

Absenteeism amongst nursing students in a
Limpopo college of nursing

PD Baloyi

11981911

Dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree *Magister Curationis* in *Health Science Education* at the
Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

Supervisor: **Dr R van Waltsleven**

Co-Supervisor: **Dr W Lubbe**

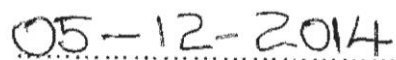
November 2014

DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare that this dissertation, entitled *Absenteeism amongst nursing students in a Limpopo college of nursing*, presents work completed by myself, and to the best of my knowledge, it does not contain any information written by another person, except where due reference is made. I declare that all the sources quoted in the study are acknowledged in the bibliography, that the study has been approved by the Ethics Committees of both the North-West University and the Limpopo Province, and that I complied with the ethical standards set by the institutions.



Phoenicia Dinan Baloyi



Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the following lovely people:

- My late mother, Maria Nkhensani Shibambo, for shedding the light of education in my life.
- My loving husband, Richard Baloyi, for his love, encouragement, understanding and for taking care of the family during my absence.
- My children, Ntshembo, Basani, Muhluri and Vutlhari, for their support and the responsibility they took when I was away from home.
- My younger sister, Mihloti Shibambo, for the support and encouragement during the years of my study.

I love you all!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank the Lord God Almighty for the protection, courage and strength He gave me throughout the years of my studies.

I also wish to extend appreciation to the following people who assisted, supported and directed me towards the success of my study:

- The Limpopo Department of Health and the nursing education institution, for permitting me to conduct the study.
- Dr Richelle van Waltsleven, my supervisor, for her love, effort and support, which helped me to complete my studies. You led me to the greener pastures. May God give you the desires of your heart. I will always remember your words on our first encounter when you encouraged me to persevere in order to successfully complete my study.
- Dr Welma Lubbe, my co-supervisor, for your kindness and emotional support. May the Lord God Almighty shower you with blessings.
- Ms Louis Vos for your assistance in always providing me with relevant articles.
- The author also thank Dr Grace Fayombo for the data collection instrument.
- Ms Elma de Kock, for the language editing; Prof Casper Lessing, for editing my bibliography and Ms Susan van Biljon, for technical editing.
- Mrs Hlongwane BR (Head of our component), for her prayers, support and encouragement during the years of my study.
- My colleagues, friends and all those who provided support.

- The respondents for sharing their knowledge.
- I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to my spiritual father, Pastor Nkuna MS, for his prayers and unrepeated encouraging messages. May God multiply the anointing in his life.

ABSTRACT

Title: Absenteeism amongst nursing students in a Limpopo college of nursing

Globally, student absenteeism is seen as a period of time when students do not attend classes. This is a serious concern for lecturers at institutions of higher learning (Lipscomb & Snelling, 2010:573). In South Africa, student absenteeism is rampant amongst university and college students (Wadesango & Machingambi, 2011:89), and it is also a problem in the Limpopo Province (Ramodike, 2008:2).

The objectives of this study were to explore and describe the reasons for nursing students to be absent from class in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province, and to formulate strategies to reduce student absenteeism in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province. The research design in this study was quantitative, descriptive, exploratory and cross sectional in nature. The sample included nursing students, from level I to level IV of their studies (n=209), registered at a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province. The data was collected using the Factors influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ) (Fayombo, 2012). EpiData and SPSS statistical programmes were used to analyse the data. The results of the study showed that nursing students absent themselves from class due to aspects of student-centred factors, for instance when they want to prepare for examination (53.1%; n=111); and home-related factors, most nursing students reported that they are absent from class when there is death of a family member (63.2%; n=132). Regarding school-related factors, most nursing students indicated that poor infrastructural facilities in school provide reasons for students' absenteeism (39.2%; n=82). However, the results revealed that there is no relation between social factors and students' absenteeism, as most of the respondents (48.3%; n=100) disagreed that the unavailability of entertainment like malls or movies around the campus is a cause of student absenteeism. With regard to measures to reduce students' absenteeism, most of the respondents (73.7%, n=154) indicated that they need a prize giving ceremony for

students that are never absent from class. A further 54.1% (n=113) reported that they want a motivating program that will emphasise the benefits of attending classes, and 47.8% (n=100) indicated that they need a program that teaches friendly and mutual lecturer-student relationships. Recommendations for nursing education, practice, future research and a policy were made.

Keywords: Absenteeism, nursing student, college

OPSOMMING

Titel: Afwesigheid onder verpleegkundestudente in 'n verpleegkollege in die Limpopo Provinsie

Afwesigheid onder studente word wêreldwyd gesien as 'n tydperk waarin studente nie klasse bywoon nie. Dit is 'n groot bekommernis vir dosente aan instellings van hoër opvoeding (Lipscomb & Snelling, 2010:573). In Suid-Afrika vier studentafwesigheid hoogty onder universiteits- en kollegestudente (Wadesango & Machingambi, 2011:89) en dit is ook 'n probleem in die Limpopo Provinsie (Ramodike, 2008:2).

Die doelwitte van die studie was om die redes waarom verpleegkundestudente afwesig is van hulle klasse by die verpleegkollege te ondersoek en te beskryf en om strategieë te formuleer wat studenteafwesigheid in 'n verpleegkollege kan verminder. Die aard van die navorsingsontwerp vir hierdie studie was kwantitatief, beskrywend, verkennend en deursnit. Die populasie het geregistreeerde verpleegkundestudente van vlak I tot vlak IV van hulle studies (n=209) aan 'n verpleegkollege in die Limpopo Provinsie ingesluit. Die data is versamel deur die *Factors influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire* (FIAQ) te gebruik (Fayombo, 2012). EpiData en SPSS statistiese programme is gebruik om die data te analiseer. Die resultate van die studie het aangetoon dat verpleegkundestudente afwesig is van klasse as gevolg van: studenteverwante faktore, soos byvoorbeeld wanneer hulle vir 'n eksamen wil voorberei (53.1%; n=111); en huisverwante faktore, die meeste verpleegkundestudente het aangetoon dat hulle afwesig is van klasse met die dood van 'n familielid (63.2%; n=132). Met betrekking tot skoolverwante faktore, het die meeste verpleegkundestudente aangedui dat swak infrastruktuurfasiliteite in die skool die rede vir studenteafwesigheid is (39.2%; n=82). Hierdie resultate het egter onthul dat daar geen verband tussen sosiale faktore en studente-afwesigheid is nie, aangesien die meeste van die deelnemers (48.3%, n=100) nie saamgestem het dat die onbesikbaarheid van vermaak, soos winkelsentrums of filmteaters naby kampus, die oorsaak van studenteafwesigheid is nie. Met verwysing na maatreëls om

studenteafwesigheid te verminder, het die meeste van die respondente (73.7%, n=154) aangetoon dat daar 'n prysuitdelingsgeleentheid moet wees vir studente wat nooit afwesig is nie, terwyl 54.1% (n=113) aangedui het dat 'n motiveringsprogram aangebied word wat die voordele van klasbywoning beklemtoon, 47.8% (n=100) het berig dat hulle 'n program benodig wat onderrig gee oor vriendelike en wedersydse dosent-student-verhoudings. Aanbevelings vir verpleegonderrig, -praktyk, toekomstige navorsing en beleid is gemaak.

Sleutelwoorde: Afwesigheid, verpleegkundestudent, kollege

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CC	Correlation co-efficient
d	Practical association
FIAQ	Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire
KMO	Kaiser –Meyer- Olkin
LCN	Limpopo college of nursing
M	Mean
n	Sample
N	Population
NWU	North-West University
r	Correlation Coefficient
SANC	South African Nursing Council
SD	Standard deviation
SPSS	Statistical Programme for Social Sciences
UI	University of Ibadan
UWI	University of West Indies
WHO	World Health Organisation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	.....	ii
DEDICATION	.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	.....	iv
ABSTRACT	.....	vi
OPSOMMING	.....	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	.....	x
LIST OF TABLES	.....	xxi
LIST OF FIGURES	.....	xxiv

<u>CHAPTER 1</u>	OVERVIEW AND RESEARCH AND PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONING	1
1.1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.2	BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY	1
1.2.1	Classification of student absenteeism	4
1.2.2	Causes of student absenteeism	5
1.2.3	The impact of student absenteeism	6
1.2.4	Strategies to reduce student absenteeism	7
1.3	PROBLEM STATEMENT	9
1.4	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	10

1.5	AIM AND OBJECTIVES.....	10
1.6	PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE.....	10
1.6.1	Meta-theoretical assumptions	10
1.6.1.1	Man.....	11
1.6.1.2	Health	11
1.6.1.3	Environment.....	11
1.6.1.4	Nursing	11
1.6.2	Theoretical assumptions.....	12
1.6.2.1	Central theoretical statement	14
1.6.2.2	Conceptual definitions.....	14
1.6.3	Methodological assumptions.....	15
1.7	RESEARCH DESIGN	15
1.8	RESEARCH METHOD	15
1.8.1	Population.....	16
1.8.2	Sample.....	17
1.8.2.1	Probability was deleted random sampling written, was used during the pilot study	17
1.8.2.2	Sample size	17
1.8.3	Pilot study	18
1.8.4	Data collection	18
1.8.4.1	Data collection method	18

1.8.5	Data analysis	19
1.9	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	20
1.9.1	Respect for others.....	20
1.9.2	Relevance and value	21
1.9.3	Scientific integrity	21
1.9.4	Risk benefit ratio	22
1.9.4.1	The right to freedom from harm and discomfort	22
1.9.4.2	The right to protection from exploitation.....	22
1.9.4.3	Respect for human dignity	22
1.9.5	Informed consent	23
1.9.6	Distributive justice	24
1.9.7	Professional competence.....	24
1.9.8	Privacy and confidentiality	25
1.9.9	Publication of results.....	25
1.10	OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION.....	25
1.11	SUMMARY	26
<hr/>		
CHAPTER 2	LITERATURE REVIEW	27
2.1	INTRODUCTION	27
2.2	LITERATURE REVIEW	27

2.3	STUDENT ABSENTEEISM	27
2.3.1	CLASSIFICATION OF ABSCENCES	28
2.4	CAUSES OF STUDENT ABSENTEEISM	30
2.4.1	Student-centred factors.....	30
2.4.1.1	Lack of personal interest in studies.....	31
2.4.1.2	Socialisation and substance abuse among students	32
2.4.1.3	Not understanding the subject	32
2.4.1.4	Lack of study time	33
2.4.1.5	Inability of students' mental capacity to match the course opted for	33
2.4.1.6	Inferiority complex among students	34
2.4.1.7	Lengthy periods	34
2.4.2	Home-related factors	34
2.4.2.1	A poor family relationship.....	35
2.4.2.2	Death of a family member.....	35
2.4.2.3	Family commitments	36
2.4.2.4	Financial issues	36
2.4.2.5	Travelling long distances to campus	37
2.4.3	School-related factors	37
2.4.3.1	Classroom environment not conducive to learning	38
2.4.3.2	Poor lecturer-student relationship	39

2.4.3.3	Inadequate orientation about school policies	39
2.4.3.4	Excessive homework and projects for students	39
2.4.3.5	Lack of recreational and allied activities.....	40
2.4.3.6	Negative peer influence	40
2.4.3.7	Poor infrastructural facilities in school.....	40
2.4.3.8	Inclement weather.....	41
2.4.3.9	Poor teaching skills of lecturers	41
2.4.3.10	Lecturer not turning up for scheduled lecture.....	42
2.4.4	Social factors	42
2.4.4.1	Fear of students that bully.....	43
2.4.4.2	Family commitments	43
2.4.4.3	Low societal value for education	44
2.4.4.4	Transportation problems	44
2.4.4.5	Political activities.....	44
2.4.4.6	Wealthy persons versus educated persons	45
2.4.4.7	The belief that a lot of education is not required for success.....	45
2.5	IMPACT OF STUDENT ABSENTEEISM	45
2.6	CONCLUSION	47

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY48

3.1	INTRODUCTION	48
3.2	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	48
3.3	RESEARCH DESIGN	48
3.3.1	Quantitative research.....	49
3.3.2	Exploratory design	49
3.3.3	Descriptive design.....	49
3.3.4	Cross-sectional design.....	50
3.4	RESEARCH METHOD	50
3.4.1	Population.....	51
3.4.2	Sample and sampling procedure	52
3.4.2.1	Sample.....	52
3.4.2.2	Sampling.....	52
3.4.3	Sample size	53
3.4.4	Research setting	53
3.5	DATA COLLECTION	54
3.5.1	Discussion of the instrument.....	55
3.5.1.1	The Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ).....	56
3.5.1.2	Data collection procedure	57
3.6	DATA ANALYSIS.....	59
3.7	VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT.....	59

3.7.1	Validity	59
3.7.1.1	Content validity	60
3.7.1.2	Face validity	60
3.7.1.3	Construct validity.....	61
3.7.2	Reliability	61
3.8	CONCLUSION	62

<u>CHAPTER 4</u>	RESULTS	63
4.1	INTRODUCTION	63
4.2	DATA COLLECTION	63
4.3	DATA ANALYSIS.....	64
4.4	RESULTS	66
4.4.1	Response rate.....	66
4.4.2	Demographic profile.....	67
4.4.2.1	Age	68
4.4.2.2	Marital status.....	68
4.4.2.3	Current level of study	69
4.4.2.4	Distance from campus	70
4.4.2.5	Method of transport.....	70
4.5	DISCUSSION OF THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	71

4.5.1	Student-centred factors.....	71
4.5.2	Home-related factors	73
4.5.3	School-related factors	74
4.5.4	Social factors	76
4.6	MEASURES TO REDUCE STUDENTS' ABSENTEEISM	77
4.6.1	Orientation program.....	79
4.6.2	Established policy for controlling student absenteeism.....	79
4.6.3	Systematic student absenteeism monitoring tool	79
4.6.4	Motivating program	80
4.6.5	Prize giving ceremony.....	80
4.6.6	Friendly mutual student-lecturer relationship	81
4.7	FACTOR ANALYSIS.....	81
4.7.1	Exploratory factor analysis.....	81
4.7.1.1	Student-centred factors.....	82
4.7.1.2	School-related factors	84
4.7.1.4	Home-related factors	88
4.8	RELIABILITY.....	89
4.8.1	Student-centred factors.....	89
4.8.2	School-related factors	91
4.8.3	Social factors	91

4.8.4	Home-related factors	92
4.9	CORRELATIONS.....	93
4.9.1	Correlation between the factors and ordered demographic data	97
4.10	ASSOCIATION OF FACTORS WITH BIOGRAPHICAL GROUPING VARIABLE	100
4.10.1	Marital status.....	100
4.10.2	Method of transport.....	103
4.11	CONCLUSION	106
4.12	SUMMARY	107

<u>CHAPTER 5</u>	EVALUATION OF THE STUDY, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NURSING EDUCATION, PRACTICE, RESEARCH AND POLICY	108
5.1	INTRODUCTION	108
5.2	EVALUATION OF THE STUDY	108
5.3	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	110
5.4	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	111
5.4.1	Nursing education	111
5.4.2	Practice.....	112
5.4.3	Further research	112

5.3.4	Policy development.....	113
5.5	CONCLUSION.....	113
5.6	SUMMARY	114
<hr/>		
BIBLIOGRAPHY	.....	115
<hr/>		
<u>APPENDIX A</u>	ETHICS APPLICATION	131
<u>APPENDIX B</u>	PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY	132
<u>APPENDIX C</u>	CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT ON CAMPUS	133
<u>APPENDIX D</u>	CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT: ABSENTEEISM AMONGST NURSING STUDENTS IN A LIMPOPO COLLEGE OF NURSING	134
<u>APPENDIX E</u>	FACTORS INFLUENCING ABSENTEEISM QUESTIONNAIRE (FIAQ)	138
<u>APPENDIX F</u>	LETTER : STATISTICAL CONSULTATION SERVICES	143

LIST OF TABLES

<u>CHAPTER 1</u>	OVERVIEW AND RESEARCH AND PHILOSOPHICAL
Table 1.1:	Information from published absenteeism report of the college of nursing (2011) .....3
Table 1.2	Total population of nursing students from the published enrolment report on one campus of the college of nursing .....16
<u>CHAPTER 2</u>	LITERATURE REVIEW
Table 2.1	Summary of classification of absences .....29
<u>CHAPTER 3</u>	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Table 3.1	Total population of nursing students from the published enrolment report on one campus of the college of nursing .....51
<hr/>	
CHAPTER 4	RESULTS
Table 4.1	Response rate of respondents .....67
Table 4.2	Marital status of nursing students .....69

Table 4.3	Distance from campus	70
Table 4.4	Method of transport	70
Table 4.5	Student-centred factors	71
Table 4.6	Home related factors	73
Table 4.7	School-related factors	74
Table 4.8	Social factors	76
Table 4.9	Measures to reduce students' absenteeism.....	78
Table 4.10	Pattern matrix (four-factor analysis)	82
Table 4.11	Subscales and four-factor analyses.....	84
Table 4.12	Pattern matrix (Factor three analyses).....	85
Table 4.13	Subscale and factor three analyses	86
Table 4.14	Pattern matrix (Factor three analyses).....	86
Table 4.15	Subscale and factor three analysis	87
Table 4.16	Subscales and factor analyses.....	88
Table 4.17	Subscale and factor two analyses.....	89
Table 4.18	Student-centred factors	90
Table 4.19	School-related factors	91

Table 4.20	Social factors	92
Table 4.21	Home related factors	92
Table 4.22	Correlation between factors.....	94
Table 4.23	Correlation between the factors and ordered demographic data	97
Table 4.24	Results for t-test for marital status with factors	101
Table 4.25	Results for t-test for method of transport with factors.....	103

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>CHAPTER 1</u>	OVERVIEW AND RESEARCH AND PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONING
Figure 1.1:	The diagram is a schematic representation of the theory (Ajzen, 1991:80).....13

CHAPTER 4	RESULTS
Figure 4.1	Age of the nursing students .....68
Figure 4.2	Current level of study .....69

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW AND RESEARCH AND PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONING

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1, an orientation to the planned research is provided. Thereafter, the researcher gives an overview of the background and rationale of the study, followed by the problem statement, research questions and the objectives. The researcher discusses the assumptions and a brief description of the research design and research method is provided. A concise description of the rigour and ethical considerations follows. The chapter concludes with an outline of the structure of this study.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Student absenteeism is seen as a period of time when students do not attend classes globally and this is a serious concern for lecturers at institutions of higher learning (Lipscomb & Snelling, 2010:573). A study conducted by Timmins and Kaliszer (2002:578) confirmed that one of the concerns expressed by nurse educators in Ireland is the high rate of student absenteeism. Another study in the United Kingdom investigated student absenteeism and found that most of the students are absent voluntarily and more than 50% of the absences are on Mondays and Fridays (Lipscomb & Snelling, 2010:575). These findings indicate that nurse educators perceive absenteeism to be an unresolved problem (Hughes, 2005:42). Hocking (2008:12) supports the stated perception by indicating that student absenteeism in Rhode Island is an ongoing concern according to nursing educators.

In Ghana (Africa), student absenteeism at higher educational institutions is also seen as a problem (Obeng-Denteh *et al.*, 2011:8). The study conducted by Shahzada *et*

al. (2011:292) confirms the fact that student absenteeism is a major and a continuous problem in nursing schools and colleges in Sub-Saharan countries that requires to be controlled. Student absenteeism at higher educational institutions is also a serious problem in Nigeria (Fayombo *et al.*, 2012:122).

In South Africa, student absenteeism is rampant amongst university and college students (Wadesango & Machingambi, 2011:89). In most of the provinces, for instance Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Eastern Cape and North West, student absenteeism is still a great concern according to Mahlangu (2012:2012). In the Limpopo Province, absenteeism amongst college students is also a problem (Ramodike, 2009:2). These findings are supported by a report that indicates that absenteeism amongst nursing students is still occurring Limpopo college of Nursing Human Resource management's report, 2011).

Table 1.1 illustrates the 2011 monthly absenteeism report of one of the college campuses of a Limpopo college of nursing according to the nursing students' level of training, the total number of students per level, the number of students absent, the total number of periods missed and the total number of hours each student missed per week and per month. According to the college of nursing's timetable each period lasts 45 minutes, thus from:

- 07:00 to 10:00 there are 4 periods.
- (180 minutes= 3 hours).
- 10:30 to 12:45 there are 3 periods in 135 minutes.
- (2 hours and 15 minutes).
- 13:30 to 16:30 there are 4 periods.
- (180 minutes= 3 hours).

- A full day comprises 11 periods.
(8 hours and 15 minutes). The timetable of a typical college in the Limpopo Province.

According to the 2011 attendance register, a monthly absenteeism report for one block showed the following:

Table 1.1: Information from published absenteeism report of the college of nursing (2011)

Level of study	Total no of students	No of students absent	Periods missed	Total hours each student missed
I	67	24(36%)	24 periods Each period is = 45 minutes $45 \times 24 = 1080$ minutes 1080 minutes = 18 hours	18 Hours per month 3Hrs 6min per week
II	85	26(30%)	30 periods Each period = 45 minutes $45 \times 30 = 1350$ minutes 1350 minutes = 23 hours	23 hours per month 4 hours per week
III	62	58(94%)	26 periods Each period = 45 minutes $45 \times 26 = 1170$ minutes 1170 minutes = 20 hours	20 hours per month 4 hours per week
IV	95	88(93%)	33 periods Each period = 45 minutes $45 \times 33 = 1485$ minutes 1485 = 25 hours	25 hours per month 5 hours per week

This study focused on the reasons for student absenteeism and will strive towards contributing to new scientific knowledge in nursing education. The findings could

contribute towards and assist in the development of strategies aimed at a reduction of student absenteeism and could therefore improve the academic performance of the students.

1.2.1 Classification of student absenteeism

Absenteeism amongst students of the college of nursing comes in different forms. The paragraphs below illustrate the evident classifications of absenteeism in a student population. Student absenteeism should be dealt with according to their classification. The classifications include unauthorised absenteeism, in other words absence without a reason and authorised absenteeism, which is absence due to illness (Shahzada *et al.*, 2011:292). Ramodike (2009:2), expanded the classification by adding to authorised and unauthorised absenteeism partial absenteeism and full absenteeism that can be defined as: Authorised absenteeism refers to the frequent absence from class without a good reason, whereas partial absenteeism refers to absence for a part of the class, in other words attending half of the subjects. Hughes (2005:41) is of the opinion that authorised absence can be problematic, because students may pretend to be ill and it might be impossible to prove whether the students are pretending or not.

Dube and Orpinas (2009:87) divide student absenteeism into child-motivated and non-child-motivated absenteeism. Child-motivated absenteeism is a violation of a child due to increased autonomy, whereas non-child-motivated absenteeism manifests through influences external to the child, such as absence due to the delegation of household activities by parents during school hours and taking care of siblings. Student absenteeism may be viewed as the failure to attend a scheduled lecture, seminar or practical class for a period of time or an entire day; this can be habitual (Kottasz: 2005:5; Barlow and Fleischer, 2011:228; Doyle *et al.*, 200:131; Bond, 2004:189; Weideman *et al.*, 2007:11).

1.2.2 Causes of student absenteeism

There are different factors responsible for absenteeism and the following are some of the causes as discussed in the literature related to this study. According to Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:90) students absent themselves due to: part-time jobs and other work-related commitments, lecturers whom they dislike, uninteresting courses or subjects and to be with friends and peers. Students tend to be absent when assignments are due for submission, when pretending to be ill and due to family commitments, such as illness of family members (Doyle *et al.*, 2007:132).

According to Ramodike (2009:2) student absenteeism is caused by illness, learning difficulties, lack of motivation, students feeling that lecturers are doing nothing to motivate them, the class environment not being conducive enough to learning, for example due to poor ventilation. Furthermore, there are psychological factors such as peer pressure, a lack of interest in education, a lack of responsibility, resulting from a lack of guidance regarding the course that lead to students lacking responsibility. Student absenteeism may also be due to social factors, such as food insecurity, problems with transport, the impact of HIV/AIDS and teenage pregnancy. A study conducted by Weideman *et al.* (2007:9) revealed that the reasons for student absenteeism varied, but are generally grouped in three broad categories:

- Personal factors, such as illness, age, gender and learning difficulties.
- Socio-economic factors relating to transport problems to school, the impact of HIV/AIDS on children and child labour.
- Inability to pay fees, poor learner-educator relationships and poor school facilities.

