epstein and Sheldon (2002) tell us that students who are normally absent miss the opportunity to learn the material that enables them to succeed later in school life. That is why it is important for the students to be able to attend classes.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The study aimed to describe factors that contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at one of colleges in Matlosana district.

Students' absenteeism dominates discourse in educational institutions. Home, family, school, community and personal characteristics of the students are factors that influence students' absenteeism at a primary level (Etsey, 2005; Withers, 2004). Research has shown that absenteeism is rife among students in primary schools (Mboweni, 2014). This means that absenteeism of students starts at a very low level of education.

Absenteeism is associated with negative effects such as students' poor academic performance and many social problems (Paisey & Paisey, 2004; Teasley, 2004; Schmulian & Coetzee, 2011; Wadesango & Machingambi, 2011). Paisey and Paisey (2004) further stated that attendance in classrooms ensures continuity in the student's learning process and that their attendance is very important to ensure that they will be able to understand what they learn, which eventually leads to better results for them.

There is a noticeable concern about the increasing number of students who become absent in the TVET sector. In my experience as a lecturer in a TVET college for 9 years, I observed students of Nated REPORT 191 (N6 students) and NCV (level 4 students) in Vuselela TVET college in Matlosana district that are absent on a regular basis. Through my observation, I found that mostly the senior students are the ones that have a higher rate of absenteeism rather than junior students. Senior students are Nated N6 students and NCV Level 4 students. The study therefore, attempts to describe factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at Vuselela college in Matlosana district and also come up with recommendations and strategies that could be used to minimise absenteeism and enhance student's attendance at TVET colleges.

Several studies were conducted on factors of absenteeism among university students internationally and locally (Paisey & Paisey, 2004; Teasley, 2004; Schmulian & Coetzee, 2011; Wadesango & Machingambi, 2011). However, there is little research that focuses on factors of absenteeism among TVET college students. This study intends to fill that gap.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors that contribute to students' absenteeism in a selected TVET college within Matlosana District. This study highlights the factors that contribute to students' absenteeism in class and further provides solutions to the research question. According to Sahin, Arseven and Kilic (2016), the aim of a study when it comes to student absenteeism is to develop suggestions for solving absenteeism problems. It also examines the relationship between students' absenteeism and their personal background and attitude towards

schooling. This study aimed to suggest ways of improving student attendance that will also enhance learning experiences of the students.

1.3.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is guided by the following objectives:

- a. To identify the perceived factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district:
- b. To identify the perceived role played by students support officers and the college in decreasing absenteeism among TVET students at Vuselela college in Matlosana district; and
- c. To suggest strategies that can be implemented to improve students' attendance at a college in Matlosana district.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- a. What are the perceived factors that contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district?
- b. What is the perceived role played by students support officers and the college in decreasing absenteeism among TVET students?
- c. What possible strategies could be used to enhance students' attendance at TVET college?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study have significant implications for college principals, lecturers, policy makers and the Department of Education. The findings will be able to shed some light on the factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at Vuselela college in Matlosana district. The findings will also be used to empower heads of department to implement effective strategies to motivate and support students.

This research will provide added value to the previous studies to control absenteeism problems faced at TVET colleges.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

1.6.1 Research methodology

Research methodology or strategy is determined by the nature of the research question and the subject being investigated (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Research methodology focuses on the population of the study, sampling, data collection and data analysis.

1.6.2 Research paradigm

In the research paradigm, the emphasis is on how people differ from each other (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Cohen et al. (2007) further maintain that the social world is only understood from the point of view of individuals that are involved and participating in the investigation. A research paradigm is therefore important for guiding the researcher to conduct the whole research process because all the activities of the researcher are determined by the researcher's understanding of the world. This study is based on a positivistic research paradigm. According to Creswell (2009), positivism is the philosophy of science that information derived from logical and mathematical treatments and reports of sensory experience is the exclusive source of all authoritative knowledge or truth in this derived knowledge.

1.6.3 Research design

The research design is described as a set of guidelines and instructions that must be followed to address the research problem (Babbie & Mouton, 2003:107). Research design is used because it emphasises detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events and their relationships (Yin, 2002). Bryman (1995:69) further states that research design is used in investigation where the researcher has minimum control over events and when the focus is on the present phenomenon within a real-life context, as is the case with student absenteeism. A survey research design was used in this study to describe factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at Vuselela college in Matlosana district.

1.6.4 Research approach

The study followed a qualitative research approach. Maree (2015:145) defines quantitative research as a process that is systematic and objective in its ways of

using numerical data from only selected subgroup of the universe or population to generalise the findings to the universe being studied.

1.6.5 Study setting

The study was conducted in two of the five Vuselela TVET colleges based in the city of Matlosana. There are four other campuses that Vuselela TVET college has, which are based in Taung, Jouberton, Potchefstroom and Stilfontein. The study was conducted at the Matlosana campus.

1.6.6 Population of the study

Population in quantitative research can be explained as a group of people that are involved in the study that is done by the researcher. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:85) state that population is a set of elements that the research focuses on and to which the results obtained should be generalised. Burns and Grove (2009) explain that population refers to the entire set of individuals that meet the sampling criteria. The target population in this study was n=161 final year (exit) students at Vuselela TVET College in Matlosana district. These are (Report 191) N6 and Level 4 senior students. The target population was gathered in Vuselela TVET college of all the students that are doing N6 and Level 4 as exist students.

1.6.7 Sample and sampling techniques

In order to answer the research question, it is doubtful that research should be able to collect data from all cases. Thus, there is a need to select a sample (Taherdoost, 2016). This shows how important the sampling technique is. Stratified sampling methods was used in this study. According to Marshall (1996), stratified sampling is sampling that selects respondents that have similar attributes. This means all the N6 and Level 4 respondents that were selected should have similar characteristics.

1.6.8 Data collection techniques

According to Polit and Hungler (1999:267), data collection is defined as information obtained in a course of study. The study used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. For quantitative data collection, questionnaires were used and semi-structured interviews were used for collection of quantitative data.

1.6.9 Data analysis and interpretation

According to Denscombe (2010), quantitative data are interpreted with statistical analysis, and since statistics are based on the principles of mathematics, the quantitative approach is viewed as scientifically objective and rational. This means that the data collected was categorised, put in rank order or measured in units of measurements. The researcher used statistics from the quality of education offered by lecturers, teaching practices, adapting to new environment by students, lack of motivation and students' attitude, excessive drinking and use of drugs by students, background of students, social and economic problems of students and burnout of students to construct graphs, tables of raw materials, analyse and interpret the data as well as describe the patterns, relationships and connections of the selected respondents. The research tool that was used was the questionnaire which rated the questions from: 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree.

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive data analysis through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The objective is always to gain rich descriptive data that will help the study to understand the participants' construction of knowledge and social reality (Brink, Van der Walt & Van Rensburg, 2012). Data represents the entire sample of a population. Denscombe (2010) emphasises that descriptive statistics help the researcher to summarise their data.

1.7 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

1.7.1 Validity and reliability

According to Heale and Twycross (2015), validity in research is an extent to which a concept is measured in a quantitative study.

Heale and Twycross (2015) further stated that the second measure of quality in a quantitative study is reliability. Reliability can be defined as the consistence of the measure. Consistence is the measure for reliability to work. If the researcher conducts research using a certain instrument, for example, a questionnaire to measure absenteeism, it should give approximately the same results every time the test is conducted on the same variable/s. So basically, the research instrument is consistent and has to have the same results if it is used in the same situation on the same or similar situation. Heale and Twycross (2015) further explain that although it

is not possible to give an exact calculation of reliability, an estimate of reliability can be achieved through different measures such as inter-rater reliability, test-retest reliability, parallel forms reliability and internal consistency reliability.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research needs to adhere to the ethical considerations. The following ethical issues were taken into account in the execution of this study:

- Anonymity.
- Confidentiality.
- Informed consent.
- Caring and Fairness.

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

This dissertation is organised as follows:

Chapter 1. This chapter covered the introduction and the background to the study. It also introduced the issues of student absenteeism.

Chapter 2. This chapter looked thoroughly at the literature on student absenteeism among TVET colleges students.

Chapter 3. This chapter looked at the methodology and methods used in order to investigate the phenomenon of student absenteeism. It also mentioned the data collection technique that was used, which was questionnaires and interviews. Ethical consideration was also mentioned and explained in detail here.

Chapter 4. This chapter dealt with presentation and analyses of the data collected. The way the data was presented was an important factor as well as the interpretation of the data. Statistics were used to conduct graphs, tables of raw materials to analyse and interpret the data as well as describing patterns. The type of analysis that the researcher used was descriptive data analysis as well as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Chapter 5. This final chapter dealt with the summary, discussion and recommendation. Recommendations were made on the topic of student's

absenteeism and how it can be controlled. It also drew conclusions about the phenomenon of the study at hand, which was absenteeism in TVET colleges.

1.10 SUMMARY

Chapter One focused on and the orientation of the study in which the problem statement was defined. This chapter included the rationale for the study which the researcher laid out the purpose of the study. The three objectives of the study were also mentioned. The chapter also stated the research question. Research methodology and design are further mentioned by the researcher. Chapter Two will examine the literature review and the possible factors that might contribute to student absenteeism.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter One discussed the problem statement, rationale and the objective of the study as well as the research questions. It further indicated the research methodology used in the study.

In this chapter, the literature from different scholars is looked at and analysed. Discussions of what absenteeism is as well as the factors that contribute to absenteeism among TVET students is undertaken. Strategies that could be used to improve attendance of students are also looked at and discussed in this chapter.

A literature review, according to Aveyard (2007), is a comprehensive study and interpretation of literature that addresses a specific topic. Webster and Watson (2002) explain a literature review as a review of prior, relevant literature which is an essential feature in any academic project. Kennedy (2006) emphasises that literature derives from systematic and other reviews which authors label as conceptual. It includes defining the boundaries of literature and distinguishing studies from citations. The researcher used a literature review to find and justify the meaning and contribution of this study by focusing on the methods and previous studies.

2.2 WHAT IS ABSENTEEISM?

The definition of absenteeism mentioned above in Chapter One does not distinguish between different categories of absenteeism. Teasley (2004) further defines student absenteeism when students do not attend school for a period of time.

2.2.1 Types of absenteeism

The literature identifies two types of absenteeism. These are authorised and un-authorised absenteeism. Weideman et al. (2007) define authorised absenteeism as being absent with a reason from parents/guardian or teacher while un-authorised absenteeism is absenteeism that has no reason from the parents/guardian nor teacher. Wheatley and Spillane (2001) further describe unauthorised absenteeism as when the student does not attend school without a valid reason and without the knowledge of the educator. Students are supposed to report to class in time to avoid

being absent and be treated as unauthorised absent unless it is due to illness or any personal reasons.

2.3 POSSIBLE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO STUDENT ABSENTEEISM.

These are many factors that affect student achievement directly and indirectly at the TVET colleges. The following factors will be discussed: Quality of education offered by lecturers, teaching practices, students adapting to the environment, lack of motivation and students' attitude, excessive drinking and using drugs, background and social economic problem of students in TVET colleges and students' burnout.

2.3.1 Quality of education offered by lecturers.

There are different definitions of the concept quality by practitioners, academics and authors. Iyamu (2005) defines the quality of education as the main measure of the effectiveness of education and the most vulnerable attribute that suffers when anything goes wrong with the system.

Quality education is said to provide students with tools which helps them to find solutions to the challenges facing mankind (Bonney, Amoah, Micah, Ahiamenyio & Lemaire, 2002). This means that the unfavourable school setting and conditions are the unfavourable teaching practices as well as the lack of quality of education offered. According to the minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande on the 28 August 2014, the South African economy is experiencing shortage of skills, poor quality of education that leads to high student dropout rates (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). The minister stated the objectives of the National Development Plan in relation to TVET colleges. Those objectives are to improve the quality of teaching by lecturers and improve the quality of education in the TVET sector. Fayombo (2012) argues that there are factors that might motivate the student to attend classes and also improve the quality of teaching. These factors that Fayombo (2012) mentions to improve the quality of teaching are: maximising students' learning, knowledge creation and Integration of information communication technology into the institution's programme of activities by the use of videos in the classroom.

2.3.2 Teaching practices

Singh and Yaduvanshi (2015) state that monotonous teaching practice is one important factor or variable that distracts the student's interest from the classroom teaching and consequently absenteeism occurs. This means that students might get bored by a lecturer who uses the same teaching methods over and over again. For example, if a lecturer is using the same strategy of teaching, standing in front of the students and reading from the book without any change or trying other teaching methods such as engaging students in team work and presentations, students can become bored with a monotonous teaching style, as Singh and Yaduvashni (2015) have mentioned. McChlery and Visser (2009) state that the possible teaching practices of South Africa and the United Kingdom could be a factor when it comes to student absenteeism. This comparison was done on undergraduate students from the two countries. McChlery and Visser (2009) further mention that the results of accounting students who are in the third year in both countries show that they had similar traits, and were grouped together. According to the study done by Darling-Hammond (1999), the variables that are recognised to be impacting on teachers' practices are:

- Measures of academic ability. This would refer to how academically inclined is the lecturer who is teaching the students, as well as qualifications of the lecturer.
- Years of education. How long has the lecturer been in the teaching sector and teaching the subject that they are offering.
- Measures of subject matter and teaching knowledge. How much does the lecturer know about the subject they are teaching.
- Teaching behaviours in the classroom. What strategies does a lecturer use when teaching students? For example, role plays, assimilations, formal assessments etc.

According to the study done by Balkis, Arslan and Duru (2016), the findings revealed that students' absenteeism was caused by the teachers and their practices. This means that the teaching style of the lecturer can lead students to be absent from college or schools. Two particular authors, Adiguzel and Karadas (2013), argue that students' attitude towards teachers and their teaching practices contribute towards absenteeism in schools. Adiguzel and Karadas (2013) further state that students with

a high level of absenteeism reported a negative attitude towards school due to teaching practices. This means that those students who become absent in classes a lot, do not like school due to how lecturers or teachers are teaching them. This shows the importance of teaching practices by the lecturer.

2.3.3 Students adapting to the new environment.

Khamis, Yaakub, Shaari, Zailani and Yusoff (2002) stated that there are problems that generate weak adaptation for students. Khamis et al. (2002) also mentioned these problems as academic problems, health problems, financial problems, social and personal problems. The word “adapt” comes from the Latin word *apere*. Students need to be comfortable and feel at home when in school campuses. It should be pointed out that a change of a new environment for students can either be positive or negative. They are now expected to live independently and be responsible for their own day-to-day activities such as feeding themselves, washing their clothes and also be responsible for their own learning.

