



DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

FACTORS INFLUENCING WORKER ABSENTEEISM AT TRANSNET PORT

TERMINAL (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2)

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10 APRIL 2025





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TERMINAL (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2)

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Abstract

Absenteeism is a pervasive issue in the South African port industry, with significant implications for productivity, efficiency, and overall operational performance. This study focused on Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2), a critical hub for international trade and economic growth. Using a mixed-methods approach, this research explored the underlying causes influencing absenteeism among employees, which included an investigation of the conditions of services factors, among various other aspects, such as work-related stress, job satisfaction, and organisational culture. The study also examined the consequences of absenteeism on terminal operations, including delays, increased workload, and decreased morale. Data were collected through a survey and interviews with the personnel from DCT (Pier 2) on all levels, and analysis of attendance records.

The findings not only show service conditions as crucial, but it also highlight the need for targeted interventions to address the root absenteeism causes, improve employee well-being, and enhance operational performance. Recommendations include developing a strategy of complete absence reduction implementing employee wellness programmes, improving communication and recognition, and addressing underlying organisational issues. This study contributes to the understanding of absenteeism in the port industry and provides practical solutions for reducing its impact on Transnet Port Terminal (DCT Pier 2) and similar organisations.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own, original work and has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

All sources used have been referenced and cited according to the institutional guidelines.

SNGUMEDE

S Gumede

08/04/2025

Date

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BCEA Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997

DCT Durban Container Terminal

EEA Employment Equity Act of 1998

SA South Africa

SPSS Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TPT Transnet Port Terminal

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Govender (2015: 1) estimates unauthorised work absence costs the South African economy more than 10 billion rand annually. Since the 1950s, absenteeism has been the subject of the most extensive research in human resource management (HRM) and remains an important issue in organizations of all sizes (Patton and Johns 2012: 16). This study was conducted to investigate conditions of services factors, among a variety of other aspects, causing the issue of worker absenteeism at Transnet Port Terminal (TPT) (Durban Container Terminal (DCT) Pier 2). Absenteeism has been extensively researched and is influenced by many factors, making it difficult to quantify, qualify, and rectify. Several reasons contribute to absenteeism in a workplace; however, according to Singh *et al.* (2016), there are two main causes of absenteeism, namely organisational and personal factors.

The backdrop to the problem studied, the problem statement, research topic, and goal, as well as the objectives, and research questions are introduced in this chapter. Along with information on the data collection and analysis, a summary of the literature pertinent to the study is also included. The current study is significant, because it aims to advance theoretical understandings of absenteeism in the transportation and freight sector, specifically the DCT (Pier 2), and investigate the predisposing factors. The results of this study may be used by managers in the sector to implement proactive solutions to the problems of absenteeism within their organizations. In future studies, comparisons of absenteeism in various South African businesses may use the findings from this study as a starting point.

1.2 Background to the study

According to Gina (2017: 32), absenteeism in a workplace is serious and negatively impacts productivity and outcomes. Any organization's growth depends on the regular attendance of its staff members (Wallace 2017: 55). Furthermore, "Employee absences are both costly and disruptive for business, and the trend has been increasing steadily over the years" (Kocakulah *et al.* 2016: 89). The high absence rate needs to be reduced and the only way to do this, is to determine the absenteeism causes.

Some contributory factors include targets not met, overtime being common, poor efficiency, and other employees having to take on extra work to make up for an absent employee, putting the freight business in financial danger (Sichani, Lee and Fayek 2017: 64). Research into how the transport and freight sector might deal with this difficulty is consequently required.

Factors and causes of absenteeism, such as illness or injury, bullying, disengagement, and stress, as well as problems with family responsibilities, low workplace morale, burnout, and time theft, along with a lack of flexibility, are considered independent variables (Durdyev, Omarov, and Ismail 2017: 32). The difficulty is that the worker returning from an extended absence finds it difficult to catch up on unfinished work and is perpetually stressed out as a result (Forte 2017: 59). This causes the employee to become ill once more, starting a vicious cycle. Investigations into absenteeism are necessary, as are investigations into contributory problems.

To contribute to a reduction in the high absenteeism rate at the TPT (DCT Pier 2), the research study goal was to determine the elements related to working conditions that impact absenteeism. In this study, there are two dependent variables: absenteeism and productivity.

Port terminals will profit from the study through the exploration and identification of conditions of service factors, such as labour relations, working conditions, health and safety, and any other elements, which may be affecting or producing workplace absenteeism. In addition, the research will deepen or enlighten Transnet's understanding of absenteeism and increase staff knowledge regarding the difficulties absenteeism causes the company.

TPT (DCT Pier 2) will be provided access to the findings and recommendations.

1.3 Study Context

Zondi (2021) explains TPT is the operational division of Transnet SOC Ltd, the holding company with five operating divisions, a state-owned entity formed in 1990, with the South African government the single shareholder, through the Department of Public Enterprise. Transnet has approximately 50 000 employees and an annual turnover of more than R38 billion. This state entity, according to Zondi (2021: 13), is responsible for "commercial handling services of the sea-route freight across exports, imports and

transhipments in breakbulk, bulk, containers and automotive”. Seven terminals are operated by TPT in South African commercial ports comprising: Ngqura; Saldanha; Durban; and Cape Town; as well as East London; Richards Bay; and Port Elizabeth (Zondi 2021). According to the TPT Report (Transnet 2024: 10), there is currently a permanent staff complement at TPT division of 8 991 (including contractors, the total is 9 731).

In this study, absenteeism was investigated at DCT (Pier 2), a unit within the TPT division located at the Durban harbour of the KZN province, providing strategic support to the export-led strategy of the South African government. The DCT (Pier 2), which is the study focus, The Pier 2 Fact Sheet states number of employees as 1 879, with females at 32 percent and shift work patterns for weekday and weekends. The investigation of employee absenteeism stems from its increase at the DCT and “the consequent effect(s) not yet being known, despite increasingly becoming unbearable as it negatively affects productivity levels” (Zondi 2021: 13).

1.4 Problem statement

TPT provides a range of services to its customers, and those services necessitate the frequent attendance of its staff. Transnet may have poor service delivery, job pressure on devoted staff, and slowed productivity due to absenteeism, all of which have a detrimental impact on sustainability and profitability. In this regard, Zondi (2021: 12) states:

“The port terminal industry of late has become highly competitive due to globalisation and technological advancement, to the extent that only competitive terminals will survive. For both terminals [Pier 1 & 2], sustaining productivity can only be possible through effective employee performance. Unfortunately, current developments at the two selected container terminals depict high levels of employee absenteeism. To maintain acceptable production levels, effective absenteeism management has become a key focus [for] the Durban Container Terminal.”

According to Craig (2016: 3), employee absenteeism continues to be an expensive issue for most employers, particularly large organizations with many employees, where unexpected absenteeism is thought to cost corporations billions of dollars annually. Skosana (2014: 2) estimates approximately 15 percent employees in South

Africa (SA) are missing on any one day, costing businesses more than R12 billion annually. The situation in 2024 remains the same, according to the Human Capital Review, however, the cost has increased to R19.1 billion (Woosey 2024: para 2).

Employee absenteeism is one workplace issue many businesses face (Badubi 2017). This situation has existed for many years and is still present, draining resources from organizations, lowering output, as well as the cost, speed, accuracy, and completeness of standards (Clare 2016).

Unscheduled absences are expensive for a company. Furthermore, the organisation may incur direct costs as a result (Singh *et al.* 2016), including sick pay, lost productivity, missed days, and a reduction in service. Employee absenteeism is, in some cases, a major problem HR manager must deal with; in other instances, it has become a worst-case scenario for most managers. This significant issue, which can arise in any business, affects organisational performance negatively and results in resource waste (Aishwariyashindhe and Vijayalakshmi 2019).

Absenteeism at work also lowers productivity and increases expenditure for society and will, eventually, lower an organization's productivity, performance, and financial balance. This is because absenteeism leads to employee instability, workplace disorder, management challenges, and customer discontent, as well as morale problems, a decline in service quality, and public mistrust (Kocakulah *et al.* 2016).

1.5 Study Aim

The aim of the study was to investigate conditions of service and factors that cause worker absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2), while its purpose was to examine the causes of employee absence in the freight business. Corrective actions to reduce absenteeism in the industry and promote economic growth can be found by analysing the causes. The purpose of this research study was, consequently, to identify working condition factors influencing absenteeism in TPT (DCT Pier 2), in addition to establishing the rate of absenteeism in the workplace and how it can be decreased. This would, accordingly, raise company awareness of the cause(s) of absenteeism in the workplace and establish how identified working conditions can be improved or adjusted to reduce absenteeism.

1.6 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

- To examine worker absenteeism as a challenge for the freight industry in general and port terminals in specific.
- To explore factors that influence absenteeism, with a focus on conditions of service factors.
- To investigate factors that cause employee absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2).
- To explore which aspects of the conditions of service cause worker absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2).
- To determine what measures relating to service conditions can be implemented to assist in reducing worker absenteeism at the TPT (DCT Pier 2).

1.7 Research Questions

Research questions developed for the study are:

- How is worker absenteeism a challenge for industry in general and port terminals?
- What are the factors that cause absenteeism, with a focus on conditions of service factors?
- What are the factors that contribute to worker absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2)?
- What conditions of service cause worker absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2)?
- How do conditions of service cause worker absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2)?
- What measures, strategies and/or policies can TPT (DCT Pier 2) use to counter or reduce worker absenteeism?

1.8 Hypotheses

The null hypothesis (Ho) and alternative hypothesis (Ha) are stated as:

- Ho: Conditions of service factors influence worker absenteeism at TPT (DCT).
- Ha: Conditions of service factors do not influence worker absenteeism at TPT (DCT).

The present case study employed a multiple methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The survey questionnaire approach was used to collect quantitative data to test the research hypothesis.

1.9 Study Population

Transnet Port Terminals (TPT), a state-owned logistics freight transport company in SA, is an operational branch of Transnet SOC Limited. Transnet Port Terminals owns and maintains a total of 16 terminal operations at seven ports across the country. The automobile industry, break bulk, bulk, and container industries are among the sectors into which their operations are separated. By facilitating the transfer of cargo between SA and nations worldwide, Transnet Port Terminals play a crucial role on a global scale (Transnetportterminals.net 2018).

In this study, according to the Transnet Fact Sheet, the target population is the 1879 employees at DCT (Pier 2), at the TPT in Durban, in the KwaZulu Natal (KZN) province of SA. A sample size of 341 respondents was, therefore, considered sufficient for the survey and 15 participants were selected for the interviews, conducted until saturation was reached. Participants from different departments were interviewed at the terminal where the study took place.

1.10 Measuring instrument

The research instrument used to gather the quantitative data for this study was a standardised, self-administered survey questionnaire. Denscombe (2012: 163) explains the survey questionnaire may be utilised on a large population in a short amount of time and is cost-effective. The survey questionnaire was designed as measurement instrument, where the questions developed by the researcher were based on the review of literature, aligned to the research objectives. Respondents were asked to indicate to the same set of questions, in a specific order.

Open- and closed-ended questions are the two categories of inquiries, according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011: 60). Closed-ended questions were employed in the structured questionnaire, thereby limiting answers to the set of response choices the researcher provided. Respondents had to rate how much+- they agreed or disagreed with a series of items related to a specific question, using a 5-point Likert scale. The survey questionnaire was hand-delivered to those respondents who agreed to participate in the study from all departments at Pier 2 of the DCT.

In addition to a survey questionnaire, the researcher also conducted face-to-face interviews with participants while at work. Interviews are employed in qualitative research to explore the implications of major themes in the lives of the participants.

Most qualitative research involves conducting interviews, which comprise asking one or more individuals general, open-ended questions and recording their responses (Creswell 2013: 148).

Understanding the meaning of what interviewees say is the primary goal of the interview process (McNamara 2009: 25). In interviews, open-ended questions are typically asked to elicit unbiased responses, whereas closed-ended questions could coerce respondents into providing a particular response (Creswell 2012: 11; McNamara 1999: 25). In addition, to enable more accurate transcription, audio recordings are frequently used in interviews (Creswell and Clark 2017: 11).

The researcher collected data on an individual basis to gather the data quickly and efficiently. Therefore, the researcher had to personally conduct the in-person interviews during business hours and administer the survey questionnaire to the respondents in writing, handing them a printed survey questionnaire.

1.11 Data analysis

The most recent Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 29.0 for Windows, was used to analyse the survey results and perform the necessary statistical tests in the quantitative part of this study. Triangulation was also used to combine different data, collection techniques and sources, such as survey responses, field notes from observations, and documents, as well as various data analysis techniques, such as content analysis, discourse analysis, descriptive and/or inferential methods, and statistics (Denzin 1978: 291-292).

The most recent version of NVIVO Pro 11 was used to first code then categorise the interview data, as well as for subsequent manual analysis. This involved the use of Grounded theory, an inductive method of interpreting recorded data on a social phenomenon to construct ideas regarding that phenomenon. It is one strategy for analysing qualitative text data. A process of classifying and categorising text data segments into a set of codes (concepts), categories (constructs), and relationships was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in their method of constant comparative analysis of grounded theory research, with Strauss and Corbin (1990) further refining the technique.

1.12 Delimitations

This study focused on the conditions of services factors that contribute to absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2) in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). The research did not include any other TPTs and focused exclusively on DCT (Pier 2).

1.13 Significance of the study

This study will help businesses and employees understand the impact absenteeism has on the organization and the broader health of the economy, which will be good for businesses, workers, and the economy. The recommendations that result from the research will deal with potential solutions to absenteeism. The study will be a valuable addition to existing absenteeism studies, as well as being tremendously important for port terminals in their focus on addressing the high rate of absenteeism.

1.14 Chapter-outline

Chapter 1 – The first chapter introduced absenteeism and provided an overview of the independent variables identified for study. The chapter also presented the problem statement, research questions and study objectives.

Chapter 2 - A literature review on absenteeism and contemporary evidence regarding the independent variables identified for the study is presented. In addition, low morale, stress, work overload and bullying will be among the factors discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 3 - The outline of the research design and paradigm are presented in this chapter, with the data collection, method and protocol for data analysis also detailed. A discussion of the research ethics considered in conducting the study concludes this chapter.

Chapter 4 – The findings are presented and analysed in this chapter, regarding the service factors that contribute to absenteeism in a port terminal.

Chapter 5 - In this chapter the findings presented in chapter four are discussed.

Chapter 6 – This final chapter presents a summary of the findings, drawing conclusions and offering recommendations.

1.15 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the topic of absenteeism investigated in this study. A brief background to the study was provided and the problem statement highlighted, with the

chapter further delineating the research questions, and study significance. The next chapter reviews the literature relevant to the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to the Literature Review

Regardless of the industry, absenteeism is a serious pandemic that has and is still affecting many organizations. It has long been known this non-attendance raises operating costs, with a detrimental effect on company products. The problem description, goal, and objectives of the study were summarised in the previous chapter, with the concept of absenteeism, as well as the causes of absence and factors affecting service, examined in this chapter. Various secondary data sources are, furthermore, explored to build a theoretical framework.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual frameworks are crucial for directing study design and guaranteeing methodological rigour, according to Ravitch and Carl (2020: 12). A conceptual framework is described by Jozkowski (2017: 5) as “both a process and product that can be used to guide the research process from conception through dissemination”. In this study, the framework depicted in Figure 2.1 shows the basic concept on which the study is premised, while Figure 2.2 details the aspects reviewed in the literature to better answer the research question and meet the study aim and objectives.