Kottasz (2005:7) found that student absenteeism is the result of stress from work overload and students finding the work to be too difficult. A large number of students indicated that they were not able to attend classes due to part-time employment, the influence of peers, poor teacher-student relationships and the way in which the

curriculum was presented to the student, family aspects as well as bullying (Hocking, 2008:10).

1.2.3 The impact of student absenteeism

Student absenteeism is the most critical element affecting learning in different environments according to both international and national perspectives, in theory or clinically. These aspects will be discussed in the paragraphs to follow. Internationally, student absenteeism hinders nursing students from working together; this affects positive examination results (Holbert *et al.*, 2002:3). Johnson *et al.* (2003:336) supported this finding by indicating that the absence from scheduled teaching sessions might result in poor academic performance and unprofessional conduct. Furthermore, when students are absent in the theoretical setting, it can also occur in the clinical setting after qualification; this may result in impaired quality of care (Unruh *et al.*, 2007:673; Timmins & Kalliszer, 2002:580). Gump (2004:25) disagreed and indicated that student absenteeism does not have an impact on student performance. However, he revealed that student absenteeism is costly, has short-term consequences, including low educational success; long-term absenteeism can lead to drug and alcohol abuse and a high dropout rate (Hocking, 2008:12). In Ghana and Nigeria, student absenteeism also resulted in low performance levels and led to students dropping out or prolonging their studies (Denteh *et al.*, 2011:8; Shahzada *et al.*, 2011:292; Fayombo *et al.*, 2012:122).

In South Africa, students who are absent do not perform well academically (Wadesango & Machingambi, 2011:89) and researchers further indicated that whenever students are absent from class, they miss valuable learning opportunities. According to (Holbert *et al.*, 2002:3) the relationship between student absenteeism and academic performance renders mixed results, since some of the students who are absent from class may perform well academically. However, there is a strong relationship between attendance and academic performance (Lipscomb & Snelling, 2010:574). Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:93) indicated that students who

absent themselves from class tend to answer test questions incorrectly and attain lower examination results.

In South Africa, student absenteeism contributes to a high drop-out rate at institutions of higher learning, which results in an annual loss of R1,3 billion of government funds (Brits *et al.*, 2011:1). Student absenteeism results in a tiresome, unpleasant classroom environment that causes students that came to school to be uncomfortable, since the lecturers have to repeat work; this has a negative impact on the scheduled timetable. It further disturbs the dynamic teaching-learning environment and is a waste of educational resources, time and human potential (Segal, 2008:783).

The findings by Johnson *et al.* (2003:336) are similar to that of international studies; these studies indicated that the results of students who are absent from class without permission are poor academic performance, unprofessional conduct, inadequate socialisation and a symptom of low achievement (Dhaliwal, 2003:34). Students who usually absent themselves from class, miss peer-lecturer teaching and the benefits of special examples lecturers use to clarify difficult concepts (Wadesango & Machigambi, 2011:89). Student absenteeism has a negative effect on the morale of nurse educators, which results in lecturers being irritated by it.

1.2.4 Strategies to reduce student absenteeism

Internationally, strategies applied to reduce student absenteeism included the monitoring of students who are absent from class and avoiding scheduling lengthy teaching sessions, since these are not successful (Doyle *et al.*, 2007:128). Timmins and Kaliszer (2002:580) indicated that in Ireland, attendance records are kept and formalised disciplinary procedures are in place to deal with those who are absent without notification. Lipscomb and Snelling (2010:575) argued that students should attend classes voluntarily and the lecturers should avoid applying rigid procedures, but they should rather ensure that the programs that are presented are suitable to nursing students.

In Uganda, the government took actions such as punishment to reduce absenteeism, but these did not have a serious impact. It is presently the principals' responsibility to ensure that student absenteeism is reduced (Winkler & Sondergaard, 2008:6). Shahzada *et al.* (2011:292) recommended that the Ugandan government should ensure that absenteeism is reduced by providing free transport and textbooks. In Nigeria, it is mandatory for students to attend 75% of the lectures before they are allowed to write examination. Therefore, attendance policies were formulated and applied (Fayombo *et al.*, 2012:122).

In South Africa, strategies to control student absenteeism included corporal punishment; this was not successful (Weideman *et al.*, 2007:13). At a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province, students who do not attend 80% of theoretical and clinical practice periods, do not qualify to write examination; this results in repeating a year of study according to the Limpopo college of nursing (LCN) rules and regulations 2009:14. Nkonzo-Mthembu (2010:259) supported this by indicating that in Kwazulu Natal, in a college of nursing, students who failed to attend 80% of theoretical and clinical practice opportunities must catch up with all the lost periods under supervision before writing the examination. The introduction of policies and disciplinary procedures and a punitive approach were developed to deal with absenteeism. However, these controlling systems were not evaluated and lacked effectiveness (Doyle, 2007:132).

The abovementioned discussions show that student absenteeism is an international problem. A study conducted by Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:96) recommended that further studies about student absenteeism should not only focus on the nursing students, but should focus on socio-economic influences such as the financial status of the students and the environments in which the colleges or universities are situated.

In Ireland, Timmins and Kaliszer (2002:580) kept records of the absenteeism of students from the classroom. Disciplinary procedures were put in place to deal with those students who excessively and without notification absented themselves.

Students were expected to complete 156 weeks of training in order to qualify as registered nurses. Students had to extend their training programme if their record of absenteeism was not reduced to the minimum limit. Students with excessive absences with noticeable patterns were subjected to disciplinary procedures.

Improvement of the learning environment and facilitation structures may make sessions more productive and shorter, and may reduce absenteeism (Johnson *et al.*, 2003:336). Positive and influential relationships amongst educators and administrators should also be developed to motivate students to reduce absenteeism. According to Davey *et al.* (2009:312) an organisational commitment and involvement amongst students should be established to contribute to the reduction of absenteeism amongst students.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Student absenteeism and the consequent loss of learning opportunities at a college of nursing are of great concern to the nurse educators and college administrators. The researcher, as a nurse educator at a selected campus of a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province, has observed that the rate of nursing student absenteeism is increasing. Therefore, students fail to meet the 4000 hours of practice by the statutory body for nurses, namely the South African Nursing Council (Act no: 33 of 2005) within the stipulated years. This observation is supported by the Human Resource report (2011) that indicated that 80% of nursing students are absent from class at a college of nursing. This results in non-compliance to the SANC minimum requirements for registration and causes wasteful expenditure to the Department of Health (because of the bursaries from the Department). It also results in the extension of studies. The high absenteeism rate at the college of nursing necessitated the need for this research.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the abovementioned problem statement, the following research questions were formulated:

- What are the reasons for nursing student absenteeism from class at a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province?
- Which strategies can be formulated to reduce nursing student absenteeism in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province?

1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study was to explore and describe reasons for nursing student absenteeism and to develop strategies to reduce student absenteeism.

- To achieve the aim of the study, the following objectives were formulated:
- To explore and describe the reasons why nursing students absent themselves from class in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province.
- To formulate strategies to reduce student absenteeism in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province.

1.6 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

1.6.1 Meta-theoretical assumptions

According to Polit and Beck (2008:767) theoretical assumptions refers to the researcher's interpretation of behaviour. In this study, the researcher refers to meta-theoretical assumptions according to the researcher's beliefs regarding man's origin and the world he/she lives in.

1.6.1.1 Man

The researcher views man as a unique being, created by God. Man is not only a physical being, but also a mental, physical, spiritual and psychological being. This should be regarded in order to understand man as a holistic being. In this study, man refers to the nursing student in a college of nursing. Man can either be male or female and is in constant interaction with the environment and practicing student absenteeism that might involve valid reasons.

1.6.1.2 Health

The WHO (2010) defines health as the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. This definition illustrates that health does not only implicate physical well-being. In this study, the researcher refers to health as the state of a nursing student in a college of nursing who are not absent.

1.6.1.3 Environment

The researcher believes that environment refers to the setting where teaching and learning takes place that can determine the health of the student. For the purpose of this study, the researcher refers to environment as the classroom and clinical setting at the college of nursing where facilitation of learning takes place.

1.6.1.4 Nursing

According to the South African Nursing Council Act (No.33 of 2005), nursing refers to a caring profession practiced by a person registered under section 31 of the Nursing Act (No. 33 of 2005). This profession supports, cares for and treats a healthcare user to achieve or maintain health. In this study, the researcher believes that nursing is the profession in which these students will be functioning. This profession is promoted by the motivation of students to attend classes on a daily basis and to be discouraged from absenteeism by exploring and describing the reasons for absenteeism.

1.6.2 Theoretical assumptions

In this study, the researcher was guided by the theory of planned behaviour to describe student absenteeism (Ajzen, 1991:80). According to Ajzen (1991:80) the theory of planned behaviour postulates three conceptually independent determinants of intention that are used as the basis for the study. The first one is “**behavioural beliefs or intention**”, which entails the attitudes towards the behaviour or motivation and refers to the degree to which a person has a favourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question (Ajzen, 1991:180). The second one is a social factor termed “**normative beliefs**”, these are subjective norms referring to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991:180). The third one is “**control beliefs**”, in other words, perceived behavioural control that refers to the ease or difficulty with which the behaviour is performed and it reflects past experiences and anticipated obstacles (Ajzen, 1991:180). The theory of planned behaviour is relevant to this study, because students are expected to attend classes and go to clinical facilities to integrate theory and practice throughout their training, as well as achieving the minimum number of 4000 hours of training within the four academic years. This was affected by the students’ experiences, attitudes and the environment in which training was conducted. The theory was used to describe the students’ attitudes as well as their intentions, based on the reasons the students supplied during the interviews.

The researcher predicted the students’ attitudes, subjective norms and perceptions surrounding student absenteeism in the determination of whether they were able and willing to perform the behaviour, which was attending classes throughout their training. The students’ perceptions towards student absenteeism depended on whether they perceived student absenteeism favourable or not. This is most likely influenced by social norms, the second factor in the theory of planned behaviour. If students perceived social norms at the college of nursing regarding student absenteeism favourably, students will not see attending classes as good conduct.

There is a need to develop the strategies to address student absenteeism, the learning value of avoiding student absenteeism and perceived personal susceptibility. These strategies will also attempt to increase confidence in the ability to leverage available access to learning facilities, promoting commitment to adhere to the strategies related to avoiding student absenteeism. This forms part of control beliefs as the third factor. If the nursing students perceived attending classes unfavourably, the norms in the college might not support it and therefore, the control beliefs will be to avoid going to classes frequently, leading to student absenteeism. If the nursing students perceived attending classes favourably, social norms may support class attendance and see it as a normal phenomenon. As a result, student nurses maintained continuous attendance of classes that assisted in meeting the learning requirements set out by (GG Regulation No. R425 of 22 February 1985, as amended).

The diagram below captures the three factors that have an influence on the student nurses' perceptions towards student absenteeism.

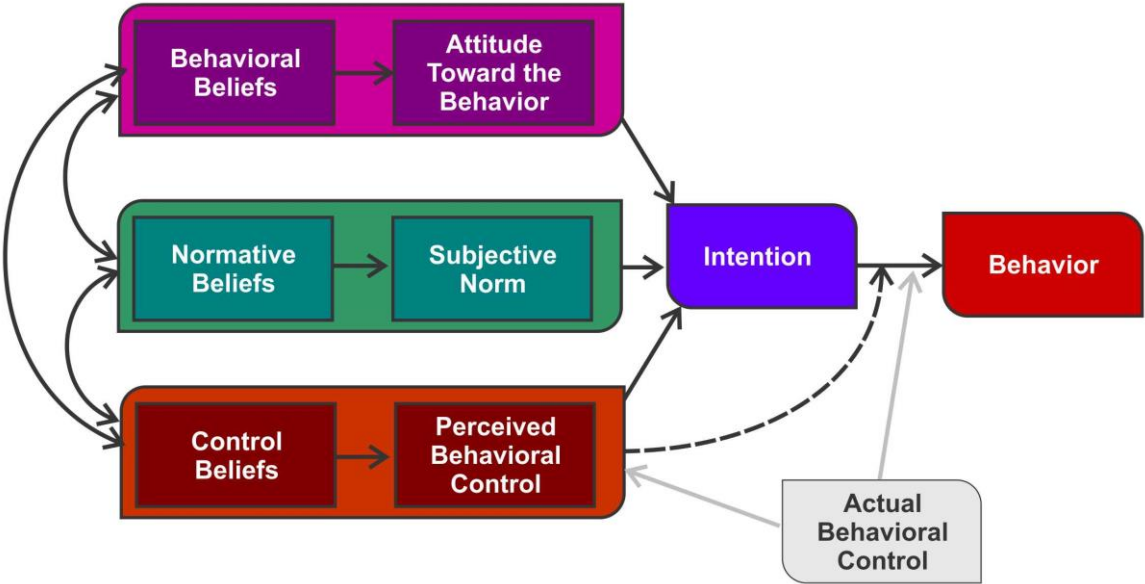


Figure 1.1: The diagram is a schematic representation of the theory (Ajzen, 1991:80)

1.6.2.1 Central theoretical statement

An investigation into the reasons why nursing students absent themselves from class in a college of nursing, should provide useful information to understand issues and formulate strategies regarding nursing students' absenteeism.

1.6.2.2 Conceptual definitions

In this section, the researcher defines the concepts of the study.

- **Absenteeism**

Absenteeism refers to the state of not being at work/school (Longman South African School dictionary for students, 2007:3). According to Muller *et al.* (2006:517), absenteeism refers to the failure to be present at the normal allocated hours. In this study, the researcher views absenteeism as a personal decision of not regularly attending a timetabled class in a clinical or theoretical setting for a period of time or an entire day.

- **Nursing student**

Student refers to a person studying at a university or college (Compact Oxford English Dictionary for students, 2006:1029). A nursing student refers to a student registered under (GG Regulation No. R425 of 22 February 1985, as amended) that is studying at a college of nursing. In this study, a nursing student is a person who is registered under (GG Regulation No. R425 of 22 February 1985, as amended) to do a nursing course at a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province, South Africa.

- **College**

According to the Compact Oxford English Dictionary for students (2006:188) a college refers to an educational establishment providing higher education or specialised training. The researcher refers to a college of nursing as a post-secondary educational institution that offers professional nursing education at basic

and post-basic level and has been approved by the South African Nursing Council (2005). In this study, college refers to a college of nursing offering nursing courses that is situated in the Limpopo Province of South Africa.

1.6.3 Methodological assumptions

The researcher believes in good research. Good research is a systematic, scientific process conducted accurately and without bias (Brink *et al.*, 2009:03) with the purpose to accumulate relevant information that can initiate change and contribute to a solution to the current situation (Polit & Beck, 2008:146).

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2007:70) refer to the research design as a plan or strategy that include the data gathering techniques that will be used and the data analysis that will be performed. A quantitative, descriptive, exploratory and cross sectional design was used to explore and describe reasons for nursing student absenteeism and to develop strategies to reduce student absenteeism. A quantitative design allows the systematic use of a formal instrument to gather numeric information that can be analysed with a statistical procedure (Polit & Beck, 2008:556). According to Brink *et al.* (2009:103) a descriptive design is concerned with gathering information from the representative sample of the population and data is collected from questionnaires and survey studies. Reasons for student absenteeism were described.

1.8 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method includes population, sampling, data collection and data analysis. This will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

1.8.1 Population

Babbie (2007:199) defines population as the theoretically specified aggregation of the elements in a study. In this study, the target population comprised of all the nursing students from level I to level IV on one campus of a college of nursing (Brink *et al.*, 2009:123). The students were easily accessible and student absenteeism occurs in all four levels. The target population of this comprised of 254 (N=254) students. The researcher requested that the mediator (hospital nurse manager) recruit the respondents and was informed that all the students are eligible to participate in the study. The researcher orientated the mediator regarding the information leaflet and data collection tool, that included the sections that must be completed by the respondents as well as the instructions to be followed by respondents when completing the questionnaire. The mediator held an information session with the nursing students, explaining that they had to give consent before taking part in the study. The benefits of the study were discussed with the respondents, and the mediator emphasised that participation was voluntary. Table 2 provides an overview of the number of nursing students in the different levels on the campus.

Table 1.2 Total population of nursing students from the published enrolment report on one campus of the college of nursing

Level	Number of students
Level 1	37
Level 2	47
Level 3	83
Level 4	87
Total number of students	254

1.8.2 Sample

The sample is a subset of the population selected to participate in a research study (Polit & Beck 2012:742). In this study, the sample comprised of 209 (n=209) of the nursing students that were willing to participate in the study and are registered under (GG Regulation No. R425 of 22 February 1985, as amended) on a selected campus at a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province.

1.8.2.1 Probability was deleted random sampling written, was used during the pilot study

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a group of people or other elements as representatives of the target population with which to conduct a study (Burns & Grove, 2009:721). In this study, random sampling was applied as it implies that all the elements in the population have an equal chance of being included in the sample (Brink *et al.*, 2009:126) and was used during the pilot study. Furthermore, the method ensured that the sample is representative of the population and it will provide less opportunity for systematic bias (Burns and Grove, 2009:349).

The researcher used an all-inclusive sample for data collection to counteract a low response rate. An all-inclusive sample entails that the entire population is the sample and has met the same criteria (Burns and Grove, 2009:344).

1.8.2.2 Sample size

According to Burns and Grove (2009: 721) sample size refers to a number of respondents recruited and consenting to take part in a study. The researcher consulted with a North-West University statistician in preparation for the data collection, and per instruction of the statistician the sample size comprised of 254 nursing students, while the actual sample size comprised of 209 (n=209) nursing students registered on a campus of a college of nursing. The sample size was sufficient to counteract a low response rate. The target sample size is 50% of the target population, as was suggested by the North-West University statistician.

1.8.3 Pilot study

Before the collection of data could commence, a pilot study was conducted on one campus of the college of nursing. According to De Vos *et al.* (2010:206), the term pilot study refers to a small study that is conducted prior to a larger study of research to determine whether the instrument to be used is adequate and appropriate (De Vos *et al.*, 2010:206). The purpose of conducting a pilot study was to detect possible problems in the data collection instrument, such as ambiguous instructions and inadequate time, so that it can be avoided (Brink *et al.*, 2009:166). Eight (8) nursing students from a campus of a college of nursing were included in the pilot study. Two respondents were randomly selected from each level.

The researcher approached them to obtain consent and requested that they complete the Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ) (Fayombo, 2012) voluntary (Burns & Grove, 2009: 44). These respondents were not included in the main study (Brink *et al.*, 2009:166). The only modification on the questionnaire concerned the completion time (Burns & Grove, 2009:44). The completion time was 12-15 minutes instead of the initially estimated 10 minutes. Therefore, the time for completion was changed to 15 minutes. No other modifications were made in the main study.

1.8.4 Data collection

According to Burns and Grove (2009:441) data collection is the gathering of data from the respondents. A self-report method was used to collect data. The researcher will now discuss the detailed information regarding the instrument.

1.8.4.1 Data collection method

A self-report method by means of a questionnaire was used, as it is a data collection method used mainly in survey studies (Burns & Grove 2009:245). It involves obtaining information from the respondents by asking them to respond to questions posed by the researcher (Polit & Beck, 2008:324). In this study, the purpose of the

study was explained and voluntary consent was obtained from the respondents before the data was collected. The researcher obtained the assistance of a hospital nurse manager to act as mediator that is not affiliated with the college of nursing under study. The mediator held an information session in which she explained and informed the respondents of the purpose of the research, the objectives and possible benefits as well as the fact that participation is voluntary. The respondents were also informed that by completing the questionnaire, they would be giving their consent and that they could terminate participation at any time.

The self-report scale, which is usually presented in a form of a questionnaire, was used systematically to obtain the reasons for student absenteeism from class and the practical setting (Jeanne, 2011:162). The Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ) (Fayombo, 2012) was used to obtain the data. A questionnaire was utilised to collect the data, as questionnaires provide a greater sense of anonymity to the respondents, are the quickest way of obtaining data from a large sample and are less expensive and time consuming (Brink *et al.*, 2009:147). Questionnaires can be distributed by mail or in person (Burns & Grove 2009:245). In this study, the questionnaires were distributed and collected by the mediator.

1.8.5 Data analysis

Data analysis entails reduction, organising and giving meaning to the data (Burns & Grove, 2009:44). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to describe and summarise the data. The data was then converted and condensed in an organised manner and transformed to make it meaningful to the readers (Brink *et al.*, 2009:171). EpiData was used to capture and enter data into the computer and the software statistical program for social sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 (SPSS, 2013) was used to calculate the data. According to Jackson (2009:419), descriptive statistics refer to numerical measures that describe a distribution by providing information on the central tendency of the distribution. Inferential statistics is defined as statistics that permit inferences about whether the results observed in a sample are likely to be found in the larger population (Polit & Beck, 2012:730). The

statistician analysed the data immediately after all the data was collected and the researcher presented it in the form of graphs and tables.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics concerns the conformity of behaviour to a code or set of principles and prevents research abuse (Bless *et al.*, 2007:140). This study explored and described the reasons why nursing students absent themselves from class. Therefore, the researcher adhered to the ethical principles that prevented any form of abuse.

Ethical approval was obtained to protect the rights of the respondents, the researcher, and the institution. In order to conduct research in an ethical manner, the researcher obtained approval from the ethics committee of a North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus (Clearance number: NWU-00100-13-S1) (See appendix A). Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Limpopo Provincial Government ethical committee (See appendix B) and from the Vice-principal of the campus of a Limpopo college of nursing (See appendix C), based on the approval by the ethical committee of the Limpopo Provincial Government. The researcher respected the rights of the respondents, based on ethical principles as defined by Brink *et al.* (2009:31). She further ensured that the rights of the respondents were protected through obtaining voluntary informed consent from the respondents after an explanation of the details of the study and before they engaged in the research study (Creswell, 2009:89). The ethical principles applied in this study will now be discussed:

1.9.1 Respect for others

According to Brink *et al.* (2009:32) the principle of respect for others involves the right to self-determination, which implies that human beings are capable of controlling their own destiny and have the freedom to participate or not to participate in research (Burns & Grove, 2009:188). Furthermore, individuals should be treated as free and autonomous agents (Brink *et al.*, 2009:32). The respondents were informed of their

right to choose to participate or not to participate in the study. The respondents had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty. The principle of beneficence imposes the researcher's responsibility to minimize harm and maximize benefits (Polit & Beck, 2012:152).

According to Brink *et al.* (2009:32) discomfort can be physical, emotional, economic, social or legal in research. The researcher ensured that the study was conducted in a quiet room that was free from distractions and that involved no risks. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that the questionnaire comprised of questions that excluded any form of harm. The respondents had the right not to answer a question if they felt that the questions were too personal and made them uncomfortable; respondents could also withdraw from participation should they experience any form of discomfort.

1.9.2 Relevance and value

The researcher attached crucial aspects related to relevance and value to the study by using and recognising ethical issues and by thoroughly overthinking the ethical consequences of decisions. Alternative viewpoints were examined when deciding what was right in a particular set of circumstances and the researcher had to develop the ability to deal with ambiguity and uncertainty; making a decision on the best information available (Burns & Grove, 2009:189).

1.9.3 Scientific integrity

Research integrity is defined as the active adherence to ethical principles and professional standards. It involves honesty, personal responsibility and the protection of human subjects in the conduct of a research study. The researcher ensured that the findings of the study were not falsified or fabricated. The findings of the study reflected the true information from the respondents and nothing was added to the research. The researcher analysed and interpreted the findings correctly with the assistance of the statistician as shown in the relevant tables (Burns & Grove, 2009: 212).

1.9.4 Risk benefit ratio

The principle of beneficence imposes on the researcher the duty to minimize harm and maximize benefits (Polit & Beck, 2012:152). This principle covers multiple dimensions, which are outlined in the following sections:

1.9.4.1 The right to freedom from harm and discomfort

Harm and discomfort in research can involve many facets concerning a respondent's life, such as the physical, economic, spiritual, social or legal facets (Brink *et al.*, 2009:32). These rights were protected by conducting the research in a safe environment on a selected campus. With the assistance of the supervisors and the statistician, the questions that appeared in the questionnaire were carefully framed in order to avoid harm of any nature. The researcher ensured that the respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. The researcher's contact numbers were provided in the information leaflet. Furthermore, the respondents were assured that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from completion of the questionnaire should they experience any discomfort without any penalty.

1.9.4.2 The right to protection from exploitation

The researcher ensured that the respondents were informed before participation in the study and allowed time for clarity-seeking questions. The respondents were further informed that participation was free and voluntary. They were free to withdraw at any time without losing any benefits as nursing students and without being victimised. They had the right to decline participation in the study. No space was provided for the respondents to write their names on the questionnaire.