2.3.4 Lack of motivation and students’ attitude.

2.3.4.1 Motivation

The term motivation means any and all disciplines of life that is a driving factor in whether one will be successful or not (Ormrod, 2008). Usher and Kober (2012) state that motivation is a challenge that can be addressed from different angles by scholarly journals, newspaper and reports. This means that there could be different views when it comes to motivation. Hartnett (2020) argues that motivation can be a feeling of satisfaction and success when engaged in meaningful learning. Hartnett (2020) further states that student motivation and engagement are closely related elements of students’ learning that can have an impact on learning outcomes. It is clear that boredom reduces academic motivation and attention. Guay, Chanal, Ratelle, Marsh, Larose and Boivin (2010) explain motivation as the reasons underlying behaviour. This means that there must be underlying factors that push an individual to behave. Broussard and Garrison (2004) have us believe that motivation is the attribute that moves us to do, or not to do something.

Gokyer (2012) emphasises that poor attitude and lack of motivation for learning is the key factor that enhances student absenteeism in higher education. Students need to be kept motivated in order to attend classes. Motivation can be internal or external.

Motivation can come from within one's self or from an outside factor. An example of external motivation is good marks, seeing other students going to class, and the reality of finishing their courses. Vaughn, Maynard, Salas-Wright, Perron and Abdon (2014) explain this as well when he states that students with low educational goals and those who repeat one or more grades are likely to become chronically absent. This clearly shows how important motivation is. Lack of motivation can make a student not come to class, or even have poor grades, which leads to absenteeism of the student. Schwatz, Radcliffe and Barakat (2009) stated that non-motivated students lead to being absent.

2.3.4.2 Attitude

Attitude towards schooling indicates a positive or negative predisposition towards schooling and every activity in the school environment, which could be cognitive, emotional or behavioural (Bernstein, Penner, Clarke-Stewart & Roy, 2008). This describes that any attitude, whether positive or negative towards schooling can influence any activity that is done in school. Attwood and Croll (2006) also support the theory that students' negative attitude to teachers is related to school absenteeism. This means the attitude of students about the lecturer can cause the student be absent from school. This overwhelming factor can cause unsettlement in a student's attitude behaviour. Gokyer (2012), Paisey and Paisey (2004) argue that attitude and motivation for learning are the key factors in student absenteeism, which was debated between these scholars. Therefore, attitudes of students as well as how motivated learners are is something important to be looked at when it comes to student absenteeism. To add to the facts researched by Adiguzel and Karadas (2013), negative attitudes towards school are also the causes of absenteeism. The study conducted by Pehlivan (2006) showed that absenteeism at colleges is motivated by being bored at school, dislike of lessons that are taught, and the influence of friends as well as lack of expectations when it comes to education.

A positive attitude towards attendance of school regularly leads to higher academic achievement compared to students who have a negative attitude towards attendance, which leads to high absenteeism (Klem & Connell, 2004).

Boredom is another factor associated with motivation and attitude. According to La Marca and Longo (2017), when students have a perception that learning is

meaningless or not connected with their goals and interests, it leads to boredom in class. Motivation and attitude need to be dealt with by the lecturer by creating a favourable environment for the students as well as engaging them in the learning process. This favourable environment can be created when the lecturer involves the students in learning and makes them take charge of their own learning. Students then would develop self-regulated learning, which means that the students would set their own objectives and goals in order to learn.

Students' behaviour that is negative is motivated by their attitudes. This is a serious factor when it comes to absenteeism. Smink and Reiner (2005) further state that students that have absenteeism often engage in behaviours that are high risk, which leads to them being jailed. Social problems can mean students getting arrested during the weekend due to many reasons. A student can miss up to a month of school work as they can be incarcerated, waiting for their court appearance. This would impact on the performances of students and can cause failure, absenteeism as well as the dropping out of students

2.3.5 Excessive drinking and using drugs

Teasley (2004) argues that another most common variable among students' absenteeism is excessive drinking and using drugs during some days of the week. This in turn affects the students' performances and many of them become absent and eventually drop out of college. Borawski, Levers-Landis, Lovegreen and Trapl (2003) provided evidence from the study conducted of the sample of 23 schools and 926 students through questionnaires. It revealed that parental involvement is important in reducing the use of drugs by their children and in turn make them attend school more regularly. Toumbourou (2009) emphasises that the drinking habits of some students are also formed before their university or college years and when peer influences in schools become very strong. Some students already have a drinking or drug problem before they even enter colleges and universities. Toumbourou (2009) also states that the drinking and drug problem is formed by influence from the student's peers.

There has been research done by Flaherty, Sutphen and Ely (2012) on the effect of truancy on substance abuse in truant youths and their caregivers. There was also a study in Sweden by the Investigation and statistics office in 2000 on high school

students with regard to alcohol consumption. In 2021 it found that 88 percent of the students surveyed showed that they had consumed alcohol at least once during the 12 months, while 74 per cent were reported having at least six or more standard drinks in one sitting at least once during that year. These statistics emphasise the point that alcohol is a factor with students in schools. Sundbom (2003) clarifies this in two recent studies he conducted that 95 per cent of Swedish university students aged 18-25 years consume alcohol. Bullock (2004) stated that 34 percent of university students under the age of 20 years binge drank at least twice a month. This variable could be the course of absenteeism in tertiary institutes.

2.3.6 The background and social economic problems of students in TVET colleges.

Students' background could be a variable that hinders attendance and confidence of students in class. According to Moon, Kim and Parrish, (2020), lack of parental involvement could lead to truancy. This suggests that a student may have no interest or drive to attend class due to no parent being involved in their learning. Ingul (2012) confirms that socio-economic status of the family is a factor to a student's absenteeism as well. This is supported by Casoli-Reardon (2012), who states that students may have responsibilities at home and they live in an extremely stressful home environment. In other words, some students have responsibilities to take care of family and even leave school so that they could go and work. This is emphasised by Hunt (2007:28) when he states that poor background of some students develops a negative attitude towards school, either because the family needs the student to work and contribute to the family financially, or because education is not seen as important by some parents to increase economic status. Furthermore, Balkis, Arslan and Duru (2016) argue that there is a direct and indirect relationship between student, school absenteeism, personal factors, family factors and academic achievement in the structural equation model. This emphasises the importance of a study in absenteeism as well as the impact of students' background has on students.

The study conducted by Ingul (2012) showed that students from low level socio-economic backgrounds tend to be more absent from school than students from a high socio-economic level. Other student background variables that contribute to absenteeism are family income, education and occupation. Stressful family events

such as death, divorce and major illness can also be a major predictor of chronic absenteeism by students (Vaughn et al., 2014).

Balfanz and Byrnes (2012) emphasise that even older students may be absent or chronically absent because they are needed to watch younger siblings, or because they must earn money to help support the family. According to Orazem, King, Schultz and Strauss (2001), it has been argued that school absenteeism and attendance is a better indicator of exposure of children to schooling than the school enrolment, particularly in developing countries like Bangladesh and India with a high incidence of child labour. This is either because of work, or of taking care of grandparents. Having said that, the issue of students who come from single parents and broken families also plays a role in student absenteeism and how well a student attends class. A study done by the Sichuan Information Technology College in Guangyuan, China, to investigate the impact of absenteeism in students that are from single parents compare them to students where both father and mother are present. A total of 496 students was researched, including 114 students of single parents and 382 students with perfect families. The results showed that students from single parent families are more likely to be absent from school than students with both parents available. The single parent group scored 29.82% whereas students with a father and mother present group scored 47.38%. This clearly shows that students' background with single parents have a more difficult socio-economic status compared to students with both father and mother present. This is therefore a contributor towards absenteeism for students with single parents.

Sirin (2005) finds that social and economic problems are also the cause of student absenteeism in schools. Socio-economic status is the single best predictor of academic achievement (Sirin, 2005). Social background of students has a big influence when it comes to academic achievement as well as absenteeism of students in colleges. Students who are geographically indisposed from the college can have a problem with absenteeism as well. This inaccessibility may be due to distance, unreliable transportation, and lack of a safe route to school (Vaughn, et al., 2014 & Goodman, 2014). Vaughn et al. (2014) further state that students who live in communities with high availability of unskilled jobs that do not require formal schooling, particularly those communities with low compulsory education requirements are more likely to be absent.

Due to the different socio-economic status of students as some students are from poor backgrounds and parents are not working, the minister of Basic Education in 2004 introduced the National School Nutrition Programme circular 29/2004 on the April 1, 2004, which commenced on the 19th of the same month in 2004, after it was transferred from the Department of Health on April 1, 2004. The National School Nutrition Programme is aimed to assist poor students by offering food during schools at break times to make it conducive for students to learn. This plan was designed to minimise student absenteeism due to not having anything to eat during the day. Students who are from low socio-economic and poor backgrounds would have a chance to eat at school during the day. This idea was to be implemented at a higher education level, although due to lack of funds it has then been placed on hold. Many children that are from low socio-economic backgrounds face more trials and negative circumstances than those of their middle and high socio-economic counterparts (Milne & Plourde, 2006).

2.3.7 Student burnout

According to the study done by Wickramasinghe, Dissanayake and Abeywardena (2018) on child and adolescent psychiatry and mental health, the evidence pertaining to student burnout in a South Asian context reveals that the prevalence of burnout among undergraduate and post graduate students substantially varies from 10.2 to 52 %. Burnout can be caused by various factors such as social life of students at night, over studying and not having time to rest as a student, and family lifestyle of taking care of sickly parents or grandparents. These various factors result in burnouts of students as they would come to class tired from their social life, over studying and not having time to rest due to taking care of parents or grandparents.

2.4 STRATEGIES THAT COULD BE USED TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS.

A strategy is a plan, some sort of consciously intended course of action, a guideline to deal with a situation (Mintzberg, 2000). This means strategy is a plan that is put forward to achieve a certain objective. Balfanz and Byrnes' (2012) have proposed different strategies to improve attendance of students.

2.4.1 Balfanz and Byrnes' strategies to improve students' attendance.

1. Students to start early: This means that students should start at an early age to learn to avoid absenteeism so that it becomes easier when the student gets to tertiary level of education.
2. Involve families and the community: Districts should engage families and the community with affective communication and support as some students are from disadvantaged backgrounds.
3. Create mentorship programmes: Assigning an older person or member of the community to be a "monitor" and build trust between students and families. The member of the community or older person to report the progress of the student to the parents.
4. Use of incentives: Incentive programmes to be applied. The students would be getting incentives upon being present at school for a period of time.
5. Attendance data: Collecting students' attendance data so that it can be interpreted. By doing this, it gives the researcher data to properly classify, collect and interpret the attendance.

2.4.2 Policy

Policy makers in most countries, including South Africa, regard TVET colleges as the major contributor to economic growth (Yao, Wang, Yang, Mo, Chu, Loyalka & Rozelle, 2015). However, this may be difficult to achieve if the problem of absenteeism of students is not taken as a priority.

TVET colleges in South Africa have policy documents that were compiled, released and introduced for the purpose of attendance and punctuality of students (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2019). Furthermore, one policy document in attendance and punctuality states that if a student is absent unauthorised, this could lead to NSFAS payment being stopped where applicable for the rest of the term/trimester. This speaks to students that are using NSFAS to pay for their studies. The policy emphasises the fact that students should know their own attendance levels and regularly review and report their attendance, which must be part of the student monitoring process.

Another document from the policy document of Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) presented by the minister Blade Nzimande was the document of memo 46(2) of (2015):4-5 to control student absenteeism. The aim of this document was to monitor the absenteeism of TVET college students. Memo 46 is one of the policies that was passed to reduce absenteeism among students. This policy (memo 46) states that a student needs to attend at least 80% of his/her classes in order for her/him to be able to qualify and write the final exam. The student also needs to get a minimum pass of 50% in order to write the examination. This procedure would make TVET students responsible enough to come to classes and not be absent. It is clear that these policies are set to curb absenteeism in TVET colleges as no student wants to be excluded from NSFAS benefits.

Even though the government had implemented the feeding scheme in basic education, the problem is that it has not been implemented in higher education, which is where some of the work and concentration is needed from the government. This has become a problem that lecturers, student support officers, and sometimes community members would provide tuck money and sometimes food to assist students from poor backgrounds. There are foundations that are run by individuals in the community of Matlosana municipality to assist with the funding for schooling of disadvantaged students. One of the foundations in the Matlosana district is Thabo Palesane Foundation. This foundation focuses on the wellbeing of the youth that attends school by providing school shoes as well as school fees for those students that cannot pay their school fees so that students can go to school. The policy document from National Development Plan 2030 Chapter 9 launched on the 15 August 2013 by the then minister in the presidency, Trevor Manuel, regards these as the main factors that can reduce poverty and inequality that exist in society, which in turn can reduce student absenteeism in schools. This includes helping a child who is willing to go to school but has no means to do so. An abstract from the policy document of National Development Plan 2030, Chapter 9, on the topic of improving education, training and innovation, states that education, training and innovation are central to South Africa's long-term development. The framework anticipates that by 2030, the school system should have students that are highly motivated and prepared to attend classes regularly. Principals and campus managers are expected to provide leadership in both curriculum and administration and should be

accountable. In addition, parents should be involved in the education of students. It emphasises the poverty that is mentioned in this study. The policy framework's plan (2030) from the Department of Higher Education also stipulates how the community should come together with the parents and educators to assist students with education. It further states that by 2030, the school system should be characterised by students and teachers who are highly motivated. The policy framework also states that principals should be effective managers who provide administrative and curriculum leadership. Schools are accountable to parents. Furthermore, committed and professional teachers should have good knowledge of the subjects they teach.

2.4.3 Creating conducive learning environment

Singh and Yaduvanshi (2015) stated that it is a duty of a lecturer to create a conducive learning environment for students so that they take an interest in classroom learning. This means that the lecturer must make the classroom student friendly and students must be part of the lesson by participating and taking charge where necessary to make learning interesting. Singh and Yaduvanshi (2015) further state that lecturers must use a constructivist approach of teaching-learning at every level of school education to make classroom learning more interesting and lead to student/child centred learning. A constructivist approach of learning means that students are actively involved in their own learning as opposed to just receiving information. This would reduce absenteeism of students in colleges and schools. Singh and Yaduvanshi (2015) further mention that there are some remedial measures that can be done by lecturers that can prevent absenteeism of students, such as providing incentives or rewards for punctuality. The reward or incentive method would encourage students to participate more in the classroom as well.

Another strategy that can be used to curb absenteeism is lecturers or educators applying a flipped classroom teaching mode. Toto and Nguyen (2009) argue that a flipped learning system changes and transforms education and training. Tucker (2012) explains that the flipped classroom approach is accepted as the most popular and active based approach. This means that students would be trying to solve the task alone at home so that in the classroom it becomes easier to solve with the lecturer. It helps the student to be able to watch teaching videos, exercise before class and practice after class. Rose and Martin (2012) state that when using a flipped

classroom technique, students are effectively educating each other and that means they are in control of their learning. This strategy can minimise absenteeism in TVET colleges as stated above, which gives the student the control of their own learning.