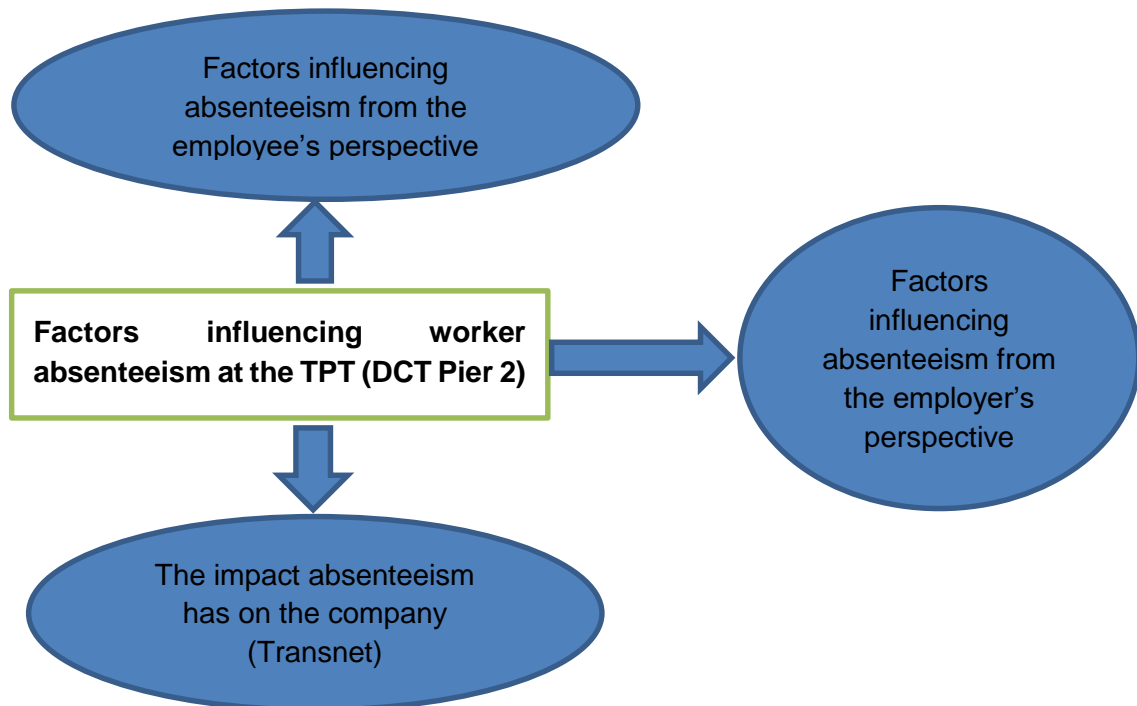


Figure 2.1: Basic Conceptual Framework

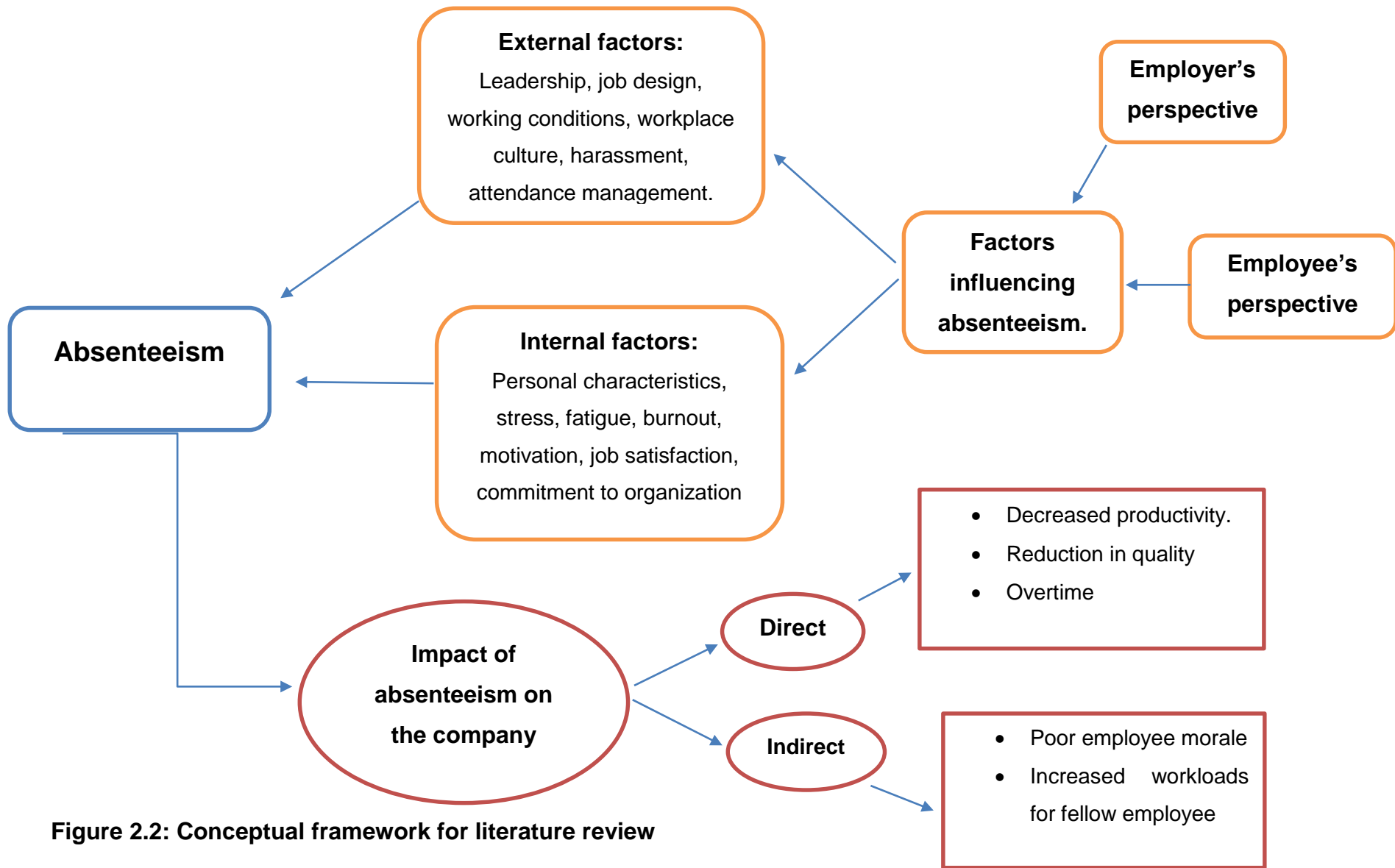


Figure 2.2: Conceptual framework for literature review

2.3 Absenteeism as a concept

Different people will interpret a worker's absence differently. Absenteeism is described as "the keeping away from place of employment without prior notice" by Gupta and Raja (2019: 123). "The total number of lost man-hours shifts as a percentage of all scheduled man-hour shifts" is a further description. In an analysis of absenteeism's effects on organisational performance, Harrison *et al.* (2020a: 15) emphasised the significance of addressing the root causes of absence to reduce its effects. The avoidance of or failure to report to work, which renders it difficult to fulfil a contractual duty, is described as absenteeism by Gennard and Graham (2015: 97).

Unjustified absences can have a major detrimental effect on an organization's overall performance, morale, and productivity, according to Fluegge-Woolf *et al.* (2020: 10). Attridge (2016: 32) contrasts this by defining absenteeism as "a pattern of unjustified missing work or other commitments". According to research by the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) (2020), absenteeism causes large productivity losses, which are projected to be roughly 2.5 percent of GDP. This confirms research by Abrey and Smallwood (2014: 11), who highlighted the South African economy has a high absenteeism rate, which lowers production.

Lack of employee engagement, poor work-life balance, and job discontent were found to be major predictors of absenteeism by Asiedu and Agyemang (2020: 12). This adds to findings by Mahamid (2013: 132) showing absenteeism is a problem that managers in many organizations across the nation deal with on a regular basis, with several variables that contribute to absence at work. According to Kumar *et al.* (2020: 15), productivity losses from absenteeism were substantial and estimated to be roughly 2.3 percent of total working hours. Forte (2017: 59) additionally asserts dangerously high levels of absenteeism negatively affect organisational productivity and profitability. Employees who are disengaged or actively disengaged from their work were more likely to miss work, which reduced productivity and profitability (Gallup 2020: 12). However, Taylor (2015: 62) maintains excessive absence from work is a symptom that an individual is unhappy with their job, their workplace, or the environment in general.

2.4 Absenteeism Types

Sick leave, authorised, unauthorised, and unscheduled absence are the common types of absenteeism in the workplace (Mashaba and Mile 2019: 22). When a worker

misses work for an approved reason, this is known as authorised absenteeism. Unauthorised absenteeism, however, occurs when a worker does not attend work without informing the employer. Unexpected absences from work are referred to as unplanned absenteeism.

2.4.1 Permitted absence

An employee is on permitted leave when they are away from the office for a pre-approved reason. Authorised absences, such as paid time off or family leave, can improve worker productivity and well-being (Baloyi and Mafini 2020a: 12). The term "authorised absenteeism" refers to absences from the workplace approved by management (Govender 2015: 2). Annual leave and leave connected to family are frequent forms of approved absences that can improve worker productivity and well-being, according to Hennekens *et al.* (2020: 10). Authorised absences from work include, but are not limited to, annual leave, leave taken for family obligations, and other absences when the employee has been given permission to miss work by the appropriate authorities of the organization (Patton & Johns 2012: 16).

Employee sick leave is covered by Sections 22 and 23 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA), Act 75 of 1997. In addition, the amount of paid sick leaves an employee is entitled to during each 36-month sick leave cycle, is stated to be equal to the number of days the employee would ordinarily work during a period of six weeks (Cloete 2022: lines 4–11, section 2).

2.4.2 An unscheduled absence

An unplanned absence occurs when an employee is absent from work for an unforeseeable reason. Whether one is dealing with a mild illness or a significant instance of mental illness, the result is the same: staff morale is impacted, along with some costly business disruption. To reiterate, illness is the most typical cause of unplanned absence. Other types of unscheduled absence include:

- Sickness
- Injury
- Stress
- Mental ill-health
- Emergency leave

Employees who take unapproved time off from work do so without informing their employer; frequently, not because they are ill or injured. Instead, they merely chose to avoid work that day (PayScale 2020: 12). Nonetheless, Munns (2021: para 7-9, line 17-52) avers those unauthorised absences, although inconvenient, can be controlled.

2.4.3 Sick Leave

Sick leave is a type of absenteeism in which an employee claims health-related reasons for being absent from work. According to Naidoo *et al.* (2020:12), the BCEA requires workers to provide a medical certificate for absences longer than two days, so that employers can confirm the validity of absences for medical reasons. The BCEA requires a medical certificate from a doctor when an employee is absent from work for more than two days due to health reasons (Du Plessis *et al.* 2017: 145).

Every employee has a responsibility to arrive for work on time for each working day. Should an employee be ill or unable to report for work for any other reason, they must contact their supervisor, for example, within three hours of the first day they are supposed to report for work. In addition, when their absence will last more than one day, they should notify the supervisor once more of their continued absence. These terms may vary between organisations, for instance, the Transnet Port Terminals' Employee Handbook (2022: 34-37), under Leave Policy, states shift workers are required to report their absences no later than two hours prior to the start of their shift.

Unauthorised absences may, furthermore, be viewed as a breach of employment contracts and usually considered as serious by employers. The employer will, consequently, implement the required disciplinary measures to address and rectify any breaches. Functional absenteeism, such as tardiness and prolonged breaks, can have a major effect on the performance and productivity of an organization, according to Baloyi and Mafini (2020b:15). In addition, Forte (2017: 59) explains an employee's absence might also involve arriving late, departing early, and taking extended lunches and tea breaks, all considered functional absenteeism and a breach of the employment contract.

2.5 Factors that influence absenteeism

This section discusses some internal and external factors that influence absenteeism (Figure 2.3.), with among these personal difficulties, motivation of employees, policies on absenteeism, and job fulfilment, along with working conditions, attendance ability, personal traits, and burnout, as well as tiredness and stress, workplace atmosphere and leadership.

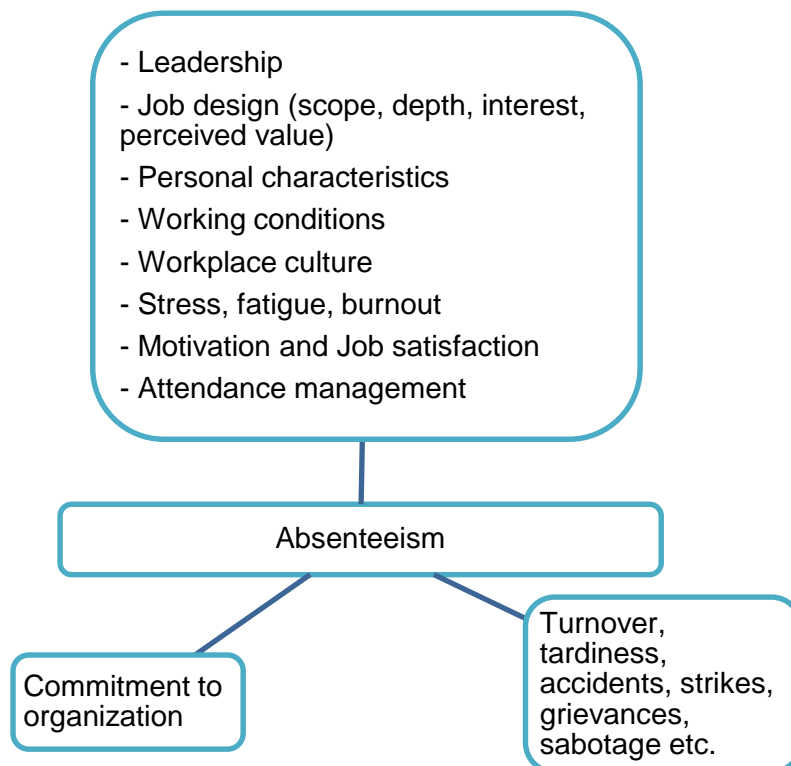


Figure 2.3: Factors that influence absenteeism in the workplace.

Source: Developed by researcher

2.5.1 Internal factors

2.5.1.1 Employee motivation

According to Harter, Schmidt and Killham (2020b: 10), motivated and engaged workers were more productive and had reduced absenteeism rates. Employee motivation has an impact on absenteeism, and a poorly motivated workforce is expensive to the business, owing to decreased performance and productivity, high staff turnover, increased costs, and frequent absences, as well as having a detrimental impact on co-worker morale (Jobber and Lee 2014: 13). Gallup (2020: 10) highlighted how crucial managers are to creating a happy workplace, praising and rewarding staff members, and offering opportunities for advancement—all of which boost employee motivation.

To go to work and contribute to the organization's goals, people need to be inspired, motivated, and driven by management (Charles 2014: 294). According to Amah *et al.* (2019: 20), workers who felt their own values and the values of the company did not align were more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs, which in turn led to absenteeism. However, absenteeism may occur when an employee's ideals, job expectations, and real experience are out-of-sync, according to Gncobo (2016: 28).