1.9.4.3 Respect for human dignity

The researcher took into consideration that the respondents were human beings who had the right to self-determination and the freedom to decide whether they wanted to participate in the study or not (Burn & Grove, 2009:188). According to Polit and Beck

(2012:154), respect for human dignity involves the right to self-determination and the right to full disclosure. These principles are discussed in the following section:

1.9.4.3.1 The right to self-determination

According to Burns and Grove (2009:189) self-determination is explained as the ability of the respondents to decide whether they want to participate in a research study. In this study, the respondents first received information about the research study from the mediator and ensured that participation was voluntary. Thereafter the mediator provided them with an information leaflet and explained to them that when they agree to complete the questionnaire they were giving their consent. The respondents were informed that they could decide whether to participate in the study or not without receiving any penalty (Brink *et al.*, 2009:32). Anonymity was ensured by stating in the letter that respondents' names will never be revealed and that the provided data will be handled as confidentially as possible.

1.9.4.3.2 The right to full disclosure

In order for people to make an informed voluntary decision about participation in a study, there should be full disclosure (Polit and Beck, 2012:154). In this study, the nature of the study was fully described and the respondents were fully informed about their right to refuse participation and to withdraw from participation at any time without being victimised. The benefits of the study were outlined in the information leaflet and the respondents were encouraged to read it before they participate in the study.

1.9.5 Informed consent

Informed consent refers to an individual's agreement to voluntarily participate in a study. This consent is obtained after assimilation of the essential information (Burns & Grove, 2009:201). Respondents provided informed consent after being made aware of the design and procedures of the study, this process provided the students

with enough detail to exercise a rational decision to participate. Respondents' right to make an informed and voluntary decision about study participation requires full disclosure (Polit & Beck, 2012:154). The questionnaire contained the letter that contained information about the nature, title, purpose and objectives of the study as well as the rights of the respondents in the study. The information leaflet was read and the mediator indicated to the respondents that by completing the questionnaire, the respondents would have given consent to participate. It was disclosed that there would be no discrimination against those who did not wish to participate in the study. The possible risks were disclosed, namely that respondents should not answer any question they felt uneasy or uncomfortable with.

1.9.6 Distributive justice

According to Brink *et al.* (2009:33), this principle entails that the respondents have the right to fair selection and treatment. The researcher should not choose the population, because they are easily available and can be easily manipulated (Burns & Grove, 2009:198). In this study, there was no discrimination with regard to culture, social values and sexual preferences. All-inclusive sampling was used, based on the problem being studied. All respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and had the right to withdraw at any time without any loss of benefits as a nursing student. The right to privacy entails that the respondents have the right to choose with whom they share their information and that they had the right to be assured that the data will remain private (Polit & Beck, 2012:156). To ensure privacy protection, the questionnaire was designed in such a way that there is no place provided for the writing of names. Therefore, the name of the respondents will never be known. It was stated in the information leaflet that only the research team will work with the information that the respondents shared.

1.9.7 Professional competence

Professional competence was maintained in the study by ensuring that the mediator is well orientated regarding the information leaflet and data collection tool. This

orientation included the instructions to be followed by the respondents when completing the questionnaire. This process created a similar understanding of professionalism for the mediator and the researcher and issues of privacy and confidentiality were also emphasised (Ashcroft, 2002:282).

1.9.8 Privacy and confidentiality

Burns and Grove (2009:195) explained the right to privacy as the right of the participants to choose with whom they are willing to share their information. The respondents were informed that no individual identifiers will be used in any publication resulting from this study and that only the team of researchers will work with the information they will share. One of the aspects used to ensure confidentiality was by making sure that the questionnaire was completed anonymously by not providing a space to write a name. The researcher locked the completed questionnaires in a cupboard immediately after data collection. The questionnaires were sent to the statistician for data analysis. The researcher protected all sensitive information by keeping it in a locked cabinet and stored on a password-protected computer.

1.9.9 Publication of results

The respondents were informed that the research findings would be published without linking the findings to individual respondents, and that no individual identifiers would be used in any publication resulting from this study. Only the team of researchers will work with the shared information.

1.10 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 1: Overview of the study

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter 4: Research findings

Chapter 5: Evaluation of the study, limitations and recommendations for nursing education, practice, research and policy

1.11 SUMMARY

In Chapter 1, an overview of the planned research study was presented. The background of the research was discussed, the concepts defined and the research design and research method was briefly outlined. The chapter concluded with a discussion on the ethical principles applied in this study. In the next chapter, the literature review relating to the study will be discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2, the literature on student absenteeism is explored and discussed. Student absenteeism is discussed according to its classifications, followed by the causes of student absenteeism and the impact thereof.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review refers to a summary of written sources relevant to the topic of interest (Burns & Grove, 2009:91) and serves an important role in the research process. It can provide the reader with an overview of existing evidence and contribute to the argument for the new study (Polit & Beck, 2012:95). Burns and Grove (2009:38) state that the literature review provides an orientation as to what is known and unknown and determines gaps. It also determines consistencies and inconsistencies in the literature about the subject, concept or problem, as well as the need for the replication or refinement of a study. Performing a literature review can synthesise the strengths, weaknesses and findings of available studies on a topic or a problem.

2.3 STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

Student absenteeism is discussed according to the classification of absences as provided in literature.

2.3.1 CLASSIFICATION OF ABSCENCES

Absence has been classified differently by various authors depending on the duration and frequency. Weideman *et al.* (2007:7) indicates that student absenteeism is a period of time when students do not attend school for the entire day. School refers to the place where students are taught (Longman South African School dictionary, 2007:607). In this case, it is a higher education institution, such as a nursing college. Cook and Ezenne (2010:54) maintain that the acceptable period of absence is 10% of school days and more than 10% is regarded as chronic absence.

According to Reid (2005:78), student absenteeism refers to incidents when students fail to attend scheduled meetings like classes, lectures, tutorials, workshops or seminars or laboratory classes without prior permission (Reid, 2005:78; Barlow & Fleischer, 2011:228; Thekedam, 2013:1026).

Ramodike (2008:2) classified absenteeism in the following way: authorised absenteeism that refers to frequent absence from class with a valid reason, and unauthorised absenteeism, that entails absence from class without a valid reason. In addition, partial absenteeism refers to being absent for a part of the class or attending half of the subjects and full absenteeism is defined as a full day of absence. Kerr *et al.* (2011:27) concurs with Ramodike (2008:2), and further classifies student absenteeism as: lesson absence, which is absence from attending a lesson; and school refusal, which refers to absence that occurs when students refuse to go to school. Kerr *et al.* (2011:2) indicated that chronic absence can have legal implications in the case of prolonged absenteeism due to illness and when students are not attending some of the school days.

Eastman *et al.* (2007:3) classified student absenteeism even in more detail: absence, which entails being absent for some of the learning hours or all school day, simple truancy, which refers to a single day absence, and habitual truancy, which means five days of absence in a semester; this is considered an offense.

According to Dube and Orpinas (2009:87) and Kottasz (2005:5), student absenteeism can be classified as student-motivated and non-student motivated absenteeism. Student-motivated absenteeism is the disadvantaged consequences for a student due to increased autonomy, whereas non-student motivated absenteeism, manifests through external influences such as, absence due to the delegation of household activities by the parents during school hours and taking care of the siblings. Similar to school-going children, parents of students in a college of nursing also require that they take care of siblings. Timmins and Kaliszer (2002:255) and Weideman *et al.* (2007:11) define student absenteeism as a coping mechanism to reduce stress and regarded one day absence as a short-term absence.

Table 2.1 Summary of classification of absences

Classification	Description	Author
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorized absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Frequent absence from class with a valid reason 	Ramodike (2008:2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unauthorized absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Absence from class without a valid reason 	Ramodike (2008:2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partial absenteeism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Absent for part of the class or attending half of the subjects 	Reid (2005:78)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A full day absence. 	Eastman <i>et al.</i> (2007:3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Absence from attending a lesson. 	Kerr <i>et al.</i> (2011:38)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School refusal absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – -Refers to absence which occurs when students refuse to go to school. 	Ramodike (2008:2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prolonged absenteeism due to illness and when students are not attending some of the school days. 	Cook and Ezenne (2011:54)

Classification	Description	Author
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple truancy absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A single day absence and habitual truancy, which means five days of absence in a semester. 	Eaton <i>et al.</i> (2008:223)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-motivated absenteeism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Violation of a student due to increased autonomy. 	Dube and Orpinas (2009:87)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-student motivated absenteeism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Absenteeism influenced by external factors such as delegation of household activities during school hours and taking care of the siblings or family. 	Kottasz (2005:5)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Single day absence used as a coping mechanism to reduce stress. 	Weidman <i>et al.</i> (2007:11)

2.4 CAUSES OF STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

Absenteeism can be caused by different factors, depending on the circumstances students find themselves in. Different literature sources reflect on causes of absenteeism; these causes can be classified according to the following factors: Student-centred, home-related, school-related and social factors. A detailed description of each factor is presented in the subsequent paragraphs.

2.4.1 Student-centred factors

Student-centred factors are defined as individual characteristics that hold the student from attending classes (Cook & Ezenne, 2010:48). There are various factors which

affect student absenteeism. The available information regarding student absenteeism revealed the following factors:

- Lack of interest in studies (Fayombo 2012:90; Wadesango & Machigambi 2011:90).
- Socialisation among students (Hixson, 2012:28; Eaton *et al.*, 2008:224).
- Not understanding the subject (Ramodike, 2008:2; Eastman *et al.*, 2007:10).
- Lack of study time (Timmins & Kaliszer, 2002:254; Wadesango & Machigambi, 2011:92).
- Inability of the students' mental capacity to match the course opted for (Reid, 2006:29; Holbert *et al.*, 2002:250).
- Inferiority complex among the students (Cooperkline, 2009:33; Timmins & Kaliszer, 2002:253; Eastman *et al.*, 2007:10).
- Lengthy periods (Fayombo *et al.*, 2012:92; Wadesango & Machigambi, 2011:92; Suhid *et al.*, 2012:347).

These factors will now be discussed in detail:

2.4.1.1 Lack of personal interest in studies

Studies conducted by Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:90) and Thekedam, (2013:1028), showed that an uninteresting course or subject and a subject being taught by lecturers the students dislike leads to absenteeism. Ramodike (2008:2), in support of Wadesango and Machigambi's (2011:90) findings, stated that factors, such as a lack of interest, in education leads to student absenteeism. Bati *et al.* (2013:597) revealed that when students experience difficulty in adapting to the university environment, it causes student absenteeism. Kottasz (2005:6) and Ramodike (2008:2), in support of Bati *et al.* (2013:597), also indicated that another cause of student absenteeism is a lack of student self-motivation. However,

students' personal interest and self-motivation should be initiated primarily at home involving family members. Reid (2005:59) discovered that students skip classes because they dislike school as well as due to boredom with schoolwork (Cook & Ezenne, 2010:35). In support, Suhid *et al.* (2012:348) showed that students are absent from class when they feel tired and bored with certain subjects. Creative and innovative teaching strategies are therefore recommended to improve students' interest (Wadesango & Machigambi, 2011:96).

Student orientation, support programs and regular guidance should be implemented for the selection of courses of interest and the lecturers' teaching strategies should be improved to stimulate students' interest (Wadesango & Machigambi, 2011:96). According to Thekedam (2013:1032), students should first change their negative attitude towards institutional courses to gain interest in their studies.

2.4.1.2 Socialisation and substance abuse among students

Most of the students reported that they absent themselves from class when they are in the company of friends who are doing drugs and drinking alcohol (Hixson, 2012:28). According to Eastman *et al.* (2007:10), a high rate of student absenteeism is observed amongst social groups who influence each other on substance abuse and sexual experimentation. Students who have busier social lives also absent themselves from class (Young *et al.*, 2010:292) and most of the students indicated that they absent themselves when they want to be with their peers (Sharma & O'Byrne, 2008:1376).

2.4.1.3 Not understanding the subject

Ramodike (2008:2) and Eastman *et al.* (2007:10) indicated that causes of student absenteeism are learning difficulties and a lack of student self-motivation. Gump (2006:40) describes learning difficulties as a failure to understand the subject; this resulted in obtaining less than 50%. Reimer and Smink (2005:15) report that when students experience difficulties to understand school subjects, these results in absence from class. Hughes (2005:47) and Kottasz (2005:08) concur by revealing

that students agree that they absent themselves from class when they dislike the subject, because they do not understand it. These tendencies are observed amongst students who attain lower marks in certain subjects (McCray, 2006:32).

2.4.1.4 Lack of study time

A lack of study time resulting from too much time for socialisation is another source of absenteeism (Kumar and Rao, 2013:512). Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:92) and Kumar and Rao (2013: 512) showed that students absent themselves when they want to study for a pending test and when they want to work on assignments (Kottasz, 2005:08). According to Desalegn *et al.* (2014:82) students reported that preparation for examinations is one of the factors that contribute towards absenteeism from class. Poor time management for studies in institutions of higher learning has been reported (Wadesango & Machigambi, 2011:96).

2.4.1.5 Inability of students' mental capacity to match the course opted for

According to Cooperkline (2009:33) students with a low IQ become frustrated in the classroom environment and finally they absent themselves. They tend to absent themselves from class when they discover that the school curriculum is not tailored to meet their academic needs (Kearney, 2008:258). When the mental capacity of a student does not match the course opted for, it results in student absenteeism (Wadesango & Machigambi, 2011:90). Students who underperform feel that the lessons are not relevant to their lives and as a result, a high absenteeism rate has been reported (Gupta & Lata, 2014:14). Teasley (2004:126) shows that low performance in certain subjects is a major cause of student absenteeism and students opted to be absent from class to avoid the difficulties they experience while in class (Teasly, 2004:126). This is especially true for the days on which test feedbacks are provided, because then underperformers absent themselves to escape the shame they experience (Gupta & Lata, 2014:12).

2.4.1.6 Inferiority complex among students

Patel *et al.* (2013:13) indicate that poor academic performance leads to the development of a low self-esteem and this is a common cause of student absenteeism. In addition, students with low academic performances absent themselves with the intention of getting enough time to study (Ramlah & Ahmed, 2013:6). Students from families with negative cultural educational perceptions feel socially unacceptable at school (Patel *et al.*, 2013:14). With regard to gender, lesbians, gay and bisexual students experience verbal harassment and a feeling of being unacceptable; this leads to school absenteeism (Diaz & Kosciw, 2009:19). Finally, Maynard (2010:23) reports that a lack of self-acceptance results in creating a school absenteeism habit.

2.4.1.7 Lengthy periods

Fayombo *et al.* (2012:92) reported that lecturers who take extra time utilising students' free time cause a high percentage of student absenteeism. In addition, Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:92) indicate that poor time management by the lecturers leading to lengthy periods causes student absenteeism. Suhid *et al.* (2012:347) indicated that extra classes that are arranged by the school management become a source of absenteeism. Lecturers' lengthy explanation of concepts that take up the students' time for refreshments resulted in student absenteeism (Mergani *et al.*, 2013: 325). The mentioned aspects concur with Musser's (2011:37) findings that stated that students report that the characteristics of the lecturers, including the pace at which lessons are presented, contribute to student absenteeism. Consequently, lectures that are short become too long and students tend to avoid it (Kumar & Rao, 2013:512).

2.4.2 Home-related factors

According to Sanchez (2012:2) home-related factors refer to the circumstances that occur within the family that concern the student. Home-related factors have a negative impact on students' class attendance. These factors include the following:

- A poor family relationship (Rochford *et al.*, 2009:601; Hammond *et al.*, 2007:14).
- Death of a family member (Epstein & Sheldon, 2000:196; Dube & Orpinas, 2009:89).
- Family commitments (Romero & Lee, 2008:5; Dhaliwal, 2003:36).
- Financial issues and travelling long distances (Young *et al.*, 2010:293; Williams, 2000:28).

The abovementioned factors will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.4.2.1 A poor family relationship

Rochford *et al.* (2009:601) revealed that poor family relationships are one of the social causes of student absenteeism. Hammond *et al.* (2007:14) agreed and stated that family disorganisation is another cause of student absenteeism. The mentioned arguments are supported by Teasley (2004:117) and Reid (2006:29) who indicated that unsupportive family members can influence the reasons for students not to attend school. Chang and Romero (2008:15) stated that poor family relationships that result in domestic violence lead to a high student absenteeism rate. In addition, Ham (2004:173) indicated that students from poor family relationships, such as students with separated parents, are more absent than those who are living with both biological parents. The findings by Strohschein *et al.* (2009:84) showed that adopted students have a lower absenteeism rate than those who live with their biological parents and it has been reported that poor relationships in the family, such as marital dissolution, contribute to a high rate of student absenteeism (Strohschein *et al.*, 2009:84).

2.4.2.2 Death of a family member

Chronic school absenteeism is a sign of a serious problem in a family, such as a high rate of mortality, resulting in inconsistent parenting (Epstein & Sheldon, 2000:42).

Stressful events, such as the death of a family member, influence student absenteeism (Dube & Orpinas, 2009:89). According to Young *et al.* (2010:293), students absent themselves from class when they are attending the funerals of their loved ones. A study conducted by Kearney and Bensaheb (2006:3) concurs with Young *et al.* (2010:293) and Alyildiz and Kuğuoğlu (2010:2582), indicating that 80% of school absences are due to legitimate reasons, which include important family functions, such as funerals. Cooperkline (2009:34) and Kousalya *et al.* (2006:5) showed that the death of a family member increases the student's responsibility, for instance taking care of the siblings; this results in student absenteeism.

2.4.2.3 Family commitments

Family commitment is one of the causes of student absenteeism (Dhaliwal, 2003:36); this is most prevalent amongst students who have children (Doyle *et al.*, 2008:132; Alyildiz and Kuğuoğlu, 2010:2579), because students revealed that they miss classes in order to resolve their family matters. Students with working parents are compelled to stay at home to look after their siblings when they are sick (Sparks, 2010:197).

Reid (2005:70) revealed family commitments, such as having a child, cause student absenteeism. Furthermore, Hocking (2008:10) indicated that students who have children, absent themselves more frequently than students without children. These findings are consistent with the findings of Joseph and Hunter (2008:45) indicating that student absenteeism is due to a personal nature concerning family commitments, such as taking care of the siblings or children (Joseph & Hunter, 2008:45).

2.4.2.4 Financial issues

Chronic absenteeism is a signal of a serious problem in the circumstances of students who come from poverty-stricken families. Students will have to utilise their bursary or stipend for financial support (Epstein & Sheldon, 2000:197). Romero and Lee (2008:5) also revealed that a family risk factor, such as poverty, is an indicator of chronic student absenteeism. This is supported by Railsback (2004:20) who

indicated that schools serving students who live in poverty, have significantly higher rates of chronic absenteeism due to a lack of financial support. Chang and Romero (2008:18) agree with Epstein & Sheldon (2000:198) who explained that chronic absenteeism is related to economic and social challenges, such as poverty, affecting the families. Shahzada *et al.* (2011:292) expanded on this by reporting that one of the reasons for not attending classes was due to parents who failed to pay admission fees.

2.4.2.5 Travelling long distances to campus

Students reported that the failure to arrive on time due to staying far from the campus is a cause of absenteeism (Young *et al.*, 2010:293). According to Williams (2000:28) long distances to learning institutions cause student absenteeism. Balfanz and Byrnes (2012:26) concur when stating that students who utilise more than one type of public transport to get to school, are often absent, because they arrive after the lessons have started. A study conducted by Kousalya *et al.* (2006:6) shows that travelling long distances to school resulted in student absenteeism.

2.4.3 School-related factors

School-related factors are the physical and psychosocial climates of the school (Sanchez, 2012:2). Researchers have found that institutions of learning are having a negative impact on student absenteeism. According to the relevant literature, high rates of student absenteeism are found in institutions that are not conducive to learning. The following factors are school-related:

- Classroom environment not conducive to learning (Bati *et al.*, 2013:597; Hughes, 2005:41).
- Poor lecturer-student relationship (Kottasz, 2005:6; Timmins & Kaliszer, 2002:257).

- Inadequate orientation about school policies (Thedekam, 2013:1028; Alyildiz and Kuğuoğlu, 2010:2582).
- Excessive homework and projects for students (Doyle *et al.*, 2008:132; Hughes, 2005:46).
- Lack of recreational and allied activities (Wadesango & Machigambi, 2011:92; Sheppard, 2009:89).
- Negative peer influence on lecturers (Kearney, 2008:245; Wadesango & Machigambi, 2011:92).
- Poor infrastructural facilities (Weideman *et al.*, 2007:9; Bati *et al.*, 2012:590).
- Inclement weather (Teasley, 2004:118; Alyildiz and Kuğuoğlu, 2009:259; Young *et al.*, 2009:259).
- Poor teaching skills of lecturers (Rochford *et al.*, 2009:601; Bati *et al.*, 2013:597).
- Lecturer not turning up for scheduled lectures (Thedekam, 2013:1028; Alyildiz and Kuğuoğlu, 2010:2582).

The abovementioned factors will now be discussed:

2.4.3.1 Classroom environment not conducive to learning

A study conducted by Bati *et al.* (2013:597) revealed that difficulty in adapting to the college/university environment causes student absenteeism. Hughes (2005:41) is of the opinion that students engage in absenteeism when they view the teaching environment as non-conducive. An institutional factor cited by Ramodike (2008:2) is poor ventilation that caused the classroom environment not to be conducive enough to learning. Gupta and Lata (2014:13) further indicated that an unfavourable learning environment contributes towards school absenteeism. In addition, a poor

educational environment promotes students' detachments from school (Christie, 2007:320).

2.4.3.2 *Poor lecturer-student relationship*

Poor teacher-student relationships are the cause of student absenteeism (Gupta & Lata, 2014:13). Kottasz (2005:6) concurred and indicated that students absent themselves due to a poor lecturer-student relationship; this demotivates students to attend class. Reid (2006:29) showed that the causes of student absenteeism within the school setting include poor student-teacher relations. According to Wilkins (2008:22) and Weideman *et al.* (2007:09) the result of a poor relationship between students and lecturers is serious tension that disturbs the learning process.

2.4.3.3 *Inadequate orientation about school policies*

According to Barlow and Fleischer (2011:228) a lack of policy for monitoring student absenteeism and inconsistency in applying the rules for the reduction of student absenteeism are major causes of this problem. In some institutions policies are available, but they do not address absenteeism issues correctly (Joseph & Hunter, 2008:35). Similar findings are also evident in a study conducted by Kousalya *et al.* (2006:5) indicating that most of the institutions' student absenteeism policies are not clear and not well communicated.

2.4.3.4 *Excessive homework and projects for students*

Doyle *et al.* (2008:132) and Hughes (2005:46) indicated that students absent themselves when they did not do the assignment that is due for submission. Kottasz (2005:7) concurred and showed that stress resulting from work overload and students finding the work to be too difficult are other factors that cause student absenteeism. Alyildiz and Kuğuoğlu (2010:2582) agreed with Kottasz (2005:7) and revealed that students absent themselves when they feel that getting up early in the morning is very difficult for them due to tiredness after working late. According to Fayombo *et al.* (2012:92), Hughes (2005:41) and Doyle *et al.* (2008:132) competing

assignment dates is another cause of student absenteeism. Therefore, lecturers should plan homework in such a way to ensure that only one task is submitted at a time (Yahaya *et al.*, 2010:626).

2.4.3.5 Lack of recreational and allied activities

According to Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:92) a lack of recreational activities and support systems in the institutions of higher learning are sources of student absenteeism. Students reported that a lack of recreational activities, such as sports, makes them unhappy and results in students engaging in community activities (Sheppard, 2009:483; Weideman *et al.*, 2007:9). Contrarily, Kousalya *et al.* (2006:5) reported that recreational activities are a cause of absenteeism, because participating students absent themselves when they are tired. According to Kousalya *et al.* (2006:6), students revealed that a lack of shopping malls and cinemas around the institution result in travelling long distances for entertainment, causing absenteeism.

2.4.3.6 Negative peer influence

According to Kearney (2008:245), students absent themselves from class when they associate themselves with delinquent peer groups. The study conducted by Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:92) revealed that students have a negative influence on other students regarding lecturers who teach certain subjects. In addition, it was revealed that students, who are having personal differences with lecturers, influence their peers not to attend classes (Kousalya *et al.*, 2006:5; Gupta & Lata, 2014:13).

2.4.3.7 Poor infrastructural facilities in school

Institutions with a poor infrastructure and a lack of the necessary teaching equipment, contribute towards student absenteeism (UNICEF, 2010:35). In addition, poor school facilities also cause student absenteeism (Weideman *et al.*, 2007:9).