The lecturer can play an important role in reducing boredom and developing student self-regulated learning. This means that lecturers would have to provide a learning strategy that would make students learn on their own so that they do not get bored. According to Barnard-Brak, Paton and Lan (2020), students who are self-regulated in their learning appear to achieve more positive academic outcomes than individuals who do not exhibit self-regulated learning behaviours. The first step to develop student self-regulated learning is introducing project-based learning (PBL) for students, which can help students with learning problems. This means students should take responsibility for their learning process by setting goals, reflecting, monitoring and sustaining their motivation. According to Hung, Hwang and Haung (2012), project-based learning (PBL) conflicts with the habits of being familiar to classroom experience that the students have developed over the years. Bembenutty, Cleary and Kitsantas (2013) state that students who are unable to self-regulate learning or motivate themselves to learn, often have learning difficulties and low motivation. Therefore, it is important for students to be able to motivate themselves to learn.

2.4.4 Student Support Officers (SSO).

Konovalov, Sealey and Munns (2017) state that programmes which describe Student Support Officers were developed by Australian universities, where Student Support Officers play an important role in retention of students that do not attend regularly in class. Wilmer (2008) argues that students who enter colleges need student support services that will support them on their journey to achieve their academic success. TVET colleges in South Africa have the structure in place to deal with motivation of students that are demotivated and constantly absent from lecturers. There are Student Support Officers (SSO) who deal with students' social and academic issues to help find a solution when it comes to absenteeism of students.

2.5 SUMMARY

Chapter Two focused on and discussed the literature review in which possible factors that contribute to student absenteeism and strategies could be used to improve attendance of students. It also included the lack of motivation by students as well as attitudes that the student has when it comes to education. The chapter also discussed how lecturers can create a conducive learning environment for the students. Chapter Three will examine the research methodology and design of the research.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Two, discussions of what absenteeism is, as well as the factors and variables that contribute towards absenteeism, were explained. It also covered strategies that could be used to improve attendance of students in order to minimise absenteeism.

This chapter explores the research methodology under the following headings: research paradigm; research design; research approach; population of the study; data collection techniques; data analysis and interpretation.

3.1.1 Research methodology

Research methodology or strategy is determined by the nature of the research questions and the subject that is being investigated (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Research methodology focuses on the population of the study, sampling, data collection and data analysis.

3.1.2 Research paradigm

A research paradigm is a set of fundamental assumptions and beliefs on how the world is perceived, which then serves as a thinking framework that guides the behaviour of the researcher (Wahyuni, 2012:69). The research paradigm influences and informs the researcher's decision in terms of research questions and research methodology (Morgan, 2007:49). This study is based on a positivist research paradigm. A positivist research paradigm regards human behaviour as passive and controlled by external environment. A positivist paradigm is objective in nature. According to Creswell (2009), positivism is the philosophy of science according to which information derived from logical and mathematical treatments and reports of sensory experience is the exclusive source of all authoritative knowledge.

3.1.3 Research design

According to Creswell (2009:21), there are eight different research designs used by researchers, namely: experimental, correlational, survey, grounded theory,

ethnographic, narrative research, mixed method and action research. These research design types give in-depth coverage to the researcher. A survey research design was used in this study to describe factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at Vuselela college in Matlosana district. According to Maxwell (2013), the value, or benefit added by the survey research design, provides a strategy to be used by the researcher to set up the research questions through the discussing of data. This means that the designing of the research is important and also needed to set a strategy of how questions would be asked.

3.1.4 Research approach

This study was based on a quantitative research. According to Denscombe (2010), a quantitative approach has a scientific objective because the results can be interpreted using statistical analyses.

3.1.5 Population of the study

A group of students from different classes from a population of 161 students within Vuselela TVET College in Matlosana district were involved in filling in a questionnaire. TVET colleges have only two student support officers (SSOs) in each campus. The study used these two student support officers (SSOs) as part of the population of the study. The reason of selecting the two student support officers (SSOs) is because they work directly with students. One of the SSOs is responsible for students' academic issues while the other one focuses on students' personal and general issues.

3.1.6 Sample and sampling techniques

Purposive sampling was used to select the SSOs as both have the same purpose in their tasks. Respondents for quantitative study were selected through stratified sampling. The SSOs selected were the two SSOs of the college. Purpose sampling is also known as judgemental, selective or subjective sampling. According to Bernard (2002), purpose sampling is especially exemplified through the key information technique wherein one or a few individuals are solicited to act as guides to a culture. Purposive sampling focuses on specific characteristics of a selected population that

is of the same interest, which enabled the respondent to best answer the research question. The two campuses were selected due to the fact that they both fall under Matlosana district. They both have N6 and Level 4 students.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

In order to answer the main research question which is, what are the factors that contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at one of the colleges in Matlosana district, data on the views and perceptions of students and students support officers (SSOs) about absenteeism was needed. The study used two data collection methods. Data was gathered by means of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The method of questionnaires was used on students whereas the method of interviews was used on student support officers (SSOs). The reason to use interviews of SSOs is that they are only two of them in a college. The use of multiple methods gives the researcher an opportunity to compare the responses and data collected, hence producing accurate, reliable and valid data. The sources provided the researcher with an opportunity to examine the phenomenon of absenteeism among TVET college students. In addition, these sources are seen as having in-depth knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study as they are final year students and have been in the college for some time. The SSOs would contribute as a source of data as they deal with students' issues daily.

3.2.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is defined by McMillan and Schumacher (2001) as a printed self-report form designed to elicit information that can be obtained through responses from the subjects. According to Lobiondo-Wood and Haber (2004), the questionnaire aims to gather data from a widely scattered sample. The researcher designed a set of questions that was answered by all respondents. By selecting the questionnaire instrument to collect data from the Level 4 and N6 students, the researcher is given insight into how student absenteeism is perceived by students. Respondents were given an opportunity to give a personal perspective or account of the phenomenon or to express their feelings about the topic. Therefore, those students should give more information on the causes of absenteeism of the students in the college, where. N6 and Level 4 students are considered seniors. The questionnaire contained 41 questions that respondents needed to answer. A 5 Likert scale was used for

respondents to select an answer. The Likert scale has options that start from: 1 for strongly agree to 5 for strongly disagree. The questionnaire comprises eight sections, namely, personal information, quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices, adapting to new environment by students, lack of motivation and students' attitude, excessive drinking and using drugs, background of students, social and economic problems of students and burnout.

3.2.1.1 Questionnaire administration

One hundred and sixty-one (161) questionnaires were distributed and given to level 4 and N6 students of Vuselela TVET college. The time limit for filling the questionnaire was estimated at 10-15 minutes. The questionnaire was written in English. The researcher was available to address and clarify any questions. This gave the researcher an indication of how many respondents responded to the questions asked in the study. The questionnaires were coded on return for data entry. This means that the questionnaires were numbered when returned to the researcher for the purpose of entering data.

The stats below show how the questionnaires were administered by the researcher: 29.8% (n=48) of N6 students were given the questionnaires and all of them returned them while 70.2% (n=113) of level 4 students were given the questionnaires and also returned all of them. This gives the total of 100% (n=161) of students that took part in the study and also returned the questionnaires.

Questionnaires administered and returned per N6 and L4 programme

Vuselela TVET College	Questionnaires Administered	Returned	Percentage Returned
Report 191 N6	48	48	29.8%
Level 4	113	113	70.2%
Total	161	161	100%

3.2.2 Interviews

The study used interviews for collecting qualitative data. According to Cohen (2007:29), an interview is a method that is valuable to explore the construction and negotiation of meanings in a setting that is natural for both the interviewer and interviewee. Berg (2009) also explains that the importance of interviewing does not only build a holistic snapshot, analyse words and reports detailed views of respondents, but it also gives the respondents the platform to speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings. There are three types of interviews that a researcher can use in data collection: structured interview, semi structured interview, and un-structured interview. The researcher used the semi-structured interview in this study. The reason of selecting a semi-structured interview is because it provides the respondents with open ended questions as well as close ended questions. McMillan and Schumacher (2011) contended that a semi-structured interview uses open response questions to obtain data from participants' meaning on how they view their world and how they make sense of it. This means that the student support officers responded to the interview with one-word answers and in full sentences as well as expressing their views when answering the questions asked. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to probe for clarity on the responses given by the respondents. Therefore, the questions were pre-determined questions that the respondents answered.

Interviews were used in this study to collect data from student support officers (SSOs). An interview represents one of the most effective ways to collect data in research because it provides the researcher with opportunities for accurate data and useful information (Warren, 2002). The process that the researcher engaged in when conducting the interview was explained to the two SSOs and the reason why they have been asked to participate in the interview. The purpose of the study, which is to identify factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college, was explained to the SSOs as the reason of conducting the interviews. The process of interviews was conducted in each SSO's office where there was no external barrier that could disturb the interview process. The SSOs were then given forms to sign which gave them consent to participate, which explains that the respondents are engaging in the study voluntarily. The researcher explained to the respondents that they would be voice-recorded during the interview. The credibility of

the results were used by the researcher by asking the participants to read the transcribed data to ensure that it captured what they wanted to say. Participants could even change their statements if they felt they were not happy with the information provided and triangulation.

3.3 RELIABILITY TESTING

Babbie and Mouton (2003) explain that reliability testing is whether a particular technique that was applied repeatedly to the same object would show the same results every time. This means that no matter how many times the researcher applies the testing to the object, the results would show the same information. It has to be appreciated that there are several statistical indexes that may be used to measure internal consistency. Examples include the Average Inter-Item correlation, Average Item Total Correlation, Split-Half Reliability, and the Cronbach's alpha (Wells & Wollack, 2003:4). For the purposes of this study, the Cronbach's alpha was adopted as the measure of internal consistency for the measurement scale. According to Wells and Wollack (2003:4), the Cronbach alpha provides a measure of the extent to which the items on a measurement scale or test provide consistent information. Cronbach's alpha is often considered a measure of item homogeneity, that is, large alpha values indicate that the items are tapping into a common domain. The scale in Cronbach's reliability test ranges from 0 to 1. Scores that are close to 1 indicate that the instrument has a high reliability, while scores close to 0 indicate that the reliability of the instrument is very low (Wells & Wollack, 2003:4). Most researchers require a reliability of at least 0.7 before they can use the instrument. In this study, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20.0) was used to test the reliability of the measuring instrument. Cronbach's Alpha score in this study was 0.682, which is an acceptable score as recommended by Wells and Wollack (2003:4). This shows that it is closer to score 1 than score 0.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

As the research is quantitative, the type of analysis that was used is descriptive data analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive data is data that has been summarised that represents the entire sample of a population. Descriptive analysis deals with analysing datasets. It does not aim at coming up with the right recommendation or solving a particular problem.

Denscombe (2010) emphasised that descriptive statistics assist the researcher to summarise their data. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse quantitative data. Descriptive statistics are explained as the techniques that assisted to mention the characteristics or appearance of sample data (Zikmund, 2013:54). Frequency tables and the mean score ranking technique are the major descriptive statistics employed in this study.

Frequency distributions are used to depict absolute and relative magnitudes, differences, proportions and trends (Zikmund, 2013). These methods use both horizontal and vertical bars to examine different elements of a given variable (Malhotra, & Lumineau, 2011). The use of frequency distributions facilitated the assessment of age, marital status, educational status, employment status, source of income, etc.

Qualitative data was collected by using semi-interviews. The participants interviewed were the two student support officers of Vuselela TVET college in Matlosana district. The reason of selecting these two student support officers was that they handle students' affairs on a day-to-day as well as handle students' problems in a one-on-one basis. Both interviews took approximately 30 minutes to conduct. They were recorded and transcribed. The transcribed data was then classified and put according to themes and analysed using coding to describe elements identified from the text. Thematic analysis was used by the researcher to analyse the data collected from the interviews. Themes and sub-themes were formed as a result of the transcribed data collected. Both participants were able to give responses from their own experiences and personal views. The researcher used verbatim quotes that are written in italics from the responses of both student support officers to demonstrate how the findings and interpretations arose from the data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), there are six most common steps to conduct thematic analysis. These six steps were used in this study to analyse and interpret the data collected from both participants.

The following six steps are Braun and Clarke's (2006) process used to conduct thematic analysis:

- Familiarisation.
- Coding.

- Generating themes.
- Reviewing themes.
- Defining and naming themes.
- Writing up.

Familiarisation: This is reading and re-reading the data to become immersed and familiar with its content.

Coding: This is pithy labelling or coding that is used to identify the important features of the data that is relevant to the research question. The whole dataset should be coded, then all the codes and relevant data should be collected together for later analyses.

Generating themes: Examining the codes and collected data to identify patterns of meaning. Then the data is collated relevant to each candidate theme.

Reviewing themes: This is checking the candidates' themes against the dataset to determine that they are telling a convincing story of the data. Themes are typically refined, which sometimes involves them being split, combined or discarded.

Defining and naming themes: This is developing a detailed analysis of each of the themes. It is also determining the story of informative names for each theme that is decided.

Writing up: This is putting together the analytic narrative of each extract done and contextualising the analysis in relation to existing literature.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

Ethical consideration in this study focuses on informed consent to conduct the study and maintaining anonymity, confidentiality, caring and fairness in order to meet the required ethical code of conduct. Van Zyl (2011) explains that the researcher needs to remember that he is dealing with human beings who are serving as participants in the research. The following ethical issues were taken into account in the execution of this study.

- Anonymity.
- Confidentiality.

- Informed consent.
- Caring and Fairness.

3.5.1 Anonymity

Anonymity means removing the name of respondent during data collection process is a standard setting for the researcher. The researcher would have to ask the respondents if the information given by them can be disclosed or not.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), a participant may be considered anonymous when the research cannot identify a given response with a given participant. Wiles, Crow, Heath and Charles (2008) emphasise that making data anonymous means removing the contributor's name. However, you would often need to take more than this basic step to protect a respondent's identity. This means the researcher would have to ask the respondent (students, lecturers and student support officers) if they want to remain anonymous when conducting a questionnaire about the absenteeism of students. By doing this, the researcher would be protecting the respondent's identity.

3.5.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality here means privacy to protect the data collected from respondents that were selected to do the study. Brink (2006) further elaborates that privacy and confidentiality made with the respondents were maintained throughout the study. This means that the data that was gathered from students, lecturers and student support by means of questionnaires was confident, respected and protected. The respondents were informed beforehand of the data collection that took place. They were told how and where that data that was collected will be stored. According to Babbie (2001), confidentiality implies that only the researcher should be aware of the identity of participants.

3.5.3 Informed consent

The researcher should have consent of the recording. The consent can also be given in writing. Consent gives the researcher the right to ask the respondents questions related to the study that the researcher is doing.