2.5.1.2 Absenteeism regulations

Organizations with clear and consistent attendance standards had lower absenteeism rates than those with ambiguous or lax policies, according to Fluegge-Woolf *et al.* (2020: 10). Furthermore, employee attendance policies are a major factor influencing absenteeism at work (Grant 2008:16). Harrison *et al.* (2020b: 20) examined employer perceptions regarding absence management programmes and their impact on employee absenteeism, stressing the importance of consistent and equitable implementation. Although many studies have investigated the reasons workers miss work, relatively little research has examined how organisational decisions to reduce absences affect different types of absence or the variations in how employers perceive these efforts may affect employee absences (Holley *et al.* 2011).

Much lower absenteeism rates are found in organizations with explicit attendance policies than those without (Fluegge-Woolf *et al.* 2020: 10). Furthermore, Waiyaki (2017: 15) asserts organizations with an attendance and absence policy have lower absenteeism rates than those without. Hausknecht *et al.* (2020: 15) confirm companies that put attendance tracking systems in place saw a notable drop in absenteeism. The authors add this is because the policy regulates and monitors staff attendance (Waiyaki 2017).

2.5.1.3 Job satisfaction

According to Spector *et al.* (2019: 10), job satisfaction is a complex concept that includes a range of elements such as compensation, possibilities for advancement, supervision, and work-life balance. Sageer, Refat, and Agarwal (2012: 34) describe job satisfaction as a measure of how much employees like or dislike their jobs. As Hackman and Oldham (2019: 15) explain, job design elements such as autonomy, feedback, and variation can promote psychological states that are motivating, such as motivation, engagement, and satisfaction. A core tenet of job design research holds

that motivating psychological states is linked to stimulating employment and leads to favourable attitudinal and behavioural work outcomes (Morgeson & Campion 2003; Parker & Wall 1998).

The ongoing practical significance of the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) was demonstrated by O*NET (2020: 12), using it as a framework for analysing job characteristics and their correlations with worker happiness, engagement, and performance. Most recent research on job design has been built on the JCM proposed by Hackman and Oldham (1976, 1980). Hackman and Oldham (2019: 15) reaffirmed the importance of knowledge of outcomes, accountability, and experienced meaningfulness in fostering employee engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction.

The JCM focuses on five fundamental job elements namely, skill variety, task identity, task significance, and autonomy, as well as job feedback, which enhance job stimulation. Three crucial psychological conditions are part of the outcomes (experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility, and knowledge of results), and these, in turn, enhance individual work motivation, satisfaction, and performance (Wiley 2007). According to Spector *et al.* (2019: 10), work satisfaction is a complex concept that includes a range of job-related factors, such as compensation, prospects for advancement, supervision, and work-life balance.

Work satisfaction is “a good attitude toward a job from an assessment of all its components” (Stephen and Timothy 2009: 117). The analysis of the connection between job satisfaction and worker well-being, Harter *et al.* (2020b: 15) emphasised the significance of good feelings and experiences in enhancing general quality of life. In contrast, Kainkan (2015: 37) defines job satisfaction as “an expressive state brought on by work experience and the emotions associated with employee happiness, which can influence an employee's decision to attend, leave, or stay with the company”.

2.5.1.4 Working conditions.

Employees spend most of their lives at work performing their jobs. In contrast to individuals who work in a workplace that is ergonomically better suited for workers, people who work in dangerous and stressful environments are more likely to choose to take time off (Rana 2017: 177). A study by Eurofound (2020: 15) examined how the workplace affects workers' health and happiness, emphasizing how crucial a healthy work environment is for lowering absenteeism and enhancing general quality of life.

Additionally, a poor work environment influences employee health and well-being, which raises the rate of employee absences due to illness and permitted sick leave (Ose 2015: 161).

An employee's quality of life has also been found to impact their attendance and absence decision-making, which is linked to factors such as working hours, salary, work facilities, and job security, along with rising workloads, staffing shortages, constant change and poor change management methods, in addition to poor organisational leadership, poor employee interactions, excessive workloads, and risks from overworking, as well as employee career uncertainty (Mashaba and Mile 2019: 22).

2.5.1.5 Attendance ability

Johns and Miraglia (2019: 10) find several factors, such as job responsibilities, work-life balance, and physical and mental capacity, affect attendance. The most crucial factor affecting employee attendance is the capacity to show up for work (Gncobo 2016: 22). The ability of employees to report to work in SA is affected by a variety of factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in several national lockdowns, in addition to protests and strikes, such as the protests at the arrest of former President Mr. Jacob Zuma, short illness, and family obligations, as well as burnout, fatigue, and transportation issues, along with bad weather (Badubi 2017: 122).

A study of the effect of transportation mode on job attendance by Lucas *et al.* (2020: 15) emphasised the significance of accessible and dependable transportation in encouraging consistent attendance. In addition, unreliable transportation may, according to Wahab (2010: 40), contribute to work absence. In an analysis of the effects transportation insecurity has on low-wage workers, Blumenberg and Pierce (2020: 15) stressed the difficulties associated with erratic public transit and the requirement for employer-sponsored transportation options. However, due to their economic advantages, high-level employees have fewer transportation problems than low-level employees, who rely heavily on unreliable public transportation (Wahab 2010: 43).

Lambert *et al.* (2020: 15) additionally assert perceived class divides caused higher levels of stress, anxiety, and burnout among lower-level employees, which in turn increased absenteeism. Interestingly, Gncobo (2016: 28) discovered lower-level

employees were more affected by employee class divisions in terms of absence rates, whereas higher-level employees were less affected by the phenomena.

2.5.1.6 Burnout, tiredness, and stress

While there is some evidence illness is a major contributor to the absenteeism problem, many researchers have labelled workload as stressful (Al-fudail and Mellar 2018). Liu and Ramsey (2018) found stress could be attributed to poor work conditions – for example, inadequate offices or equipment and the danger of physical violence to their persons. It is held by Demerouti and Bakker (2019: 10) that long-term stress can result in burnout, which raises the risk of absenteeism from sickness. Stress is a significant element frequently disregarded, even while some evidence shows illness plays a significant role in the absenteeism issue (Kim and Philips 2014: 38).

High workloads, a lack of employees, and inadequate change management can all result in burnout, which then has an impact on workers' physical and emotional well-being (Demerouti and Bakker 2019: 10). Rising workloads, staffing shortages, and on-going change, frequently accompanied by subpar change management techniques, can all contribute to stress and burnout (Hughes and Thorpe 2014: 231). Stress can also be produced at work by inadequate organisational leadership and poor employee relations. As Gilbreath and Karimi (2019: 10) determined, transformative leadership and good employee relations might lessen the detrimental impacts of workload on workers' stress levels and general well-being. Increased workloads, risks associated with overwork, uncertainty over employees' careers, and rigidity in the work schedule are all factors that contribute to stress (Hoonakker & van Duivenbooden 2010: 22).

Potential sources of stress include uncertain employment, conflicting responsibilities, and boundaries, and having accountability for others. Opportunities for professional growth at work are essential stress reducers because under-promotion, a lack of training, and job insecurity are all stressful situations. Two significant stressors or stress buffers are interpersonal relationships at work and organisational culture. Harvey *et al.* (2020: 15) studied how manager behaviour affects employee stress and wellbeing, emphasising the value of emotional intelligence, empathy, and support from managers in lowering stress.

Positive social aspects of the workplace and good teamwork reduce stress, however, managers who are critical, demanding, unsupportive, or bullying produce it (Michie

2002: 69). As a coping strategy, workers who encounter work-life conflict—including those with problematic personal lives—may become unduly dedicated to their employment, according to Bakker *et al.* (2019: 10). Furthermore, due to a dysfunctional personal life or larger financial demands, some individuals could be too committed in their jobs (Hughes and Thorpe 2014: 11). According to West *et al.* (2020: 15), managers may lower the risk of burnout and increase employee engagement by putting their employees' well-being first, identifying burnout symptoms, and offering support. Therefore, management should be aware of this kind of behaviour before an employee succumbs to burnout (Wahab 2010: 24)

2.5.1.7 Workplace atmosphere

Denison *et al.* (2019: 10) established that employee behaviour, engagement, and overall performance are significantly influenced by company culture. Any organization's organisational culture is observable and important (Hartworth 2013: 13). Organisational culture is a “dynamic system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs that influence employee behaviour and decision-making”, as stated by Schein (2019: 10). Common values, beliefs, symbols, and behaviours inside an organization form its culture, which has an unconscious impact on people's decisions and behaviours (Hartworth 2013: 13). Accordingly, it has the potential to significantly affect the health and success of an organization (Gncobo 2016: 28).

In a study of how corporate culture affects social interactions and team dynamics, Baer *et al.* (2020: 15) accentuated the significance of an environment that values open communication, respect, and trust. Additionally, an organization's culture influences how its members interact with one another (Tonder and Roodt 2009: 114). Christensen *et al.* (2019: 10) confirm a culture of cooperation and unity among staff members can boost teamwork, communication, and trust, all of which can improve organisational performance.

To achieve organisational goals and objectives, it is crucial the workplace culture promotes cohesion, harmony, and oneness among personnel (Tylor 2015: 66). McKinsey (2020: 12) avers management plays a critical role in establishing a positive corporate culture. Leadership behaviours such as empathy, inclusion, and coaching are crucial for promoting a cooperative culture and the welfare of employees. As a

result, management's responsibility is to ensure the organization has a solid culture that fosters cooperation and an uplifting spirit (Baldry 2005: 710).

A healthy workplace culture is also built on treating people with respect and allowing them the opportunity to make their own decisions (Forte 2017: 21). Zero-tolerance policies for harassment and bullying are crucial, as the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) (2020: 12) points out, which also underlined the need for developing a workplace culture that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion. Furthermore, Hoonakker and van Duivenbooden (2010: 262) maintain a harassment-free workplace culture can influence an employee's decision to leave their job.

Nielsen *et al.* (2019: 10) assert bullying at work has a detrimental impact on employees' mental health and well-being and is linked to higher absenteeism, turnover intentions, and lower productivity. Consequently, there is a connection between workplace bullying and undesirable employee behaviours such as absenteeism, attrition, and productivity (Tonder and Roodt 2009: 114). Considering this, Wallace (2017: 72) argues management must take action to stop workplace bullying and deal decisively with complaints. Conflict at work has been linked to higher absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover rates as well as worse job satisfaction and organizational commitment, according to Faragher *et al.* (2019: 10). Moreover, Sichani *et al.* (2011: 321) concur employee attendance at work suffers when there is much conflict. The importance of high employee morale in a business cannot be overstated (Wallace 2017: 72).

2.5.1.8 Leadership

Eisenberger *et al.* (2019: 10) affirm transformational leadership, which prioritises employee empowerment, acknowledgment, and support, has a favourable correlation with work satisfaction, organisational commitment, and employee happiness. The leadership of the immediate supervisor is related to employee happiness (Hartworth 2013: 13). Gallup (2020: 12) highlighted the importance of managers who create a friendly and upbeat work environment, stressing the role manager-employee connections has in promoting employee engagement, commitment, and organisational dedication. Dedication to an organization and leadership style is all positively correlated (Chionk 2012: 51).

Managers with qualities such as emotional intelligence, empathy, and self-awareness are better at managing teams and accomplishing corporate goals, according to DeRue *et al.* (2019: 10). As a result, managers need to have the traits essential to attaining an organization's objectives (Hartworth 2013: 13). To drive employee happiness, engagement, and general well-being, Gallup (2020: 12) highlighted the importance of manager-employee connections and the value of managers who create a supportive and upbeat work environment.

A leader's vision and style can affect workers' satisfaction with their employment both internally and externally (Patton & Johns 2012: 16). The lack of a significant correlation between leadership style and absenteeism (Kuoppala *et al.* 2020: 15) raises the possibility that other characteristics, such as work-life balance and job demand, may be more important. Contradictory findings by Taormina and Gao (2013: 125) showed no conclusive connection between leadership style and absenteeism. McKinsey (2020: 12) maintains transformational leadership is crucial for achieving organisational success, emphasising the value of CEOs who can encourage and inspire staff to meet goals. However, transformational CEOs typically boost employee loyalty to the organization, simultaneously accomplishing its objectives (Carr 2013: 126).

Transformational leadership has a good correlation with student involvement, academic motivation, and achievement in educational contexts, according to Wang *et al.* (2019:10). In considering job satisfaction as part of the leadership study, several outcomes may be derived. In addition, feelings of involvement and academic progress are linked to transformational leadership (Carr 2013: 126). Employees are given tasks and more autonomy when a transformative leader is in charge (Mashaba and Mile 2019: 22). This usually offers the person an excellent path to professional fulfilment and achievement (Badubi 2017: 32).

The impact of transformational leadership on employee growth and development was studied by Kark *et al.* (2020: 15), who emphasised the value of feedback and relationships between leaders and employees in fostering employee learning and development. On the one hand, people often perceive their needs are being met and addressed when transformational leaders rally their subordinates' growth (Hughes and Thorpe 2014: 231). On the other hand, employees who are uninterested in

transformative leadership are likely to feel the pay structure is insufficient (Mashaba and Mile 2019: 22).

2.5.2 External factors

2.5.2.1 Personal difficulties

Employees experience personal challenges, such as those related to their families, finances, and drug use, which manifest at work in the form of absenteeism (Jaaskelainen 2018: 448). Additionally, workers go through several life stages, such as starting a family, having children, and aging, which may need them to take some time off work to focus on their personal lives (Forte 2017: 59).

2.5.1.2 Personal traits

Employee absenteeism is influenced by both personal characteristics and demographics (Mukwevho 2020: 162). Most studies have shown a link between age, gender, marital status, and tenure with occupational absenteeism (Badubi 2017: 125). Women are more likely to miss work than men, since they are by nature expected to take on greater household responsibilities, particularly after marriage (Lobodzinska 1996: 536). To lower absenteeism and enhance employee well-being, the SHRM (2020: 12) underlined the need of employee benefits, including paid family leave and childcare help. In addition, Skosana (2014: 2) believes married employees with children are more likely to be absent from work and cites childcare as one of the major causes of absenteeism worldwide.

Durdyev *et al.* (2017: 70) point out employees who are parents or guardians of children have commitments to their families that may prohibit them from showing up to work on a regular basis. Employees who encounter work-life conflict are more likely to report lower job satisfaction, higher intentions to leave, and worse physical and mental health, according to Allen *et al.* (2019: 10). Due to the pressures of both employment and domestic responsibilities, worsened by the high cost of institutional child and family care, families and employees must develop ways to manage the two domains of work and home (Hyman, Scholarios, and Baldry 2005: 710).

In their study of the effects coping mechanisms have on stress and work-family conflict, Michel *et al.* (2020: 15) emphasised the value of emotion-focused coping mechanisms, such as mindfulness and relaxation, in lowering stress and enhancing work-life balance. According to some research (Lazarus and Folkman 1984), finding

constructive strategies to resolve work-family conflicts can eliminate or significantly reduce stress both at work and at home. Furthermore, it has been determined senior people are more likely to be absent from work and are more prone to illness, exhaustion, burnout, and job-related stress (Mafini 2016: 61).