Bati *et al.* (2013:598) maintained that small lecture halls utilised for large groups of students create absenteeism amongst the students due to overcrowding.

A study conducted by Weideman *et al.* (2007:09) revealed that poor school facilities, such as a poor library and a lack of equipment, cause student absenteeism. In addition, large numbers of students in one classroom predisposed students to absenteeism (Bati *et al.*, 2012:596). West (2012:9) agreed with Gupta and Lata (2014:13), explaining that most of the students reported that a poor classroom environment lead to high rates of school absenteeism, especially during cold and hot days. Students further reported that a lecture theatre is not a teaching environment conducive to learning (Doyle *et al.*, 2008:132).

2.4.3.8 Inclement weather

Bad weather, such as rainy days, is one of the factors that cause students to be absent (Alyildiz and Kuğuoğlu, 2009:257; Mukisa *et al.*, 2009: 89). Young *et al.* (2010:293) indicated that 80% of school absences are due to legitimate reasons, which include bad weather conditions such as snow (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012:4).

2.4.3.9 Poor teaching skills of lecturers

Rochford *et al.* (2009:601) stated that academic related reasons, such as the poor teaching skills of teachers, lead to student absenteeism. The study conducted by Bati *et al.* (2013:597) revealed that a factor influencing student absenteeism is the presentation of lessons that are not adequately prepared by the lecturers. According to Holbert *et al.* (2002:25), students tend to be absent when a lecturer is unable to explain the subject content well and in a language that is understandable to the students. Poor delivery of the content and curriculum by lecturers is a cause of student absenteeism (Reid, 2006:30). Hua (2008:23) reported that, due to ineffective teaching skills, students absent themselves from class to attend private lecturers.

2.4.3.10 Lecturer not turning up for scheduled lecture

Thedekam (2013:1028) stated that academic related reasons for student absenteeism include teachers that do not come to class for scheduled lectures. Alyildiz and Kuğuoğlu (2010:2582), Wadesango and Machgambi (2011:92) and Rogers and Vegas (2009:6) concur and stated that an institutional factor for absenteeism cited by students is lecturers not coming to class to teach. In addition, students tend to consider lecturer absenteeism as a normal phenomenon that can be practiced (Miller *et al.*, 2007:6).

2.4.4 Social factors

The researcher describes social factors as the behaviour and activities that are adopted through interaction with peers in the learning environment and in the community. From the relevant literature sources, another cause of student absenteeism is social factors. These students come from different societies which value education differently and some students focus on entertainment rather than education itself. As a result they absent themselves from class. The following social factors were identified:

- Fear of students that bully (Reid, 2005:70; Hocking, 2008:10).
- Family commitments (Reid, 2005:70; Hocking 2008:10).
- Low societal value for education (Hammond *al.*, 2007:14; Teasley, 2004:117; Reid, 2006: 29).
- Transportation problems (Teasly, 2004:134; Kearney, 2008:262).
- Political activities (Schumilian & Coetzee, 2011:176; Kousalya *et al.*, 2006:5; Hillygus, 2005:34).
- Regarding wealthy persons higher than educated persons (Virginia Department of education, 2005:57; Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012:5).

- The belief that a lot of education is not required for success (Bandura, 2009:504; Hocking, 2008:250).

These factors will be discussed in the subsequent paragraphs:

2.4.4.1 Fear of students that bully

According to Reid (2005:70) and Hocking (2008:10) student absenteeism is caused by a fear of students that bully. Cooperkline (2009:34) and Cook and Ezenne (2010:35) agreed by indicating that female students indicate that they are absent from class because they are afraid of students that bully. Further, Cooperkline (2009:35) indicated that disruptive classroom behaviour is a source of school absenteeism. Students absent themselves when they are afraid of other students laughing at them when they are unable to answer the teacher's question (Suhid *et al.*, 2012:348). Copperkline (2009:33) indicated that chronically absent students reported that they absent themselves from class in order to avoid conflict with peers.

2.4.4.2 Family commitments

According to Suhid *et al.* (2012:346) the family is regarded as the primary institution that causes student absenteeism. The Paradise Unified school parent-student handbook (2014:5) shows that the death of a family member is one of the commitments that lead to student absenteeism. This is consistent with the findings of Malik (2012:448) indicating that the illness of a family member prevents children from attending classes. Student absenteeism is occurring during the last semester due to family commitments, such as families going on holiday (Queensland state school policy, 2013:10). Community activities, such as funerals, are essential commitments that result in school absence (Baltimore community, 2012: 7). Students whose parents have bad health, tend to stay at home to take care of their siblings when they are sick (Cook & Ezenne 2010:43).

2.4.4.3 Low societal value for education

Hammond *et al.* (2007:14) stated that negative peer influences from the community are causing student absenteeism. Teasley (2004: 117) and Reid (2006:29) concur by indicating that reasons for students not to attend school can be influenced by factors such as a lack of community support. The community values and negative attitudes towards education cause high rates of student absenteeism (Gump, 2006:26). A study conducted by Hocking (2008:16) indicates that societies that do not have institutions that support the students' school attendance, have high rates of absenteeism. Student advocacy (2008:7) maintained and indicated that a lack of positive role models in the community is also a cause for absenteeism.

2.4.4.4 Transportation problems

According to Teasley (2004:134), one of the reasons why students do not attend classes can be due to transportation problems. Students report that transportation problems are a source of class absenteeism (Kearney, 2008:262; Weideman *et al.*, 2007:09; Schumilian & Coetzee, 2011:176), since they do not get transport on time (Bati *et al.*, 2013:598). Students who use public transport to school are more likely to be absent than those who walk to school (Balfanz *et al.*, 2008:25). Merghani *et al.* (2013:325) indicated that a low socio-economic status leads to the failure to pay for the students' transport to school and causes school absence.

2.4.4.5 Political activities

Political activities have an influence on student absenteeism (Schumilian & Coetzee, 2011:176). Many students are absent from class due to attending political conferences (Kousalya *et al.*, 2006:5). Most of the students view political activities as helpful in resolving school related problems (Longo & Meyer, 2006:2). Students who show interest in politics, usually have a family political background (Hillygus, 2005:34). Although political activities are allowed and taken as a democratic right (Virginia Department of Education policy 2005:58), it contribute to student absenteeism.

2.4.4.6 Wealthy persons versus educated persons

High rates of absenteeism have been reported in communities where wealthy people are more valued than educated people. Therefore, students are not motivated to attend classes (Virginia Department of education policy, 2005:57). According to Rogers and Vegas (2009:33), uneducated wealthy people play a major role in student absenteeism, as they are more valued than educated people that are not wealthy. The findings of Hua (2008:24) show that in some societies, people do not see the practical value of education and as a result, education is viewed as irrelevant when compared to work opportunities.

2.4.4.7 The belief that a lot of education is not required for success

According to Bandura (2009:504) absenteeism is influenced by the belief that there is no connection between education and better life opportunities. Hocking (2008:25) agrees with Bandura and explains that communities that believe that education is not necessary for success in life, create the feeling amongst students that they can be leaders without being educated. In addition, a high rate of student absenteeism is evident in students whose societies do not believe in the importance of attending classes in order to be successful (Hocking, 2008:18).

2.5 IMPACT OF STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

Students who absent themselves from class obtain poor academic outcomes and perform poorly (Musser, 2011:37). In addition, Copperkline (2009:37) indicates that poor performance is evident from the lower test marks that students receive who are always absent from class. Consistent with these findings, Kumar and Rao (2013:511) also show that students that score lower test marks are those who missed the explanation and examples of the content given by the lecturer. Gupta and Lata (2014:15) concur by indicating that students who absent themselves from class also get lower reading marks. According to Balfanz and Byrnes (2012:5) students who absent themselves are likely to fail the course. Maynard (2010:95)

support these findings by indicating that school absenteeism exposes students to school failure and delinquent behaviour. Hamdi (2006:29) show that students who are absent from classes obtain low test marks and perform badly, even in the examination. Consequently, absenteeism places students at risk of not being able to achieve educational qualifications and make quality choices for their future (Cook & Ezenne, 2010:36).

Student absenteeism reduces the students' opportunity to learn important aspects of life that will assist in obtaining success in life (Spradlin *et al.*, 2012:2). Shahzada *et al.* (2011:293) show that student absenteeism disrupts the classroom environment and students who attend classes regularly are interrupted (Yahaya *et al.*, 2010:626). As a result, students who attend school regularly, may end up starting to absent themselves. Finally, frequent absenteeism causes an interruption of the continuity of a formal lecture and a loss of literacy skills (Yahaya *et al.*, 2010:626).

Schumilian and Coetzee (2011:15) revealed that students who absent themselves from class also miss the benefit of learning from questions asked by other students during lectures. Buehler *et al.* (2012: 4) indicate that teachers spend more time reviewing concepts to students who missed the lessons. At the end of the day, lecturers teach less content than desired, sacrificing the learning experience of those who attend school regularly. Therefore, students are being left behind and take education less serious (Gupta & Lata, 2014:15). Balfanz and Byrenes (2012:4) revealed that student absenteeism lead to student dropout. In addition, suspension and expulsion can be the results of student absenteeism (Dembo & Gullledge 2009:423).

Economically, student absenteeism tends to result in future unemployment (Lochmiller, 2013:10). Furthermore, student absenteeism leads to dropout; this requires a lot of money, since society now have to co-ordinate social programs that address the effects of school absenteeism (Yahaya *et al.* (2010:626). Student absenteeism negatively affect the financial status of the school, because most schools are funded according to the number of students they have (Lochmiller,

2013:10). Chronic absenteeism requires counselling sessions, which also need to be funded (Yahaya *et al.*, 2010:626). The study conducted by Shahzada *et al.* (2011:293) revealed that student absenteeism leads to the conduction of workshops, symposia and projects that drain the government's funds. Frequent student absenteeism leading to school dropout, causes financial losses to the families (Gupta & Lata, 2014:15).

Students who are absent from class loose social contact with their peers; this can lead to isolation resulting in premature sexual activities (Shahzada *et al.*, 2011:293). Consequently, teenage pregnancies are common amongst students who absent themselves from class (Shahzada *et al.*, 2011:293). Teixeira (2013:13) shows that a lack of self-motivation and a poor self-esteem are evident in students who absent themselves from class. Gupta and Lata (2014:15) maintain and indicate that students who are frequently absent from class do not have the opportunity to be motivated by other students who perform very well academically. Students who are frequently absent from class loses the opportunity to identify their talents and to develop their skills during classroom learning activities (Gupta & Lata, 2014:14). As a result, students that are absent are more likely to undermine lessons and take learning less seriously. According to Maynard (2010:23), students who absent themselves from class are likely to engage in bad behaviours, such as drug and substance abuse. Dembo and Gullede (2009:423) maintain that chronic absence from school also lead to delinquent and violent behaviour. Students' absenteeism is an indicator of student disengagement and the loss of opportunities to develop social skills and meaningful relationship with other students and lecturers (Gotfried, 2009:394).

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented a literature review on aspects of student absenteeism, such as the classification of absences, causes of student absenteeism and the impact of student absenteeism. In the next chapter, the research methodology will be discussed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, the researcher describes the research methodology used in the study. The setting where the study was conducted, the study design, population and sample are described. Thereafter the researcher report on the instrument used for data collection, including the methods implemented to maintain the validity and reliability of the instrument and then these aspects are illustrated in more detail.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology refers to the steps, strategies and procedures used for data gathering and analysis in research (Polit & Beck, 2008:758). In addition, Burns and Grove (2009:719) describe research methodology as the process or plan for conducting the specific steps of the study. The discussion of the design and method relating to the variables under investigation will follow.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2008:70) the research design is a plan or strategy that includes the movement from the underlying philosophical assumptions to the indication of the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be performed. Burns and Grove (2009:236) view the research design as a blueprint for conducting a study that maximizes control over aspects that could interfere with the validity of the findings. This study used a quantitative, explorative, descriptive, and cross-sectional design to identify and describe the reasons why nursing students absent themselves from

class. The concepts that are included in this research design are discussed in the next paragraphs.

3.3.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research refers to a process that allows the systematic use of a formal instrument to gather numeric information that can be analysed with statistical procedures (Polit & Beck, 2008:556). This statement is consistent with the view of Creswell (2009:233) who states that numerical data is collected and analysed using statistical procedures, so that a hypothesis can be tested. The researcher used a quantitative method to gather data in a numerical form, the data was then analysed and described in a form of descriptive and inferential statistics. In this study, the researcher collected the relevant data related to the reasons for student absenteeism in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province.

3.3.2 Exploratory design

An exploratory design is used to increase the knowledge about a particular concept under investigation when little is known about it (Burns & Grove, 2009:700). The aim of an exploratory design is to gain a broader understanding by refining the hypothesis about the relationship between the phenomena (Polit & Beck, 2012:727). In conducting this research, the researcher explored the reasons why students absent themselves from class by means of the Factors Influencing Absenteeism questionnaire (FIAQ) (Fayombo, 2012). The researcher used the information from the literature review to explore the phenomena under investigation.

3.3.3 Descriptive design

According to Brink *et al.* (2009:103) a descriptive design is concerned with gathering information from the representative sample of the population and data is collected through questionnaires and survey studies. Descriptive designs aim at providing a picture of situations as they naturally occur (Burns & Grove, 2009:237). Furthermore,

in descriptive designs, phenomena in real life situations are explored and described in detail to generate new knowledge about the research topic (Burns & Grove, 2009:45). This study used the FIAQ (Fayombo, 2012) to explore and describe the reasons for student absenteeism in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province.

3.3.4 Cross-sectional design

A cross-sectional design is used where data is collected on one occasion from different participants on different times (Brink *et al.*, 2009:105). When using a cross-sectional design, the researcher attempts to understand a topic by collecting data relevant to the topic through categorising the participants (Burns & Grove, 2009:241) in order to describe the changes in the phenomena across the stage.

In this study, the data was collected in two sessions. In the first session, the mediator collected the data from the first and third year nursing students. In the second session, data was collected from the second and fourth year nursing students.

3.4 RESEARCH METHOD

Burns and Grove (2009:719) describe the research method as the process or plan for conducting the specific steps of the study. The research method is used to structure a study and to gather and analyse information in a systematic fashion (Polit & Beck, 2008:765). After a researcher has defined the research problem and decided which approach to use, appropriate research methods are applied in relation to the population and sample (Brink *et al.*, 2009:123) to gather and analyse the relevant data. A discussion of the population, sample and sampling procedure as well as sample size follow in the subsequent paragraphs.

3.4.1 Population

Population is the theoretically specified aggregation of the elements in a study (Babbie, 2007:199). According to Polit and Beck (2008:338) the population is the particular type of individual that the researcher is interested in, meeting the designated set of criteria and possessing certain characteristics.

The target population in this study comprised all full-time nursing students from level one to level four, currently enrolled for the comprehensive nursing program on one campus of a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province. A mediator (hospital nurse manager) recruited the nursing students on one of the campuses of the college of nursing. The researcher appointed and oriented the mediator regarding the purpose of the research and the ethical issues. The mediator recruited the nursing students while they were on campus allocated for theory by placing an invitation for participation on the notice board. The invitation specified those who qualify to participate and that participation is voluntary. The date, venue and time for data collection were indicated in the invitation. Questionnaires were then handed to the students who agreed to participate. Table 3.1 reflects the total number of nursing students that took part in the study according to their levels of study.

Table 3.1 Total population of nursing students from the published enrolment report on one campus of the college of nursing

Level of study	Number of students
Level 1	37
Level 2	47
Level 3	83
Level 4	87
Total number of students	254

The target population of this study was 254 (N=254) students. The level four students were the largest group and level one contained the least students.

3.4.2 Sample and sampling procedure

The sample and sampling procedure of the study will now be discussed:

3.4.2.1 Sample

Brink *et al.* (2009:207) refer to a sample as a subset of the population that is selected to represent the population. An all-inclusive sample was applied in this study in order to counteract low response rates. Burns and Grove (2009:344) refer to an all-inclusive sample as the entire population having the same characteristics and meeting the same criteria. In this study, the sample was 254 (N=254) nursing students. Nursing students had to be enrolled at the selected campus of a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province under (GG Regulation No. R425 of 22 February 1985, as amended), in their first, second, third or fourth year of study and willing to participate in the study.

3.4.2.2 Sampling

Various authors define sampling in a different way. Burns and Grove (2009:721) define sampling as a process used for selecting a group of people or representatives of the target population with which a proposed study will be conducted. According to Brink *et al.* (2009:124), sampling refers to a process of selecting a certain part from the population in order to obtain information regarding a phenomenon in a way that represents the population according to the researcher's interest. The researcher applied an all-inclusive sample in order to counteract a low response rate. Burns and Grove (2009:344) refer to an all-inclusive sample as the entire population having the same characteristics and meeting the same criteria. The researcher obtained an all-inclusive sample (N=254) of nursing students on a selected campus at a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province.

3.4.3 Sample size

The sample size was 254 (N=254) nursing students. The mediator handed 254 questionnaires to the nursing students. Of the 254 nursing students, 209 (n=209) respondents completed and returned the questionnaire. Therefore, the actual sample size was 209 (n=209). The sample size was more than the target sample size of 50% of the target population suggested by the North-West University statistician. The response rate was 82,3%.

The mediator was one of the hospital nurse managers responsible for the nursing students' supervision during their clinical placement. The researcher asked the nurse manager to act as a mediator for the study in order to introduce the study to the students, for recruitment, explaining the purpose of the study as well as ensuring that ethical issues, such as informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and voluntary participation, are addressed on the students' level of understanding before the questionnaires were distributed. Another task of the mediator was to hand out the questionnaires, to receive them back and to send them to the researcher. In this study, the mediator was utilised to reduce bias, as the researcher is a lecturer on the selected campus, which could have influenced the students to participate in the fear of being victimised by the researcher.

3.4.4 Research setting

The setting is the location where the study is conducted (Burns & Grove, 2009:722). Polit and Beck (2012:743) define to the research setting as the physical location and conditions under which data collection takes place in a study. Settings for nursing research can range from total naturalistic environments to formal controlled laboratories (Polit & Beck, 2012:49). In this study, the mediator collected the data in a setting where there was no manipulation or change of the environment (Burns and Grove, 2009:362). The study took place in the Limpopo Province on one of the campuses of a college of nursing in the Mopani district. The setting allocated for data collection was a classroom, a natural and quiet place with limited distractions,

conducive to data collection. The setting was chosen to cut the cost of travelling during data collection.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

According to Burns and Grove (2009:441) data collection is the gathering of data from the respondents. Data collection involves obtaining information from the respondents by asking them to respond to the questions posed by the researcher (Polit & Beck, 2009:324). The collected data addresses the research problem (Polit & Beck, 2012: 725).

In this study, a questionnaire was used to collect data. A questionnaire is designed to gather data about the prevalence, distribution and interrelations of phenomena within a population (Polit and Beck, 2008:323). The researcher chose this design because it tends to yield data that is primarily quantitative, it allows the researcher to obtain information from a sample by means of self-report, that is responding to a series of questions posed by the investigator, and it was suitable for collecting the original data for describing a population too large to observe directly (Polit & Beck, 2008:324).

The self-report scale was presented in the form of a questionnaire that was used systematically to obtain the reasons for student absenteeism from class (Jeanne, 2011:162). In a survey design, the questionnaires can be distributed by mail or in person (Burns & Grove, 2009:245). However, in this study, the mediator distributed and collected the questionnaires (FIAQ) (Fayombo, 2012); this also contributed to a higher response rate. A discussion of the method of data collection follows in the next paragraph.

Once the sampling plan was specified, the respondents were recruited. Recruitment of the respondents involved two major tasks: the identification of eligible respondents and asking for their voluntary participation (Polit & Beck, 2008:352). Eligible respondents were nursing students registered at a campus of a college of nursing

under (GG Regulation No. R425 of 22 February 1985, as amended), in the Limpopo Province. In this study, all the nursing students on the campus of the nursing college were eligible. The researcher asked the hospital nurse manager to be the mediator. The researcher first orientated the mediator (hospital nurse manager) about the information leaflet and the data collection tool regarding the sections and the instructions to be followed by the respondents in order to complete the questionnaire.

The researcher obtained the assistance of a mediator that was not affiliated with the Nursing School under study. The mediator held an information session with the nursing students where the purpose of the research, objectives and possible benefits, as well as the fact that the participation is voluntary was explained. They were also informed that their consent will be obtained and that they can terminate participation at any stage of the research without any penalty.

According to Polit and Beck, 2012:743, the setting refers to the physical location and conditions in which data collection takes place in a study. In this study, the location was at one campus of the college of nursing in the Limpopo province of Mopani district and perfect for data collection. FIAQ (Fayombo, 2012) was used to investigate the reasons for students' absenteeism in a college of nursing. The FIAQ was adopted per permission granted by the author (Fayombo *et al.*, 2012) and was used for data collection (See appendix D). The researcher, with the assistance of the study leaders and the statistician, made adjustments, such as altering some of the questions in the study as will be discussed in 3.5.1.1. The FIAQ (Fayombo, 2012) has three subsections which were section A for demographic data, section B for the reasons for students' absenteeism and section C for measures to reduce students' absenteeism. The content of the FIAQ will be outlined in the following sections.

3.5.1 Discussion of the instrument

The Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ) (Fayombo, 2012) was used to collect data in this study (See appendix E) and is discussed in the paragraphs below.

3.5.1.1 The Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ)

The Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire is a previously validated questionnaire that was adopted for this study per permission granted by the author (Fayombo *et al.*, 2012). This questionnaire was used for data collection. The FIAQ is a self-administered questionnaire that is divided into three sub-sections, namely: Section A: Demographic data, Section B: reasons for student absenteeism, and Section C: measures to reduce absenteeism.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

This section focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including questions about age, marital status, current level of study, current distance from campus and method of transport. The nursing students had to complete the questionnaire by ticking the appropriate box next to the correct answer. The reason for including the demographic data that describe the distance from home to the nursing campus and the mode of transport the nursing students used, is related to the reasons for student absenteeism. In this section, the researcher, with the assistance of the study leaders and the statistician, included the method of transport and the distance the students travel from home to the campus.

SECTION B: REASONS WHY STUDENTS ARE ABSENT FROM CLASS

In this section, the reasons why students absent themselves from class were explored. The questionnaire consisted of 36 questions. The reasons were categorised into four sub-themes, namely: student-centred, home-related, school-related and social factors. The mediator asked the nursing students to tick their responses in the appropriate box next to the correct answer. With the help of the study leaders and the statistician, changes were made to the questionnaire and effected before data collection commenced. The subsequent statements below refer to areas that were changed in the questionnaire.

In section B, the heading which read, "according to your opinion what are the causes of students' absenteeism", was rephrased as follows: "in my opinion students are absent from class due to the following:"

- In section B item number 5, "Student does not understand the subject", was rephrased as: "I do not understand the subject".
- Item 6, "when student want to prepare for the test" was rephrased as: "when I want to prepare for a test".
- Item 10, "when student is preparing for examination" was rephrased as: "when I am preparing for examination".
- Section B item 35, under social factors: "when student want to attend community activities" was rephrased as: "when I want to attend community activities".

SECTION C: MEASURES TO REDUCE ABSENTEEISM

This section focused on the programs that were available and those that are needed to reduce student absenteeism. Nursing students were asked to tick their response in the appropriate box next to the programs that are already available and the ones that they think need to be established in a college of nursing (see annexure E) in the Limpopo Province. No changes were made in this section of the questionnaire.

3.5.1.2 Data collection procedure

Before data collection could commence, the researcher followed three processes to ensure that the research is ethically sound: the proposal was approved by the North-West university ethics committee (Clearance number: NWU-00100-13-S1) (see annexure A), the researcher obtained permission from the Limpopo provincial government of the Department of Health (See appendix B) and from the Vice-principal of the nursing campus (See appendix D).

A hospital nurse manager of the nearby hospital in the Mopani district in the Limpopo Province, served as the mediator. The mediator was first orientated about the information leaflet and the questionnaire, referring to the different sections and the instructions to be followed by the respondents in order to complete the questionnaire.

The mediator held an information session at the classroom allocated for data collection in which she explained and informed the nursing students of the purpose of the research, objectives and possible benefits, as well as the fact that participation is voluntary.

The researcher needed the mediator, because the researcher is a lecturer on the same campus and students might have felt obliged to take part in the study. Hence, the researcher viewed an independent person as the best option to grant students the freedom to accept or to refuse to take part in the study. The mediator explained the proposed measure to ensure confidentiality and anonymity and asked the respondents to give their consent by completing and submitting the questionnaire. The respondents were informed that participation can be terminated at any stage of the study without any penalty and that there would be no incentives offered for participation.

