

Perceptions of Teachers and Learners towards the Effects of Absenteeism on Learner Academic Performance in Selected Rural Secondary Schools in Eastern Cape, South Africa

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ABSTRACT This paper investigates the views of teachers and learners on how teacher and learner absenteeism affects the academic performance of learners in rural secondary schools in the Eastern Cape. The researchers were prompted by observation that it is not uncommon for teachers and learners to be absent from school. Authors argue that teacher and learner absenteeism can have a negative effect on the academic performance of learners. A qualitative research approach with a case study research design was used. Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Interviews were guided through an interview schedule. 16 participants from four schools were conveniently selected. The following participants were purposefully selected and interviewed per school, that is, principal, a head of department, a post level 1 teacher and a learner per school. The main findings revealed that there are no effective strategies to curb teacher and learner absenteeism. To regulate learner absenteeism, the South African Schools Act should be clearer on the responsibilities of learners regarding their absence from school.