2.6 Consequences of absenteeism in the workplace

In addition to being disruptive to regular business operations and procedures, employee absenteeism increases costs, which has a detrimental effect on the bottom line and profitability of the organization (Tylor 2015: 66). Costs associated with absences might, furthermore, be direct or indirect. Employee absenteeism costs businesses an average of \$3,600 annually per employee, according to the SHRM (2020). The expenses are significantly higher in other industries. The business is forced to reschedule work when employees are absent, pay current employees extra, raise wages to cover overtime, and hire part-timers (Armstrong 2014). The SHRM (2020) reports employee absences can seriously affect business operations, particularly in sectors with high task demands and workforce shortages. Moreover, absence disrupts organisational and managerial planning and decisions (Armstrong 2014).

Management has access to task definitions, the people who will perform the tasks, and the timeframe during which employees should be evaluated (Badubi 2017: 32). Unexpected absences can alter team dynamics, lower productivity, and add to the effort of the remaining team members (Mitchell *et al.* 2019). The team, the department, and the organization are all impacted by unplanned employee absences, in terms of how flexible management is and how quickly and efficiently work should be completed (Carr 2013: 42). Gennard and Graham (2015: 97) add when workers miss work, it increases the workload for other employees and necessitates overtime work.

A 2020 study by Lara *et al.* examined how employee absences affected organizational performance and stressed how important absence management is to sustaining sales growth and profitability. Mahamid (2013: 73) discovered a connection between low output, revenue declines, and absence. Mitchell *et al.* (2019) affirmed absenteeism negatively impacts employee turnover intentions, organisational commitment, and job satisfaction. Absenteeism can result in poorer productivity, a demotivated workforce,

low organisational involvement among employees, as well as lower earnings, according to findings from a study on absenteeism (Basson 2013: 3).

In their 2020 study, Gupta *et al.* investigated how employee discontent affected organisational performance and stressed how crucial it is to address the root causes of discontent to lower absenteeism and boost output. Employee dissatisfaction is another element Hoonakker and van Duivenbooden (2010: 30) concur with, and the sum of all these factors may increase an organization's expenditures. As Forte (2017: 230) found, management in the United States is primarily responsible for ensuring the company has proactive procedures in place to accurately measure and analyse the costs associated with absence.

2.7 Conditions of service and its impact on absenteeism

The following conditions of employment and their implications on the absenteeism of the organisation regarding flexibility, ergonomics, and workplace design, as well as programmes for employee health and assistance, and employee attendance management are discussed below.

2.7.1 Flexibility in the work situation

The ability to balance work and personal duties is highly valued in today's workforce (Rehman 2016: 86). According to Allen *et al.* (2019), telecommuting and flexible scheduling are examples of flexible working arrangements that can enhance work-life balance, lower turnover intentions, and boost job satisfaction. As a result, flexible working arrangements are highly desired by many organizations to enable staff members to balance work and family obligations (Basson 2013: 3). Contractual flexibility clauses permit adaptability in working conditions. These provisions allow employers to make reasonable adjustments to some employment terms and conditions. Daily, weekly, or monthly flexibility in working hours is also possible, as is the option for an employee to work fewer days per week, but for longer hours on those days. Another flexible work option is job-sharing, which divides a full-time employment between two part-time employees.

Another other kind of work arrangement known as "flexi-place" enables employees to conduct their business away from the workplace or the site where they are expected to carry out their obligations. Consequently, implementing flexible work arrangements can help employees reconcile their conflicting needs, while also lowering absenteeism

(Badubi 2017: 32). Notably, flexibility clauses in contracts should only be used when the changes being made or proposed are legal, consistent with the BCEA, sectorial determination, bargaining council, or other collective agreement, have a solid operational basis, and will be discussed with the affected employees prior to being implemented (Jordaan 2020).

The Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) (2020) highlighted the importance of promoting equality and preventing discrimination in the workplace, underscoring the role of Section 6 of the Employment Equity Act (EEA) in protecting employees from discrimination based on family responsibilities. Ainslie (2014), furthermore, points out both direct and indirect discrimination based on family duties is prohibited in para 4, lines 1–14, of the EEA of 1998 (Section 6). Family responsibilities are described by the EEA as "workers' responsibility with respect to their spouse, partner, children who are dependent upon them, or any members of their immediate family who require their care or support."

While flexitime is not a work arrangement only for women, it should be noted, however, section 15 of the EEA also requires designated employers to adopt affirmative action measures to ensure fair representation of designated groups (including women) at the workplace and reasonable accommodations for such designated groups. Ainslie (2014: para 5 line 10-16) asserts a company can help its employees achieve a work-life balance, while still meeting the demands of the employer's business, by offering them the option of working flexible hours. Flexitime options have benefits for businesses since they reduce absenteeism and increase employee enthusiasm and productivity.

2.7.2 Work layout and design

The workplace layout or the design and arrangement of the workplace, working equipment and work tools to fit workers' needs further contribute to absenteeism. "This includes considering the physical and cognitive abilities of the workers, as well as their comfort and safety while on the job" (ApexEnviro 2023: para 2). Ergonomics has as its main goal "to reduce the risk of injury and strain at work, and to increase productivity and overall well-being of workers" (para 3). Further to this, "poor ergonomics can even lead to employee dissatisfaction and increased absenteeism and can also contribute to high turnover rates for the company" (para 8). As a result, the ergonomics and

design of the workplace are found to affect employee absenteeism in industries ranging from mining to airports (Stanton, Kielblock and Schoeman 2007; ACSA 2021).

The nature of the employment has also been determined to significantly influence absenteeism (Patton & Johns 2012: 16). Boring jobs are dull because of their design, which is repetitious and monotonous (Carr 2013: 41). Due to such monotonous and repetitive work, employees may not go to work, which leads to absenteeism (Park and Ryoo 2013: 55). Contrarily, workers perceive jobs that promote contact, critical thinking, and a range of activities to be very interesting (Robbins 2015: 82). Due to the interest, motivation, and significance of their work, these employees are less likely to be absent from work (Rehman 2016: 86).

2.7.3 Employee help and wellness programmes

Although employee wellness and support programmes vary between companies, they all aim to foster positive organisational outcomes (Swayze and Burke 2013: 50) through attitudes, behaviours, and practices. Organisational commitment, employee morale, and attendance are a few examples of the attitudinal benefits of wellness and assistance programmes that are felt and perceived as less quantitative (Bass and Avolio 2019: 13). Employee wellness initiatives also show the employer's interest for the health and well-being of staff, as well as company commitment to employees (Carr 2013: 42).

2.7.4 Managing employee attendance.

Employee attendance is the responsibility of management, and there is an increasing demand for effective attendance management at work to lower absenteeism (Glen 2016: 71). Every business has a unique approach to managing absence, which has a significant direct impact on the absenteeism rate of the business. According to Hater and Bass (2013: 21), the “carrot approach” is a method of reducing absenteeism where an employer rewards staff for not taking any sick days during a predetermined timeframe. Depending on the approach the organization takes, absenteeism will change. Additionally, Trott and Windsor (2019: 140) contend, by disciplining those who break absenteeism policies and rewarding those who have good attendance records, a balanced approach to absenteeism management can maximise the strengths of both employees with good attendance records and those with poor attendance records.

2.8 Models of Absenteeism in the Workplace

To better understand the personal and professional factors that contribute to employee absences and to suggest solutions for the absenteeism issue, models and theories of workplace absenteeism were developed (Glen 2016: 74). The models employed in this study include the pain avoidance model, the Steers and Rhodes absenteeism model, and Herzberg's two component theories.

2.8.1 Absenteeism model of Steers and Rhodes

A widely acknowledged theory that explains why workers elect to miss work is the 1990 Rhodes and Steers model of absenteeism (Azri 2011: 81). According to this notion, employee attendance depends on both an employee's capacity and the incentive to show up for work (Mukwevho 2020: 173). An individual's alleged ability to be present at work is the phenomena known as the attendance connection, wherein the individual's excitement to attend work is moderated. Ability to attend and incentive to attend are two factors thought to interact in this way (Azri 2011: 12).

2.8.2 Model of pain avoidance

One of the earliest models that offered significant guidance for absenteeism research was the pain avoidance model, which developed from job satisfaction research (Mashonganyika 2004: 63). The "fear-avoidance model of pain investigates how movement phobia and catastrophizing influence disability." According to the theory, those who catastrophise (that is, overestimate the risk value of pain cues) are more likely to have movement anxiety, which would ultimately cause them to avoid engaging in activities, suffer impairment, and experience depression (Timothy *et al.* 2009: 45). It appears a direct correlation exists between contentment and absence behaviour, because employees who are unsatisfied at work are more likely to miss work, when their unhappiness is a symptom of being in a punishing situation (Bass and Avolio 2019: 13).

2.9 Theoretical framework

The theoretical foundation of this study was based on Frederick Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, also known as Hertzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. The Two Factor Theory aims to explain motivation and job satisfaction at work (Ozguner and Ozguner 2014: 210), proposing two sets of factors influence job satisfaction, namely motivators and hygiene factors. Employees can work in a favourable atmosphere when motivational

variables are present, but absenteeism results when these components are omitted. Therefore, while enhancing hygiene elements may reduce employee dissatisfaction and lead to consistent employee attendance, inadequate hygiene factors can also lead to absenteeism (Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman 1959).

Motivational factors include success, acclaim, the task itself, and responsibility, as well as advancement, and the possibility of growth (Herzberg 1966; Herzberg 2003). Hygiene considerations, the second set of factors, focused on "the need to avoid unpleasantness". The areas of work connected to hygiene include administration and policies of the company, interactions with supervisors, interpersonal interactions, and the working environment, as well as compensation (Herzberg 1966; Herzberg 2003). Motivational factors impact positive job attitudes, while sanitary considerations surround the actual "doing" of the task (Herzberg *et al.* 1959; Stello 2011). Motivation is the inner drive a person must achieve to fulfil their personal and professional goals (Hoskinson, Porter, and Wrench 2007: 133).

The key premise is that elements promoting job happiness and those that produce job discontent impact employee consistency with reference to turning up for work and occupying their positions in the workplace, according to Hoskinson *et al.* (2007: 133). As a result, all elements that emerged from a thorough empirical inquiry have been classified into those that promote job satisfaction (motivators) and those that cause job discontent (hygiene factors) (Azri 2011: 81). The alternative to satisfaction, contrary to what traditional academics believed, was not unhappiness, according to Herzberg's empirical investigations in the context of intrinsic (motivators) and extrinsic (hygiene) variables (Park and Ryoo 2013: 55). Herzberg claimed the opposite of job discontent is the lack of job unhappiness. The opposite of job satisfaction is no job satisfaction (Herzberg 1966, 2003).

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter thoroughly examined workplace absenteeism and reviewed several definitions. Important to keep in mind, is the contention by Steers and Rhodes (1978) that a universal definition is one that enables organizations to manage absenteeism, while also monitoring it, with the aim to gradually assist the organization towards growing productivity. Personal traits, job happiness, and organisational dedication

have further been shown as important factors in employee attendance (Steers and Rhodes 1978).

In response to the absence of a sufficient theory in the work by Steers and Rhodes (1978), Nicholson (1977) advanced a thorough attachment theory. Similarly, Nicholson, Rhodes, and Steers (1978) saw motivation as a factor in occupational absenteeism. For today's managers in a variety of organizations, absenteeism is a severe management concern. This chapter adds to the literature, having examined secondary data sources to clarify the notion of absenteeism, influencing variables, repercussions of absenteeism in the workplace, and the impact service conditions have on absenteeism are described in the literature and summarised here. The research design and methods utilised to collect primary data for the study will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter links the first and second chapters by describing the research methodology used in the study. The research techniques used in this study are explained, with the chapter comprising the target population, sample size and distribution, and methods for data collection and analysis. The validity, dependability, and credibility of the research were also evaluated, with the chapter also examining how the questionnaire was developed and ethical issues considered in the investigation.

3.2 Research Methodology

Research technique refers to the research methodologies the researcher intends to use to carry out his design. Although there are several research strategies, qualitative and quantitative approaches are the most popular. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016: 95), study design relates to the researcher's "intended method of investigation". The study goals and procedures for data collection and analysis are all outlined in the research design. For this study, a case study research strategy was adopted using a multiple-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative techniques.

The unit of analysis, sample, time horizon, and study setting, as well as measurement, and data analysis are all components of the research design. On the one hand, the quantitative research method illuminates phenomena by collecting numerical data and analysing these using scientifically grounded approaches (Muijs 2011: 3). On the other hand, quantitative research is described by Rahis (2017: 2) as a scientific method that focuses on gathering new data from a broad group, in response to an issue. Furthermore, a quantitative research technique works well with big groups. It does, however, have the disadvantage of neglecting Individual's feelings and emotions, addressed by the qualitative part of the study.

3.3 Research Techniques

The most well-known research strategies include qualitative, quantitative, case study, and mixed-methods studies (Sekaran and Bougie 2016: 97). Furthermore, Grey (2009: 26) asserts while quantitative research concentrates on facts and figures, qualitative

research concentrates on the words, attitudes, and feelings of the respondents; both are combined in case study research. Mixed methodologies can also be used because they are founded on an interpretivism and subjectivism approach, thus assisting in gaining a complete understanding of the situation (Sekaran and Bougie 2016).

Qualitative research, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2001: 52), is used to study social phenomena among participants and quantitative research is used to understand mathematical phenomena. The qualitative technique will be used to gather and analyse participant data, while the quantitative method will be utilised to analyse statistical data and responses. Nonetheless, qualitative data cannot be objectively measured using numerical values. Cooper and Schindler (2014: 121) define an interactive qualitative inquiry as an in-depth investigation that uses face-to-face interviewing techniques to gather data from people in their natural situations.

Case study research methodology was used in this investigation, which meant the qualitative method was crucial, because most descriptions and judgments in this study could be communicated verbally rather than statistically, as in quantitative research (Grey 2009: 28). Primary and secondary data were collected in this case study research approach, employed to better comprehend aspects addressed in interviews not found using questionnaires (Sekaran and Bougie 2016).

3.3.1 Collecting secondary data.

The researcher created a theoretical framework for the literature review in this study using secondary data. Examples of secondary data include reports, theses, books, and research journals, as well as government publications (Rahis 2017: 4). Other examples comprise meeting minutes, reports to stakeholders, speech transcripts, and publications, along with government data, periodicals, census data, and the media, as well as administrative records (Saunders, Lewis, and Horahill 2007: 248).

Secondary data, which include both quantitative and qualitative information, can be used for both descriptive and exploratory research. Easy to analyse, secondary data are excellent for academic research. There are several available data gathering techniques, and researchers must choose the most relevant to their study (Denscombe 2010: 152).

3.3.2 Primary data collection

Primary data are defined by Driscoll (2011: 153) as facts obtained by the researcher. The qualitative nature of primary data makes it perfect for descriptive studies (Saunders *et al.* 2007: 356), with the following primary data collection techniques available to the researcher: telephone surveys, in-person interviews, postal surveys, and personal data collection. A closed-ended structured survey questionnaire and open-ended semi-structured interviews were utilised to gather primary data for this investigation. Personal data were gathered by the researcher and treated with the utmost confidentiality. This enabled the researcher to conduct the interviews in-person during business hours, while it also allowed the researcher to provide respondents with a printed survey questionnaire, assisting with quick and effective data collection.