The data was collected in two sessions: The first session was in March 2014, for the level I and III nursing students; and in April 2014, data was collected from the level II and IV nursing students. The reason for using two sessions is the fact that only two levels of students are allocated per block and are therefore available on campus at that time. The mediator distributed the questionnaires and the students submitted it to the mediator approximately fifteen minutes later. After each data collection session, the mediator sealed the submitted questionnaires in a box. The researcher sent the questionnaires to the statistician at the North-West University (Potchefstroom campus) for data capturing and analysis.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The software statistical programme for social sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 was used for data analysis. The data analysis was carried out after capturing the collected data in the computer software programme EpiData (SPSS, 2013). Specific procedures were used for the data analysis, such as descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics are very useful in describing and summarising data in an organised and meaningful manner in order to assist the readers to understand the findings (Brink *et al.*, 2009:171). Descriptive statistics include cross tabulation, standard deviation, Cronbach's alpha coefficient and Spearman's rank order; these provide more meaning to the findings. The researcher used descriptive statistics to organise the data in a way that provides meaning and facilitates insight, such as frequency distribution, measures of central tendency and dispersion of the findings (Burns & Grove, 2009:696). Brink *et al.* (2009:203) describe inferential statistics as an area of data analysis concerned with drawing conclusions from the characteristics of populations, it uses sample data to make inferences about the population and it includes statistical significance. The researcher presented the results in frequencies, percentages, graphs and tables. A detailed discussion of the data analysis follows in chapter 4.

3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

According to Burns and Grove (2009:720) rigour in quantitative research strives for excellence through the use of discipline, scrupulous adherence to detail and strict accuracy. The following paragraphs discuss rigour in terms of the validity and reliability of the instrument used in the study.

3.7.1 Validity

The validity of a research instrument is determined by its ability to accurately measure what it is supposed to measure (De Vos, 2010:160). According to Jackson (2009:424), the research instrument is valid if it reflects the concept it claims to

measure. Validity was ascertained by the choice of items that were subjected to internal consistency analysis (Cronbach's Alpha). This is an index of item homogeneity and an indication of construct validity. After the researcher obtained permission to conduct the study, a pilot study was performed in March 2014 to determine the predictive validity of the FIAQ (Fayombo, 2012). Eight nursing students received the questionnaires in the pilot study, 2 students from each from level I to level IV. None of the students that participated in the pilot study was included in the final data collection sample. The pilot study determined that instrument obtained the data it was supposed to obtain. The respondents took 12-15 minutes to complete the questionnaires instead of the estimated 10 minutes. In consultation with the study leaders, the completion time of the questionnaire was increased to 15 minutes. No other problems were identified regarding the content of the questionnaire. The pilot study ensured the accuracy and dependability of the instrument. This assured the researcher of the fact that the instrument that will be used is validated. Important aspects of validity are discussed below.

3.7.1.1 Content validity

According to De Vos *et al.* (2010:160) content validity is concerned with the representativeness of the content of an instrument. The author that developed the FIAQ (Fayombo, 2012) established content validity, and the statistician and the study leaders confirmed this.

3.7.1.2 Face validity

Face validity is concerned with the appearance of the instrument to the respondents and whether it measures what it intends to measure (Polit & Beck, 2012:728). The questionnaire was pre-tested by conducting a pilot study. The aim was to identify any problems and to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. After the researcher secured permission for the pre-testing of the questionnaire, the respondents who met the selection criteria and were willing to participate were randomly selected by selecting two numbers from the class list. Two nursing

students from each level of study participated in the pilot study. The author that developed the FIAQ (Fayombo, 2012) established the face validity, and the statistician and the study leaders confirmed this (Babbie, 2007:154). (See appendix E).

3.7.1.3 Construct validity

Construct validity refers to the ability of the research instrument to measure the theoretical constructs it purports to measure (Burns & Grove, 2009:693). The author that developed the FIAQ established the construct validity (Fayombo *et al.*, 2012), and the statistician and the study leaders confirmed this.

3.7.2 Reliability

The reliability of a data collection instrument is determined by its ability to yield the same results each time it is repeatedly applied to the same objects (Brink *et al.*, 2009:165). De Vos (2005:162) adds that the reliability of a measurement procedure is the stability of the measurement, which is determined by producing identical and consistent numerical results each time it is applied. The researcher ensured reliability of the instrument by accurately phrasing each question to avoid ambiguity. Furthermore, the reliability of the instrument was ascertained in studies among students of the University of the West Indies in Cave Hill campus (UWI) and of the University of Ibadan (UI) in 2010/2011. The instrument yielded Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients of 0.87 and 0.79 among the UWI and UI samples respectively. The instrument was generated and initial versions were given to research experts for suggestions and comments before coming up with the final version (Fayombo *et al.*, 2012:125). The Cronbach's alpha value was calculated for this study. In this study value obtained was 0.61 and 0.83. Thus, the researcher is assured that the instrument to be used is reliable.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter described the research design and method. The information discussed included the instrument used for data collection, the procedure for data collection and data analysis, and validity and reliability of the instrument. The next chapter will present the data analysis and the research findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 4, the researcher addresses the data analyses and interpretation of the findings. An overview of the statistical analysis process is provided and a discussion of the findings is given.

4.2 DATA COLLECTION

The data was collected on a campus at a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province. The researcher chose the campus and the allocated classroom because it was accessible for her, quiet and conducive to data collection. All nursing students at the selected campus of the college of nursing were eligible to participate in the study. An all-inclusive sample was used. The mediator collected the data by means of a structured questionnaire, the Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ), (See appendix E) as developed by Fayombo *et al.* (2012). The hospital nurse manager (mediator) distributed the questionnaire. Participants responded to questions about the reasons why nursing students absent themselves from class in a college of nursing. The questionnaire took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

The questionnaire comprised of three sections, namely:

Section A: Demographic data

Section B: Reasons why students are absent from class

Section C: Measures to reduce absenteeism

The population in this study consisted of nursing students from a selected campus at a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province. A sample of 209 (n=209) nursing students, ranging from level 1 – 4, level I (n=33), level II (n=42) level III (n=75) and level IV (n=59) responded.

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis can be seen as a synthesis of research data and in quantitative research the data can be used to test a hypothesis (Polit & Beck, 2010:552). According to De Vos *et al.* (2005:218) analysis means the categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising of data to obtain answers to a research question. The raw data was captured and imported into a computer software statistical programme commonly known as SPSS version 21.0 (SPSS, 2013). Descriptive statistics were used to present the data that was analysed and included the mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage.

Measures of central tendency were used to describe the mean and standard deviation of the different sections of the questionnaire. The mean is used as an indicator for central tendency and is statistically known as an arithmetical average of all the scores in a distribution (Brink *et al.*, 2009:177). Standard deviation refers to a measure of variation, in other words the average difference between the scores in the distribution and the mean or central point of the distribution (Jackson, 2009:423). According to Brink *et al.* (2009:178) the larger the standard deviation, the more spread out the scores are around the mean. If the standard deviation is very low, it indicates that most of the respondents' answers were the same (Burns & Grove, 2009:474).

Frequency refers to a systematic arrangement of numeric values from the lowest to the highest and counting the number of times a number occurs (Polit & Beck, 2012:729). Percentage is used for a statistic that represents a certain proportion of a subgroup to a total group expressed as a number ranging from 0-100 (Brink *et al.*, 2009:206).

Factor analysis refers to an analysis that examines interrelationships among large numbers of variables and disentangles those relationships to identify clusters of variables that are most closely linked (Burns & Grove, 2009:700).

Oblimin Rotation is used to determine the correlation between factors and is determined by the similarity of the answers of the participants and therefore measure the same factor or dimension (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:219).

Exploratory factor analysis explores the underlying dimensionality of a set of variables (Polit & Beck, 2012:727). Burns and Grove (2009:700) describe exploratory factor analysis as a stepwise regression in which the variance of the first is partialled out before analysis is begun on the second factor. This type of analysis is performed when the researcher has little prior expectations about the factor structure. Principal component analysis is a multivariate technique that is performed to determine the linear components of a set of variables (Field, 2009:792). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value is a measure of sampling adequacy. The Bartlett test refers to a test in statistics to determine if there is sufficient correlation between items.

Reliability (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:216) refers to whether scores to items on an instrument have internal consistency (Creswell, 2009:233). According to Polit and Beck (2012:731), internal consistency is the degree to which the subparts of a composite scale are all measuring the same attribute as a measure of the scale's reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficient refers to a test most frequently used to establish internal consistency (Brink *et al.*, 2009:164). According to Polit and Beck (2010:101) the normal values for Cronbach's alpha coefficient are between 0.00 and 1.00; these values are based on inter-item correlations.

Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient refers to the correlation coefficient used when one or more of the variables are measured on an ordinal scale (Jackson, 2009:423).

Correlation is an association or bond between variables with variation in one variable systematically related to variation in another (Polit & Beck, 2012:724).

According to Jackson (2009:423), the independent sample t-test refers to a parametric inferential statistical test of the null hypothesis for a single sample where the population variance is not known.

Statistical significance refers to a term indicating that the results from an analysis of sample data is unlikely to have occurred by chance, at a specific level of probability (Polit & Beck, 2012:743). The association is considered to be statistically significant when the p-value is < 0.05 . If the p-value is > 0.05 there is no statistical significance between the variables (Polit & Beck, 2010:354). However, this sample consisted of an availability sample and no generalisation of results will be made. Although the p-values are reported, more emphasis will be placed on the interpretation of practical significance (effect sizes). Cohen's d refers to an inferential statistics for the interpretation of the effect size (Jackson, 2009: 415). According to Cohen (1988), the effect size is interpreted as follows: a small effect size is one of approximately 0.2, a medium effect size is 0.5 and a large effect size is 0.8.

4.4 RESULTS

The researcher collected the data through the Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ) (Fayombo, 2012) and sent it to the North-West University statistician for analyses. The data was captured and imported into a computer software statistical analysis program known as SPSS version 21 (2013). Statistical analysis was used to summarise the data, explore the meaning of deviations in the data, and test the proposal relationship and to compare or contrast descriptively (Burns & Grove, 2009; 461).

4.4.1 Response rate

The mediator handed out two hundred and fifty four (N=254) questionnaires to the nursing students. Two hundred and nine (n=209) respondents completed and returned the questionnaire. The response rate is outlined in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1 Response rate of respondents

RESPONDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER	FREQUENCY	RESPONSE RATE
Level one	37	29	74.4%
Level two	47	42	89.3%
Level three	83	74	89.2%
Level four	87	59	67.8%
Total responses	254	209	82.3%

Table 4.1 depicts the response rate according to the different levels of study. The total response rate was 82.3%. The highest response rate was from the level two (89.3%) and level three (89.2%) nursing students.

4.4.2 Demographic profile

The demographic data of the respondents is found in Section A of the FIAQ. All nursing students (under the South African Nursing Council's Regulation 425) registered on a selected campus of a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province were included in the study. Nationally, the demographic data shows that there are 20 956 registered nursing students. Provincially, in Limpopo there are 1 915 registered nursing students (SANC, 2014). The data was collected at a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province and there were 254 (N=254) registered nursing students.

The following demographic data are discussed: the age of the nursing students, the marital status, the current level of study, the current distance nursing students travel from the campus and the method of transport they use.

4.4.2.1 Age

The respondents were asked to indicate their age. Figure 4.1 outlines the age of the nursing students that responded to the questionnaire.

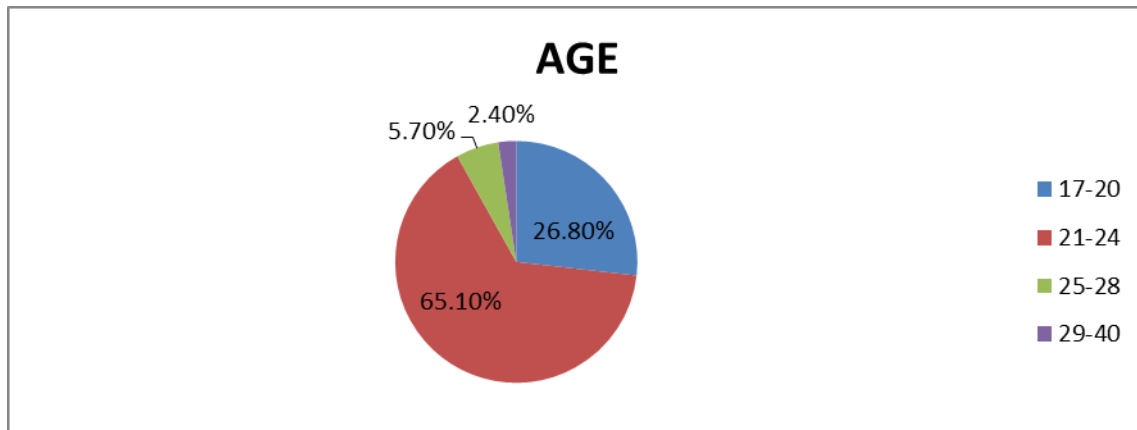


Figure 4.1 Age of the nursing students

The respondents' ages ranged from 17 to 40 years of age. The largest proportion of the respondents (65.1%) were in the age group 21-24 years (n=136). The second largest group's ages ranged from 17-20 (26.8%; n=56). The group of 25-28 (n=12) years of age formed 5.7% of the respondents, while the smallest proportion of the respondents (2.4%) were in the age group 29-40 years of age (n=5) (see Figure 4.1). According to the South African Nursing Council's age analyses, the age of the nursing students who are enrolled for the R425 programme ranges from 17-53 years (SANC, 2014).

4.4.2.2 Marital status

According to the respondents' responses on the question concerning marital status, the largest proportion of the respondents (93.3%; n=195) indicated that they were single (unmarried) and the respondents who were married formed 6.7% (n=14) of the respondents. Table 4.2 outlines the marital status of the nursing students.

Table 4.2 Marital status of nursing students

Marital status	Frequency	(%)
Married	14	6.7
Single	195	93.3
Divorced	0	0
Widow/Widower	0	0

4.4.2.3 Current level of study

The largest proportion of the respondents 35.9% (n=75) was in level III, the smallest proportion was 15.8% (n=33) and in level I of study. The respondents who were in level II were 20.1% (n=42), while 28.2% (n=59) of the respondents were in level IV of study. Figure 4.2 provides an outline of the current level of study.

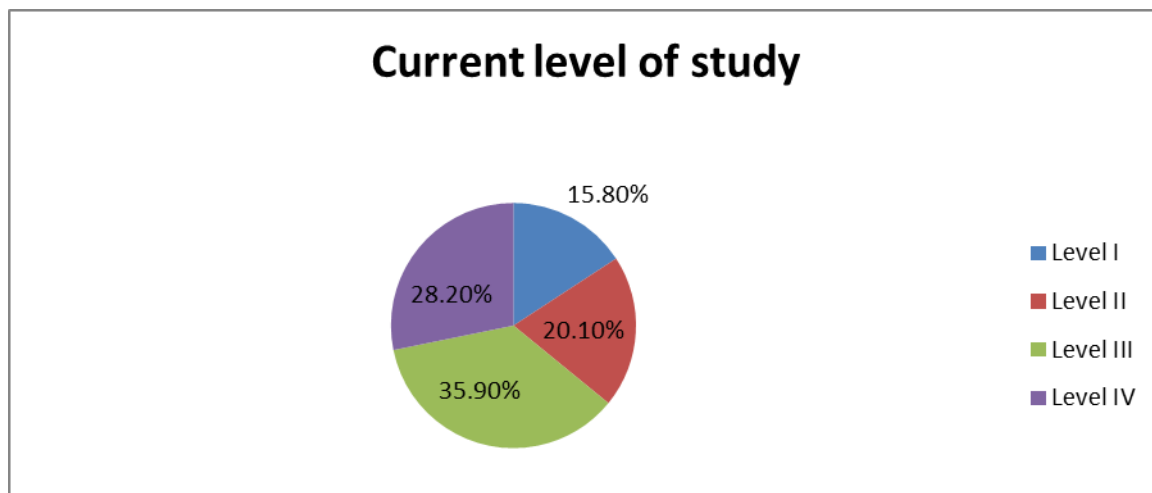


Figure 4.2 Current level of study

4.4.2.4 *Distance from campus*

Concerning the distance the students travel from the campus to home, the majority (52,2%) of the respondents (n=109), are travelling 15 kilometres or more, 42,6% (n=89) of the respondents are traveling 0-5 kilometres, while 2.4% (n=5) of the respondents travel 11-15 kilometres from the campus to home and only 1.0 % (n=2) of the respondents travel 6-10 kilometres. Table 4.3 outlines the distance students travel.

Table 4.3 Distance from campus

Current distance from campus	Frequency	(%)
0-5 km	89	42.6
6-10 km	2	1.0
11-15 km	5	2.4
15 km or more	109	52.2

4.4.2.5 *Method of transport*

The respondents were also asked about the method of transport they use to travel to campus. The majority (54.5%) of the respondents (n=114) are using public transport, followed by 43.5% (n=91) of the respondents who walk to the campus and 0.5% (n=1) of the respondents used his/her own transport (car or bicycle). See Table 4.4 for the results on the method of transport used by the respondents.

Table 4.4 Method of transport

Method of transport	Frequency	(%)
Own car or bicycle	01	0.5%
Public	114	54.5%
None (I have to walk)	91	43.5%

4.5 DISCUSSION OF THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

In this section, the researcher presents the descriptive statistics related to the items of the subscales of the FIAQ. The reasons for students' absenteeism were divided into the following (four) subscales: Student-centred factors; home-related factors; school-related factors; and social factors. The subscales will be outlined according to the items each subscale consisted of, and an explanation of what items belonged to which subscales will be provided in the following paragraphs.

4.5.1 Student-centred factors

In the FIAQ (Fayombo, 2012), student-centred factors consisted of 10 items. In Table 4.5, a description of the items as well as the percentage and frequency of each item is displayed.

Table 4.5 Student-centred factors

Item no.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Students' lack of interest in school subjects or courses	7.7% (16)	8.2% (17)	31.6% (66)	31.6% (66)
2	Lack of personal interest in studies	7.2% (15)	30.1% (63)	35.1% (75)	26.3% (55)
3	Inability of students to match the course the courses opted for	5.3% (11)	33.5% (70)	38.8% (80)	19.1% (40)
4	Lack of self-confidence among the students	8.1% (17)	25.8% (54)	34.4% (72)	30.1% (63)
5	I don't understand the subject	11.0% (23)	19.6% (41)	41.6% (87)	25.4% (53)
6	When I want to prepare for a test	49.3% (103)	27.3% (57)	12.9% (27)	9.6% (20)
7	Inferiority complex among the students	8.1% (17)	23.0% (48)	1.6% (3)	23.4% (49)
8	Lengthy periods	38.8% (81)	33.0% (69)	8.2% (38)	8.6% (18)

Item no.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
9	Too much socialisation among students	7.2% (15)	20.6% (43)	42.6% (89)	28.2% (59)
10	When I am preparing for examination	53.1% (111)	20.1% (42)	14.4% (30)	10.5% (22)

The largest proportion of the respondents (31.6%; n=66) strongly disagree and 31.6% (n=66) disagree that they are absent from class due to a lack of interest in school subjects or courses (item 1). The largest proportion of the respondents (35.1%; n=75) disagreed and 30.1% (n=63) agreed that they are absent due to a lack of personal interest in their studies (item 2). In item 3, 38.8% (n=80) of the respondents disagreed and 33.5% (n=70) agreed that inability is the reason for the students' absenteeism. With regard to item 4, 34.4% of the respondents (n=72) disagreed and 30.1% (n=63) strongly disagreed that a lack of self-confidence among the students causes student absenteeism. In Item 5, 41.6% of the respondents (n=87) disagreed and 25.4% (n=53) strongly disagreed that they absent themselves when they do not understand the subject. With regard to item 6, the largest proportion of the respondents (49.3%; n=103) strongly agreed that they are absent from class when they want to prepare for a test. In item 7 23.4% of the respondents (N=49), strongly disagreed and 23.0% (n=48) agreed that an inferiority complex causes student absenteeism. The largest single proportion of the respondents (38.8%; n=81) strongly agreed and 33.0% (n=69) of the respondents agreed that they absent themselves from class due to lengthy periods (item 8). In item 9, the largest proportion of the respondents (42.6%; n=89) disagreed and 28.2% (n=59) strongly disagreed that too much socialisation among students causes student absenteeism. With regard to absenteeism when the nursing students want to prepare for examination (item 10), the largest proportion of the respondents (53.1%; n=111) strongly agreed and 20.1% (n=42) agreed with being absent when writing examination.

4.5.2 Home-related factors

Home-related factors included seven items. Table 4.6 provides a description of the items as well as the percentage and frequency of each item.

Table 4.6 Home related factors

Item no.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
11	Financial issues	9.6% (20)	16.7% (35)	28.7% (60)	45.0% (94)
12	Lack of parental support	12.9% (27)	34.0% (71)	25.4% (53)	27.4% (58)
13	Lack of parental care and involvement in their children's academic activities	17.2% (36)	35.4% (74)	23.9% (50)	23.4% (49)
14	Death of a family member	63.2% (132)	25.8% (54)	6.2% (13)	3.8% (8)
15	Poor family relationships	15.8% (33)	33.0% (69)	37.3% (78)	13.4% (28)
16	My home is too far from the campus	14.8% (31)	15.8% (33)	25.8% (54)	43.5% (91)
17	Family commitments	21.1% (44)	37.8% (79)	23.9% (50)	16.3% (34)

In item 11, 45.0% of the respondents (n=94) strongly disagreed and 28.7% (n=60) of the respondents disagreed that they are absent due to financial issues. With regard to item 12, the largest proportion of the respondents, 34.0% (n=71) agreed and 27.4% (n= 58) strongly disagreed that a lack of parental support causes student absenteeism. In item 13, the largest proportion of the respondents 35.4% (n=74) agreed and 23.9% (n=50) disagreed that the lack of parental care and involvement causes absenteeism. According to the findings, 63.2% of the respondents (n=132) strongly agreed and 25.8% (n= 54) agreed that they absent themselves when there is death of a family member (item 14). With regard to item 15, the largest proportion of the respondents 37.3% (n=78) disagreed and 33.0% (n=69) agreed that they are

absent due to poor family relationships. In item 16, where the home is far from campus, 43.5% (n=91) strongly disagreed and 25.8% disagreed that this contributes to absenteeism. Regarding family commitments (item 17), 21.1% (n=44) strongly agreed and 37.8% (n=79) of the respondents agreed that they are absent from class when they have family commitments.

4.5.3 School-related factors

School related factors consist of 11 items. In Table 4.7, a description of the items as well as the percentage and frequency of each item is provided.

Table 4.7 School-related factors

Item no.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
18	Poor lecturer-student relationship.	24.9% (52)	38.8% (81)	23.4% (49)	12.4% (26)
19	Poor teaching skills of lecturers leading to boring lectures	31.6% (66)	37.3% (78)	20.6% (43)	10.5% (22)
20	Negative peer influence on lecturers	16.3% (34)	35.9% (75)	32.5% (68)	14.8% (31)
21	Lecturers not turning up for scheduled lectures	8.1% (17)	25.4% (53)	41.6% (87)	23.4% (49)
22	Excessive homework and projects for students	31.1% (65)	28.2% (59)	27.3% (57)	12.4% (26)
23	Lack of recreational and allied activities like sports programs	21.1% (44)	18.2% (38)	38.8% (81)	22.0% (46)
24	Lack of fresher's or farewell parties	9.6% (20)	12.9% (27)	36.8% (77)	40.2% (84)
25	Inadequate orientation about hours of training	10.0% (21)	27.3% (57)	35.9% (75)	26.3% (55)
26	Classroom environment not conducive to learning	18.7% (39)	24.9% (52)	36.4% (76)	18.7% (39)

Item no.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
27	Poor infrastructural facilities in school, e.g. inadequate space in library, lack of necessary equipment	39.2% (82)	23.9% (98)	23.4% (49)	12.4% (26)
28	Inclement weather, such as when it is cold or hot	15.8% (33)	23.0% (48)	27.8% (58)	20.1% (42)

With regard to item 18, the largest proportion of the respondents 38.8% (n=81) agreed and 24.9% (n=52) strongly agreed that a poor lecturer-student relationship is a reason for the students' absenteeism. With regard to poor teaching skills (item 19) of the lecturer leading to boring lectures, 31.6% (n=66) of the respondents strongly agreed and 37.3% (n=78) agreed that they are absent due to boring lectures. With regard to item 20, the largest proportion of the respondents, 35.9% (n=75) agreed and 32.5% (n=68) disagreed that they absent themselves when they experience negative peer influence on lecturers. The largest proportion of the respondents, 41.6% (n=87) disagreed and 25.4% (n=53) agreed that they are absent from class when the lecturer are not turning up for a scheduled lecture (item 21). In terms of excessive homework and projects for students (item 22), the largest proportion of respondents, 31.1% (n=65) strongly agreed and 28.2% (n=59) of the respondents agreed that they are absent due to excessive homework and project work. The largest proportion of the respondents 38.8% (n=81) disagreed and 22.0% (n=46) strongly disagreed that they absent themselves due to a lack of recreational and allied activities (item 23). In item 24, the largest proportion of respondents 40.2%, (n=84) strongly disagreed and 36.8 % (n=77) disagreed with the lack of fresher's or farewell parties as a reason for absenteeism. In item 25, the largest proportion of the respondents, 35.9% (n=75) disagreed and 27.3% (n= 57) agreed with inadequate orientation about hours of training leading to absenteeism. In item 26, classroom environment not conducive to learning, the largest proportion of the respondents, 36.4% (n=76) disagreed and 24.9% (n=52) agreed that a classroom environment not

conducive to learning leads to absenteeism. The findings shows that 39.2% (n=82) of the respondents strongly agreed and 23.9% (n=98) agreed that poor infrastructural facilities in school (item 27) is the reason for their absenteeism. The largest proportion of the respondents, 27.8% (n=58) disagreed and 23.0% (n=48) agreed that inclement weather leads to absenteeism.