3.5.4 Caring and Fairness

Fairness when gathering data must be used and be part of the ethical consideration. The questions that were asked in the questionnaire were able to be answered by every respondent who was given the questionnaire. The researcher did not ask questions that might or could make the respondent uncomfortable to answer. As much as caring is mentioned when gathering data, the researcher drew the line and was not emotionally involved in the study or with the respondents. McMillan and Schumacher (2011) state that caring and fairness must play a part in the researcher's thinking, actions and personal morality.

3.6 SUMMARY

Chapter Three focused on stating the study's purpose. It included a description of methodology used in conducting the study, research design, population of the study, sample of the students and student support officers (SSOs) as well as information about the sampling process, data collection technique, data analyses and interpretation. Chapter four includes the results of the data analyses and data interpretation.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed all structural and fundamental methodological components relevant to the present study of student absenteeism in Vuselela TVET college. It explored this research methodology under the following headings: research paradigm; research approach; research design; data collection techniques; population of the study; data analysis and interpretation.

This current chapter focuses on the presentation and interpretation of data collected from the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews to describe factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district.

The chapter begins by discussing the framework that was used for analysing and interpreting quantitative data before describing the characteristics of the research respondents. The subsequent sections focus on analysis of variance also used to the existence of the relationships between each of the factors and demographical information. Most of the results in this chapter are presented either through a tabular arrangement or in a diagrammatic format to describe factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district.

Qualitative data was obtained from the interviews with student support officers. Two student support officers were required to respond to five questions. The research findings were discussed and guided by the purpose of the study and research questions. Confidentiality of participants was explained, although the participants chose to identify themselves during the interviews. In this study, data presentation and analysis, comments and statements by participants are quoted verbatim to illustrate and emphasise the themes and categories. Interviews with the participants were recorded and transcribed. Transcribed data was then arranged according to themes and analysed and classified by using coding to describe the elements.

4.2 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Research questions that were mentioned in Chapter One:

- a. What are the perceived factors that contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district?
- b. What is the perceived role played by students support officers and the college in decreasing absenteeism among TVET students?
- c. What possible strategies could be used to enhance students' attendance at TVET college?

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS to analyse qualitative data? After the questionnaires were returned, they were screened. This procedure was followed by capturing the data on a Microsoft Excel computer package. The Excel document was then imported into the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26 where it was coded in preparation for data analysis. The data analysis involved several rigorous statistical tests such as reliability tests, a normality test and analysis of variance. A comprehensive diagrammatic representation of the research path adopted for data analysis in the current study is also made in the next section. Frequency distributions such as percentages, graphs, line charts, pie charts, histograms and bar charts were utilised to display research findings.

4.3 DEMOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS.

A demographical profile of the respondents provides basic facts about individuals, such as their age, gender, educational level. Section A of the questionnaire elicited information pertaining to the demographic characteristics of respondents. The section addressed the following attributes pertaining to the respondents:

Age of the respondents;

Gender;

Name of campus enrolled;

Current level;

Each of these characteristics will now be discussed.

4.3.1 Age distribution of participants

The participants were required to indicate their ages in order to establish whether age had any impact in the factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district. Age in the study showed that the majority of respondents were between 19 years to 25 years of age. This means that the majority of exit students in Vuselela TVET college are junior adults that have left the teenage stage.

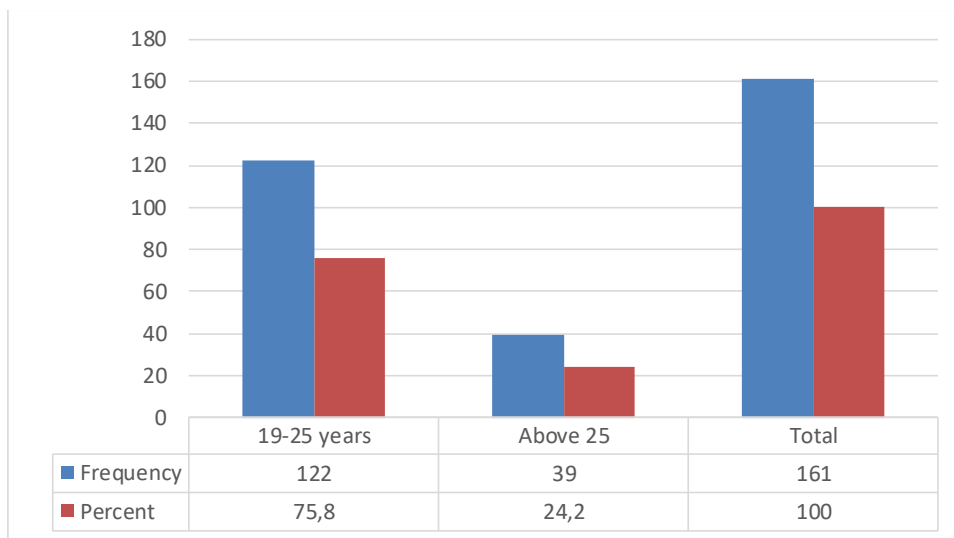


Figure 4.1: Age distribution of participants

Figure:1. Indicates that the majority 76 % which is 122.36 of (n= 161) of the participants were between ages 19 to 25 while 24%, which is 38.46 of respondents are above 25 years of age.

4.3.2 Gender of the respondents

It was necessary to determine the gender of the respondents in order to enable the researcher to make their biographical inferences. The information of their gender is depicted in Figure 2.

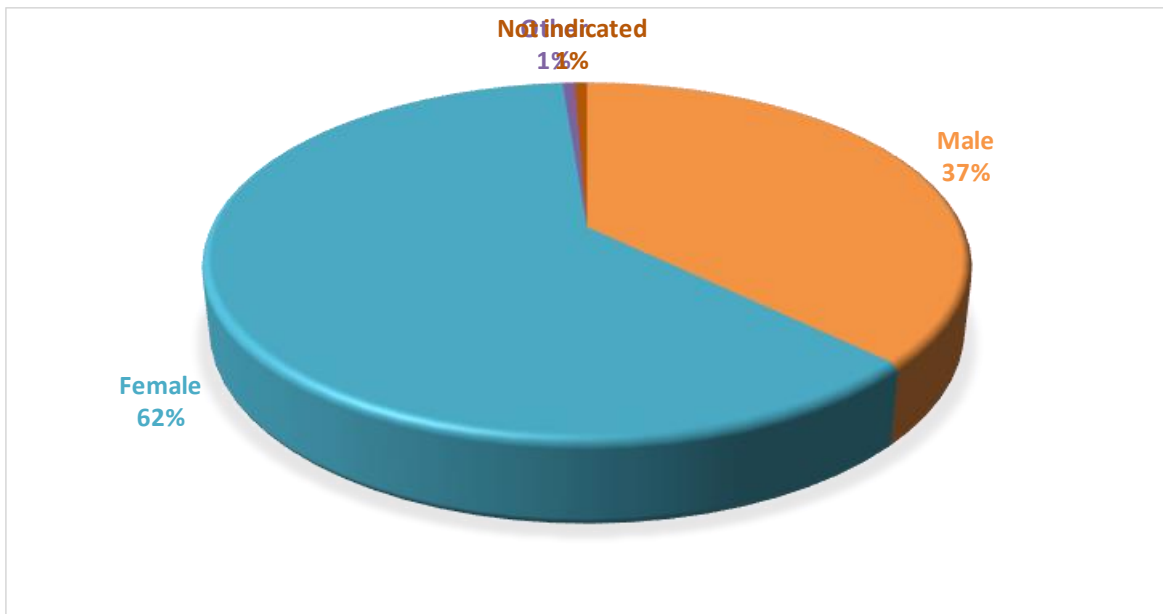


Figure 4.2: Gender of respondents (n=161)

Figure 2 shows that the female respondents constitute 62% (n=99.82) of the respondents, and dominate their male counterparts, who constitute the remaining 37% (n=59.57). These results indicate that the majority of respondents in this study are females. However, 1% (n=1.61) didn't indicate their gender. This could mean that there are more females that passed from the previous year, or more females studying than their male counterparts.

4.3.3 Campus of your college

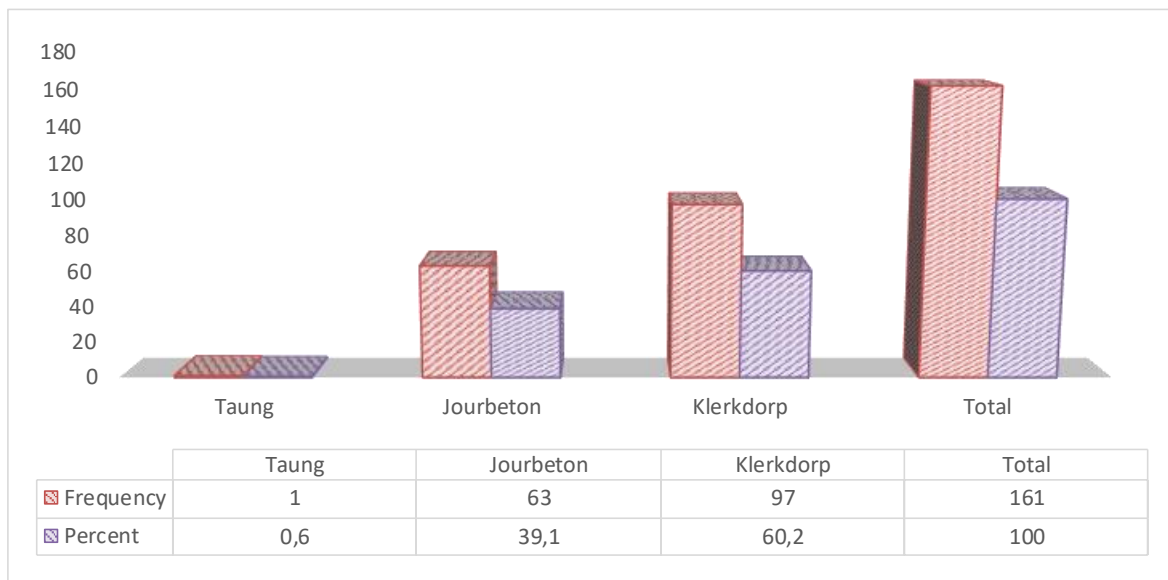


Figure 4.3: Campus location

Within the questionnaire given to the respondents, they had to specify which campus they belong to within the Matlosana district. The data showed that 60.2% (n=97) of respondents are from Klerksdorp campus. 39.1% (n=63) comes from Jouberton campus. Some respondents from either Klerksdorp or Jouberton campus selected Taung campus in error and it showed a 0.6% (n=1). This means that there are more exit students from Klerksdorp campus that answered the questions than Jouberton campus. This also could mean that there are more level 4 and N6 students in Klerksdorp campus than in Jouberton campus that participated on the study.

4.3.4 Current level

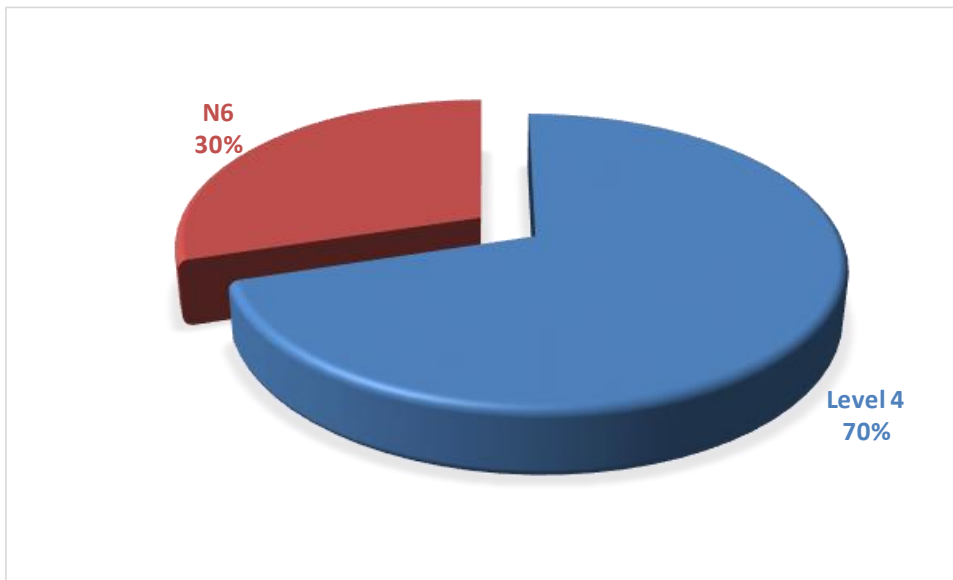


Figure 4.4: Current level

Respondents that took part in the study were exit students who are Level 4 and N6 students. These respondents have been in the college for quite some time as they are seniors so they would be familiar with the reasons that contribute to absenteeism in the college. The study showed that 70.2% (n=113) of the respondents were Level 4 students where as 29.8% (n=48) were N6 students of Vuselela TVET college in Matlosana district that participated in the study.

4.4 RELIABILITY TESTING

Cronbach's alpha test proved to be both appropriate and handy as it provided a summary of inter-correlations that existed among the items on factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district. The values that are high in Cronbach Alpha below do not mean that the measure is one dimensional. These values are presented below in Table 1.

Table 4.1: Internal consistency reliability values of scales

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Quality of education offered by lectures and teaching practices	0.504	7

Adapting to new environment by students	0.123	3
Lack of motivation and students' attitude	0.155	6
Excessive drinking and using drugs	0.275	4
The background of students in TVET College	0.587	8
Social and economic problem of students	0.402	5
Burnout	0.400	4
Overall	0.682	37

From the results provided in Table 1, the Cronbach's Alpha value for each research concepts range from 0.504, 0.123, 0.155, 0.275, 0.587, 0.402 to 0.400 and therefore they are below the acceptable value of 0.7; however, overall, Cronbach's Alpha is 0.682 that is an acceptable mark as recommended by Wells and Wollack (2003). Furthermore, the value of the average inter-item correlation is greater than the minimum acceptable value of 0.3.

4.5 SUMMARY STATISTICS OF ALL VARIABLES

Section B of the questionnaire dealt with the objectives of the study to describe factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students. Respondents were required to answer questions regarding their views and understanding on the factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district. Questions in this section were elicited to determine the construct of this study, namely:

- quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices (Items- B5-B11);
- adapting to new environment by students (Items- C12-C14);
- lack of motivation and students' attitude (Items- D15-D20);
- excessive drinking and using drugs (Items- E21-E24);
- the background of students in TVET College (Items-F25-F32);
- social and economic problem of students (Items-G33-G37); and
- burnout (items H38-H41).

The tables below are a statistical summary of the responses. Descriptive statistics, namely percentages, were used to analyse the data of statistical summary of the respondents. In the information presented in tabular form, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and

5 represent strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree respectively. The frequencies are presented both numerically and as percentages for all 37 items were placed in a rank order.