Physical encounters were, additionally, one-on-one and in a private setting, with adequate room to maintain social distance between the interviewer and respondent. Additionally, to adhere to COVID-19 protocols, interviews could be conducted using authorised online platforms and software such as Skype, Microsoft Teams and Zoom. The survey questionnaire was created on Google Forms and administered to respondents, provided with access thereto via a link. Among other methods, Sekaran and Bougie (2016) point out researchers gather primary data using focus groups, videoconferencing, panels, and interviews, as well as questionnaires, and observations.

3.4 Target Population

According to Resinger (2014: 44), a target population is any group of individuals or objects a researcher wants to learn more about. The 1879 employees at the DCT Pier 2, of the TPT in Durban, SA, served as the study's target population.

3.5 Sample number

Sampling is the process of choosing enough constituents from a population (Sekaran and Bougie 2016: 237). By choosing a smaller number of units from the population, Fox, and Bayat (2007: 56) aver sampling represents the entire population. While 15 interviews were performed with representatives from various departments at the terminal by the researcher (until saturation was attained), the survey used a sample size of 341 and the sample size was calculated in accordance with Morgan and Krejcie (1970: 30).

The questionnaire was trial tested by 30 respondents who did not take part in the final survey. The pretesting of data was used to validate the survey but not used in the final study, with all adjustments made prior to the start of data collection for research.

3.5.1 Sampling

To measure people's characteristics, convictions, and attitudes, a sample of units from a data collection is chosen, which is referred to as sampling (Newman 2011: 242). Grey (2009: 79) notes sampling has two functions: to be representative and to allow the researcher to draw more general conclusions. There are many ways to gather data; however, they can be categorised into probability- and non-probability-based methods (Sekaran and Bougie 2016: 237).

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010: 215), probability sampling is the act of selecting samples at random from a population, when each person has an equal chance of being chosen. Sekaran and Bougie (2016: 238) concur, stating every component of the population has a known non-zero probability of selection in probability sampling. This technique, therefore, provides each unit an equal probability of being selected. The four different methods of probability sampling are simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, cluster sampling, and multi-stage sampling.

The practice of choosing items from a population that do not all have the same chance of being chosen is known as non-probability sampling (Fox and Bayat 2007: 56). Rachis (2017: 5) defines non-probability sampling as a sampling strategy in which the probability of each unit being chosen is unknowable or unconfirmed.

3.5.1 Criteria for inclusion

The researcher focused on TPT full-time employees from DCT (Pier 2), who have been with the company for more than three years and at least have a matriculation qualification.

3.5.2 Exclusion criteria

The research did not focus on TPT employees who were not working full-time, who had not worked in the company for the three years prior and/or who do not have a matriculation qualification. Therefore, any employee who had not worked at DCT (Pier 2) in the last three years was not considered for the data gathering.

3.6 Sample Size

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), the sample size is a portion of the population and seen as representative of the population. The target population in this study comprised the 1879 workers at DCT, Pier 2; a target population is described by Resinger (2014: 44) as any group of individuals or objects a researcher wants to acquire more information on.

The DCT (Pier 2) of the TPT in Durban, SA, was the study's intended audience. Interviews were, therefore, conducted with 15 employees at the terminal, while the sample size for the survey questionnaire was 341. In addition, 30 respondents who did not form part of the final survey participated in a pilot study of the survey questions. The pretested data were used to verify the survey validity and were not included in the final report.

3.7 Interrogation

This qualitative research technique comprises open-ended inquiries to pique respondent interest and learn more about a subject. Information regarding the contributory causes of absenteeism will be gathered through the interviews. The interviews performed as part of this study adhered to all prescribed COVID-19 preventative measures. Organised, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews are some of the several interview types (Sekaran and Bougie 2016: 113), with semi-structured interviews used in this inquiry. Three types of interviews and how they help to accomplish the study objective are explained below.

3.7.1 Semi-structured interviews

The researcher has much latitude to interrogate the response in this type of interview, which was achieved by adhering to a straightforward interview structure.

A few advantages of organized interviews are listed below (Easwaramoorthy and Zarinpoush 2006: 62):

- These interviews are planned within a set timeframe, making it easier for the researcher to prepare and analyse interview questions.
- Facilitates keeping the research guidelines up to date. The dependability component of the interview may be questioned by participants due to the flexibility allowed, which is one semi-structured interview disadvantage.

- It is possible to compare two distinct responses when the interview guidelines are rigorously followed.

3.7.2 Structured Interview disadvantages

These are research tools that operate in an exceedingly rigorous manner, with little or no room for participants to be prompted to collect or analyse results. Structured interviews, according to Sekaran and Bougie (2016: 114), reduce time by avoiding continual interference with participants and according to COVID-19 rules. Structured interviews are quantitative and standardized. The interview questions are pre-determined.

Structured interviews have several advantages (Easwaramoorthy and Zarinpoush 2006: 68), including:

- They focus on correctness or various responses since data gathering is incredibly organised.
- Structured interviews are standardised, making the method simple.
- There is no duplication of interview questions.
- The number of details considered when preparing for the interview.

Structured interviews have the following drawbacks:

- The results only allow for a limited breadth of assessment.
- It restricts participants by only allowing them to choose from the offered answer possibilities, so the accuracy of the information takes precedence over the detail of the information.

3.7.3 Unstructured Interviews

These are in-depth interviews since they entail dialogues with a specific goal in mind.

Unstructured interviews should be designed to produce the fewest number of questions possible. They prefer to have ordinary chats around a central theme. The purpose of the interview must be kept a secret, and participant best interests protected. Unstructured interviews have several advantages (Easwaramoorthy and Zarinpoush 2006), including:

- Because of their informal nature, they make it easy for researchers to create a good relationship with participants.
- It is simple for people to offer their opinions, making it uncomplicated to promote research or develop solutions.

Unstructured interviews also have drawbacks.

- It takes a long time since there is no structure or restraint.
- The lack of a uniform set of questions and methods makes reliability unclear.

3.8 Data Gathering

For this study, the researcher used structured, closed-ended questions in a survey questionnaire to collect quantitative data. This enabled all respondents to answer the same set of questions in a predetermined order. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011: 60), there are two sorts of questions, namely open- and closed-ended. In this study, both closed- and open-ended questions were employed. Closed-ended questions are typically used for quantitative data, restricting answers to a range of options the researcher listed. A 5-point Likert scale was used, allowing respondents to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the series of statements addressing absenteeism as the specific main issue. Furthermore, the survey questionnaire is described by Denscombe (2012: 163) as affordable, useful on a large population, in a short timeframe. The questionnaire for the survey was created, assembled, and personally sent to respondents from all DCT (Pier 2) departments.

Interviews were conducted for the qualitative aspect of the research. In qualitative research, interviews are used to explore the significance of important issues in the lives of participants, where the most crucial aspect of interviewing is to comprehend the relevance of what the interviewees say (McNamara 2009: 25). Closed-ended questions may push interviewees to answer in a particular way, while open-ended questions are often asked to obtain unbiased responses (Creswell 2012: 11; McNamara 1999: 25). Participants were asked broad, open-ended questions in the interviews, with their answers recorded.

The interviews were performed face-to-face, and the researcher administered the survey questionnaire during working hours. To achieve more accurate transcription, audio recordings were employed (Creswell and Clark 2017: 11). To protect

confidentiality, the informed consent and audio recordings will be stored separately. Password protection is used to safeguard both the list of codes and the names of the participants. The information is available to both the researcher and the supervisor for recording and examination purposes. The data will be electronically kept and password-protected for five years, after which the electronic data will be deleted.

3.9 Data Analyses

Data analysis is the methodical use of statistical techniques to define, present, and interpret data (Gay 2013: 70). The most recent version of the SPSS, version 29.0 for Windows, was used to code and then analyse the survey responses, with statistical tests run on the survey data. In a study, descriptive statistics are employed to offer brief descriptions of the sample and measures as well as an overview of the essential data aspects (Saunders *et al.* 2007). Demographic information was analysed and examined using descriptive statistics. Since the information was delivered in accordance with the objectives set out in chapter one, all study questions were covered. Almost all quantitative data studies are built on the foundation of descriptive statistics and basic graphical analysis (Denscombe 2010). In this study, all data were converted to numbers and displayed as graphs and tables.

NVIVO Pro 12 was used to code, classify, and categorise the interview data into themes. Further manual analysis was done on the qualitative data using Grounded theory, one method to analyse textual qualitative data, is an inductive method for evidence analysis on a social issue, to develop theories about it. To better illustrate specific coding techniques, which is the process of classifying and categorising text data segments into a set of codes (concepts), categories (constructs), and relationships, Strauss, and Corbin (1990) improved the technique developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in their Grounded theory research method of constant comparative analysis.

Triangulation combines qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques and sources (interviews, surveys, field notes from observations, documents, and so on) with data analysis techniques (content analysis, discourse analysis, descriptive and inferential methods, and statistics) (Creswell 2014: 234-235).

3.9.1 Quantitative statistical examination

Quantitative data can also be divided into categorical and quantifiable data (Saunders *et al.* 2012: 328). Further to this, these authors state, on the one hand, categorical data are information that cannot be quantified numerically but can be classified according to stated criteria such as gender, religion, profession, or qualification. On the other hand, quantifiable data comprise information with values that can be quantified (Saunders *et al.* 2012: 328). Interval and ratio measurements fall under this category. The data for this investigation were analysed using SPSS for Windows, version 29.0.

3.9.1.1 Data coding

Data were recorded using numerical codes to classify responses to each question on the research instrument after information was gathered from participants. A coded questionnaire was developed concurrently to record the codes for each variable. For instance, the codes for gender were 1 for men and 2 for women, or for the Likert scale response, the range indicated 1 as highly agree, 2 as agree, 3 as uncertain, 4 as disagree, and 5 as highly disagree.

3.9.1.2 Statistical analysis

The resulting data coding and data were entered into a spreadsheet and presented in tables and graphs, with percentages employed as a measure of expression. Tables and graphs can be used in descriptive data analysis to identify trends and show proportions, and with more detailed analysis, the researcher can reach conclusions on how the data collected relate to the original research objectives and hypotheses, and how these results may be generalizable to the research population (Saunders *et al.* 2012: 199).

3.10 Reliability and Validity

3.10.1 Reliability

The degree to which the equipment provides comparable data over a period is known as measurement reliability. Wicker (2009: 39) further explains the trustworthiness of research must rely on the strictness of the data collection procedures, the care taken to ensure their consistency and that they do not skew the results. Using Cronbach's alpha test, the survey instrument dependability was evaluated in accordance with

Bonnet and Wright (2015), who assert Cronbach's alpha is a method for evaluating the dependability of scales.

Denscombe (2012: 298) states validity refers to how well the data fit the study question under consideration. A pilot study was conducted to ensure the research tool is valid and dependable. Participants were allowed to carefully review their interview responses (member checking) and evaluate the interpretive accuracy after receiving a copy of the transcribed interview notes. As a result, dependability was enhanced (Carlson 2010: 36).

To ensure participant responses, uniformity, and data triangulation, the researcher used the same set of questions for the questionnaire and interviews. A concept for evaluating the dependability of an instrument regarding interview questions is presented by Casey and Murphy (2009: 27). Furthermore, as a component of the dependability process, Harvey (2014: 43) suggests a continuous member-checking loop.

3.10.2 Validity

According to Rahis (2017), validity in qualitative research refers to the consistency and reliability of events and behaviours associated with the phenomena that were the subject of the investigation. As explained by Grey (2009: 155), the ability of a research instrument to measure what it claims to assess constitutes validity. In addition, consistency refers to how reliable the research tool and conclusions are when used by other researchers, as well as how coherent the work is.

Validity and dependability work in tandem to ensure the study is sound and trustworthy. To ensure this research is reliable and valid, the researcher used a decent and representative sample of items. The combination of components ensured the concept was thoroughly explored. Saunders *et al.* (2012) maintain research validity is generally understood to be a measure of the reliability of the research. The primary focus here is data gathering.

3.10.2.1 Face Validity

Face validity refers to how easily or relevantly the research instrument can be used by study participants (Saunders *et al.* 2012: 101). People from the target population were asked to interpret the importance of the questions during the pilot study. The feedback

supplied by participants was quite valuable in improving the structure of this part of the instrument.

3.10.2.2. Content Validity

Contrary to face validity, content validity describes a situation in which the researcher asks a professional opinion on the applicability and relevance of the questions. Content validity, according to Cooper *et al.* (2008: 290), describes how well the data collection tool addresses the study topic. A pilot study was, furthermore, performed to ensure the validity and dependability of the research tool. Participants were able to evaluate their responses to the in-depth interview (member checking) and validate the interpretative accuracy, with a copy of the transcribed interview notes made available to each participant, thus improving reliability (Carlson 2010: 36).

The researcher utilised the same set of questions for both the interviews and the questionnaire to verify responses, response consistency, and within method triangulation. Casey and Murphy (2009: 27) offer a construct to test the dependability of the interview questions' instrument. The study instrument and the correctness of responses are corroborated by the similarity of participant responses throughout the interview (Stevenson and Mahmud 2013: 82). A continuous member-checking loop has been proposed by Harvey (2014: 43) as a component of the reliability process. Validity in qualitative research denotes consistency and reliability regarding actions and occurrences connected to the phenomena as indicated by the research findings (Rahis 2017:10).

3.11 Considerations of a moral nature

Saunders *et al.* (2012: 305) emphasise the necessity for researchers to act in a highly ethical manner throughout their study. Research ethics is concerned with the moral principles that guide each stage of the research process, from planning to data collection and execution. (Brotherton 2008: 55). In addition, research ethics set guidelines for conducting research in an ethical manner (Nueman 2011: 351). The rights to informed consent, to voluntary participation, to anonymity, and to confidentiality are the main ethical issues.

To conduct the analysis at the DCT Pier 2 of the TPT, the researcher first formally requested approval from the company CEO. The data collection tool (survey questionnaire and interview schedule of questions) was accompanied by a cover letter

outlining the goals and purpose of research. Neither respondents nor participants were asked to provide any personal information on the research instruments; consequently, the researcher protected both the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents and participants.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter provided a full summary of the research methods used, which included the study design, sampling procedures, sample size, and respondent selection, along with the techniques for data collection. The reasons why the researcher decided to employ these procedures were also discussed. The next chapter offers an outline and discussion of the results based on the responses of the respondents and participants.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the significant findings from the questionnaires and interviews of the worker absenteeism study at the TPT's DCT Pier 2. The chapter examines the quantitative data from employee questionnaires as well as the qualitative data from the terminal employee interviews before triangulating the findings.

A questionnaire was issued to 115 workers at TPT (DCT Pier 2) in the Durban region to obtain their thoughts on the variables affecting staff absenteeism and its impact on organisational success. The response rate and sample characteristics are reviewed, as well as instrument reliability and validity statistics. The quantitative data were analysed using IBM SPSS version 29.0 statistical software to determine how service conditions impact employee attendance. The analysis starts with descriptive statistics to explain participant demographics and absence trends, then moves on to inferential statistical procedures such as hypothesis testing and factor analysis to find data, links, and structure. Job satisfaction, the workplace atmosphere, personal and work-induced stress, and overall employee duties are among the key variables investigated.