4.5.4 Social factors

Social factors consisted of eight items. Table 4.8 indicates the students' responses to the reasons for absenteeism under social factors, and include the percentages and frequency of each item.

Table 4.8 Social factors

Item no.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
29	Unavailability of opportunities for entertainment like malls or movies around the campus	7.7% (16)	8.6% (18)	35.4% (74)	48.3% (100)
30	Low societal value for education	6.7% (14)	29.2% (61)	39.7% (83)	23.9% (50)
31	More regard of wealthy persons than educated persons	5.3% (11.0)	15.3% (32)	51.6% (108)	27.8% (58)
32	Beliefs that a lot of education is not required for success and business	3.8% (8)	13.9% (29)	44.5% (93)	37.8% (79)
33	Political activities such as rallies	4.8% (10)	18.2% (38)	39.2% (82)	36.4% (76)
34	Transportation problem	12.9% (27)	22.0% (46)	24.4% (51)	40.2% (84)
35	When I want to attend community activities	2.9% (6)	15.8% (33)	39.7% (83)	40.2% (84)
36	When I am afraid of students that bully	20.6% (43)	20.1% (42)	26.8% (56)	29.7% (62)

The largest proportion of the respondents, 48.3% (n=100) strongly disagreed and 35.4% (n=74) disagreed that the unavailability of opportunities for entertainment like malls or movies around the campus (item 29), is the cause for student absenteeism. With regard to low societal value (item 30) for education, 39.7% (n=83) of the respondents disagreed and 23.9% (n=50) of the respondents strongly disagreed with this item. The largest proportion of the respondents, 51.6% (n=108) disagreed and 27.8% (n=58) strongly disagreed that there is more regard of wealthy persons than educated persons (item 31). In item 32, the largest proportion of the respondents 44.5% (n=93) disagreed and 37.8% (n=79) strongly disagreed that they absent themselves from class due to the beliefs that a lot of education is not required for success and business. Item 33, concerning political activities, the largest proportion of the respondents 39.2% (n=82) disagreed and 36.4% (n=76) strongly disagreed that political activities lead to absenteeism. Regarding transport to the campus, the largest proportion 40.2% (n=84) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the transport problem as the cause of absenteeism and 24.4% (n=51) of the respondents disagreed (item 34). In item 35, 40.2% of students strongly disagreed (n=84) and 39.7% (n=83) agreed that they are absent when they want to attend community activities. The largest proportion of the respondents, 29.7% (n=62) strongly disagreed and 26.8% (n=56) disagreed that they absent themselves when they are afraid of students that bully (item 36).

4.6 MEASURES TO REDUCE STUDENTS' ABSENTEEISM

Section C of the FIAQ (Fayombo, 2012) consisted of the measures to reduce students' absenteeism. In Table 4.9 a description of the items as well as the percentage and frequency of each item is given.

Table 4.9 Measures to reduce students' absenteeism

Program	We already have the program	We need to improve our current program	We do not have programs like this	We need a program like this	We do not need a program like this
1. Orientation program	83.7% (175)	67.9% (142)	15.8% (33)	15.3% (32)	1.0% (2)
2. Established policy for controlling absenteeism	64.6% (135)	48.8% (102)	34.9% (73)	31.6% (66)	3.8% (8)
3. Systematic student absenteeism monitoring tool	58.9% (123)	38.8% (81)	41.1% (86)	33.0% (69)	7.2% (15)
4. Motivating program, emphasizing the benefits of attending classes	43.5% (91)	36.4% (76)	56.5% (118)	54.1% (113)	1.9% (4)
5. Prize giving ceremony for student who was never absent from class	15.8% (33)	14.4% (30)	83.7% (175)	73.7% (154)	8.6% (18)
6. Friendly and mutually lecturer-student relationship program	48.8% (102)	40.7% (85)	50.7% (106)	47.8% (100)	2.9% (6)

The following paragraphs provide a discussion of the results regarding the programs needed to reduce students' absenteeism.

4.6.1 Orientation program

The largest proportion of the respondents, 83.7% (n=175) indicated that they have an orientation program. With regard to the improvement of the program, 67.9% (n=142) of the respondents indicated that they need the current program to be improved. However, 15.8% (n=33) of the respondents reported that they do not have an orientation program. A further 15.3% (n=32), indicated that they want the program to be established. Only 1.0% (n=2) showed that an orientation program is not needed. Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:96) suggested the implementation of effective and functional student orientation programs in order to reduce students' absenteeism.

4.6.2 Established policy for controlling student absenteeism

The largest proportion of the respondents, 64.6% (n=135) stated that the established policy for controlling absenteeism was available. However, 48.8% (n=102) of the respondents indicated that the policy needs to be improved. On the other hand, 34.9% (n=73) of the respondents indicated that they do not have a policy for controlling students' absenteeism, while 31.6% (n=66) of the respondents said that they want a policy to be established. Only 3.8% (n=8) of the respondents revealed that they do not need a policy for controlling student absenteeism. The findings were consistent with the statement of Spradlin *et al.* (2012:2), indicating that attendance policies should be available and that the educational institution must ensure that the policies are well communicated (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012:8).

4.6.3 Systematic student absenteeism monitoring tool

The largest proportion of the respondents, 58.9% (n=123) indicated that there was a systematic student absenteeism monitoring tool on the campus and 38.8% (n=81) of the respondents reported that it needs to be improved. According to 41.1% (n=86) of the respondents, they do not have a monitoring program, while 33.0% (n=69) of the respondents indicated a need for the program to be established. Only 7.2% (n=15)

of the respondents reported that they do not want the program to be established. An electronic system for recording and monitoring students' absenteeism should be designed for educational institutions (Weideman *et al.*, 2007:78) in order for the lecturers to keep accurate records of absenteeism.

4.6.4 Motivating program

According to 43.5% (n=91) of the respondents there is a motivating program on the campus and 36.4% (n=76) reported that they want the current program to be improved. The largest proportion (56.5%) of the respondents (n=118) stated that they do not have a motivating program that emphasises the benefits of attending classes. A proportion of 54.1% (n=113) of the respondents indicated that they need such a program to be established. However, 1.9% (n=4) of the respondents said that they do not want a program to be established. Wadesango and Machigambi (2011:96) indicated that student support programs could also be part of the strategies needed to reduce students' absenteeism.

4.6.5 Prize giving ceremony

According to the findings, the largest proportion (83.7%) of the respondents (n=175), revealed that there is no prize giving ceremony on the campus for students who were never absent from class. According to 73.7% (n=154) of the respondents they need this program to be established. However, 15.8% (n=33) of the respondents indicated that they already had the program and 14.4% (n=30) reported that the current program needs improvement, whereas 8.6% (n=18) of the respondents reported that they do not want this program. Hocking (2008:34) indicated that an award giving program can be initiated to motivate students not to be absent from class. Furthermore, a study by Shahzada *et al.* (2011:292) found that an award giving ceremony is successful in reducing students' absenteeism. Types of awards may include certificates, ribbons and announcements of the students' names over the intercom (Shahzada *et al.*, 2011:292).

4.6.6 Friendly mutual student-lecturer relationship

The largest proportion (50.7%), of the respondents (n=106) indicated that they do not have a friendly and mutual lecturer-student relationship program on the campus. On the other hand, 47.8% (n=100) of the respondents answered that they require the establishment of such program, while 48.8 % (n=102) of the respondents reported that they have a friendly and mutually lecturer-student program. Furthermore, 40.7% (n=85) of the respondents indicated the need for the current program to be improved and 2.9% (n=6) of the respondents indicated that they do not want such a program to be established. Estridge (2009:252) indicated that a positive and influential relationship amongst educators and administrators should be developed to motivate students to reduce absenteeism. Quinn and Hughes (2007:224) suggested that nurse educators should ensure that a good lecturer-student relationship is maintained in order to reduce students' absenteeism. Gump (2005:24) revealed that lecturers should be responsible for making classes interesting to increase student involvement.

4.7 FACTOR ANALYSIS

According to Burns and Grove (2009:484), factor analysis examines inter-relationships amongst large numbers of variables and disentangles those relationships to identify the clusters of variables that are most closely linked. The following paragraphs will explain the factor analyses of the study.

4.7.1 Exploratory factor analysis

According to Polit and Beck (2012:363), exploratory factor analysis deals with the hypothesis that was formulated about the dimensionality of a set of items. Kaizer-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values of between 0.5 and 0.7 are seen as mediocre, between 0.7 and 0.8 is considered good, between 0.7 and >0.9 superb (Field, 2009:659).

4.7.1.1 Student-centred factors

Table 4.10 displays the results of the factor analysis as well as the items of the student absenteeism instrument.

Table 4.10 Pattern matrix (four-factor analysis)

Item no.	Item	COMPONENT			
		1	2	3	4
		Student lack of interest	Study challenges	Academic inabilities	Socialisation
4	Lack of self confidence among students	.895			
3	Inability of students to match the course opted for	.707			
7	Inferiority complex among the students	.658			
5	I don't understand the subject	.484			
6	When I want to prepare for the test		.925		
8	Lengthy periods		.895		
10	When I am preparing for examination		.567		
1	Students' lack of interest in school subjects			.931	

Item no.	COMPONENT				
		1	2	3	4
	Item	Student lack of interest	Study challenges	Academic inabilities	Socialisation
2	Lack of personal interest in studies			.887	
9	Too much socialisation among students				.883

Student centred factors were grouped into four components. The grouping of the items was satisfactory with the four-factor analysis; therefore, it was discussed and agreed that this could form the final product. The KMO value achieved was .644, in other words mediocre, and a total variance of 69.150% was explained by the 4 factors.

Table 4.11 outlines the subscales of the four factor analyses and the items they represent. The subscales consisted of the following factors: student lack of interest; study challenges; academic inabilities and socialisation.

Table 4.11 Subscales and four-factor analyses

Factor	Item
Factor 1 represents: Student lack of interest	4, 3, 7, 5
Factor 2 represents: Study challenges	6, 8, 10
Factor 3 represents: Academic inabilities	1, 2
Factor 4 represents: Socialisation	9

4.7.1.2 *School-related factors*

The results of the KMO value and Bartlett test for the school-related factor analysis were .745 and a total variance of 53.684% was explained; these results are sufficient. In Table 4.12 the subscales of the factor three analyses and the items they represent are outlined.

Table 4.12 Pattern matrix (Factor three analyses)

Item no.	Item	Factor		
		1	2	3
		Student lack of interest	Study challenges	Academic inabilities
18	Poor lecture-student relationship	.781		
19	Poor teaching skills of lecturers leading to boring lectures	.765		
20	Negative peer influence on lecturers	.738		
21	Lecturers not turning up for scheduled lectures	.520		
22	Excessive homework and projects for students	.495		
Factor 2				
24	Lack of fresher's or farewell parties		.803	
23	Lack of recreational and allied activities like sports programs		.757	
25	Inadequate orientation about hours of training		.585	
Factor 3				
26	Classroom environment not conducive to learning			.731
28	Inclement weather, such as when it is cold or hot			.654
27	Poor infrastructural facilities in school			.550

In Table 4.13, the subscales of the factor three analysis and the represented items are outlined.

Table 4.13 Subscale and factor three analyses

Factor	Item
Factor 1 represents: Student lack of interest	18, 19, 20, 21, 22
Factor 2 represents: Study challenges	24,23, 25
Factor 3 represents: Academic inabilities	26, 27, 28

4.7.1.3 Social factors

The KMO value and Bartlett' test result for the social factor analysis were .737 with a total variance of 61.482% explained by three factors, which is sufficient. This is outlined in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 Pattern matrix (Factor three analyses)

item no.	item	Factor		
		1	2	3
		Opportunity and value system	Social problems	Social events
29	Unavailability of opportunities for entertainment like mall and movies	.864		
30	Low societal value for education	.633		

item no.	item	Factor		
		1	2	3
		Opportunity and value system	Social problems	Social events
31	More regard for wealthy persons than educated persons	.610		
34	Transportation problems		.824	
36	When I am afraid of students that bully		.775	
33	Political activities			-803
32	Beliefs that a lot of education is not required for success and business			-781
35	When I want to attend community activities			-456

Social factors consist of 8 items. The researcher and the statistician discussed the items and grouped them into three factors.

Table 4.15 outlines the subscales and factor three analyses of the social factors.

Table 4.15 Subscale and factor three analysis

Factor	Item
Factor 1 represents: Opportunity and value system	29, 30, 31
Factor 2 represents: Social problems	34, 36
Factor 3 represents: Social events	33, 32, 35

4.7.1.4 Home-related factors

For factor A (home-related factors) analysis, The KMO value and Bartlett' test result were .681 and a total variance of 53.032% was explained by the two factors. These results are sufficient. Table 4.16 summarises the subscales.

Table 4.16 Subscales and factor analyses

ITEM NO.	ITEM	Component	
		1	2
		Lack of resources	Family
12	Lack of parental support	.883	
13	Lack of parental care and involvement in their children's academic activities	.832	
11	Financial issues	.675	
15	Poor family relationships	.613	
17	Family commitments		.754
14	Death of a family member		.648
16	My home is too far from the campus		.609

Home-related factors consisted of seven items The researcher and the statistician discussed and agreed on a two factor analysis for the grouping of the items. The subscale and factor two analyses and the items each factor represents are indicated in Table 4.14.

Table 4.17 Subscale and factor two analyses

Factor	Item
Factor 1 represents: Lack of resources	12, 13, 11, 15
Factor 2 represents: Family	17,14, 16

4.8 RELIABILITY

In the next section, the researcher discusses the reliability of the FIAQ. The reliability of an instrument refers to the degree to which an instrument can be dependent upon to yield consistent results if used repeatedly by another researcher in a similar context (Brink *et al.*, 2009:161). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is the most commonly used measure of reliability. According to Polit and Beck (2012:724), the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is a widely used reliability index that estimates the internal consistency of a composite measure composed of several subparts. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranges between 0 and 1 (Burns & Grove, 2009:379). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the subscales of the FIAQ ranged between .61-.83, which is satisfactory. The mean scores for the factors were calculated as the mean of items contributing to the factor, with Strongly Disagree taken as 1, and Strongly Agree as 4 on a Likert scale. The following tables outline the reliability, mean per factor and the standard deviation of the questionnaire.

4.8.1 Student-centred factors

In consultation with the study leaders and the statistician, the team decided that student-centred factors consist of ten items. The items were grouped into four subscales, namely: Student lack of interest; study challenges; academic inabilities

and socialisation. The researcher will discuss the reliability of the first three subscales; the reliability for the subscale socialisation was very low. The results obtained can be seen in Table 4.15.

Table 4.18 Student-centred factors

Factor	Cronbach's alpha	Mean	Standard deviation
Student lack of interest	.80	2.15	.84
Study challenges	.72	3.12	.80
Academic inabilities	.69	2.17	.65

Student lack of interest had four items: lack of self-confidence among students; inability of students to match the course opted for; inferiority complex among the students; and I don't understand the subject. The results obtained (Table 4.15) were acceptable.

Study challenges consisted of three items: when I want to prepare for the test; lengthy periods, and when I am preparing for examination. The results (Table 4.15) obtained are deemed acceptable. This mean shows that student specific challenges are the biggest problem that causes students to absent themselves from class.

Academic inabilities had the two items: students' lack of interest in school subjects; and a lack of personal interest in studies. The results (Table 4.15) obtained were considered acceptable. This revealed that lack of students' interest is the third reason for students' absenteeism.

Socialisation consisted of one item: too much socialisation among students, and had the lowest Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Study challenges was seen as the biggest problem (M=3.12), while academic inabilities and a lack of student interest were lesser problems.

4.8.2 School-related factors

Items 18-22, poor lecturer-student relationship; poor teaching skills of lecturers leading to boring lecturers; negative peer influence on lecturers; lecturers not turning up for scheduled lectures; and excessive homework and project work for students were discussed and grouped together; the researcher and the statistician agreed that the theme should be discontentment with lecturers. The theme social depletion was given to the following items; item 23 – lack of recreational and allied activities like sports programs; item 24 – lack of fresher’s or farewell parties; and item 25 – inadequate orientation about hours of training. The results obtained are depicted in Table 4.16.

Table 4.19 School-related factors

Factor	Cronbach’s alpha	Mean	Standard deviation
Discontentment with lecturers	.71	2.63	.66
Social depletion	.65	2.17	.75

The results obtained for discontentment with lecturers are considered acceptable and show that this aspect has a great impact on students’ absenteeism. The results obtained for social depletion are considered acceptable.

4.8.3 Social factors

Item 29 – unavailability of opportunities for entertainment like malls or movies around the campus; item 30 – low societal value for education; and item 31 – more regard for wealthy persons than educated persons, were discussed and grouped together. The theme that emerged from the discussion for these items was opportunity and value systems. Item 32 - beliefs that a lot of education is not required for success and business; item 33 – political activities such as rallies; and item 34 – when I am

afraid of students that bully were grouped together and the theme given was social events. The results achieved can be seen in Table 4.17.

Table 4.20 Social factors

Factor	Cronbach's alpha	Mean	Standard deviation
Opportunity and value systems	.61	1.97	.64
Social events	.63	1.85	.62

The results obtained for both themes in Table 4.17 are acceptable.

4.8.4 Home-related factors

Lack of resources was the theme given to item 11 – financial issues; item 12 – lack of parental support; item 13 – lack of parental care; and item 14 – involvement in their children’s academic activities and poor family relationships. The results achieved are depicted in Table 4.18.

Table 4.21 Home related factors

Factor	Cronbach's alpha	Mean	Standard deviation
Lack of resources	.75	2.3	.75

The acquired results for lack of resources are acceptable.

The results above showed that under student-centred factors; the students considered student-specific challenges as one of the reasons for absenteeism. Student--centred factors were other reasons why students are absent. Another

reason for absenteeism came from the school-related factors; this is discontentment with lecturers. From the home-related factors lack of resources was the final reason for student absenteeism.

4.9 CORRELATIONS

The correlation coefficient (cc) refers to a measure of the degree of the relationship between two sets of scores that can vary between -1.00 and +1.00 (Jackson, 2009:417). The table below outlines the relationship between the factors of the study.

Table 4.22 Correlation between factors

	Student lack interest	Student study challenges	Student academic inabilities	Home lack resources	School lecturers	School socials	Social values	Social events
School_lack_interest	1.000	.077	.401**	.217**	.242**	.065	.144*	.136*
		.266	.000	.002	.000	.350	.038	.049
	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209
Student_study_challenge	.077	1.000	.169*	-.013	.325**	.035	-.041	-.067
	.266		.015	.852	.000	.613	.559	.333
	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209
Student_academic_inabilities	.401**	.169*	1.000	.375**	.181**	.131	.243**	.196**
	.000	.015		.000	.009	.058	.000	.004
	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209
Home_lack_resources	.217**	-.013	.375**	1.000	.265**	.184**	.335**	.292**
	.002	.852	.000		.000	.008	.000	.000
	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209
School_lecturers	.242**	.325**	.181**	.265**	1.000	.329**	.169*	.146*
	.000	.000	.009	.000		.000	.015	.035
	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209

	Student lack interest	Student study challenges	Student academic inabilities	Home lack resources	School lecturers	School socials	Social values	Social events
School_socials	.065 .350 209	.035 .613 209	.131 .058 209	.184** .008 209	.329** .000 209	1.000 209	.311** .000 209	.154* .026 209
Social_values	.144* .038 209	-.041 .559 209	.243** .000 209	.335** .000 209	.169* .015 209	.311** .000 209	1.000 209	.450** .000 209
Social_events	.136* .049 209	-.067 .333 209	.196** .004 209	.292** .000 209	.146* .035 209	.154* .026 209	.450** .000 209	1.000 209

From the analyses a large positive correlation is seen between student academic inabilities ($r = .401$) and student lack of interest. However, home lack resources seemed to have a moderate positive correlation with student lack interest ($r = .217$), indicating that students who lack home resources are likely to have a high lack of interest in their studies. Moreover, problems with school lecturers also showed a moderate positive correlation with student lack interest ($r = .242$), implying that students that are experiencing discontentment with lecturers, show a lack of interest.

The Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (cc) between school lecturers ($r = .325$) and student study challenges, demonstrated a moderate positive correlation, indicating that students who experience study challenges, may have discontentment with school lecturers.

A moderate positive correlation ($r = .401$) is demonstrated between the school lecturers and student lack of interest, implying that students who experience discontentment with school lecturers, may experience a lack of interest in their studies. Home lack resource ($r = .375$) and student academic inability, demonstrated a moderate positive correlation, thus, students who lack home resources may experience academic inabilities.

Student academic inabilities and social values showed a moderate positive relationship ($r = .243$), which shows that students experiencing discontentment with lecturers may value their social life higher than their studies. There was a moderate positive correlation between school lecturers ($r = .265$) and home lack resources, which may imply that students who lack home resources may experience discontentment with their lecturers.

Home lack resources and social values had a moderate positive relationship ($r = .335$), indicating that students who lack home resources may value social life higher than their studies. The cc between home lack resources and school social events ($r = .292$) demonstrated a moderate positive relationship, which implies that students who lack home resources may value school social events.

Social events and school lecturers ($r=.329$) showed a moderate positive correlation, indicating that students who experienced discontentment with lecturers may be more committed to social events than their studies. A moderate positive correlation between school socials and social values ($r=.311$) imply that students focus on social life more than on their studies. A large positive relationship is demonstrated between school socials and social events ($r=.450$), implying that students who value social life may focus more on school social life than their studies.

4.9.1 Correlation between the factors and ordered demographic data

According to Polit and Beck (2012:724), the correlation coefficient (cc) refers to an index summarising the degree of relationship between variables, typically ranging from +1.00 for a perfect positive relationship, through 0.0 for no relationship, to – 1.00 for a perfect negative relationship. The correlation matrix in Table 4.20, provide the factors of the FIAQ compared with demographical ordered variables.

Table 4.23 Correlation between the factors and ordered demographic data

		Age	Level of study	Distance from campus
Student_lack_interest	Correlation Coefficient	-.201**	-.204**	-.078
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.003	.265
	N	209	209	205
Student_study_challenges	Correlation Coefficient	.067	.172*	-.302**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.338	.013	.000
	N	209	209	205

		Age	Level of study	Distance from campus
Home_Lack_recources	Correlation Coefficient	-.203**	-.340**	.127
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.000	.070
	N	209	209	205
School_Lecturers	Correlation Coefficient	-.252**	-.232**	-.018
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.803
	N	209	209	205
Death of a family member	Correlation Coefficient	-.199**	-.075	-.019
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.284	.785
	N	207	207	203
My home is too far from the campus	Correlation Coefficient	-.030	.023	.301**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.671	.737	.000
	N	209	209	205
Transportation problems	Correlation Coefficient	-.200**	-.161*	.372**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.020	.000
	N	208	208	204
When I am afraid of y students that bully	Correlation Coefficient	-.287**	-.342**	.207**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.003
	N	203	203	199

The correlation between the factors and ordered demographic data will now be discussed. In this study, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (cc) was determined. Spearman's rank-order correlation indicates the magnitude of a relationship between variables measured on the ordinal scale (Polit & Beck, 2012:743). The statistical significance (sig 2-tailed value) was used to indicate the presence of a statistical significant relationship between two variables (Jackson, 2009:423).