4.5.1 Quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices.

From the quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices, seven (7) questions were asked. The table and figure below illustrates the descriptive statistics of the responses. In the information presented in tabular form, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 represent strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree and strongly agree respectively. The frequencies are presented both numerically and percentages for all 5 items were placed in a rank order.

Summary statistics

Respondents were required to answer questions regarding their views on the quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices. Table 2 below shows the summary statistics in percentages (%) of the responses to items of quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices.

Table 4.2: Summary responses to items on Quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices (n=161)

Item no.	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Do not know	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
B5	Lecturers in my college have poor quality of teaching.	24% (n=39)	34% (n=55)	9% (n=14)	22% (n=35)	11% (n=18)	100%
B6	The low quality of tuition in the college makes me absent.	38% (n=61)	34% (n=55)	15% (n=24)	7% (n=11)	6% (n=10)	100%
B7	Some lecturers have minimum knowledge of the subject.	17% (n=27)	19% (n=31)	17% (n=27)	30% (n=48)	17% (n=27)	100%
B8	I have a positive attitude towards some lecturers.	14% (n=23)	7% (n=11)	5% (n=8)	31% (n=50)	43% (n=69)	100%

Item no.	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Do not know	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
B9	Lecturers are not qualified to teach in TVET colleges.	37% (n=60)	27% (n=43)	26% (n=42)	6% (n=10)	4% (n=6)	100%
B10	Lecturers do not vary their teaching methods.	15% (n=24)	29% (n=47)	19% (n=31)	27% (n=43)	10% (n=16)	100%
B11	Lecturers in my college makes learning exciting?	11% (n=18)	19% (n=31)	8% (n=13)	38% (n=61)	24% (n=38)	100%

Table 2 shows the findings of seven statements related to quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices. Analysis of the responses from question B5 to B11 are as follows:

Lecturers in my college have poor quality of teaching

Table 2 above, B5 (Lecturers in my college have poor quality of teaching), shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that the lecturers in my college have poor quality of teaching. This is supported by a majority of 34% (n=39) disagreeing, plus 24% (n=39) strongly agreeing with the statement. The other 9% (n=14) of the respondents are neutral, 22% (n=35) agree and 11% (n=18) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by lecturers in my college that have poor quality of teaching.

The low quality of tuition in the college makes me absent

Table 2 above, B6 (The low quality of tuition in the college makes me absent), shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that the low quality of tuition in the college makes me absent. This is supported by a convincing majority of 38% (n=61) strongly disagreeing, plus 34% (n=55) agreeing with the statement. The other 15% (n=24) of the respondents are neutral, 7% (n=11) agree and 6% (n=10) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the most sampled students is

of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by low quality of tuition in the college.

Some lecturers have minimum knowledge of the subject

Table 2 above, B7 (Some lecturers have minimum knowledge of the subject), shows that the majority of respondents agreed that some lecturers have minimum knowledge of the subject. This is supported by a convincing majority of 30% (n=48) agreeing, plus 17% (n=27) strongly agreeing with the statement. The other 17% (n=27) of the respondents are neutral, 19% (n=31) disagree and 17% (n=27) strongly disagree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is caused by some lecturers that have minimum knowledge of the subject.

A positive attitude towards some lecturers.

Table 2 above, B8 (I have a positive attitude towards some lecturers), shows that the majority of respondents agreed that students have a positive attitude towards some lecturers. This is supported by a 31% (n=50) agreeing plus 43% (n=69) strongly agreeing with the statement. The other 5% (n=8) of the respondents are neutral, 7% (n=11) disagree and 14% (n=23) strongly disagree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is caused by student's positive attitude towards some lecturers.

Lecturers are not qualified to teach in TVET colleges.

Table 2 above, B9 (Lecturers are not qualified to teach in TVET colleges), shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that the lecturers are not qualified to teach in TVET colleges. This is supported by a convincing majority of 37% (n= 60) strongly disagreeing, plus 27% (n=43) disagreeing with the statement. The other 26% (n=42) of the respondents are neutral, 6% (n=10) agree and 4% (n=6) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by lecturers who are not qualified to teach in TVET colleges.

Lecturers do not vary their teaching methods

Table 2 above, B10 (Lecturers do not vary their teaching methods), shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that the lecturers do not vary their teaching methods. This is supported by a convincing majority of 29% (n=47) disagreeing, plus 15% (n=24) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 19% (n=31) of the respondents are neutral, 27% (n=43) agree and 10% (n=16) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by lecturers that do not vary their teaching methods.

Lecturers in my college make learning exciting

Table 2 above, B11 (Lecturers in my college make learning exciting), shows that the majority of respondents agreed that the lecturers in their college make learning exciting. This is supported by a convincing majority of 38% (n=61) agreeing plus 24% (n=38) strongly agreeing with the statement. The other 8% (n=13) of the respondents are neutral, 19% (n=31) disagree and 11% (n=18) strongly disagree with the statement. From this response that came from the stats above, the majority of the sampled population is of the opinion that the lecturers in their TVET college make learning exciting.

4.5.2 Adapting to new environment by students.

On adapting to the new environment by students, three (3) questions were asked. The table and figure below illustrate descriptive statistics of the responses. In the information presented in tabular form, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 represent strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree and strongly agree respectively. The frequencies are presented both numerically and percentages for all five items were placed in a rank order.

Summary statistics

Respondents were required to answer questions regarding their views on adapting to a new environment by students. Table 3 below shows the summary statistics in percentages (%) of the responses to items of adapting to new environment by students.

Table 4.3: Summary responses to items on Adapting to new environment by students. (n=161)

Item no.	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Do not know	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
C12	I find it stressful when I change environment.	14% (n=23)	30% (n=48)	9% (n=14)	24% (n=39)	23% (n=37)	100%
C13	I get support from the SSO's to help with adjusting to new environment.	32% (n=52)	20% (n=32)	11% (n=17)	23% (n=37)	14% (n=23)	100%
C14	I get support from lecturers to help with adjusting to new environment.	23% (n=37)	21% (n=34)	8% (n=13)	35% (n=56)	13% (n=21)	100%

Table 3 shows the finding of three statements related to adapting to a new environment by students. Analysis of the responses from question C12 to C14 are as follows:

I find it stressful when I change environment.

In Table 3 above, C12 (I find it stressful when I change environment) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that they find it stressful when changing environment. This is supported by a convincing majority of 30% (n=48) disagreeing, plus 14% (n=23) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 9% (n=14) of the respondents are neutral, 24% (n=39) agree and 23% (n=37) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is caused by students finding it stressful when they have to change environment.

I get support from the SSOs to help with adjusting to new environment.

In Table 3 above, C13 (I get support from the SSO's to help with adjusting to new environment) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that they get support from the SSOs to help with adjusting to new environment. This is supported by a convincing majority of 20% (n=32) disagreeing, plus 32% (n=52) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 11% (n=17) of the respondents are neutral, 23% (n=37) agree and 14% (n=23) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the majority of absenteeism among TVET students is due to SSOs not helping to support students to adjusting to new environment.

I get support from lecturers to help with adjusting to new environment.

In Table 3 above, C14 (I get support from lecturers to help with adjusting to new environment.) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that they get support from the lecturers to help with adjusting to a new environment. This is supported by a convincing majority of 21% (n=34) disagreeing, plus 23% (n=37) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 8% (n=13) of the respondents are neutral, 35% (n=56) agree and 13% (n=21) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the majority of the sampled population is of the opinion that TVET students in Matlosana district get support from lecturers to help them adjust to new environment.

4.5.3 Lack of motivation and students' attitude.

On lack of motivation and students' attitude, six (6) questions were asked. The table and figure below illustrate descriptive statistics of the responses. In the information presented in tabular form, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 represent strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree and strongly agree respectively. The frequencies are presented both numerically and percentages for all five items were placed in rank order.

Summary statistics

Respondents were required to answer questions regarding their views on lack of motivation and students' attitude. Table 4 below shows the summary statistics in

percentages (%) of the responses to items of lack of motivation and students' attitude.

Table 4.4: Summary responses to items on lack of motivation and students' attitude.

Item No.	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Do not know	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
D15	I feel motivated to attend class.	6% (n=10)	9% (n=14)	6% (n=10)	37% (n=59)	42% (n=68)	100%
D16	I feel bored when i am at the college.	47% (n=76)	31% (n=50)	4% (n=6)	11% (n=18)	7% (n=11)	100%
D17	I feel I am doing well academically.	2% (n=3)	7% (n=11)	6% (n=10)	44% (n=71)	41% (n=66)	100%
D18	I feel the course I took is relevant to my career.	2% (n=3)	6% (n=10)	10% (n=16)	17% (n=27)	65% (n=105)	100%
D19	College must put motivation programme in place for me to be motivated.	3% (n=5)	6% (n=10)	12% (n=19)	31% (n=50)	48% (n=77)	100%
D20	I only come to class to sign an attendance register only.	69% (n=111)	20% (n=32)	2% (n=3)	5% (n=8)	4% (n=7)	100%

Table 4 shows the finding of six statements related to lack of motivation and students' attitude. Analysis of the responses from question D15 to D20 are as follows:

I feel motivated to attend class.

In Table 4 above, D15 (I feel motivated to attend class) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that they feel motivated to attend class. This is supported by a convincing majority of 9% (n=14) disagreeing, plus 6% (n=10) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 6% (n=10) of the respondents are neutral, 37% (n=59) agree and 42% (n=68) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from

this response that the majority of the sampled population is of the opinion that they feel motivated to attend classes in Vuselela TVET college. This could not be the reason for students being absent.

I feel bored when I am at the college.

In Table 4 above, D16 (I feel motivated to attend class) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that they feel bored when they are in the college. This is supported by a convincing majority of 31% (n=50) disagreeing, plus 47% (n=76) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 4% (n=6) of the respondents are neutral, 11% (n=18) agree and 7% (n=11) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by respondents feeling bored when they are at the college.

I feel I am doing well academically.

In Table 4 above, D17 (I feel I am doing well academically) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that they feel they are doing well academically. This is supported by a convincing majority of 7% (n=11) disagreeing, plus 2% (n=3) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 6% (n=10) of the respondents are neutral, 44% (n=71) agree and 41% (n=66) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the majority of the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by respondents doing well academically.

I feel the course I took is relevant to my career.

In Table 4 above, D18 (I feel the course I took is relevant to my career) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that they feel the course they took is relevant to their careers. This is supported by a convincing majority of 6% (n=10) disagreeing, plus 2% (n=3) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 10% (n=16) of the respondents are neutral, 17% (n=27) agree and 65% (n=105) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the majority of the sampled population is of the opinion that absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by courses relevant to their careers.

College must put motivation programme in place for them to be motivated.

In Table 4 above, D19 (College must put a motivation programme in place for them to be motivated) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that the college must put a motivation programme in place for them to be motivated. This is supported by a convincing majority of 6% (n=10) disagreeing plus 3% (n=5) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 12% (n=19) of the respondents are neutral, 31% (n=50) agree and 48% (n=77) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the majority of the sampled population is of the opinion that they feel that the college must put a motivation programme in place for them to be motivated. This could be a positive impact towards students' being motivated to decrease absenteeism.

I only come to class to sign an attendance register only.

In Table 4 above, D20 (I only come to class to sign an attendance register only) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that they only come to class to sign an attendance register. This is supported by a convincing majority of 20% (n=32) disagreeing, plus 69% (n=111) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 2% (n=3) of the respondents are neutral, 5% (n=8) agree and 4% (n=7) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by respondents feeling that they only come to class to sign an attendance register only.

4.5.4 Excessive drinking and using drugs.

On excessive drinking and using drugs, four (4) questions were asked. The table and figure below illustrate descriptive statistics of the responses. In the information presented in tabular form, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 represent strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree and strongly agree respectively. The frequencies are presented both numerically and percentages for all five (5) items were placed in rank order.

Summary statistics

Respondents were required to answer questions regarding their views on excessive drinking and using drugs. Table 5 below shows the summary statistics in percentages (%) of the responses to items of excessive drinking and using drugs.

Table 4.5: Summary responses to items on excessive drinking and using drugs (n=161)

Item no.	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Do not know	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
E21	When I drink during the week, I do not come to school the next day.	71% (n=114)	16% (n=26)	4% (n=6)	5% (n=9)	4% (n=6)	100%
E22	I started to drink before i came to the college.	61% (n=98)	11% (n=18)	1% (n=2)	15% (n=24)	12% (n=19)	100%
E23	I sometimes become absent in college due to drinking of alcohol.	77% (n=124)	16% (n=26)	2% (n=3)	3% (n=5)	2% (n=3)	100%
E24	I am aware of the counselling procedure that my college has if I become absent.	27% (n=43)	17% (n=27)	24% (n=39)	21% (n=34)	11% (n=18)	100%

Table 5 shows the findings of four statements related to excessive drinking and using drugs. Analysis of the responses from question E21 to E24 are as follows:

When I drink during the week, I do not come to school the next day.

In Table 5 above, E21 (When I drink during the week, I do not come to school the next) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that when they drink during

the week, they do not come to school the next day. This is supported by a convincing majority of 16% (n=26) disagreeing plus 71% (n=114) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 4% (n=6) of the respondents are neutral, 5% (n=9) agree and 4% (n=6) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students drinking during the week, and so they do not come to school the next day.

I started to drink before I came to the college.

In Table 5 above, E22 (I started to drink before I came to the college) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that they started to drink before they came to the college. This is supported by a convincing majority of 11% (n=18) disagreeing, plus 61% (n=98) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 1% (n=2) of the respondents are neutral, 15% (n=24) agree and 12% (n=19) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students who started to drink before they came to the college.

I sometimes become absent in college due to drinking alcohol.

In Table 5 above, E23 (I sometimes become absent in college due to drinking of alcohol) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that they become absent in college due to drinking alcohol. This is supported by a convincing majority of 16% (n=26) disagreeing, plus 77% (n=124) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 2% (n=3) of the respondents are neutral, 3% (n=5) agree and 2% (n=3) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students who sometimes become absent in college due to drinking of alcohol.

I am aware of the counselling procedure that my college has if I become absent.

In Table 5 above, E24 (I am aware of the counselling procedure that my college has if I become absent) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that they are aware of the counselling procedure that the college has if they are absent. This is

supported by a convincing majority of 17% (n=27) disagreeing plus 27% (n=43) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 24% (n=39) of the respondents are neutral, 21% (n=34) agree and 11% (n= 18) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the majority of the sampled population is of the opinion that the students are not aware of the counselling procedure that the college has if they become absent. This could lead to absenteeism of students if they are not aware of the counselling procedure provided by the college.

4.5.5 The background of students in TVET College.

To the perceived reasons for absenteeism among students in TVET college, eight (8) questions were asked. The table and figure below illustrate descriptive statistics of the responses. In the information presented in tabular form, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 represent strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree and strongly agree respectively. The frequencies are presented both numerically and percentages for all five (5) items were placed in a rank order.