The chapter also discusses and examines the qualitative research conducted with terminal staff at DCT Pier 2. These interviews were conducted to determine the causes of absence, assess working conditions, and recommend solutions. A detailed thematic analysis was performed to investigate the impressions participants held of their work environment, shift patterns, equipment usage, as well as health and safety, and organisational norms. The qualitative findings supplement the quantitative results, providing a thorough picture of the complex reasons causing worker absence at the port. The findings of this multifaceted investigation will help enhance organisational behaviour understanding and advise the industry in establishing effective absence prevention initiatives for port facilities.

4.2 Reliability and Validity Statistics

Evaluating the reliability and validity of the study instrument was essential to ensure the data collected were of high quality and credible. Reliability pertains to the dependability and steadfastness of the measurement tool, whilst validity concerns if the instrument accurately assesses what it is intended to. Cronbach's alpha coefficient

was used to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire items measuring specific scales. Cronbach's alpha is a valuable tool for evaluating the inter-correlation and internal consistency of items within a scale, guaranteeing their reliable measurement of the same underlying concept (Bonnet and Wright 2015). Table 4.1 presents the Cronbach's alpha values for the primary constructs analysed in this study.

Table 4.1: Research Instrument Reliability

Factor	Construct	Items included	Variance extracted	Cronbach's alpha
1	Workplace environment (WP_ENV)	14, 19, 20, 22, 27, 28, 29, 35, 37	30.28	.879
2	Job satisfaction (JOB_SAT)	5, 6, 7, 30, 31, 32, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43	8.99	.911
3	Leave allocation. (LEAVE)	1, 2, 3, 4	6.32	.889
4	Personal stress (PER_STRESS)	10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17*, 25	4.56	.787
5	Work-induced stress (WORK_STRESS)	33, 34, 36	2.99	.786
6	Responsibilities (RES)	8, 9	2.60	.721

As tabled above, the reliability analysis reveals most constructs exhibit strong internal consistency, with high Cronbach alpha values indicating the items reliably measure their respective factors. Specifically, Workplace Environment (WP_ENV), Job Satisfaction (JOB_SAT), and Leave Allocation (LEAVE) show excellent reliability with alpha values of .879, .911, and .889, respectively, suggesting these constructs are well-defined and consistently measured. However, Personal Stress (PER_STRESS) has a lower alpha of .787, indicating acceptable but less robust reliability, possibly due to the varying relevance of item 17. Work-Induced Stress (WORK_STRESS) and Responsibilities (RES) show weaker reliability with alphas of .786 and .721, respectively, highlighting a need for further refinement or additional items to enhance their measurement consistency. Overall, while most factors are reliably measured, some require review to ensure their constructs are accurately captured.

4.3 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The quantitative part of this research included distributing questionnaires to 115 workers of TPT (DCT Pier 2). The major trends and statistics derived from the quantitative data are described in detail in this section. The factors that impact employee absenteeism and the relationships between various workplace variables can be better understood with the quantitative findings. An outline of the participant demographics is provided to start the analysis, followed by the inferential statistical methods, such as hypothesis testing and correlation analysis, used to uncover the causes and patterns that contribute to absence.

4.3.1 Participant Demographics

Understanding data dynamics begins with participant demographics in any research project (Creswell 2014: 123). The demographic details of the participants were distributed and elicited as follows (Table 4.2):

4.3.1.1 Highest Level of Education Composition

The composition regarding the highest level of the participants' education is presented in Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2: Highest Level of Participant Education Composition

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid some schooling	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
Matric	27	23.5	23.5	26.1
Higher certificate	18	15.7	15.7	41.7
Diploma	33	28.7	28.7	70.4
Degree	20	17.4	17.4	87.8
Post-graduate diploma/degree	14	12.2	12.2	100.0
Total	115	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 4.2, the data on the highest level of education attained by respondents indicates the majority have obtained a diploma (28.7 percent), followed

by those with a matriculation qualification (23.5 percent), and a degree (17.4 percent). Higher certificates are held by 15.7 percent participants, while 12.2 percent have completed a postgraduate diploma or degree. Only a small fraction (2.6 percent) has some schooling without completing matric. The cumulative percentages show a steady progression, with 70.4 percent having at least a diploma, and by the time we reach those with postgraduate qualifications (12.2 percent), 100 percent of the sample is accounted for. This distribution suggests a relatively high level of education among the respondents, with a significant portion having advanced beyond secondary education.

4.3.1.2 Gender Composition

Kumar *et al.* (2020) argued gender is vital in a study, considering perspectives may be gender influenced. The gender composition of the participants is summarised in Table 4.3 below:

Table 4.3: Participant Gender Composition

		Gender			
		Freque ncy	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	50	43.5	43.9	43.9
	female	64	55.7	56.1	100.0
	Total	114	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		115	100.0		

The gender distribution of respondents shows a slight female majority. Specifically, 55.7 percent respondents are female, while 43.5 percent are male. This accounts for 56.1 percent and 43.9 percent of the valid percent, respectively. The cumulative percentage reaches 100 percent with females, indicating no other gender categories were reported. There is a minor discrepancy with one missing system entry, constituting 0.9 percent of the total sample. Overall, the data reflects a balanced gender representation with a slight predominance of females among the respondents.

4.3.1.3 Age Group Composition

Creswell (2021) opined participant age groups are crucial in a research study. The participant age groups composition is illustrated in Table 4.4 below:

Table 4.4: Participant Age Group Composition

		AGE			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-29	17	14.8	14.8	14.8
	30-39	59	51.3	51.3	66.1
	40-49	28	24.3	24.3	90.4
	50-59	9	7.8	7.8	98.3
	60-69	2	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	115	100.0	100.0	

The age distribution of the respondents is heavily skewed towards the younger demographic, with the majority within the 30-39 year age range (51.3 percent). The 40-49 year age group represents the second largest segment at 24.3 percent, followed by the 18-29 year age group at 14.8 percent. Those aged 50-59 years' account for 7.8 percent, and the 60-69 year age group constitutes the smallest portion at 1.7 percent. The cumulative percentages indicate 66.1 percent respondents are under 40 years, and nearly all (98.3 percent) are under the age of 60. The data suggest a predominantly young to middle-aged population among the respondents.

4.3.1.4 Race Composition of the Participants

The race of the participants was elicited and presented in Table 4.5 below:

Table 4.5: Participant Race Composition

RACE GROUP

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Black	76	66.1	66.1	66.1
Coloured	11	9.6	9.6	75.7
Indian	13	11.3	11.3	87.0
White	14	12.2	12.2	99.1
Other	1	.9	.9	100.0
Total	115	100.0	100.0	

The racial composition of the respondents reveals a predominant representation of Black individuals, who constitute 66.1 percent of the sample. Following this, White respondents make up 12.2 percent, Indian respondents account for 11.3 percent, and Coloured individuals represent 9.6 percent. The "Other" category includes just 0.9 percent respondents. Cumulatively, by the time we include White respondents, 99.1 percent of the sample is accounted for, with the final 0.9 percent categorised as "Other." This distribution indicates significant racial diversity among the respondents, with a notable Black majority.

4.3.1.5 Job Category Composition

The study ascertained the job categories of the participants to determine their proximity to the subject under study. The findings are presented below:

Table 4.6: Participant Job Category Composition

WHICH JOB CATEGORY DO YOU OCCUPY IN THE COMPANY

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid HR	11	9.6	9.6	9.6
Technical	10	8.7	8.7	18.3
Operations	60	52.2	52.2	70.4
Supervisor	13	11.3	11.3	81.7
Management	13	11.3	11.3	93.0
Other	8	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	115	100.0	100.0	

The occupational roles of the respondents are shown (Table 4.6) to be primarily concentrated in Operations, which accounts for 52.2 percent of the sample. This is followed by those in Management and Supervisor roles, each constituting 11.3 percent. HR and Technical roles are represented by 9.6 percent and 8.7 percent of the respondents, respectively, while seven percent fall into the "Other" category. Cumulatively, by including those in Operations, 70.4 percent of the sample is accounted for, with the remaining roles contributing to the rest of the distribution. The data highlight a strong emphasis on Operations within the respondent group, indicating its critical role in their professional landscape. Nevertheless, the high occurrence of three-shift schedules prompts concerns regarding the potential effects of irregular work patterns on employee well-being and attendance, as indicated in the existing research (Afonso & Fonseca 2011).

4.3.1.6 Work Experience Composition

The work experience of the participants is crucial to discern their understanding of the subject under study. The work experience composition is summarised in Table 4.7 below:

Table 4.7: Participant Work Experience Composition

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WITH TRANSNET

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid <4 years	25	21.7	21.7	21.7
4 - <6 years	25	21.7	21.7	43.5
6 - <10 years	19	16.5	16.5	60.0
10-15 years	35	30.4	30.4	90.4
>15 years	11	9.6	9.6	100.0
Total	115	100.0	100.0	

The length of service among respondents shows a diverse range of tenure (Table 4.7). The most common duration is 10-15 years, reported by 30.4 percent participants. Both the <4 years and 4-<6 year categories are equally represented, each accounting for 21.7 percent respondents. Those with 6-<10 years of service make up 16.5 percent, while the smallest group, with more than 15 years of service, comprises 9.6 percent. The cumulative percentages illustrate 60 percent respondents have less than 10 years' experience, indicating a blend of relatively newer and moderately experienced employees within the group.

4.3.1.7 Types of Contracts

The types of contract compositions of participants are presented in Table 4.8 below:

Table 4.8: Participant Contract Types

TYPE OF CONTRACT		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fixed term	10	8.7	8.7	8.7
	Permanent	105	91.3	91.3	100.0
	Total	115	100.0	100.0	

The employment status of the respondents (Table 4.8) predominantly indicates permanent positions, with 91.3 percent of the sample employed on a permanent contract basis. Only 8.7 percent respondents are on fixed-term contracts. The cumulative percentages show once the fixed-term category is included, 100 percent of the respondents' employment statuses are accounted for. This distribution suggests a high level of job stability among the respondents, with the vast majority holding permanent positions.

4.3.1.8 Type of Shift Work

The study recorded the type of shift work of the participants as presented in Table 4.9 below:

Table 4.9: Participant Shift Work Types

TYPE OF SHIFT WORK

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid straight	45	39.1	39.1	39.1
three	70	60.9	60.9	100.0
Total	115	100.0	100.0	

The data on respondents' shift types (Table 4.9) reveal the majority work three shifts, comprising 60.9 percent of the sample. The remaining 39.1 percent work straight shifts. The cumulative percentages indicate, by the time those working three shifts are accounted for, 100 percent of respondents' shift types are represented. This distribution demonstrates a preference or requirement for three-shift work patterns among the respondents, suggesting a work environment that possibly demands around-the-clock operations.

The descriptive analysis of the statistics is presented according to the study objectives. The quantitative data analysis commenced by scrutinising the descriptive statistics to comprehend the fundamental participant sample attributes. The study involved analysing the frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, and measures of dispersion for the essential variables.

4.3.2 Factors Affecting Absenteeism

Absenteeism in the workplace is influenced by various factors, with conditions of service playing a significant role. The study ascertained the factors that influence absenteeism, with a focus on conditions of service factors.

Table 4.10: Conditions of Service factors

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
C13.1 I am satisfied with the number of leave days I get.	115	2.95	1.310
C13.2 I am satisfied with number of sick days allowed	115	2.90	1.298
C13.3 I am satisfied with number of family responsibility days allowed.	115	2.89	1.269
C13.4 I am satisfied with the overtime pay.	115	2.65	1.389
C13.5 I am satisfied with the night shift regulations and allowance.	115	2.83	1.244
C13.6 I am satisfied with the time allowed for tea breaks and lunch breaks.	115	3.16	1.218
C13.7 I am satisfied with the maternity leave and paternity leave days granted.	115	3.23	1.140
C13.8 There are dependents at home for whose care I am responsible (e.g., parents).	115	3.97	.950
C13.9 I have a responsibility for assisting with the care of children in the home.	115	3.99	1.013
C13.10 Relationships within the family are stressful.	115	3.32	1.120
C13.11 I am under financial stress.	115	3.18	1.268
C13.12 I have a problem with substance abuse.	115	1.75	1.107
C13.13 Someone in the home has a problem with substance abuse	115	2.33	1.503
C13.14 I am satisfied with my work-life balance.	115	2.80	1.086
C13.15 I suffer from health problems which require regular medical intervention/doctor's appointments	115	2.42	1.192
C13.16 I rely on public transport to get to work.	115	2.55	1.265
C13.17 I have a good relationship with my colleagues and superiors.	115	3.58	.946
C13.18 I am treated with respect at my workplace.	115	3.30	.948

C13.19 I have freedom to make my own work decisions.	115	3.03	1.017
C13.20 I have a comfortable place in which to work at my workplace	115	3.18	1.048
C13.21 I can handle conflicts at work.	115	3.42	1.051
C13.22 The rewards on offer for performance are adequate.	115	2.50	1.038
C13.23 I have been bullied in my workplace.	115	2.72	1.105
C13.24 I have been harassed in my workplace.	115	2.29	1.160
C13.25 I feel mentally stressed because of my job.	115	2.93	1.160
C13.26 Personally, I have not experienced any gender discrimination at work.	115	3.39	1.247
C13.27 The leadership in our workplace is good.	115	2.94	1.118
C13.28 There is good communication between superiors and employees in my workplace.	115	2.84	1.105
C13.29 I receive adequate motivation and encouragement at work.	115	2.87	1.128
C13.30 I am satisfied with my annual /monthly bonuses.	115	2.58	1.318
C13.31 I am satisfied with the hours I am required to work.	115	3.17	1.244
C13.32 Attitudes and behaviours of co-workers are acceptable.	115	2.82	.933
C13.33 I often experience fatigue from an excessive workload	115	3.50	1.071
C13.34 We experience shortages in staffing which increases my workload.	115	3.74	1.178
C13.35 There is a strong organizational leadership in my workplace.	115	2.90	1.231
C13.36 I feel as if I am suffering from burnout.	115	3.03	1.092
C13.37 There is a fair allocation of resources in my workplace.	115	2.70	1.116
C13.38 I have the same work goals and purposes as the people I work with.	115	2.71	1.168

C13.39 I can participate in training or skills development in my workplace.	115	3.49	1.187
C13.40 There are opportunities for change and growth for me in the workplace.	115	3.44	1.265
C13.41 Generally, my morale is high when I am at work.	115	3.23	1.185
C13.42 I know my role in the organization.	115	3.93	.943
C13.43 I work as part of a team.	115	4.05	.926

According to Table 4.10 above, absenteeism in the workplace is significantly influenced by conditions of service, with various factors impacting employee attendance. The key among these is leave provisions and compensation. The relatively low satisfaction scores for the number of leave days (mean = 2.95), sick days (mean = 2.90), and family responsibility days (mean = 2.89), suggest employees feel inadequately supported in terms of time off. This dissatisfaction can lead to increased absenteeism, as employees may be forced to take unscheduled leave when their formal leave entitlements do not meet their needs. Similarly, the low satisfaction with overtime pays (mean = 2.65) and night shift regulations (mean = 2.83) indicates poor compensation and challenging shift conditions are likely to contribute to absenteeism, causing employee fatigue and dissatisfaction.

The work environment and job conditions also play a crucial role in absenteeism. Although satisfaction with breaks (mean = 3.16) and work hours (mean = 3.17) is moderate, these aspects remain areas where improvements could be made. Employees who perceive their work environment as uncomfortable or inadequately resourced are more likely to experience job dissatisfaction, which can lead to higher rates of absenteeism. Additionally, employees who rely on public transport (mean = 2.55) face external challenges that can affect their attendance. Issues such as unreliable transportation can contribute to punctuality problems and increase absenteeism.