From the analyses it was evident that the age of students and student lack of interest in their studies demonstrated a moderate negative relationship ($r=-.201$). Moreover, the level of study and student lack of interest also showed a moderate negative relationship ($r=-.204$). Therefore, students in higher levels of study, experience less of a lack of interest in their studies than lower level students.

While between the level of study and study challenges, a weak positive relationship ($r=.172$) was demonstrated. Student study challenges and the distance from the campus demonstrated a moderate negative relationship ($r=-.302$). This implies that the higher the level of study, the less the students experience study challenges.

A moderate negative relationship was evident between home lack resources and age of the students ($r=-.203$). There was also a moderate negative relationship between the level of study and home lack resources ($r=-.340$). Therefore, older students experience less problems with home resources, and the further the students stay from campus the more home resource problems they experience.

There was a weak negative relationship between school lecturers and age of students ($r=-.252$) and the level of study ($r=-.232$). Thus, older students have less problems with their lecturers, whereas the younger students experience more problems with their lecturers.

A weak negative relationship between the death of a family member and age of the students ($r=-.199$) was evident. Therefore, the older students are, the less the death of a family member will have an effect on their studies.

There was a moderate positive relationship between the distance from the campus and the home that is too far from the campus ($r=.301$). Therefore, the further from campus the student is, the further from home the student is.

Transportation problems and age of students revealed a weak negative correlation ($r=-.200$). Level of study ($r=-.161$) showed a weak negative relationship with transportation problems. However, a moderate positive relationship was seen between transportation problems and the distance from the campus ($r=.372$). This implied that the further the distance from the home to the campus, the more the students are affected by transport problems.

A moderate negative relationship was demonstrated between age of students and when students are afraid of students that bully ($r=-.287$). The level of study also showed a moderate negative relationship ($r=-.342$) with when students are afraid of students that bully. A moderate positive relationship between the distance from campus and when students are afraid of students that bully ($r=.207$) were seen, implying that the further the distance from campus, the more the students are afraid of students that bully.

4.10 ASSOCIATION OF FACTORS WITH BIOGRAPHICAL GROUPING VARIABLE

A test for equality of mean factors and the biographical grouping variable was performed. In the following section, factors associated with the biographical grouping variable will be discussed according to marital status and method of transport.

4.10.1 Marital status

Table 4.21 illustrates the results obtained for the t-test for marital status with the factors.

Table 4.24 Results for t-test for marital status with factors

Q2 Marital status		N	Mean	Standard Deviation	p-value	Cohen's d-value (effect size)
Student lack interest	1	14	1.8214	.79921		
	2	195	2.1744	.84972			.133	.24
Student study challenges	1	14	2.8333	1.00213		
	2	195	3.1453	.78847			.273	.80
Student Accad inabilities	1	14	2.0357	.81369		
	2	195	2.1872	.64450			.507	.78
Home lack resources	1	14	1.8036	.51121		
	2	195	2.3385	.75441			.002	1.78
School lecturers	1	14	2.3000	.67368		
	2	195	2.6595	.65620			.073	.10
School socials	1	14	1.9762	.83168		
	2	195	2.1846	.75098			.377	.36
Social values	1	14	1.8095	.46620		
	2	195	1.9863	.65613			.202	1.52
Social events	1	14	1.7381	.50937		
	2	195	1.8650	.63611			.390	.93
B9 Too much socialisation among the students	1	14	1.86	.535		
	2	192	2.08	.906			.166	2.60
B14 Death of a family member	1	14	3.00	.784		
	2	193	3.53	.771			.027	.07
B16 My home is too far from the campus	1	14	1.79	.975		
	2	195	2.04	1.100			.372	.48

Q2 Marital status		N	Mean	Standard Deviation	p-value	Cohen's d-value (effect size)
B17 Family commitments	1	14	3.14	.949		
	2	193	2.61	.990	.060	.16
B26 Classroom environment not conducive to learning	1	14	2.43	1.089		
	2	192	2.44	1.001	.963	.30
B27 Poor infrastructural facilities	1	14	2.86	1.027		
	2	193	2.91	1.069	.850	.15
B28 Inclement weather, such as when it is cold or hot	1	13	2.77	.927		
	2	168	2.37	1.041	.159	.45
B34 Transport problems	1	14	1.64	.929		
	2	194	2.11	1.074	.093	.59
B36 When I am afraid of students that bully	1	14	1.79	.893		
	2	189	2.37	1.129	.035	.99

- 1 = married

- 2 = single

According to effect sizes, the following medium or large significant differences between married students (n=14) and single students (n=195) were obtained.

Single students (M=3.14) experience more study challenges than married students (M=2.83). Single students (M=2.18) had more academic inabilities than married students (M=2.03). Both of these results indicated a large significance. The mean score of M (M= 2.33), indicated that single students have a higher lack of home resources than married students (M=1.80); this implied a large significance.

Social values enjoyed greater importance with single students (M=1.98) than with married students (M=1.80). A large practical significance was also seen in social events between single students (M=1.86) and married students (M=1.73).

Single students (M=2.08) experienced more socialisation among students than married students (M=1.86) and a large practical significance was seen. For single students (M=2.04) my home is too far from campus was a bigger problem than for married students (M=1.79); a medium significance was reported.

It was determined that single students (M=2.11) have more transport problems than married students (M=1.64) and a medium significance was evident. Furthermore, single students are more afraid of students that bully (M=2.37) than married students (M=1.79), indicated by a large significance.

4.10.2 Method of transport

In this section, the researcher presents an outline of subscales grouped according to the mean score, standard deviations, p-values and effect size in order to measure the central tendency of the data distribution. Table 4.21 outlines the group statistics.

Table 4.25 Results for t-test for method of transport with factors

Q5 Method of transport		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Cohen's d-value (effect size)
Student lack interest	2	114	2.0921	.89632		0.17
	3	91	2.2418	.79009		
Student study challenges	2	114	2.9313	.80155	.000	0.53
	3	91	3.3535	.74694		
Student academic inabilities	2	114	2.1689	.67759	.801	0.03
	3	91	2.1923	.64426		

Q5 Method of transport		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Cohen's d-value (effect size)
Home lack resources	2	114	2.4057	.75213		
	3	91	2.1868	.73936	.038	0.29
School lecturers	2	114	2.6478	.62826		
	3	91	2.6258	.71291	.817	0.03
School socials	2	114	2.2705	.73419		
	3	91	2.0568	.78301	.047	0.27
Social values	2	114	2.0263	.67275		
	3	91	1.9194	.60724	.234	0.16
Social events	2	114	1.9196	.66859		
	3	91	1.7894	.56756	.133	0.19
B9 Too much socialisation among students.	2	112	2.20	.909		
	3	90	1.92	.851	.028	0.30
B14 Death of a family member.	2	113	3.49	.781		
	3	90	3.51	.797	.827	0.03
B16 My home is too far from the campus.	2	114	2.31	1.145		
	3	91	1.65	.887	.000	0.58
B17 Family commitments.	2	112	2.84	.954		
	3	91	2.42	.978	.002	0.43
B26 Classroom environments not conducive to learning.	2	112	2.48	.995		
	3	90	2.38	1.023	.467	0.10

Q5 Method of transport		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Cohen's d-value (effect size)
B27 Poor infrastructural facilities in school e.g. inadequate space in the library, lack of necessary equipment.	2	113	2.95	1.093	.545	0.08
	3	90	2.86	1.045		
B28 Poor infrastructural facilities in school e.g. inadequate space in the library, lack of necessary equipment.	2	99	2.36	1.025	.590	0.08
	3	78	2.45	1.052		
B34 Transportation problems.	2	113	2.40	1.090	.000	0.63
	3	91	1.71	.922		
B36 When I am afraid of students that bully.	2	111	2.55	1.110	.002	0.44
	3	88	2.06	1.076		

- 2 = public transport

- 3 = walk to campus

According to effect sizes the following medium differences between using public transport and walking to campus (method of transport) was reported; no large effect sizes were reported.

Student study challenges are experienced more by those who walk to campus (M=3.35) than those who make use of public transport (M = 2.93). My home is too far from campus is a bigger problem for students who use public transport (M=2.31) than for those who walk to campus (M=1.65). Transport problems are a bigger concern for students who make use of public transport (M=2.40) than for those students who are walking to campus (M=1.71).

4.11 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher used the data collected from the nursing students registered under Regulation 425 on one of the campuses of a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province. The largest proportion of the nursing students were between 21 and 24 years of age (65.1%, n=136). Most of the nursing students were single (unmarried) (93.3%, n=195). With regard to their level of study, the largest proportion of the respondents were in level III, 35.9% (n=75). The majority of the nursing students (52.2%, n=109) travel 15 kilometres or more from the campus to their homes, while 54.5% (n=114) of the respondents utilise public transport.

The largest proportion of the respondents (53.1 %, n=111) is absent when they want to prepare for examination. The findings show that the respondents are absent from class when they want to prepare for a test (49.3%; n=103) and 38.8% (n=81) of the respondents absent themselves due to lengthy periods. In the final item, 31.6% (n=66) of the respondents disagreed that they absent themselves due to a lack of interest in school subjects.

With regard to home-related factors, nursing students are mostly absent (63.2%; n=132) when there is death in the family, followed by family commitments (21.1%; n=44) and poor family relationships (33.0%; n=69).

When looking at school-related factors, the findings reveal that the largest proportion 39.2% (n=82) of the students are absent due to poor infrastructural facilities in school, while 37.3% (n=78) of the respondents are absent due to poor teaching skills of the lecturers, leading to boring lectures. When given excessive homework, 31.1 % (n=65) of the respondents reported that they were absent.

The study showed that 20.6% (n=43) of the respondents are absent when they are afraid of students that bully, while 22.0% (n=46) of the respondents are absent due to transportation problems. Of the respondents, 48.3% (n=100) disagreed that the unavailability of entertainment like malls or movies around the campus is the cause of students' absenteeism.

4.12 SUMMARY

In Chapter 4, the researcher discussed the process and data analysis performed during this research. The results from the Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ) were analysed and discussed. Chapter 5 will outline the evaluation of the study, limitations and recommendations for nursing education, practice, research and policy.

CHAPTER 5
**EVALUATION OF THE STUDY, LIMITATIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NURSING EDUCATION,
PRACTICE, RESEARCH AND POLICY**

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 5, the researcher reflects on the findings by means of an evaluation of the research study, with reference to the attainment of the objectives set in chapter 1. The limitations encountered during the study are discussed, followed by recommendations for nursing education, practice, research and policy.

5.2 EVALUATION OF THE STUDY

The researcher evaluates the study with regard to its objectives. The following objectives were set:

- To explore and describe the reasons why nursing students absent themselves from class in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province.
- To formulate strategies to reduce student absenteeism in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province.

Chapter 1 focused on the overview, research and philosophical positioning. In Chapter 2, a literature review was conducted to understand the construct of the study; the construct is the reasons for student absenteeism in a selected college of nursing. Chapter 3 consisted of the research design and method and in Chapter 4, the data analysis of the Factors Influencing Absenteeism Questionnaire (FIAQ)

(Fayombo, 2012) was provided. With regard to objective 1 of the study, which is to explore and describe the reasons for students' absenteeism, the findings indicated that students absent themselves from class due to **student-centred factors**, for instance when they want to prepare for examination, the largest proportion of the respondents (53.1%, n=111) strongly agreed with this item. This finding was consistent with the findings of the studies conducted by Shahzada (2011:296) and Kumar and Rao (2013:512). Other factors that caused student absenteeism included: **Home-related factors**, since 63.2% (n=132) of the respondents strongly agreed that they are absent when there is death of their family members. Balfanz (2012:4) and Cooperkline, (2009:34) obtained the same results. **School-related factors** were identified as another reason causing absenteeism, where 39.2% (n=82) of the respondents strongly agreed that poor infrastructure in school, such as inadequate space in the library and a lack of equipment, is a reason for absenteeism. The findings of Gupta (2014:14) and Bati *et al.* (2012:596) also revealed the same reason. With regard to **social factors**, the findings showed that the largest proportion of the respondents, 48.3% (n=100), strongly disagreed with the fact that the unavailability of opportunities for entertainment like malls or movies around the campus is a reason for absenteeism. In terms of the statistical significant relationship between the variables demonstrated by the correlation coefficients, there is no relationship between socialisation and students' absenteeism. Based on the findings, most of the respondents disagreed with factors such as the unavailability of opportunities for entertainment around the campus as the cause of absenteeism. Thus, social factors were not a cause of students' absenteeism.

With regard to **measures to reduce students' absenteeism**, most of the respondents, 73.7% (n=154), indicated the need for a prize giving ceremony to honour students who were never absent from class. They further reported a need for a systematic student absenteeism monitoring tool (33.0%, n=69), motivating programs emphasising the benefits of attending classes (54.1%, n=113) and a friendly mutual lecturer-student relationship program (47.8%, n=100). These findings will contribute towards the achievement of objective 2, entailing the formulation of

strategies that could reduce students' absenteeism. Therefore, the researcher achieved the aim of the study. The requirements of objective 1, describing the reasons for students' absenteeism, and objective 2, formulation of strategies to reduce students' absenteeism were met. As a result, the study contributed to the knowledge base of nursing in South Africa.

With regard to objective 2, that is to formulate strategies to reduce students' absenteeism in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province, the researcher formulated the following strategies, based on the findings regarding measures to reduce students' absenteeism:

- The implementation of a student orientation program emphasising the consequences of student absenteeism, done at least twice a year; during the first and the second semester.
- The establishment of a student absenteeism policy document.
- Accurate monitoring of students' absenteeism with a systematic monitoring tool.
- A motivating program, such as a prize giving ceremony, to motivate students not to absent themselves from class, emphasising the benefits of attending classes, should be established.
- Conducting workshops for the lecturers on how to build a friendly mutual student-lecturer relationship.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

All studies are subject to limitations and in the data analysis section, the researcher as a novice, often felt out of contact with the data. Poor response rates were anticipated, therefore an all-inclusive sample was selected, based on the respondents' willingness to complete the questionnaire. In this study, the response

rate was 82.3%, which strengthens the findings of the study, since this is an exceptional good response rate. Thus, the sample could have been biased against the respondents who did not volunteer to participate. Furthermore, the nursing students that are only available on the campus during examinations (direct entries), did not form part of the study, as they were not available at the time of data collection. The mediator collected the data on a selected campus of a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province, therefore the results cannot be generalised to the other colleges of nursing in South Africa. However, in spite of the limitations, the study has provided important information on the factors that contribute to student's absenteeism. The identified factors were helpful in the development of strategies that could reduce student's absenteeism.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher developed the following recommendations in terms of nursing education, practice, and research and policy development:

5.4.1 Nursing education

- It is recommended that the college management should ensure that the year program should allow the nursing students at least one week for revision before they start with the examination.
- In-service training and workshops should be conducted for nurse educators on time management and the utilisation of innovative teaching strategies that will enable them to finish the content on time and provide enough time for students to prepare for the examination.
- The researcher recommends regular support services, emphasising the importance of academic achievements, to reduce students' absenteeism.

- The establishment of a student counselling and support service, which could be an intervention to nursing students in coping with traumatic events, while focusing on their education is recommended.
- The college management should motivate the improvement of the infrastructure, such as well-equipped libraries and laboratories, for knowledge and skill development of the nursing students.

5.4.2 Practice

- The college management should ensure that in-service training is conducted for the lecturers , which will include topics such as classroom management, promotion of the student-lecturer relationship and the provision of moral support to the students.
- Improvement of infrastructure to enhance learning.
- Lecturers should be trained to utilise different teaching strategies that will stimulate the students' interest.
- Lecturers should adhere to the policy for a student-motivating program in order to reduce students' absenteeism.

5.4.3 Further research

Further research could be conducted on the following topics:

- Replication of the same study on different nursing campuses to compare the findings and to determine whether different findings can be obtained, as the nursing education environment is different.

- Continuing the study, using a qualitative approach to explore and describe the identified factors that influence student's absenteeism in more depth to obtain richer data.
- An investigation of the factors that contribute towards student's absenteeism, as viewed by the nurse educators by means of a qualitative approach.
- Exploring and describing the impact of student's absenteeism on their academic performance.

5.3.4 Policy development

- The development of a policy that will address students' absenteeism in a college of nursing in the Limpopo Province that will be monitored systematically, is recommended
- The policy should outline the selection criteria for a prize giving in order to motivate students not to absent themselves from class.
- The college management should develop an orientation program policy that will address the consequences of class absenteeism.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In this study, the researcher found that there is still a need to improve the following: examination programs should provide days for revision, student's support programmes, infrastructure and the establishment of the following programmes: student motivating programmes, prize giving ceremonies for students who obtained a 100% class attendance, and student-lecturer relationship programs. The researcher further found that nursing students absent themselves from class due to student-, school- and home-related factors. Recommendations with regard to the findings were made.

5.6 SUMMARY

The aim of Chapter 5, as the final chapter of this research, was to provide a comprehensive overview and evaluation of this research through reflecting on the objectives of the study.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ajzen, I. 1991. Attitudinal vs. normative messages: an investigation of the differential effects of persuasive communications on behavior. *Sociometry*, 34:236-280.

Alyildiz, A. & Kuşuoğlu, I.H. 2010. Evaluation of the reason for absenteeism in terms of different variables according to their own perceptions of pre-service teachers. *Procedia - social and behavioral sciences*, 2(2) 2577-2582.

Ashcroft, K. 2002. The lecturer's guide to quality and standards in colleges and universities. Washington, D.C.: Falmer Press.

Babbie, E. 2007. The practice of social research. 11th ed. Belmont, Calif.: Thomson/ Wadsworths.

Balfanz, R. & Byrnes, V. 2012. The importance of being in school: a report on absenteeism in the Nation's Public schools. *Education digest: essential readings condensed for quick review*, 78(2):4-9.

Baltimore community. 2012. State of Chronic Absenteeism and School Health. *A preliminary review for the Baltimore community*. Baltimore, Md.

Baltimore Education Research Consortium (BERC). 2011. Destination graduation: sixth grade early warning indicators for Baltimore City schools: their prevalence and impact. Baltimore, Md.: Baltimore Education Research Consortium (BERC).

Bandura, A. 2009. Social cognitive theory goes global. *Psychologist*, 22(6):504-506.

Barlow, J. & Fleischer, S. 2011. Student absenteeism: whose responsibility? *Innovations in education and teaching international*, 48(3):227-237.

Bati, A.H., Mandiracioglu, A. & Orgum, F. 2013. Why do students miss lecture? A study of lecture attendance amongst students of health science. *Nurse education today*, 33:596-601.

Bless, C., Smith, C. & Kagee, A. 2007. Fundamentals of social research methods: an African perspective. 4th ed. Cape Town: Juta.

Bond, G. 2004. Tackling student absenteeism: research findings and recommendations for school and local communities. (Report written for Hume/Whittlesea LLEN and Inner Northern LLEN.) <http://www.hwllen.com.au/Text/1062829817063-3396>. Date of access: 8 May 2008.

Brink, H., Van der Walt, C. & Van Rensburg, G. 2009. Fundamentals of research methodology for health care professionals. 2nd ed. Cape Town: Juta.

Brits, H.J., Hendrich, U., Van der Walt, C. & Naidu, Y. 2011. Student dropout at the Vaal University of Technology: a case study. Vanderbijlpark: Vaal University of Technology.

Buehler, M.H., Tapogna, J. & Chang, H.N. 2012. Why being in school matters: chronic absenteeism in Oregon public schools. Eugene, Oreg.: ECONorthwest.

Burnet, K. & Farkas, G. 2009. Poverty and family structure effects on children's mathematics achievement: estimates from random and fixed effects models. *Social science journal*, 46(2):297-318.

Burns, H. & Grove, S.K. 2009. The practice of nursing research: appraisal, synthesis and generation of evidence. 6th ed. St. Louis, Mo.: Elsevier Saunders.

Chang, H.N. & Romero, M. 2008. Present, engaged, and counted for: the critical importance of addressing chronic absence in the early grades. Report. New York: Columbia University. National Center on Children in Poverty.

Christie, K. 2007. The complexity of compulsory attendance. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 88(5):341-342.

Cleary-Holdforth, J.C. 2007. Student non-attendance in higher education: a phenomenon of student apathy or poor pedagogy. Level 3, Issue, 5 June 2007. <http://Level3.dit.ie/html/issues/cleary-holdforth>. Date of access: 14 March 2011.

Cohen, J. 1988. Statistical power analysis for the behavioural sciences. 2nd ed. New Jersey. Lawrence Erlbaum.

Compact Oxford English Dictionary for Students (COED). 2006. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cook, L.D. & Ezenne, A. 2010. Factors influencing students' absenteeism in primary schools in Jamaica: perspective of community members. *Caribbean curriculum*, 17:33-57.

Cooperkline, J. 2009. School absenteeism, disruptive classroom behavior and disruptive family process in a sample of court involved youth. Columbus, Oh.: Ohio State University. (Dissertation - Hons BS.)

Creswell, J.W. 2009. Research design: quantitative and mixed method approaches. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Davey, M.M., Cummings, G., Newburs-Cook, C.V. & Lo, E.A. 2009. Predictors of nurse absenteeism in hospitals: a system review. *Journal of nursing management*, 17:312-330.

De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H.C., Fouché, C.B. & Delport, C.S. 2010. Research at grass roots: for the social sciences and human service professional. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Dembo, R. & Gullede, L.M. 2009. Truancy intervention programs: challenges and innovations to implementation. *Criminal justice policy review*, 20(4):437-456.

Denteh, O., Yebooh, E., Sam, C & Monkah, E. 2011. The impact of student and teacher absenteeism on student performance at the junior high school: the case of the Kumali-Metro school district. *Continental journal of education, research*, 4:7-17.

Desalegn, A.S., Berhan, A. & Berhan, Y. 2014. Absenteeism among medical and health science undergraduate students at Hawassa University, Ethiopia. *BMC medical education*, 14(1):81-91.

Dhaliwal, U. 2003. Absenteeism and under-achievement in final year medical students. *National medical journal of India*, 16(1):34-37.

Diaz, E.M. & Kosciw, G.J. 2009. Shared differences: the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students of color in our nation's schools. New York: GLSEN.

Doyle, L. & O'Brien, F.A. 2007. An evaluation of an attendance monitoring system for undergraduate nursing students. Dublin, Ireland: Elsevier.

Doyle, L., O'Brien, F., Timmins, F., Tobin, G. & Doherty, L. 2008. An evaluation of an attendance monitoring system for undergraduate nursing students. *Journal of school of nursing and midwifery*, (8):129-139.

Dube, R.S. & Orpinas, P. 2009. Understanding excessive school absenteeism as school refusal behavior. *Children & schools*, 31(2):87-95.

Eastman, G., Cooney, S.M., Connor, C. & Small, S.A. 2007. What research tells us about effective truancy prevention: what works? Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin. (Wisconsin research to practice series, 5:1-15.)

Eaton, D.K., Brener, N. & Kann, L.K. 2008. Associations of health risk behaviors with school absenteeism: does having permission for the absence make a difference? *Journal of school health*, 78(4):223-229.

Epstein, L. & Sheldon, S.B. 2000. Present and accounted for: improving student attendance through family and community involvement. *Journal of educational research*, 95(5):308-318.

Estridge, W.L. 2009. School influence on student attendance and engagement in learning. Toronto: University of Toronto. (Thesis - EdD.)

Fayombo, A., Ogunkola, B.J. & Olaleye, Y.L. 2012. Cross institutional study of the causes of absenteeism among university students in Barbados and Nigeria. *Journal of education and developmental psychology*, 2(1):122-140.

Fayombo, G.A. 2012. Factors influencing absenteeism questionnaire (FIAQ). Barbados: Canadian Center of Science and Education.

Field, A. 2009. Discovering statistics using SPSS. 3rd ed. London: Sage. 821 p.

Gotfried, M.A. 2009. Excused versus unexcused: how student absences in elementary school academic achievement. *Education and policy analysis*, 31:392-419.

Gump, S.E. 2004. The cost of cutting class: attendance as a predictor of student success. *Journal of school health*, 53(1):21-26.

Gump, S.E. 2005. The cost of cutting class: a predictor of success. *Journal of college teaching*, 53(1):21-26.

Gump, S.E. 2006. Guess who's not coming to class: students' attitudes as indicators of attendance. *Educational studies*, 32(1):39-46.