Summary statistics

Respondents were required to answer questions regarding their views on the background of students in TVET college. Table 6 below shows the summary statistics in percentages (%) of the responses to items of background of students in TVET college.

Table 4.6: Summary responses to items on background of students in TVET college (n=161)

Item no.	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Do not know	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
F25	Lack of transport money is one of the reasons that makes me to stay away from college.	24% (n=39)	16% (n=26)	4% (n=6)	21% (n=34)	35% (n=56)	100%
F26	My parents are not involved in my	50% (n=81)	26% (n=42)	4% (n=6)	12% (n=19)	8% (n=13)	100%

Item no.	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Do not know	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
	learning.						
F27	My guardian is involved in my learning.	14% (n=23)	11% (n=17)	6% (n=10)	33% (n=53)	36% (n=58)	100%
F28	I have home responsibilities that I attend to that is why I become absent in class.	37% (n=59)	29% (n=47)	6% (n=10)	16% (n=26)	12% (n=19)	100%
F29	My family not having income contributes to me being absent in class.	31% (n=49)	21% (n=34)	6% (n=10)	21% (n=34)	21% (n=34)	100%
F30	My parents do not understand the importance of me being in school all the time.	56% (n=90)	26% (n=42)	4% (n=6)	8% (n=13)	6% (n=10)	100%
F31	Death of a family member has made me miss class.	37% (n=60)	29% (n=47)	5% (n=8)	20% (n=32)	9% (n=14)	100%
F32	Divorce of a parent has made me miss class before.	53% (n=85)	25% (n=41)	10% (n=16)	5% (n=8)	7% (n=11)	100%

Table 6 shows the findings of eight statements related to the background of students in TVET college. Analysis of the responses from question F25 to F32 are as follows:

Lack of transport money is one of the reasons that makes me to stay away from college.

In Table 6 above, F25 (Lack of transport money is one of the reasons that makes me to stay away from college) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that the lack of transport money is one of the reasons that makes them to stay away from college. This is supported by a convincing majority of 16% (n=26) disagreeing, plus 24% (n=39) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 4% (n=6) of the respondents are neutral, 21% (n=34) agree and 35% (n=56) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is caused by lack of transport money as one of the reasons that makes them to stay away from college.

My parents are not involved in my learning.

In Table 6 above, F26 (My parents are not involved in my learning) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that the parents are not involved in my learning. This is supported by a convincing majority of 26% (n=42) disagreeing, plus 50% (n=81) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 4% (n=6) of the respondents are neutral, 12% (n=19) agree and 8% (n=13) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by parents who are not involved in their learning.

My guardian is involved in my learning.

In Table 6 above, F27 (My guardian is involved in my learning) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that their guardians are involved in their learning. This is supported by a convincing majority of 11% (n=17) disagreeing plus 14% (n=23) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 6% (n=10) of the respondents are neutral, 33% (n=53) agree and 36% (n=58) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the majority of sampled population is of the opinion that the students' guardians are involved in their learning in Vuselela TVET college so this could not be the reason for students to be absent in college.

I have home responsibilities that I attend to that is why I become absent in class.

In Table 6 above, F28 (I have home responsibilities that I attend to that is why I become absent in class) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that they have home responsibilities that they attend to that is why they become absent in class. This is supported by a convincing majority of 29% (n=47) disagreeing, plus 37% (n=59) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 6% (n=10) of the respondents are neutral, 16% (n=26) agree and 12% (n=19) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students having home responsibilities that they attend to that is why they become absent in class.

My family not having income contributes to me being absent in class.

In Table 6 above, F29 (My family not having income contributes to me being absent in class) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that their families not having income contributes to them being absent in class. This is supported by a convincing majority of 21% (n=34) disagreeing, plus 31% (n=49) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 6% (n=10) of the respondents are neutral, 21% (n=34) agree and 21% (n=34) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students' families not having income that contributes to them being absent in class.

My parents do not understand the importance of me being in school all the time.

In Table 6 above, F30 (My parents do not understand the importance of me being in school all the time) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that their parents do not understand the importance of them being in school all the time. This is supported by a convincing majority of 26% (n=42) disagreeing, plus 56% (n=90) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 4% (n=6) of the respondents are neutral, 8% (n=13) agree and 6% (n=10) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that

the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students' parents who do not understand the importance of them being in school all the time.

Death of a family member has made me miss class.

In Table 6 above, F31 (Death of a family member has made me miss class) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that death of a family member has made them miss class. This is supported by a convincing majority of 29% (n=47) disagreeing plus 37% (n=60) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 5% (n=8) of the respondents are neutral, 20% (n=32) agree and 9% (n=14) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by death of a family member of a student that has made them miss class.

Divorce of a parent has made me miss class before.

In Table 6 above, F32 (Divorce of a parent has made me miss class before) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that divorce of a parent has made them miss class before. This is supported by a convincing majority of 25% (n=41) disagreeing, plus 53% (n=85) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 10% (n=16) of the respondents are neutral, 5% (n=8) agree and 7% (n=11) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by divorce of a parent that has made students miss class before.

4.5.6 Social and economic problem of students.

On social and economic problems of students, five (5) questions were asked. The table and figure below illustrate descriptive statistics of the responses. In the information presented in tabular form, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 represent strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree and strongly agree respectively. The frequencies are presented both numerically and percentages for all five (5) items were placed in rank order.

Summary statistics

Respondents were required to answer questions regarding their views on social and economic problems of students. Table 7 below shows the summary statistics in percentages (%) of the responses to items of social and economic problem of students.

Table 4.7: Summary responses to items on Social and economic problem of students (n=161)

Item no.	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Do not know	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
G33	I sometimes do not attend class due to staying far from the college.	32% (n=51)	30% (n=48)	3% (n=5)	21% (n=34)	14% (n=23)	100%
G34	I have been in court while attending college.	63% (n=101)	27% (n=44)	3% (n=5)	3% (n=5)	4% (n=6)	100%
G35	Sometimes I do not attend class due to engaging myself in high-risk behaviour.	59% (n=95)	27% (n=43)	3% (n=5)	8% (n=13)	3% (n=5)	100%
G36	I am happy with the transport system to and from the college every day.	26% (n=42)	14% (n=23)	9% (n=14)	30% (n=48)	21% (n=34)	100%
G37	My poor family background makes it difficult to attend class at times.	42% (n=68)	25% (n=40)	3% (n=5)	17% (n=27)	13% (n=21)	100%

Table 7 shows the finding of five statements related to the social and economic problems of students. Analysis of the responses from question G33 to G37 are as follows:

I sometimes do not attend class due to staying far from the college.

In Table 7 above, G33 (I sometimes do not attend class due to staying far from the college) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that sometimes they do not attend class due to staying far from the college. This is supported by a convincing majority of 30% (n=48) disagreeing, plus 32% (n=51) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 3% (n=5) of the respondents are neutral, 21% (n=34) agree and 14% (n=23) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students sometimes not attending class due to staying far from the college.

I have been in court while attending college.

In Table 7 above, G34 (I have been in court while attending college) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that students have been in court while attending college. This is supported by a convincing majority of 30% (n=48) disagreeing, plus 32% (n=51) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 3% (n=5) of the respondents are neutral, 21% (n=34) agree and 14% (n=23) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students who have been in court while attending college.

Sometimes I do not attend class due to engaging myself in high-risk behaviour.

In Table 7 above, G35 (sometimes I do not attend class due to engaging myself in high-risk behaviour) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that students have been in court while attending college. This is supported by a convincing majority of 59% (n=95) disagreeing, plus 27% (n=43) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 3% (n=5) of the respondents are neutral, 8% (n=13) agree and 3% (n=5) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET

students is not caused by students who sometimes do not attend class due to engaging themselves in high-risk behaviour.

I am happy with the transport system to and from the college every day.

In Table 7 above, G36 (I am happy with the transport system to and from the college every day) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that students are happy with the transport system to and from the college every day. This is supported by a convincing majority of 14% (n=23) disagreeing, plus 26% (n=42) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 9% (n=14) of the respondents are neutral, 30% (n=48) agree and 21% (n=34) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the majority of the sampled population is of the opinion that the students are happy with the transport system to and from the college every day, so this could not be the reason for the majority of students being absent in college.

My poor family background makes it difficult to attend class at times.

In Table 7 above, G37 (My poor family background makes it difficult to attend class at times) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that students are happy with the transport system to and from the college every day. This is supported by a convincing majority of 25% (n=40) disagreeing, plus 42% (n=68) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 3% (n=5) of the respondents are neutral, 17% (n=27) agree and 13% (n=21) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students whose poor family background makes it difficult for them to attend class at times.

4.5.7 Student burnout

On burnout of students, four (4) questions were asked. The table and figure below illustrate descriptive statistics of the responses. In the information presented in tabular form, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 represent strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree and strongly agree respectively. The frequencies are presented both numerically and percentages for all five items were placed in rank order.

Summary statistics

Respondents were required to answer questions regarding their views on burnout of students. Table 8 below shows the summary statistics in percentages (%) of the responses to items of burnout of students.

Table 4.8: Summary responses to items on burnout of students (n=161)

Item no.	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Do not know	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
H38	I sometimes don't attend class due to being burned out.	37% (n=60)	25% (n=40)	6% (n=10)	25% (n=40)	7% (n=11)	100%
H39	When I study sometimes I get burn-out.	20% (n=32)	22% (n=36)	5% (n=8)	35% (n=56)	18% (n=29)	100%
H40	When I am burned out, I don't attend class.	35% (n=56)	31% (n=50)	4% (n=6)	21% (n=34)	9% (n=15)	100%
H41	Student support officers help to avoid burnout.	36% (n=58)	15% (n=24)	17% (n=27)	19% (n=31)	13% (n=21)	100%

Table 8 shows the finding of five statements related to the burnout of students. Analysis of the responses from question H38 to H41 are as follows:

I sometimes don't attend class due to being burned out.

In Table 8 above, H38 (I sometimes don't attend class due to being burned out) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that students sometimes don't attend class due to being burned out. This is supported by a convincing majority of 25% (n=40) disagreeing, plus 37% (n=60) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 6% (n=10) of the respondents are neutral, 25% (n=40) agree and 7% (n=11) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students sometimes not attending class due to being burned out.

When I study sometimes I get burn-out.

In Table 8 above, H39 (When I study sometimes I get burn-out) shows that the majority of respondents agreed that students when they study sometimes get burn-out. This is supported by a convincing majority of 22% (n=26) disagreeing, plus 20% (n=32) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 5% (n=8) of the respondents are neutral, 35% (n=56) agree and 18% (n=29) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is caused by students sometimes getting burn-out when they study.

When I am burned out, I don't attend class.

In Table 8 above, H40 (When I am burned out, I don't attend class) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that when they are burned out they don't attend class. This is supported by a convincing majority of 31% (n=50) disagreeing, plus 35% (n=56) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 4% (n=6) of the respondents are neutral, 21% (n=34) agree and 9% (n=15) strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the sampled population is of the opinion that the absenteeism among TVET students is not caused by students not attending classes when they are burned out.

Student support officers help to avoid burnout.

In Table 8 above, H41 (students support officers help to avoid burnout) shows that the majority of respondents disagreed that when students are burned out, they don't attend class. This is supported by a convincing majority of 15% (n=24) disagreeing, plus 36% (n=58) strongly disagreeing with the statement. The other 17% (n=27) of the respondents are neutral, 19% (n=31) agree and 13% (n=21) (strongly agree with the statement. One could deduce from this response that the majority sampled population is of the opinion that the student support officers do not help them to avoid burnout. This could be the reason that leads the majority of students to be absent in college.

4.6 ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTED THROUGH INTERVIEWS.

Raw information that was obtained from two interviews was processed using qualitative data analysis. The categorising of data done by the researcher makes it possible for the findings to be discussed. The method that was used to analyse this qualitative data was thematic analysis. This means the themes and sub-themes were formed from the transcribed data. Both participants were able to give responses from their own experiences and personal views. The researcher used verbatim quotes that are written in italics from the responses of both student support officers to demonstrate how the findings and interpretations arose from the data.

Table 4.9: Themes, categories and code names from SSOs' collected data

Main theme	Sub-themes
Student problems	Personal problems Financial support Parent's support
Support by SSO and college	Counselling services
Funding	NSFAS
QMS Policy and procedures	Referral letter QMS policy

Table 9. above shows the different themes and sub-themes that was merged in the study. The table also shows the code names that were collected from the data of the student support officers. Their responses were grouped into four main themes. Stating themes and their sub-themes represent major findings of the study and are discussed in detail, as shown in the next section.

4.7 STUDENTS PROBLEMS

4.7.1 Personal problems

Both student support officers indicated that personal problems the students experience affect students when it comes to absenteeism. The results from the interviews revealed that personal problems of students do exist. From the data

collected from both participants, this could mean that personal problems would need to be curbed. To support the above information, participants had these comments to make:

SSO 1:

Students experience personal problems because students are unemployed. So some of them don't have money for transport.

SSO 2:

We advise students to avoid peer pressure.

According to one SSO, unemployment of students is one of the factors contributing to student absenteeism. The other SSO mentioned peer pressure as a factor towards absenteeism of students. This would mean that students need some support when it comes to unemployment and peer pressure.

4.7.2 Financial support

Family is important to everyone, including the students. It is even more important if the family has finances to pay for students' education. The two participants mentioned factors of family and finances when it comes to the students. For clarity, the researcher asked if financial dependence was needed and if lack of money was an issue. Participants answered that yes, it was an issue.

SSO 1:

It's lack of money from the families or from the students that's making them to be absent all the time. So some of them don't have money for transport. So it can be financial problems.

SSO 2:

The family or the parents are not working.

It's lack of money from the families of the students. Yes, some issues are there and its finances.

The support that we give to the student is to advise them to apply for NSFAS in time, and then I conduct counselling sessions in my office and then the other thing we make sure that they attend at least 80% to qualify for NSFAS.

NSFAS is expecting the colleges to report on absenteeism every month. So they are going to take away their allowances and then the students will not be allowed to write the final exam.

It is clear that financial and family problems experienced by students led to an absenteeism problem. Both participants mentioned lack of money from the students and lack of money from the family being a factor in absenteeism of students. This could mean that lack of money for school from the family leads to students being absent in college. The issue of a student being the head of the family was also brought up by one participant, who stated that it is the reason why students would be absent in college.

The participants mentioned NSFAS as one of the factors that they use to support the students when it comes to curbing student absenteeism. Both participants stated that NSFAS has to be applied for by the students in order for them to be funded. This could mean that applying for funding is a pre-requisite for students in the college. This also means that if the students do not attend classes up to 80% of the time, they would lose the NSFAS bursary, which could lead to students not being able to come to college and attend classes.