Personal and health-related factors further influence absenteeism. High scores for stress related to workload (mean = 3.50) and staffing shortages (mean = 3.74) indicate that excessive workload and insufficient staffing levels are significant contributors to absenteeism. These factors cause increased stress and burnout, making regular

attendance more difficult. Additionally, the impact of personal stressors such as financial issues (mean = 3.18) and stressful family relationships (mean = 3.32) also contribute to absenteeism. Health problems requiring regular medical appointments (mean = 2.42) are another critical factor, as employees with chronic health conditions are more likely to experience frequent work absences.

In general, the analysis reveals absenteeism is significantly influenced by conditions of service, including leave provisions, compensation, work environment, and personal stress factors. The dissatisfaction with leave entitlements and overtime pays, combined with challenges related to shift regulations and public transport, highlight key areas where improvements could mitigate absenteeism. These findings are consistent with existing literature, which emphasises inadequate leave policies and poor compensation are major predictors of absenteeism (Grigore 2020). Moreover, high workload and staffing shortages contribute to burnout and stress, which are well-documented contributors to absenteeism (Miraglia & Johns 2021). Personal stressors, including financial strain and health issues, further exacerbate absenteeism, aligning with studies that link personal stress and health problems to increased absenteeism rates (Lohaus & Habermann 2021).

4.3.3 Factors That Cause Employee Absenteeism at TPT

The study investigated the factors that cause employee absenteeism at TPT at DCT Pier 2. The statistics elicited are summarised below:

Table 4.11: Factors that cause Employee Absenteeism

B10.7Reason

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	95	82.6	82.6	82.6
Exam	1	.9	.9	83.5
I had personal problems	1	.9	.9	84.3
licence renewal	1	.9	.9	85.2
Memorial	1	.9	.9	86.1
My husband was in an accident	1	.9	.9	87.0
no water	1	.9	.9	87.8
Protected strike	3	2.6	2.6	90.4
Public holiday	1	.9	.9	91.3
Released Company Witness	1	.9	.9	92.2
Strike	1	.9	.9	93.0
Study leave	1	.9	.9	93.9
Study Leave	3	2.6	2.6	96.5
Study leave was not granted so I was writing a varsity examination.	1	.9	.9	97.4
Tired	1	.9	.9	98.3
Weather conditions	1	.9	.9	99.1
writing class test	1	.9	.9	100.0
Total	115	100.0	100.0	

The analysis of employee absenteeism (Table 4.11) at TPT reveals the predominant reason for absenteeism is "Valid," accounting for 82.6 percent responses. This high percentage suggests most absenteeism is attributed to authorised or officially accepted reasons. In contrast, other reasons for absenteeism, such as personal problems, license renewal, and various types of leave (for example, study leave and public holidays), are infrequently reported, each contributing less than one percent total responses. Specific occurrences such as protected strikes (2.6 percent) and study leave-related issues (2.6 percent) also contribute to absenteeism but to a lesser extent.

The diverse range of less frequent reasons, including weather conditions and tiredness, highlights the varied factors that can impact employee attendance. This

distribution indicates while formal and approved reasons for absence dominate, there is a small but notable percentage of absenteeism due to less common or personal issues, suggesting the need for a nuanced approach to managing and understanding absenteeism at the terminal.

4.4 Correlation Statistics

The relationship between workplace variables and leave types is crucial to understanding how conditions of service affect worker absenteeism. The Pearson Correlation coefficients in SPSS output are summarised in Table 4.12 below:

Table 4.12: Correlation coefficients

		WP_ENV	JOB_SAT	LEAVE	PER_STRESS	WORK_STRESS	RES	
B12.1	12 months Annual leave	Pearson Correlation	.149	.288**	.150	.055	.333**	-.218*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.113	.002	.110	.561	.000	.020	
	N	114	114	114	114	114	114	
B12.2	12 months Sick leave	Pearson Correlation	-.042	-.023	-.162	.240**	.124	-.059
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.656	.807	.084	.010	.186	.534	
	N	115	115	115	115	115	115	
B12.3	12 months Parental leave	Pearson Correlation	.181	.320**	.271**	.056	.224*	-.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.053	.000	.003	.549	.016	.489	
	N	115	115	115	115	115	115	
B12.4	12 months Maternity leave	Pearson Correlation	-.057	-.104	-.070	.022	.001	.035
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.548	.268	.457	.817	.990	.707	
	N	115	115	115	115	115	115	
B12.5	12 months Family responsibility leave	Pearson Correlation	.138	.264**	.129	.008	.125	-.234*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.143	.004	.170	.931	.184	.012	
	N	115	115	115	115	115	115	
B12.6	12 months I did not go to work – no specific reason	Pearson Correlation	.287**	.523**	.539**	.015	.282**	-.355**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000	.876	.002	.000	
	N	114	114	114	114	114	114	
B12.7	12 months Another reason	Pearson Correlation	.174	.104	.020	-.016	-.023	.187*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.066	.274	.833	.868	.812	.049	
	N	112	112	112	112	112	112	

As shown above (Table 4.12), the correlation analysis highlights significant relationships between various leave types and conditions of service factors at TPT. A notable finding is the positive correlation between job satisfaction and the use of annual leave ($r = .288, p = .002$) and parental leave ($r = .320, p = .000$). This suggests employees who are more satisfied with their jobs are more likely to utilise their annual and parental leave. This is supported by literature, which indicates higher job satisfaction often leads to better engagement with work benefits, including leave entitlements (Lohaus & Habermann 2021). Furthermore, employees who experience high levels of job satisfaction may be more inclined to take advantage of their leave entitlements as a form of work-life balance and reward.

Conversely, personal stress shows a positive correlation with sick leave ($r = .240, p = .010$), indicating that employees experiencing higher levels of personal stress tend to take more sick leave. This finding aligns with research that links stress to increased absenteeism, suggesting that stress negatively impacts employees' health and their likelihood of taking sick leave (Grigore 2020). Additionally, the negative correlation between family responsibility leaves and home responsibilities ($r = -.234, p = .012$) implies employees with more home responsibilities might take less family responsibility leave, potentially due to prioritising home duties over formal leave. This is supported by studies showing employees with extensive home responsibilities may have complex leave patterns (Lohaus & Habermann 2021).

The strong correlation between unscheduled absences and job satisfaction ($r = .523, p = .000$) indicates higher job satisfaction is associated with more unscheduled absences, potentially due to increased freedom or dissatisfaction manifesting as unplanned leave. This result reflects the complex relationship between job satisfaction and absenteeism, where high satisfaction might lead to more frequent unplanned absences due to greater autonomy or less perceived risk (Johns 2010). Additionally, the negative correlation with home responsibilities ($r = -.355, p = .000$) suggests employees with greater home responsibilities are less likely to take unscheduled leave, emphasising the influence of personal life demands on absenteeism (Grigore 2020). These findings depict the multifaceted nature of absenteeism, where both job satisfaction and personal stress significantly affect leave behaviours and highlight the importance of managing both job satisfaction and stress to mitigate absenteeism.

4.5 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results

“ANOVA is a statistical test used to evaluate the difference between the means of more than two groups” (Investopedia 2024: para 1), allowing the researcher to determine whether observed differences are a result of random chance or a reflection of differences that are genuine and meaningful. In this study, ANOVA results were employed to analyse the variance in absenteeism rates based on several key factors, including conditions of service and personal stressors. The ANOVA results that reveal whether significant differences exist between groups and the extent to which various factors contribute to absenteeism, are shown in Table 4.13 below:

Table 4.13: ANOVA Results

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
WP_ENV	Between Groups	10.205	5	2.041	3.717	.004
	Within Groups	59.853	109	.549		
	Total	70.058	114			
JOB_SAT	Between Groups	11.308	5	2.262	3.582	.005
	Within Groups	68.827	109	.631		
	Total	80.135	114			
LEAVE	Between Groups	11.429	5	2.286	1.818	.115
	Within Groups	137.033	109	1.257		
	Total	148.462	114			
PER_STRESS	Between Groups	5.132	5	1.026	1.825	.114
	Within Groups	61.317	109	.563		
	Total	66.449	114			
WORK_STRESS	Between Groups	10.925	5	2.185	2.699	.024
	Within Groups	88.258	109	.810		
	Total	99.183	114			
RES	Between Groups	3.725	5	.745	.987	.429
	Within Groups	82.240	109	.754		
	Total	85.965	114			

The ANOVA results presented in Table 4.13 provide insights into how various factors influence absenteeism rates, including workplace environment (WP_ENV), job satisfaction (JOB_SAT), leave allocation (LEAVE), personal stress (PER_STRESS), work-induced stress (WORK_STRESS), and responsibilities (RES).

The results reveal significant variance in absenteeism with respect to the workplace environment and job satisfaction. Specifically, WP_ENV shows a significant effect with an F-value of 3.717 and a p-value of 0.004, indicating differences in the workplace environment significantly impact absenteeism. Similarly, job satisfaction (JOB_SAT)

also significantly affects absenteeism, with an F-value of 3.582 and a p-value of 0.005. These findings suggest employees in varying workplace environments and with different job satisfaction levels exhibit notable differences in absenteeism rates. This supports existing literature that highlights the importance of a positive work environment and high job satisfaction in reducing absenteeism (Grigore 2020).

In contrast, the factors of leave allocation (LEAVE), personal stress (PER_STRESS), and responsibilities (RES) do not show significant effects on absenteeism, as indicated by their p-values (0.115, 0.114, and 0.429, respectively). This suggests, within the parameters of this study, the amount of leave available, personal stress levels, and the extent of personal responsibilities may not significantly influence absenteeism. However, work-induced stress (WORK_STRESS) does exhibit a significant effect, with an F-value of 2.699 and a p-value of 0.024, implying higher levels of work-induced stress contribute to increased absenteeism. This finding aligns with literature suggesting work-related stress is a critical factor influencing employee absenteeism (Chowdhury & Haider 2021). Overall, these results underscore the importance of addressing workplace conditions and stressors to effectively manage and reduce absenteeism.

4.6 Factor Analysis Results

In this study, factor analysis was employed to understand the underlying dimensions affecting absenteeism by examining various conditions of service and personal stressors. The factor analysis results are presented below:

Table 4.14: Factor Analysis

Factors	N	Mean (SD)	T	df	p-value
WP_ENV	115	2.86 (.784)	-1.877	114	.063
JOB_SAT	115				.001*
LEAVE	115				.155
PER_STRESS	115				<.001*
WORK_STRESS	115				<.001*

RES	115				<.001*
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The results indicate several factors show significant relationships with absenteeism. Workplace Environment (WP_ENV), with a mean score of 2.86 and a standard deviation of 0.784, approached significance with a p-value of 0.063, suggesting a potential influence on absenteeism, though it did not reach conventional significance levels. Job Satisfaction (JOB_SAT) demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with absenteeism with a p-value of 0.001, indicating lower job satisfaction may be associated with higher absenteeism. Personal Stress (PER_STRESS) and Work-Induced Stress (WORK_STRESS) both showed strong statistical significance with p-values less than 0.001, highlighting their critical roles in influencing absenteeism. Responsibilities (RES) also exhibited a significant relationship with absenteeism, with a p-value less than 0.001, underscoring the impact of personal and professional responsibilities on absenteeism rates.

These results underscore the importance of addressing various factors in managing absenteeism. The significant relationships found with job satisfaction, personal stress, work-induced stress, and responsibilities align with existing literature, which emphasises the impact of these dimensions on employee attendance (Chowdhury & Haider 2021). Therefore, improving workplace conditions, enhancing job satisfaction, and managing stress effectively, can be pivotal in reducing absenteeism and fostering a more productive work environment.

4.7 Independent Samples Test Summary

An Independent Samples Test, according to Białowas *et al.* (2021: 92), is acknowledged as “one of the most popular statistical tests” to compare the means of various factors. The samples should, in addition, “be selected from populations that have equal variance with reference to some criterion.... performing the t-test in SPSS enables interpretation of the results even if this assumption is violated” (Białowas *et al.* 2021: 99). In this study the independent samples test was conducted on the means of factors affecting absenteeism, with the results (Table 4.15) summarised below:

Table 4.15: Independent Samples Test Summary

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
WP_ENV	Equal variances assumed	1.228	.270	1.072	113	.286	.16049	.14969	-.13606	.45705
	Equal variances not assumed			1.036	83.357	.303	.16049	.15487	-.14751	.46850
JOB_SAT	Equal variances assumed	9.550	.003	.984	113	.327	.15772	.16022	-.15970	.47514
	Equal variances not assumed			.908	70.011	.367	.15772	.17377	-.18885	.50429
LEAVE	Equal variances assumed	6.510	.012	2.275	113	.025	.48730	.21416	.06302	.91159

	Equal variances not assumed			2.16 1	78.18 2	.034	.48730	.22545	.0384 8	.9361 3
PER_STRESS	Equal variances assumed	.162	.68 8	2.89 5	113	.005	.40933	.14137	.1292 4	.6894 1
	Equal variances not assumed			2.88 2	92.57 1	.005	.40933	.14201	.1273 1	.6913 4
WORK_STRESS	Equal variances assumed	.805	.37 1	3.26 2	113	.001	.55820	.17113	.2191 6	.8972 5
	Equal variances not assumed			3.10 5	78.80 3	.003	.55820	.17977	.2003 6	.9160 5
RES	Equal variances assumed	.917	.34 0	- 1.37 3	113	.172	-.22698	.16528	- .5544 3	.1004 7
	Equal variances not assumed			- 1.35 5	89.77 6	.179	-.22698	.16751	- .5597 8	.1058 1

The Independent Samples Test results (Table 4.15) reveal key insights into how various factors influence absenteeism. Leave allocation emerged as a significant factor, with a p-value of .025 and .034, depending on variance assumptions. This indicates differences in leave entitlements, including annual and sick leave,

meaningfully impact absenteeism rates. Employees with inadequate leave provisions are more likely to experience higher levels of absenteeism, suggesting that enhancing leave benefits might reduce unscheduled absences.

Personal stress significantly affects absenteeism, as indicated by a p-value of .005 in both scenarios. This finding highlights the crucial role of personal well-being in employee attendance. Employees experiencing higher personal stress are more prone to absenteeism, reinforcing the need for workplace strategies that address and support personal stress management. Implementing stress relief programmes and providing mental health support could be beneficial in mitigating absenteeism related to personal stress.

Work-induced stress is also a notable contributor to absenteeism, with p-values of .001 (equal variances assumed) and .003 (equal variances not assumed). This suggests a robust relationship between job-related stressors and absenteeism rates. High levels of work-related stress led to increased absenteeism, emphasising the importance of addressing workplace stressors. Organizations should consider interventions such as workload adjustments, supportive management practices, and employee well-being initiatives to manage and reduce work-induced stress, ultimately aiming to decrease absenteeism.

4.8 Testing of Hypotheses

The worker absenteeism construct mean deviations from a test value and their significance levels are illustrated (Table 4.15). Significant mean changes from the test value ($p < 0.05$) are highlighted in red. The research established which factors strongly affect absenteeism, enabling the researcher to proceed with hypothesis testing.