Gupta, M. & Lata, P. 2014 . Absenteeism in schools: a chronic problem in the present time. *Education confab*, 3(1):11-14.

Ham, B.D. 2004. The effects of divorce and remarriage on the academic achievement of high school seniors. *Journal of divorce & remarriage*, 42(2):159-178.

Hamdi, A. 2006. Effects of lecture absenteeism on pharmacology course performance in medical students. *Journal of the International Association of Medical Science Educators*, 16:27-30.

Hammond, C., Linton, D., Smink, J. & Drew, S. 2007. Dropout risk factors and exemplary programs: a technical report. Clemson, S.C.: Clemson University. National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N).

Hillygus, D.S. 2005. The missinglink: exploring the relationship between higher education and political engagement. *Political behavior*, 27(1):5-47.

Hixson, J.T. 2012. The relationship of student family structure and absence type to reading achievement. Lynchburg, Va.: Liberty University. (Thesis - DEd.)

Hocking, C. 2008. The contributing factors to student absenteeism/ruancy and the effectiveness of social services and interventions. *Social work student papers, paper 18*.

Holbert, T., Wu, L. & Stark, M. 2002. 3rd annual evaluation report: school attendance initiative - the first 3 years 1998/99-2000/01. Oregon Department of Human Services. <http://www.Co.Multnomah.Or.Or.Us/oscp/saiyr> 3 annual report final.pdf. Date of access: 16 September 2013.

Hua, H. 2008. School wastage studying: focusing on student absenteeism in Armenia. Yerevan: Ashogik. Armenia: UNICEF. *Harvard graduate school of education*: 1-66.

Hughes, S.J. 2005. Student attendance during college-based lectures: a pilot study. *Nursing standard*, 19(47):41-49.

Improving School Attendance. 2005. A resource guide for Virginia schools. Virginia, Va.: Department of Education.

Jackson, S.L. 2009. Research methods and statistics: a critical thinking approach. 3rd ed. New York: Macmillan.

Jeanne, Z. 2011. Research methods in psychology. 9th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Johnson, A.J., Croghan, E. & Crawford, J. 2003. The problem and management of sickness absence in the NHS: considerations for nurse managers. *Journal of nursing management*, 11:336-342.

Joseph, A. & Hunter, B.A. 2008. The contributory factors to student absenteeism/truancy. New York: Department of Education.

Kearney, A. & Bensaheb, A. 2006. School absenteeism and school refusal behavior: a review and suggestions for school-based health professionals. *Journal of school health*, 76(1):3-7.

Kearney, C.A. 2008. An interdisciplinary model of school absenteeism in youth to inform professional practice and public policy. *Educational psychology review*, 20(3):257-282.

Kerr, J., Price, M., Kotch, J., Willis, S., Fisher, M. & Silva, S. 2011. Does contact by a family nurse practitioner decrease early school absence? *Journal of school nursing*, 28(1):38-46.

Kottasz, R. 2005. Reasons for student non-attendance at lecturers and tutorials: an analysis. *Journal for teaching and learning*, 2(2):5-14.

Kousalya, P., Ravinndranath, V. & Vizayakumar, K. 2006. Student absenteeism in engineering colleges: evaluation of alternatives using AHP. *Journal of applied mathematics and decision sciences*, 2006:1-26.

Kumar, K.P. & Rao, K.S. 2013. A study on causes and structural effects of students' absenteeism with reference to Vignan University Andhra Pradesh, India. *Journal of applied research*, 3(12):511-512.

LCN (Limpopo College of Nursing). 2009. Rules and regulations. (Unpublished.)

Limpopo College of Nursing. 2011. Human resource management's report. (Unpublished.)

Lipscomb, M. & Snelling, P.C. 2010. Student nurse absenteeism in higher education: an argument against enforced attendance. *Journal for nurse education today*, 30:573-578.

Lochmiller, C.R. 2013. Improving student attendance in Indiana's school: synthesis of existing research related to students' absenteeism and effective, research-based interventions. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Department of Education. Centre for Evaluation & Education Policy.

Longman South African school dictionary. 2007. London: Pearson.

Longo, N.V. & Meyer, R.P. 2006. College students and politics: a literature review. Revisiting and reviewing the literature. Maryland: Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement. (Circle working paper 46.)

Mahlangu, M.J. 2012. Challenges in accessing financial assistance for poor learners in higher education. (Speech delivered during the debate on enhancing the culture of learning and teaching in our schools for better education outcomes.) <http://www.parliament.gov.za> Date of access: 29 May 2012.

Malik, S.K. 2012. Parents Involvement in female secondary schools. *International journal of social sciences and education*, 2(1):447-458.

Marree, K. & Pieterse, J. 2007. The quantitative research process. Pretoria: Van Schaik publishers. 145-153.

Maree, K. & Van der Westhuizen, C. 2007. Planning a research proposal. 1st ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Maynard, B.R. 2010. The absence of presence: a systematic review and meta-analysis of indicated interventions: increase student attendance. Chicago, Ill.: Loyola University.

McCray, E. 2006. It is 10 am: do you know where your children are? The persisting issue of school truancy. *Intervention in school and clinic*, 42:30-33.

Merghani, T.H., Eldirin Haroun, B. & Elmubarak, I. 2013. Self-report of voluntary absenteeism from didactic lectures by medical students. *Universal journal of education and general studies*, 2(10):324-328.

Miller, R.T., Murnane, R.J. & Willett, J.B. 2007. Do teacher absences impact student achievement? Longitudinal evidence from one urban school district. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 30(2):181-200.

Mukisa, W.N., Mugisha, F. & Zeitlin, A. 2009. Primary education service delivery: pupil performance and perceived challenges in Uganda. Center for the Study of African Economies (CSAE).

Muller, M., Bezuindenhout, M. & Jooste, K. 2006. Health's service management. Cape Town: Juta.

Musser, P.M. 2011. Taking attendance: how school absences undermine students and school performance in New York City. New York: Department of Education. (Campaign for fiscal equity.)

Nkondo-Mthembu, L.L. 2010. Presentation on best curriculum development. <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/11305792/Kwazulu-Natal-College-Nursing>. Date of access: 5 June 2012.

NWU (North-West University). 2012. Referencing guide. Potchefstroom: North-West University.

Obeng-Denteh, W., Yeboah, E.A., Sam, C. & Monkah, E. 2011. The impact of student and teacher absenteeism on student performance at the junior high school: the case of the Kumasi-Metro School District. *Continental journal of education research*, 4(1):7-17.

Orpinas, P. & Dube, S.R. 2009. Understanding excessive school absenteeism as school refusal behaviour. *Children & schools*, 31(2):87-95.

Patel, D., Cook, T., Cook, T. & Amendola, M. 2013. Attendance: analysis and recommendations. Danbury, Conn.: Danbury High School. School Governance Council. 19 p.

Polit, D.F. & Beck, C.T. 2008. Nursing research: generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice. 8th ed. Philadelphia, Pa.: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins.

Polit, D.F. & Beck, C.T. 2010. Nursing research generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice. 9th ed. Philadelphia, Pa.: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins.

Polit, D.F. & Beck, C.T. 2012. Nursing research generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice. 10th ed. Philadelphia, Pa.: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins.

Queensland. Department of Education. 2013. Training and employment: Queensland State School. Queensland: Department of Education.

Quinn, F.M. & Hughes, S.J. 2007. Principles and practice of nurse education. Cheltenham, UK: Nelson Thornes.

Railsback, J. 2004. Increasing student attendance: strategies from research and practice. Portland, Oreg.: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Ramlah, J. & Ahmad, A. 2013. Literacy and psychosocial problems among aboriginal students in primary school in Cameron Highlands (Malaysia). *International journal of education and research*, 1(9):1-7.

Ramodike, S.P. 2008. Student absenteeism in the FET sector. (Unpublished.)

Reid, K. 2005. The causes, views and traits of school absenteeism and truancy: an analytical review. *Review in education*, 74:59-82.

Reid, K. 2006. The views of education social workers on the management of truancy and other forms of non-attendance. *Research in education*, 75:40-57.

Reimer, M. & Smink, J. 2005. Information about the school dropout issue: selected facts and statistics. Clemson, S.C.: National Dropout Prevention Center Network.

Rochford, C., Connolly, M. & Drennan, J. 2009. Paid part-time employment and academic performance of undergraduate nursing students. *Nurse education today* 29(6):601-606.

Rogers, F.H. & Vegas, E. 2009. No more cutting class? Reducing teacher absence and providing incentives for performance policy research. Washington, D.C.: Insights Education. (Policy research working paper, 4847).

Romero, M. & Lee, Y.S. 2008. The influence of maternal and family risk on chronic absenteeism in early schooling. New York: Columbia University. National Center for Children in Poverty.

Rossouw, D. 2005. Intellectual tools: skills for the human sciences. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Sanchez, M. 2012. Truancy and chronic absence in Redwood City. Stanford, Calif.: Stanord University. John W. Gardner Center for Youth and their Communities.

Schmulian, A. & Coetzee, S. 2011. Class absenteeism: reasons for non-attendance and the effect on academic performance. *Accounting research journal*, 24:178-194.

Segal, C. 2008. Classroom behavior. *Journal of human resource*, 43:783-814.

Shahzada, G., Ghazi, S.R., Nawaz, H. & Khan, A. 2011. Causes of absenteeism from schools at secondary level. *Mediterranean journal of social sciences*, .2(2):291-298.

Sharma, M.D. & O'Byrne, J.W. 2008. The relationship between attendance in student-centred physics tutorials and performance in university examinations: *International journal of science education*, 27(11):1375-1389.

Sheldom, S.B. & Epstein, J.L. 2005. Involvement counts: Family and community partnerships and mathematics achievement. *Journal of Educational research*, 98(4). 196-206

Sheppard, A. 2009. School attendance and attainment: poor attenders' perceptions of 123 schoolwork and parental involvement in their education. *British journal of special education*, 36(2):104-111.

Smink, J. & Reimer, M.S. 2005. Fifteen effective strategies for improving student attendance and truancy prevention. Clemson, S.C.: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.

South African Nursing Council (SANC), GG Regulation No. R425 of 22 February 1985, as amended.

South African Nursing Council (SANC). 2014. <http://www.sanc.Co.za/stats.htm>
Date of access: 10 October 2014.

Sparks, S.D. 2010. Early grades become the new front in absenteeism. *Education week*, 30(8). <http://www.educationweek.org>. Date of access: 17 September 2013.

Sprandlin, T., Cierniak, K., Shi, D. & Chen, M. 2012. Attendance and chronic absenteeism in Indiana: the impact on student achievement. *Education policy brief*, 10(3):1-12.

SPSS Inc. 2013. IBM SPSS Statistics Version 21, Release 21.0.0, Copyright IBM Corporation and its licensors. <http://www-01.ibm.com/software/analytics/spss/> Date of access: 10 October 2014.

Strohschein, L, Roos, N. & Bronwell, M. 2009. Family structure histories and high school completion: evidence from a population-based registry. *Canadian journal of sociology*, 34(1):83-103.

Student Advocacy. 2008. Strengthening school attendance policies/practices to address educational neglect and truancy. <http://studentadvocacy.net/AttendanceMemoFinal4-6-09.pdf> Date of access: 17 April 2013.

Suhid, A., Rahman, A. & Kamal, N. 2012. Factors causing student absenteeism according to Peera. *International journal of arts and commerce*, 1(4):342-350.

Sutphen, R.D., Ford, J.P. & Flaherty, C. 2010. Truancy interventions: a review of the research literature. *Research on social work practice*, 20(2):161-171.

Teasly, M.L. 2004. Absenteeism and truancy: risk, protection, and best practice implications for school social workers. *Children & schools*, 26(2):117-127.

Texeria, A.A.C. 2013. The impact of class absenteeism on undergraduates' academic performance: evidence from an elite economics school in Portugal. Universidade do Porto, Faculdade de Economia do Porto.

Thekedam, J.S. 2013. Student absenteeism: interventions and programs to reduce chronic absenteeism and truancy St. Berchman's College, Changanacherry.

The paradise Unified school parent-student handbook. 2014. California Department of Education.

Timmins, F. & Kaliszer, M. 2002. Attitudes to absenteeism among diploma nursing students. *Journal of nursing and midwifery*, 8:578-588.

Unicef. 2010. Assessing the impact of seasonal factors on school attendance in the Kainali Zone. April 2010, submitted by Teacher's Union of Nepal. New York: UNICEF.

Unruh, L., Joseph, L. & Strickland, M. 2007. Nurse absenteeism and workload: negative effect on restraint use, incident reports and mortality. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 60(6):673-681.

Virginia. Department of Education. 2005. Improving guide for Virginia Schools: a resource guide for Virginia schools. Richmond, Va.: Virginia Department of Education.

Wadesango, N. & Machingambi, S. 2011. Causes and structural effects of student absenteeism: a case study of three South African universities. *Journal for social science*, 26(2):89-97.

Weideman, M., Goga, S., Lopez, D., Mayet, M., Macun, I. & Berry, D. 2007. Learner absenteeism in the South African schooling system researched for the Department of Education. Johannesburg: Community Agency for Social Enquiry & Joint Education Trust.

West, M.H. 2012. Stepping up the pace: improving attendance: a "How to" mini-guide. Richmond, Va.: M.H. West.

Wilkins, J. 2008. School characteristics that influence student attendance: experiences of students in a school avoidance program. *High school journal*, 91(3):12-24.

Williams, L.L. 2000. Student absenteeism and truancy: technologies and interventions to reduce and prevent chronic problems among school-age children. [http://chiron.Voldasta.Edu/are/litre views/vol. no1/Williams litr.pdf](http://chiron.Voldasta.Edu/are/litre%20views/vol.%20no1/Williams%20litr.pdf) Date of access: 3 May 2012.

Winkler, D. & Sondergaard, L. 2008. The efficiency of public education in Uganda. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

World Health Organization. 2010. Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organisation as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19 June - 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States. (Official of the World Health Organisation, no.2.) <http://www.who.Into/suggestions/fag/en> Date of access: 30 November 2010.

Yahaya, A., Ramli, J., Hashim, S., Ibrahim, M.A., Kadir, H.B., Boon, Y. & Rahmah, R.R.A. 2010. The effects of various modes of absenteeism problem in school on the

academic performance of students in secondary schools. *European journal of social sciences*, 12(4):624-639.

Young, P., Yates, S., Rickaby, C., Snelling, P., Lipscomb, M. & Lockyer, L. 2010. Researching student absence: methodological challenges and ethical issues. *Nurse education today*, 30:291-295.

APPENDIX A

ETHICS APPLICATION



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Private Bag X8001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

To whom it may concern

Faculty of Health Sciences
Tel: 018-299 2092
Fax: 018-299 2088
Email: Minnie.Greeff@nwu.ac.za

10 October 2013

Dear Miss van Waltseveen

Ethics Application: NWU-00100-13-S1 "Factors contributing to the success or failure of nursing students"

Thank you for the amendments made to your application, all ethical concerns have now been addressed and ethical approval is granted.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Minnie Greeff'.

Prof. Minnie Greeff
Ethics Sub-Committee Vice Chairperson

Original details: Prof. Minnie Greeff\101873-4\CIUsers\13210577\Documents\ETEK2013 E THCS\NWU-00100-13-S1\adaw
10 October 2013

File reference: NWU-00100-13-S1

APPENDIX B
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Enquiries: Latif Shamila

Ref:4/2/2

Baloyi PD
North-West University
Private Bag X6001
Potchefstroom
2520

Greetings,

Re: Factors contributing to the success or failure of nursing studies. Absenteeism amongst nursing students in a Limpopo college of nursing.

The above matter refers.

1. Permission to conduct the above mentioned study is hereby granted.
2. Kindly be informed that:-
 - Further arrangement should be made with the targeted institutions.
 - In the course of your study there should be no action that disrupts the services.
 - After completion of the study, a copy should be submitted to the Department to serve as a resource.
 - The researcher should be prepared to assist in the interpretation and implementation of the study recommendation where possible.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.



Head of Department

03/03/2014

Date

18 College Street, Polokwane, 0700, Private Bag x9302, POLOLKWANE, 0700
Tel: (015) 293 6000, Fax: (015) 293 6211/20 Website: <http://www.limpopo.gov.za>

The heartland of Southern Africa – *development is about people*

APPENDIX C

CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT ON CAMPUS



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
LIMPOPO COLLEGE OF NURSING: GIYANI CAMPUS**

18-03-2014


**MRS. P.D BALOYI
P.O BOX 1588
ELIM HOSPITAL
0960**

PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH ON CAMPUS

Permission is hereby granted for you to conduct your research at Giyani campus as requested.

Yours Truly

Vice Principal


E.T Rikhotso

Private Bag X9658 GIYANI, 0826
Tel: (015) 812 0330/1/2 or (015) 812 0123/0213 Fax: (015) 812 0123
Website; <http://www.limpopo.gov.za>

The heartland of Southern Africa – Development is about people!

APPENDIX D
CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT:
ABSENTEEISM AMONGST NURSING STUDENTS IN A
LIMPOPO COLLEGE OF NURSING



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOMKAMPUS

Privaatsak/ Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
Suid-Afrika/ South Africa, 2520

Tel: (018) 299-1111/2222

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**SKOOL VIR VERPLEEGKUNDE/
SCHOOL OF NURSING SCIENCE**

Tel: (018) 299 1886

Fax: (018) 299 1827

E-mail: richelle.vanwaltsleven@nwu.ac.za

21 November 2013

**Title of research study: ABSENTEEISM AMONGST NURSING STUDENTS IN A
LIMPOPO COLLEGE OF NURSING**

CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Dear Sir/Madam

I am Mrs. P D Baloyi from the North-West University. I am currently working on a research project on absenteeism amongst nursing students in a Limpopo College of Nursing. I am herewith inviting you to participate in the study. I also need your consent to use information provided by yourself for purposes of the research project. Below is information about the study so that you can make an informed decision.

Please note: Completing the questionnaire indicates your consent.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe reasons for nursing students' absenteeism at a nursing college, and to develop strategies aimed at reducing students' absenteeism in this college of nursing. You are herewith asked to participate in this study because you are one of the nursing students studying at this particular college and your input is very valuable to me.

2. PROCEDURE

If you agree to be in this study, you will be expected to:

- Complete a questionnaire on reasons explaining nursing students' absenteeism. This will take approximately 10 minutes of your time.

3. RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

4. Depending on your perception of absenteeism, you may feel uneasy when completing the questionnaire.
5. You do not have to answer any question or take part if you feel that any of the questions are too personal or make you uncomfortable.

Your name will never be made known and your data will be handled as confidentially as possible. No individual identifiers will be used in any publication resulting from this study and only the team of researchers will work with the information that you share. All sensitive information will be protected by locking it up and storing it on a password-protected computer.

6. BENEFITS

Individual

It is the aim of this research to reduce student absenteeism and to improve the academic processing of students.

Community

It is the hoped that by achieving the aim of this research, that is, by reducing absenteeism of students, more competent nurses will be produced.

7. COSTS

There will be no cost to you as a result of your participation in this study.

8. PAYMENT

You will receive no payment for participation.

9. QUESTIONS

You are welcome to ask any questions to a member of the research team before you decide to give your consent. You are also welcome to contact myself (Mrs. PD Baloyi) if you have any further questions concerning your consent (cell number 082 223 2111).

10. FEEDBACK OF FINDINGS

The findings of the research will be shared with you if you are interested. You are welcome to contact me regarding the findings of the research. I will be sharing the findings with you as soon as these become available.

Sincerely,

Mrs. PD Baloyi (B Cur (Ed et Adm))

Ms. R van Waltsleven (M Cur)

Dr. W Lubbe (Ph.D.)



Dear Phoenicia,

Please find attached the copy of ABSENTEEISM QUESTIONNAIRE. You are also granted the permission to use it.

Best wishes,

Dr Grace Fayombo
Lecturer, Developmental Psychology,
The University of the West Indies
Cave Hill Campus
P.O. Box 64
Bridgetown, Barbados
Tel: 1-246-417-4980
Fax: 1-246-417-9615
grace.fayombo@cavehill.uwi.edu



APPENDIX E
FACTORS INFLUENCING ABSENTEEISM QUESTIONNAIRE
(FIAQ)

FACTORS INFLUENCING ABSENTEEISM QUESTIONNAIRE (FIAQ)

Dear respondent,

Please respond to all the items in this questionnaire as honestly and completely as possible.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Tick [✓] your response in the appropriate box next to the correct answer.

1. Your age

1. 17-20	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. 29-40	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Your marital status

1. Married	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Single	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Widow/ Widower	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Your current level of study

1. Level I	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Level II	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Level III	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Level IV	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Your current distance from campus

1. 0-5 km	
2. 6-10 km	
3. 11-15 km	
4. 15 km or more	

5. Your method of transport

1. Own (car or bicycle)	
2. Public	
3. None (I have to walk)	

SECTION B

IN MY OPINION STUDENTS ARE ABSENT FROM CLASS DUE TO THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

Tick [√] your response in the appropriate box next to the correct answer.

4 - Strongly agree, 3 – Agree, 2 – Disagree and 1 – Strongly disagree

Student-centered factors	Strongly Agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
1. Students' lack of interest in school subjects or courses.				
2. Lack of personal interest in studies.				
3. Inability of students to match the course or courses opted for.				
4. Lack of self-confidence among the students.				
5. I don't understand the subject.				

6. When I want to prepare for the test.				
7. Inferiority complex among the students.				
8. Length of periods.				
9. Too much of socialization among students.				
10. When I am preparing for examination.				
Home related factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	4	3	2	1
11. Over expectation by parents.				
12. Lack of parental support.				
13. Lack of parental care and involvement in their children's academic activities.				
14. Death of a family member.				
15. Poor family relationships.				
16. My home is too far from the campus.				
17. Family commitments.				
School related factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	4	3	2	1
18. Poor lecturer-student relationship.				
19. Poor teaching skills of lecturers leading to boring lectures.				
School related factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	4	3	2	1
20. Negative peer influence on lecturers.				
21. Lecturers not turning up for scheduled lectures.				
22. Excessive homework and project work for students.				

23. Lack of recreational and allied activities like sports programs.				
24. Lack of fresher's or farewell parties.				
25. Inadequate orientation about hours of training.				
26. Classroom environment not conducive for learning.				
27. Poor infrastructural facilities in school e.g. inadequate space in the library, lack of necessary equipment.				
28. Inclement weather such as when it is cold or hot.				
Social factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	4	3	2	1
29. Unavailability of opportunities for entertainment like malls or movies around the campus				
30. Low societal value for education.				
31. More regard for wealthy persons than educated persons.				
32. Beliefs that much education is not required for success and business.				
33. Political activities such as rallies.				
34. Transportation problems.				
35. When I want to attend community activities.				
36. When I am afraid of bully students.				

SECTION C: WAYS TO REDUCE ABSENTEEISM

INDICATE THE NEED FOR THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF PROGRAMS IN YOUR CAMPUS.

Tick [✓] your response in the appropriate box next to the correct answer.

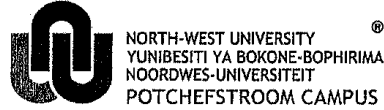
Program	We already have programs like this?	If yes, answer the following question: We need to	If no, answer the following question: We need a

			improve our current program?		program like this?	
Orientation program.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Established policy for controlling absenteeism.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Systematic student absenteeism monitoring tool.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Motivating program, emphasizing the benefits of attending classes.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Prize giving ceremony for student who was never absent from class.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Friendly and mutually lecturer-student relationship program.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX F

LETTER : STATISTICAL CONSULTATION SERVICES



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Statistical Consultation Services
Tel: +27 18 285 2447
Fax: +27 0 87 231 5294
Email: monique.vandeventer@nwu.ac.za

15 May 2014

Dissertation, Mrs PD Baloyi, student number 11981911

We hereby confirm that the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University analysed the data involved in the study of the above-mentioned student and assisted with the interpretation of the results. However, any opinion, findings or recommendations contained in this document are those of the author, and the Statistical Consultation Services of the NWU (Potchefstroom Campus) do not accept responsibility for the statistical correctness of the data reported.

Kind regards

Dr SM Ellis (Pr. Sci. Nat)

Head: Statistical Consultation Services

Original details: Monique van Deventer(12256307) Q:\Algemeen - nie konsultasie\Stylblaaie_Style sheets\Brief verhandeling_Eng.docm
23 April 2014

Current details: Monique van Deventer(12256307) Q:\KONSULTASIEDIENS\SKD\Algemeen - nie konsultasie\Briewe\Verhandelings\Brief verhandeling_Eng_Nuutste.docm
25 April 2014