4.7.3 Parents' support

The support of parents in the schooling of their children is very important. This is expressed by the student support officers of the Matlosana campus during their interview. According to the student support officers, lack of parental support is one of the factors that contributes to absenteeism.

SSO 1:

The parents are not hands on their children's education. Parents can be hands on like they are in the basic education system. Then we would be able to deal with students' absenteeism.

SSO 2:

Students are heading the family while the parents are not working.

The student support officers have identified parents as one of the contributors to the absenteeism of the students due to parents not offering support to students and not being involved in the education of the students. This might mean that parents need to be advised on the importance of being involved in the education of their children.

4.8 SUPPORT BY SSO AND COLLEGE

4.8.1 Counselling services

Counselling is important for each student. Students need to have support of counselling on a regular basis to minimise factors such as absenteeism. It is the duty of both student support officers to assist students with their issues relating to education. They are required to provide the support as well as counselling at times to the students. The college has to play a role as well by providing support and counselling to the students. One participant stated that basic counselling would be conducted and if the problem of absenteeism persisted, based on what they have found out from the basic counselling, referral of the student would be the next step. This is what the participants said about counselling. According to the (DHET) White Paper, 2013, guidance and counselling must be included in the component of Post-School Education and Training System.

SSO 1:

The kind of support that we do if it's personal problems we do what we call basic counselling and then if the problem needs professionals, then we refer students to Tshepong hospital where there are social workers and psychologists.

SSO 2:

Advise students to avoid peer pressure because some student's friends are not good.

I conduct counselling on my office.

The first participants stated that they do counselling and if the issues are too big, they refer the issue to the hospital in Tshepong as it has professional counsellors.

According to the students support officers, this is the route they take. This might mean that student support officers have knowledge of personal issues that lead to students not attending class.

4.9 FUNDING

4.9.1 NSFAS

Financial funding is very important for most students who cannot afford tuition, transportation and accommodation in tertiary education. A student support officer explained that as the funding that comes from NSFAS, students are mandated to submit application forms with all the details that are required.

This would result in the students being viable for funding. A student support officer also stated that the college would have to submit registers to NSFAS to see if absenteeism of students could be considered for their funding.

SSO 1:

NSFAS is expecting the colleges to report on absenteeism every month. If the students happen to be absent a lot, NSFAS is going to take away their allowances and then the students will not be allowed to write the final exam.

Students should apply for NSFAS, because that's the only support that we give to them. This is the funding that gives them the personal care to transport or accommodation depending where the student is coming from.

SSO: 2:

NSFAS is expecting the colleges to report on absenteeism every month. So they are going to take away their allowances and then the students will not be allowed to write the final exam.

One student support officer mentioned NSFAS as one of the factors that they use to support the students when it comes to them being absent from class. Both participants stated that NSFAS has to be applied for by the students in order for them to be funded. The second participant also mentioned that NSFAS for TVET colleges is not like university loan funding. In TVET colleges, If the students are absent more than the requirement, they risk a chance of their funds being taken away. This could

mean that students need to make sure that they are attending classes, especially after the funding was received by them to avoid the funding to be taken away.

4.10 QMS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

4.10.1 Referral letter

The policies and procedures provide guidance for the student on how they need to behave when it comes to attending classes. A referral letter is said to be one of the factors that the participants use to try to curb absenteeism or use to support them with their problems, according to one student support officer. When the researcher asked this question from one of the participants, the researcher wanted to find out what can be done to curb the absenteeism of students at Vuselela TVET college in Matlosana district. A referral letter is given to the student by the lecturer to give it to the student support officer, who can start with counselling the student according to the problem specified in the referral letter.

SSO 1:

We have what we call a referral letter, so the lecturers in class have to identify the pattern of absenteeism and then the lecturers must fill in a referral form that will be sent to this to the student support academic.

SSO 2:

The procedure would be that I would call in the students and then they would have an interview. A warning would be issued to a student. If student absenteeism is prolonging, then the parents would be called in to determine what the problem is.

Using a referral letter for the participants is a way to try to curb absenteeism of students. The reason of offering a referral letter to the student to submit to a student support officer is to involve the latter when the student is not attending. It gives the lecturers the right to send students, by using the referral letter, to student support officers to handle the issue. This means that student absenteeism is monitored from the class by the lecturer. Also, according to one student support officer, the student would get counselling and his/her absenteeism problem is attended to as parents would be called in.

4.10.2 QMS policy

The Qualitative Measuring System is a system of policies for students that student support officers have to follow. These QMS policies also provide guidance for the student on how they need to behave when it comes to attending classes. Throughout the interview with one participant, the subject of 80% attendance always came up. This policy is also used to try to curb absenteeism by student support officers to support the students. There is also I.T.S system that is used by student support officers. This system is used to calculate the absenteeism of the students.

SSO 1:

We have student support policies from QMS so we have disciplinary hearing whereby the first step we warn the students verbal[ly]. It's a verbal warning.

Students have to attend 80% of the time. We have I.T.S system which calculates how many times a student attends.

SSO 2:

We do have measures in the college, since well we have the QMS, which is quality management system.

One participant mentioned different measures in the system that have to be used to monitor student absenteeism. The use of a quality management system as well was mentioned by one participant as a tool that has procedures and regulations that the student and student support officers have to follow. This could mean that the absenteeism of students can be curbed by showing the students how much they have been absent so that they are aware that they are close to the benchmark of 80% attendance.

4.11 CONCLUSION

Chapter Four presented the data analysis and interpretation of the research findings from the participants and respondents. Data was collected through questionnaires and semi structured interviews. The focus of data interpretation was to answer the study's research questions on students' absenteeism in a TVET college in Matlosana district. The study also revealed that absenteeism of students in the TVET college in Matlosana district requires the collectiveness of SSO's and management to curb it.

Student support officers as well as the students themselves are now aware of the causes of absenteeism.

Both students in the questionnaires and student support officers in the semi-structured interviews have agreed on the variable that lack of transport money for students is a factor in student absenteeism. This is interpreted as the lack of finance being a major factor in the students' attendance.

The next final chapter, Chapter Five, presents the discussion of the findings that were interpreted according to the participants and as well as according to the respondents' responses to the research questions in the interview guide and the questionnaire guide. The summary, conclusions, limitations and recommendations for future research are also presented.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four presented the findings whereby the discussions of the data analysis were made. The purpose of Chapter Five is to discuss the findings gathered in Chapter Four as well as draw conclusions to indicate that the research questions have been addressed properly. The objective of the study was to identify factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district, as two campuses of Vuselela TVET college that were selected are located in this district. The research question mentioned in Chapter One in the study is linked to the findings mentioned in this chapter.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

It is important to remember that the aim and objective of the study was to investigate factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district. The summary of findings is based on data analysis which was interpreted from literature and responses received from data collection of the questionnaire as well as interviews with the SSOs in Chapter Four. The study focuses on possible factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district.

- What are the perceived factors that contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district?

The researcher identifies the factors that contribute to absenteeism in this section. The main research findings show that the perceived factors that were mentioned in Chapter Two in the literature review contribute a lot towards student absenteeism. *Quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices* provide students with tools, which help find students with solutions. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of students said that *low quality of tuition in the college* makes them absent. This could mean that the college syllabus is not favourable to the lecturers to teach, which results to lack of quality of the education offered. The same 37% of students also feel that lecturers do not vary their teaching methods, which means that lecturers are using

the same method of teaching, which makes students disinterested in learning. In the section of quality of education that is offered by the lecturers, 47% of the students agreed and strongly agreed that some lecturers have minimum knowledge of the subject they are teaching. This finding shows that lecturers need to be equipped with subject knowledge and only qualified lecturers for that specific subject can teach so that students can be motivated to attend their classes. They use a monotonous way of teaching. According to the literature, students might get bored by the lecturer that uses the same teaching method over and over. The findings of *adapting to the new environment by students* shows that at least 47% of students find it stressful when they change environment. Putting choices into a longer-term perspective is useful. This is where the student support officers would help with counselling. This is shown in the quantitative research done by SPSS and as well as in the interviews with student support officers. On the question of whether students feel that they get support from SSOs to help them with adjustment to new environment, 52% of the students answered that they disagree and strongly disagree that they get support when it comes helping them adjusting to new environment. This perceived factor contributes to absenteeism as it could encourage students not to come to college. Hartnett (2020) further states that student motivation and engagement are closely related elements of students' learning that could have an impact on learning outcomes. *Lack of motivation and students' attitude* is also an important finding by the researcher that contributes to the absenteeism of students. This is shown as 79% of students feel that the college needs to put motivation programmes in place for them to be motivated. Lack of motivation contributes to an individual not having an interest on what they have to do. The literature in Chapter Two stated that *excessive drinking and using of drugs* affects the performance of students and those students become absent and drop out of college eventually. Twenty-seven per cent (27%) of students who participated in the study agreed that they started drinking alcohol before they even enrolled to the college; whereas, 32% of students said that they are aware of the counselling procedure that is offered by the college if they become absent due to alcohol and drugs. Counselling services offered by the student support officers and the referral letter given to the SSOs by the lecturers represent the extent of contributing towards decreasing absenteeism among students in the college.

Another factor that was found in the research was the *background of students in TVET colleges*. The literature states that the background of students can be a challenge and if no parents are involved in the students learning, it could lead to absenteeism of students from school. Sometimes students become parents themselves by taking care of their elderly parents or grandparents daily, which makes them absent in class. This could mean that students do not have time for school or class. To support this, the literature of Casoli-Reardon (2012) states that students may have responsibilities at home. Ingul (2012) further stated that the socio-economic status of the student is a factor of his/her absenteeism. This means that socioeconomic status contributes to whether the student can be absent or not. Fifty-six per cent (56%) of students that participated agreed that lack of money makes them be absent in class. In the interviews conducted with student support officers, they also stated that lack of financial support from their families contributes greatly towards student absenteeism. This is shown as at least 42% of students say that their families lack of income contributes to them being absent. According to Brookes, Shisana and Richter (2004:129) who studied the income of students' families, 45% of students live in homes where there is not enough money.

- What is the perceived role played by students support officers and the college in decreasing absenteeism among TVET students?

The research summarises the findings of the SSO's role SSO's that of the college to minimise absenteeism. The student support officers who answered the interview questions both stated that the role played by the college in counselling of students that have personal problems as well as the referral letters from lecturers to the student support officers to be shared with their parents does decrease absenteeism. According to the SSOs their role in the college has minimised absenteeism of students. Field, Musset and Alvarez-Galvan (2014) stated that the importance of having a student support officer in the college is that they help with academic, personal support and assist with financial matters. In addition, Coetzee, Wadesango and Machingambi (2011) suggested that by implementing effective student support officers with programmes could be a strategy by universities to help decrease absenteeism of students. Both SSOs interviewed stated that counselling and referral letters are used by the college to decrease absenteeism among students in Vuselela

TVET college. For those few students who are aware of the counselling and that they could be the subject of a referral letter tend to be more present in class. Counselling of students and handing out referral letters to student support officers seem to be a common practice in the college when it comes to student absenteeism. Yao et al. (2015) suggest that the government of China should focus on students who are at risk of dropping out and implement programmes that focus on counselling students and helping them identify their future goals.

On the question answered by students under the factor of excessive drinking and use of drugs, more students answered that they disagree and strongly disagree that they are aware of the counselling in the college. This could mean that if the students that drink and use drugs are aware of such counselling, it would help them. Also, that the college and the SSOs need to make students aware of this to try and curb the absenteeism of students in college. The usage of the Quality Management System (QMS) by management is another tool to help decrease absenteeism of students. The QMS system has policies that guide management, lecturers as well as students on how to perform and follow rules and regulations. Every student should be given these rules and regulations in the diary that they receive at the beginning of the year. There is a section of class attendance that students would have to read and understand. This is the role that management plays to help decrease absenteeism of students in the college.

- What possible strategies could be used to enhance students' attendance at TVET college?

The researcher identifies the strategies that could be used to improve students' attendance at a college. The last research finding is on the question of what strategy could be used to enhance and improve students' attendance at the college. Motivation and a positive attitude on the part of students are very important and can make students attend class. Gokyer (2012) argued that students who have a poor attitude and lack motivation for learning result in student absenteeism. The strategy that the college could use is to make sure that motivation is continuous. This means that management, student support officers and lecturers are to motivate students at all times. Management should draft motivation programmes that could be used by management, students support officers as well as lecturers on students so that

students can be motivated to attend classes. On the questionnaire answered by level 4 and N6 students, there is a question on the lack of student motivation to which 127 students answered that they agree and strongly agree that the college must put motivation programmes in place for them to be motivated to attend class. This is what the researcher found when it comes to a strategy that can be used to enhance and improve students' attendance at Vuselela TVET college. According to the interview conducted with the student support officers, the strategy used by the Department of Higher Education is to provide financial support for the students through NASFAS. The findings from the interview with SSOs show that students need NASFAS funding and transportation for their studies in order to attend classes. The problem is that the funding doesn't come as soon as it should, which is before tuition or classes start. The strategy would be that NASFAS funding from the government needs to be available as soon as registration is done, which is before tuition. This would help decrease absenteeism of students in the college.

5.3 DISCUSSION

To ensure that the analysis of findings in this chapter speaks to the research question of the study, the researcher examined the literature on factors that might contribute to absenteeism in a college. This study looks at factors that contribute to student absenteeism in a specific TVET college in Matlosana district. Research into the statistics of student absenteeism in the college has therefore been conducted.

Teasley (2004:1820) stated that absenteeism is when students do not attend for a period of time. This leads to students falling behind in their studies as a result. This is in line with what the student support officers mentioned in the interviews when asked what makes students be absent. The SSOs cited lack of finances, students not applying for NASFAS funding, lack of parental support and personal problems. It is also in line with reliability testing using SPSS. Absenteeism has a direct financial impact such as loss of funding of students (Wilson, Malcolm, Edward & Davidson, 2008). This means that absenteeism could be caused by lack of funds. Furthermore, these factors make students fall behind in their studies due to absence from college. The availability of finance for students would also minimise or curb absenteeism of students to a degree. This is also expressed in responses to the question of students' background with regard to lack of finance.

The findings from student support officers referred to student absenteeism as a challenge of different variables. The study revealed that there are measures in place that are used to curb the absenteeism in Vuselela TVET college. It is clear that the policies from the government that the student support officers also mentioned play a role, along with the measures that are put in place by the college. Student support officers mentioned referral letters, registers, interview with the student, and I.T.S system tools as measures to curb absenteeism in the college. The Middlesex College of Law stressed that an educator should remind students about the importance of attendance and that the educators should maintain attendance registers to keep accurate records. This could be understood as college management by putting measures in place to help students be present in class. Student support officers seem to think that by NASFAS providing funds earlier for students could make students attend class more as they would have funds to travel and accommodation for those who stay away from the college. This financial setback for students could be interpreted as a major problem. One of the SSOs thinks that students should submit their forms to NASFAS as fast as they can so that they can get their funds as soon as possible; this could be interpreted that the students would have their financial burdens sorted out if they all apply and be granted funding. Furthermore, the second SSO mentioned that another way to curb student absenteeism is for the students to stop associating with peers missing classes to avoid being influenced by peer pressure. One SSO stated that they tend to counsel the students who mix with those that have a bad influence, and who would encourage them to skip class. Both SSOs also mentioned that the college has and uses quality management system policies that have rules and regulations that guide students against absenteeism. This means that students are aware of the consequences of being absent from class and therefore need to adhere to these rules and regulations.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

➤ Counselling for the students.

The data collected was from 161 students that participated in the questionnaire as well as the two student support officers that participated in the interviews.

From the study carried out, it is recommended that counselling of students must be known, made more available and marketable for students. This is because, according to the respondents of the questionnaire, the majority (students) answered that they were not aware of the counselling being offered at the college. Career guidance should also be incorporated in the students' college life to help them focus on their studies (DHET White Paper, 2013).

➤ **Former students.**

Motivation and a positive attitude model should be created by management to help students who are less motivated to attend classes. One recommendation would be for a motivational speaker, or a former student who was disadvantaged and had obstacles while attending the college to come and talk to current students to motivate them.

➤ **Specialist lecturers.**

It is recommended to employ lecturers who are well informed in the subject they are teaching as well as lecturers qualified in that specific subject. Forty-six per cent (46%) of students answered that some lecturers have minimum knowledge of the subject. This could be done by means of continuous training of lecturers, which would decrease absenteeism of students as they would feel comfortable to attend classes and therefore decrease absenteeism.

➤ **Further research.**

The results of the study revealed that there are steps that still need to be taken in this research domain. It is recommended that further research be carried out on the cause of student absenteeism in TVET colleges. It is also recommended that a model and instrument that would motivate students, as was mentioned by them, should be put in place. Further studies could also be performed to research other TVET colleges around North West province and as well as develop strategies that would help reduce student absenteeism within the district of Matlosana. Below are these further recommendations.

➤ **Management and Student Support Officer.**

The analysis suggests that students need more from management and student support officers, who should put more effort into making sure that all registered students are monitored if they have applied for funding. All students applying and enrolling should be given funding application forms so that they submit them prior to the start of the semester. This should ensure that students are captured by NASFAS very early on so as to avoid lack of transport money when college starts. The student support officers should educate students and have them understand the college's counselling procedure for absenteeism. The counselling that students support officers give should also include how to handle peer pressure and motivation as peer pressure and lack of motivation contribute towards absenteeism.

➤ **NASFAS funding.**

It is recommended that students should be better informed about what is required when applying for NASFAS funding; and that they should be able to complete the application online for themselves and attach all the documents needed. Furthermore, students need to apply for NASFAS earlier so that the funds could be approved sooner. The process of attaining funding should not be difficult for students. All students should be helped in any way by the management and student support officers to secure NASFAS funding.

➤ **Parent's involvement in children teaching.**

According to the study conducted, it recommends that parents play a role and be part of the learning of their children, which could also reduce a student's absenteeism. Parents should be called in for a student's feedback at least once a term as it is done in basic education. This gives the parents an indication of how their children are doing at school and also they would know about their children's behaviour at school. According to Borawski et al. (2003), parental involvement in their children's' learning also restrains the use of drugs and alcohol by students at schools.

➤ **QMS policy and procedure.**

Policy and procedures should be implemented to monitor absenteeism data; and lecturers should identify absenteeism trends through class registers and bring it to the attention of student support officers and the students themselves. The policy of the college and department of education should be stricter when it comes to 80% attendance by ensuring that only three chances are given to students who are absent with no valid reason. As the QMS system of the colleges calculates the absenteeism percentages, this should give an indication to the college and student support officers that those students who are below the 80% requirement should be looked at. The policy and procedure system should be constantly applied and monitored by student support officers and lecturers.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted in a college district located in Matlosana district. It would be valuable to replicate the study in other districts where Vuselela TVET college has other campuses in Tlokwe district in Potchefstroom and Greater Taung district in Taung. Due to the fact that the study focused only on Matlosana district with its two campuses, which are Klerksdorp and Jouberton, the data collected does not speak to the whole of Vuselela as a college, but only for the two campuses in Matlosana district. The study provided results on absenteeism as a whole for exit students only, which are level 4s and N6s. Additionally, the results of this study provided no information about other levels in the college that were not included in the sample. Replicating the study using data from other levels in the college would be beneficial as it would provide an even larger population for the study and include the whole population of students registered and attending the college. Another limitation was that some level 4 and N6 students were not available during the time period the questionnaires were handed out due to illness or other personal reasons. This decreased the population sample to 161 respondents.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This study revealed that most students and both student support officers consider that lack of student finance is the most common factor that contributes to student absenteeism. This could be because of the slowness of NASFAS funding or management's process of submitting students' forms to NASFAS late. The results of

the study also revealed that most students were not aware of the counselling that is offered by the college to deal with their personal issues and issues at home. The implications and recommendations for future research are included. The study has further revealed that students become absent because of various variables that were mentioned in the previous chapters, for example, the lack of motivation by students, which showed that they need a programme that would motivate them to attend school.

Another variable researched and discussed was the background of students and how it impacts on absenteeism. The question of some lecturers having minimal knowledge of the subject which affected the quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices was also covered in the questionnaire. Respondents felt that lecturers need to have knowledge of the subject they are teaching. This could be another reason that students become absent from class. The role played by management of the TVET college and the Department of Higher Education along with NASFAS and student support officers was revealed as a solution to curb student absenteeism. This section ends with these concluding remarks:

5.7 FURTHER RESEARCH AREAS.

Further research studies could be conducted for all the Vuselela College campuses to find out if each exiting student on Level 4 and N6 feels the same when it comes to absenteeism. The statistics obtained from that research would give an indication if absenteeism is really a big issue in Vuselela TVET college, not only in Matlosana district, but other districts as well.

Another area for further research would be to enlarge the research population to other levels of student.. The sample study could include level 2, 3, N4 and N5 students. This would give an indication of how all students feel about absenteeism in Vuselela TVET college. The research would increase the population of the study and would give a more accurate outcome.

The study revealed another research area that should be looked at, which is the area of funding students for tuition, accommodation and transportation. The researcher found some gaps in the NASFAS funding process which most respondents cited as

contributing to absenteeism. This further research area would have to be considered and researched thoroughly.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Letter of registration with University of South Africa



1207 MDRES

MAFUNDA L L MR
35 CONYNGHAM AVENUE
DURBAN NORTH
4051

STUDENT NUMBER : 5082-939-4

ENQUIRIES NAME : M&D ADMIN SUPPORT
ENQUIRIES TEL : 0124415702

DATE : 2018-03-22

Dear Student

I wish to inform you that your registration has been accepted for the current academic year. No printed material is available for the compulsory module in Research Methodology. Kindly activate your Unisa mylife account for future communication purposes and access to study material (<https://myunisa.ac.za/portal>). Please check the information carefully and kindly inform the Master's and doctoral section at mandd@unisa.ac.za on any omissions or errors.

DEGREE : MED (CURRICULUM STUDIES) (98434)
TITLE : Working title: Student Absenteeism in TVET Colleges
SUPERVISOR : Prof MJ TAOLE
ACADEMIC YEAR : 2018
TYPE: RESEARCH PROPOSAL
SUBJECTS REGISTERED: MPEDU91 Master Proposal - Education

As soon as the research proposal has been accepted you have to register for the research component, i.e. the dissertation or thesis during the prescribed registration period.

Yours faithfully,

Prof QM Temane
Registrar (Acting)

APPENDIX B: Consent form for participation

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APPENDIX B



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE FOR STUDENTS AND STUDENT SUPPORT OFFICER

18 September 2019

FACTORS THAT MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO ABSENTEEISM AMONG TVET STUDENTS AT A COLLEGE IN MATLOSANA DISTRICT.

I, _____, confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the Questionnaire.


I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname : _____

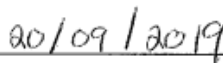
Participant Signature

Date

Researcher's Name & Surname: LL Mafunda



Researcher's signature



Date

APPENDIX C: Interview questions for Student Support Officers

Interview Questions for Student Support Officers

1. How long have you been a student advisor at this college?
2. In your own view, what are the factors that contribute to student absenteeism?
3. What kind of support have you given to students who have absenteeism problem?
4. Are the measures in place that the college use to deal with absenteeism? If yes, please describe them.
5. In you view, what can be done to address the issue of student absenteeism?

Participant's basic information:

Tertiary Institute	TVET College	University
Institution	Public	Private
Gender	Male	Female

APPENDIX D: Questionnaire for students

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEVEL 4 AND N6 STUDENTS

1. Section A: Personal Information

Please mark with an "X" on one of the options provided.				
1	AGE	Below 19	19-25	Above 25
2	GENDER	MALE	FEMALE	OTHER
3	CAMPUS OF YOUR COLLEGE.	TAUNG	POTCHEFSTROOM	JOURBETON KLERKSDORP
4	CURRENT LEVEL	LEVEL 4		N6

Please read the statement carefully and tick the appropriate answer.

2. Section B: Quality of education offered by lecturers and teaching practices.

<i>Please read each statement carefully and decide if you feel this way.</i>						
1= Strongly disagree / 2= Disagree / 3= Do not know / 4= Agree / 5= Strongly agree						
STATEMENT		SCALE				
5	Lecturers in my college have poor quality of teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
6	The low quality of tuition in the college makes me absent.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Some lecturers have minimum knowledge of the subject.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I have a positive attitude towards some lecturers.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Lecturers are not qualified to teach in TVET colleges.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Lecturers do not vary their teaching methods.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Lecturers in my college makes learning exciting?	1	2	3	4	5

3. Section C: Adapting to new environment by students.

12	I finds it stressful when I change environment.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I get support from the SSO's to help with adjusting to new environment.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I get support from lecturers to help with adjusting to new environment.	1	2	3	4	5

4. Section D: Lack of motivation and students' attitude.

15	I feel motivated to attend class.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I feel bored when i am at the college.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I feel I am doing well academically.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I feel the course I took is relevant to my career.	1	2	3	4	5
19	College must put motivation program in place for me to be motivated.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I only come to class to sign an attendance register only.	1	2	3	4	5

5. Section E: Excessive drinking and sing drugs.

21	When I drink during the week, I do not come to school the next day.	1	2	3	4	5
22	I started to drink before i came to the college.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I sometimes become absent in college due to drinking of alcohol.	1	2	3	4	5
24	I am aware of the counselling procedure that my college has if I become absent.	1	2	3	4	5

6. Section F: The background of students in TVET College.

25	Lack of transport money is one of the reasons that makes me to stay	1	2	3	4	5
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	away from college.					
26	My parents are not involved in my learning.	1	2	3	4	5
27	My guardian is involved in my learning.	1	2	3	4	5
28	I have home responsibilities that i attend to that is why I become absent in class.	1	2	3	4	5

29	My family not having income contributes to me being absent in class.	1	2	3	4	5
30	My parents do not understand the importance of me being in school all the time.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Death of a family member has made me miss class.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Divorce of a parent has made me miss class before.	1	2	3	4	5

7. Section G: Social and economic problem of students.

33	I sometimes do not attend class due to staying far from the college.	1	2	3	4	5
34	I have been in court while attending college.	1	2	3	4	5
35	Sometimes i do not attend class due to engaging myself in high risk behaviour.	1	2	3	4	5
36	I am happy with the transport system to and from the college every day.	1	2	3	4	5
37	My poor family background makes it difficult to attend class at times.	1	2	3	4	5

8. Section H: Student Burnout.

38	I sometimes don't attend class due to being burned out.	1	2	3	4	5
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MED: Dissertation by LL MAFUNDA

39	When I study sometimes I get burn-out.	1	2	3	4	5
40	When I am burned out, I don't attend class.	1	2	3	4	5
41	Student support officers help to avoid burnout.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX E: Informed consent statement for conducting research in Vuselela TVET

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APPENDIX E



INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT VUSELELA TVET

18 September 2019

FACTORS THAT MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO ABSENTEEISM AMONG TVET STUDENTS AT A COLLEGE IN MATLOSANA DISTRICT.

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is LL Mafunda and I am doing research under the supervision of M.Taole, a Professor in the Department of Education towards MEd degree at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in the study entitled. Factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY ?

This study is expected to collect important information that could improve the learning of the students as well as making learning interesting so that the issue of absenteeism is minimised. The study will also examine the relationship between students' absenteeism and their personal background and attitude towards schooling. The findings of this study will be able to inform heads of colleges of the factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at Vuselela college in Matlosana district?

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited because you are a student in Vuselela TVET college . I obtained your contact details from administration office through an ITC system which stores students' personal details and registration. There will be up to 250 respondents that will be provided with questionnaire.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The respondents would be expected to answer the questionnaire that will be provided with the relevant questions about absenteeism of students in Vuselela TVET College as well as an interview for the SSO's with the duration of 10-15 minutes to complete it for each.

Yours sincerely

L.L. MAFUNDA

20/09/2019

APPENDIX F: A letter to the college Principal requesting permission to conduct research in the college

APPENDIX F



A LETTER TO THE COLLEGE PRINCIPAL REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE COLLEGE.

FACTORS THAT MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO ABSENTEEISM AMONG TVET STUDENTS AT A COLLEGE IN MATLOSANA DISTRICT.

18 September 2019

The Principal

08 Bramfischer Street
Klerksdorp
2570
018 406 7800

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Luleka Mafunda am doing research under supervision of Prof.M.J. Taole. A professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies towards a (M ed) at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: Factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at a college in Matlosana district.

The aim of the study is to describe factors that might contribute to absenteeism among TVET students at one of the colleges in Matlosana district.

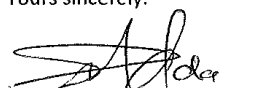
Your college has been chosen because it is in Matlosana district and data can be collected easier as the researcher is employed in Vuselela TVET college in Matlosana district and sees that it is becoming an epidemic.

The benefits of this study are in its potential to get to know the causes of absenteeism among TVET college students and perceive reasons for that which consequently could inform adaptation of the policies that is given about absenteeism at the college. Eventually, students' attendance will be enhanced and the college could achieve good results and learners' prospects would not be hindered.

There are no foreseeable negative consequences in partaking in the study, ground rules will be set at the beginning of the research sessions and respondents will be asked to commit themselves in adhering to the rules. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

Feedback procedure will entail a written submission and presentation about some of the helpful and interesting things I found out in my study.

Yours sincerely,


L.L. MAFUNDA

APPROVED/DISAPPROVED