4.8.1.1 Analysis Related to H_0 (null) and H_a (alternative)

There are major changes in the means of factors such as job happiness, personal stress, work-related stress, and tasks that support the main hypothesis (H_0) that conditions of service factors affect worker absences at TPT. On the one hand, Job satisfaction (JOB_SAT) has a mean difference of 0.26561 from the test value and a p-value of .001, which indicates it has a significant effect on absence. The concept of leave allocation (LEAVE), on the other hand, does not show a significant mean difference ($p = .155$). This suggests the mere allocation of leave may not be a direct

prediction of absence, without considering how well and how satisfied people are with the leave system (Allen 2003).

4.8.2.2 Statistical Significance and Implications

The statistical significance of the data suggests employee stress and work satisfaction impact absenteeism. The substantial negative mean difference ($p < .000$) in personal stress (PER_STRESS) from the test value implies stress-reduction programmes may reduce absenteeism. The significant positive mean difference in work-induced stress (WORK_STRESS) with a p-value of .000, suggests organisational adjustments are needed to reduce workplace stress (Maslach & Leiter 2016).

The results for domestic responsibilities (RES) with a mean difference of 0.98261 and a p-value of .000, suggest employees' domestic obligations are a major factor in absenteeism, supporting the work-family conflict literature that emphasises supportive work-family policies (Kossek & Ozeki 1998).

In conclusion, the statistical analysis strongly supports H_0 and rejects H_a for some constructs. TPT should consider stress management programmes, job satisfaction, and supportive policies for employees' outside-of-work responsibilities when designing absenteeism interventions.

4.9 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The qualitative component of this study comprised in-depth interviews with staff stationed at Pier 2 of DCT, which is run by TPT. This section presents a thorough and detailed evaluation of the primary themes and insights discovered throughout these interviews. The qualitative data provide a complete and detailed understanding of the factors influencing worker absenteeism at the terminal. The analysis begins with an overview of the participant demographics, followed by a detailed discussion of the important themes and subthemes revealed by thematic analysis.

4.9.1 Major Theme 1: Worker Absenteeism as a Challenge for Industry and Port Terminals

4.9.1.1 Sub-theme: High Rate of Absenteeism

Participants noted a complicated interplay of variables contributing to a high percentage of absenteeism at the TPT (DCT Pier 2). This phenomenon is firmly ingrained in the workplace's operational and environmental fabric, which emphasises

the need to address the root causes that reduce productivity and morale losses. The transcripts reveal the many causes of absence, including weariness, demotivation, and lack of rest. These factors suggest a workplace that may encourage absenteeism.

Through the candid revelations of the participants, the narrative of absenteeism is further enriched. For instance, one participant lamented, “the rate of absenteeism is actually relatively quite high here at DCT, Pier 2” (Participant 2), illustrating the pervasive nature of the issue within their department. Another shared, “[...] the absences here at Container Terminal, it's very high, because people are fatigued and they don't get time to spend at home or attend family events or personal matters” (Participant 4), which underscores the personal sacrifices and the ensuing weariness contributing to absenteeism.

Furthermore, the sentiment, “The rate of absenteeism is very high because employees get tired because of the equipment and long working hours” (Participant 6), captures the physical toll on employees, leading to absenteeism. Last, the observation “Employees work 19 days before getting their weekend off” (Participant 6), highlights an intensive work schedule that significantly impacts employee well-being and propensity for absenteeism.

Synthesising these observations shows the TPT's high absence rate is a systemic result of work circumstances, not merely individual disengagement, or personal concerns. The frequent mention of weariness indicates an operating pace that exceeds workers' physical and mental resilience. In addition, the observed poor rest intervals prevent appropriate recuperation, creating a cycle of fatigue and absence. The emotional and psychological aspects of absenteeism are, furthermore, revealed by demotivation, where the lack of incentives and the decreasing value of employee well-being are key determinants. These factors, mentioned in respondent interviews, suggest organisational structure and culture cause absenteeism.

This research emphasises the need for a holistic strategy to absenteeism that addresses basic causes in service conditions and organisational culture rather than surface solutions. The participants' testimony provides useful information for creating focused interventions to improve the workplace. By prioritising employee health, well-being, and motivation, organisations may minimise absenteeism and boost productivity and satisfaction.

4.9.2 Major Theme 2: Factors Influencing Absenteeism with a Focus on Conditions of Service

4.9.2.1 Sub-theme: Inadequate Equipment and Resources

Inadequate equipment and resources at TPT (DCT Pier 2) contribute to absenteeism, highlighting operational inefficiencies that affect worker satisfaction and attendance. The accounts of research participants illuminate the real and intangible consequences of these shortcomings, showing a clear association between equipment quality and absence. This link highlights a major workplace issue, as physical resources are both tools and essential factors in employee well-being and engagement.

"The technology has changed, and the workload has increased drastically. Employees work a high number of days before getting their day off. There's also a shortage of equipment. Employees sometimes come to work, and they don't have the resources to even perform their duties while they're at work."
(Participant 2)

"[...] I would say my ones are just the ones that I have, the major ones, I would say it's booking and there will be equipment. And I would say also time to rest as I would say for booking. Most of the time the trucks, they come here, they don't even, I think they don't know if the boxes. Yes. Sometimes." (Participant 1)

"[...] the technology has changed, and the workload has increased drastically. Employees work 19 days before getting their weekend off.... shortage of equipment and uncomfortable working equipment. Employees sometimes come to work and do not have the resources to perform their duties. And less rest days." (Participant 6)

Deeper data show equipment and resource shortages are more than operational barriers. They reflect a larger disregard for worker needs and a misunderstanding of motivation and productivity. The recurring statements of "shortage of equipment" and "uncomfortable working equipment" indicate physical shortcomings and reflect a systemic failure to meet changing labour and operational needs. The increased workload and technology advances that demand more from workers without improving their working conditions intensify this disregard.

This sub-theme shows a complex interaction between physical and psychological workplace elements. The company does not have sufficient simple tools and resources, which indicates a lack of care regarding employee health. People who are not driven avoid or do not go to work, because what is expected of them at work does not match reality. The participants' accounts stress the importance of solving these problems to make operations run more smoothly and create a workplace that cares about its employees.

Based on personal situations, organisations need to examine themselves and make changes. TPT may be able to cut down on absence, increase worker happiness, and improve production by emphasising the improvement of tools and resources.

4.9.2.2 Sub-theme: Excessive Workload and Insufficient Rest

The transcripts reveal participants at TPT (DCT Pier 2) are absent due to stress and a lack of relaxation. Worker stress is a common result of demanding work schedules that provide little room for relaxation. A more considerate scheduling method that considers the mental and physical limitations of the workforce is necessary, because of this disparity between work demands and opportunities for rest.

" I think most of the equipment that we're using, it's not comfortable at the points that, and, and the foundation where we're working, it's a little bit bumpy."

(Participant 1)

"[...] the rate is very high regarding as, as we talked about in the beginning, the conditions of the machine. We also do not get time to spend with family time. Most of the time we are here at work. So, I think that's also why it's always high." (Participant 1)

Synthesising these studies reveals a strong connection between operational demands and worker well-being. Respondent narratives show the operating model—high workloads and no downtime—harms employee health, morale, and attendance. The repeated need for relaxation and work-life balance alludes to a larger organisational issue: a need for readjusting work schedules and circumstances to maintain employee engagement and productivity.

Participants recommend more flexible work schedules, shifts that allow for rest, and improved workplace conditions to reduce workers' physical strain. These

recommendations demonstrate a fundamental need for workplace strategies that prioritise employee welfare and operational performance.

This detailed research emphasises the need for TPT to examine its operating processes, focusing on workload reorganisation and rest times. Addressing these core issues can help the company build a more resilient, engaged, and healthier staff, lowering absenteeism and increasing productivity.

4.9.2.3 Sub-theme: Demotivation Due to Reduced Incentives

Reduced or eliminated bonuses, events, and encouraging activities greatly increase worker absenteeism, according to the transcripts. The organisational policy and practice change appears to affect personnel morale and motivation, increasing absenteeism. Without these incentives, which rewarded hard effort and dedication, employees are less motivated.

"[...] most of the contributions I would say it's just, that they took a lot of things from us like, family days and year-end parties and insert bonuses like that and I would say that's a lot of contribution because people are motivated, you know, coming to work, no matter if you sacrifice, like, let me make example, like on the 25th of December, most of the time people were given vouchers."
(Participant 1)

"Well, firstly, I would advise the senior people in management to bring back our, or to introduce new ways of making the employees feel better. Needed and valued. Example, the job and finish activity." (Participant 2)

These statements show that eliminating incentives lowers employee motivation. According to participants, these incentives were not only money gains but a sign of gratitude for their work. Employees feel underappreciated after the dismissal of these encouragements, affecting their motivation to go above and beyond.

The research in this sub-theme reveals TPT ought to rethink employee motivation and appreciation. The direct relationship between incentives and worker motivation emphasises their relevance in employee engagement and efficiency. Reintroducing or redesigning these motivating rewards might reduce absenteeism and boost employee enthusiasm, engagement, and productivity.

The data show lowered incentives significantly affect employee engagement and absenteeism. A strategic incentive structure reassessment is recommended to boost morale and lower absenteeism. This method deals with absenteeism and builds a more resilient and engaged staff that can support TPT's organisational goals.

4.9.3 Major Theme 3: Specific Conditions of Service Causing Worker Absenteeism

4.9.3.1 Sub-theme: Poor Shift and Rest Patterns

Interview transcripts under this sub-theme show worker are concerned about shift patterns and rest times. Employees say their demanding shifts, frequently without breaks or rest days, affect their health, well-being, and attendance. This circumstance increases physical and mental weariness and reduces their work-life balance, resulting in increasing absenteeism as a coping technique.

"[...] I think that's why most of the time other people end up in hospitals with kidney problems or other effects. Sometimes. Like bumpiness and everything. And then the other one I would say is rest time, most of the time. We work 19 days straight and then we only off like those two days. So, I think we don't get much time to rest if we could like play around with like working at least like a couple of days and then offing and then I think that will be right." (Participant 1)

Participant remarks show discontent with the existing scheduling system and the need for a more balanced approach that provides for rest and recuperation. Workers feel the current patterns are unsustainable and contribute to the port's excessive absenteeism.

The combination of these data highlights a major organisational and work culture concern at TPT. Continuous activity without sufficient rest and recuperation compromises worker health and safety and operational effectiveness owing to absenteeism. This circumstance necessitates a shift schedule review to incorporate more flexible and compassionate work patterns that account for workers' physical and mental constraints.

Addressing shift and rest pattern difficulties requires stakeholder interaction, policy modification, and employee well-being. TPT can minimise absenteeism, build worker

satisfaction, and boost productivity by implementing more flexible scheduling and resting personnel. This strategy supports the study goal and creates a more resilient and sustainable workplace.

4.9.3.2 Sub-theme: Lack of Adequate Family Time

This sub-theme's interview transcript reveals a painful problem impacting worker absenteeism: tight work schedules' influence on family time. The participant narratives show considerable anxiety regarding the difficulty to combine job and family. This imbalance stresses personal relationships and causes psychological stress, driving workers to absence to regain personal and family time.

“[...] We also do not get time to spend with family time. Most of the time we are here at work” (Participant 1).

“[...] they don't get time to spend at home or attend family events or personal matters” (Participant 4)

Many mentions of lengthy work hours and little relaxation emphasise the need for organisational policy changes. Current port operating standards appear to not support employee well-being, encouraging absenteeism as a way for workers to meet their unfulfilled demands for relaxation and family engagement.

Further analysis of the interviews shows the workforce wants a more flexible work schedule. Adjustments may minimise employee absenteeism by easing personal difficulties, while employee happiness and loyalty may increase with schedules that allow for more predictable and adequate family time.

TPT's operating policies need improvement, as shown by participant' narratives. Addressing the shortage of family time demands quick schedule changes and a more holistic view of worker well-being. An organisation may considerably reduce absenteeism and boost productivity and morale by promoting a balanced lifestyle. This technique supports the study goal of identifying and addressing working condition elements that cause absenteeism, recommending more sustainable and human-centric operational solutions.

4.9.4 Major Theme 4: Measures to Reduce Worker Absenteeism Relating to Conditions of Service

4.9.4.1 Sub-theme: Introduction of Flexible Shift Patterns

The study transcripts are extensive and detailed, therefore, a focused analysis on the theme Measures to Reduce Worker Absenteeism Relating to Conditions of Service yields valuable insights. Participants stressed the need for organisational reforms, notably around shift patterns and work-life balance, which directly affect absenteeism.

Several participants articulated concerns regarding the rigidity of shift schedules and the resultant strain on their personal lives and health. For instance, "...employees work a high number of days before actually getting their day off...there's also a shortage of equipment...employees sometimes come to work, and they don't have the resources to even perform their duties while they're at work" (Participant 2). This statement not only highlights the intense workload but also points to a lack of essential resources, compounding the stress experienced by employees.

Another poignant reflection was offered by Participant 6, who noted, "The rate of absenteeism is very high because employees get tired because of the equipment and long working hours." This directly connects the reported absences to the physically demanding nature of the job and insufficient rest, suggesting the current operating model might not be able to continue.

Participant 3 agreed with these points of view and offered useful answers, focusing on the need for a more considerate approach to schedule: "Introducing new shift patterns. Give people more rest, offer flexible working options, encourage employee engagement." Such suggestions show a clear way to cut down on absence by making changes to the workplace that put employee health first.

When these participant narratives are put together, it is evident TPT worker absences need more than mere changes to resources or management. The way work is organised and how people act at work need to be completely re-evaluated. Flexible shift schedules and adequate rest time between shifts can help workers balance work and family responsibilities, which can boost job happiness and cut down on absences. This study shows the work environment needs to put employee health and happiness ahead of working efficiency to keep workers happy and productive. This improvement would address worker demands and create a company standard.

4.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter thoroughly analysed the statistical factors that impact worker absenteeism at the TPT DCT Pier 2. The analysis began by providing a comprehensive demographic profile of the participants, establishing the necessary context for the study. Advanced statistical methods were used to analyse the main factors contributing to absenteeism, such as variance analysis, correlation testing, and reliability assessments. The hypothesis testing showed factors such as job satisfaction, personal stress, and workplace-induced stress greatly influence employee attendance. The analysis of the components further refined these findings into practical constructs, highlighting the importance of specific management interventions. It is evident from the comprehensive statistical analysis that prioritising better working conditions and promoting employee well-being play a vital role in minimising absenteeism at the DCT.

Significantly, the qualitative investigation of perspectives from employees nearing their pension added depth to the quantitative examination. This allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate interplay between organisational, physical, and psychological elements that contribute to employee absences. The feedback from participants emphasised the importance of improving equipment, creating fair shift schedules, implementing stronger safety measures, and establishing employee rewards and recognition programmes that truly make a difference.

The extensive evidence compiled in this chapter provides a strong basis for TPT to incorporate these research findings into their strategic planning and operational frameworks. By addressing the identified concerns, the organisation can create a stronger and more dedicated workforce, leading to improved attendance, employee satisfaction, and overall operational efficiency. The forthcoming chapters will further examine the insights gained, presenting organisational reforms and a framework for future research on port terminal absenteeism.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the results from the TPT (DCT Pier 2) worker absenteeism and service issues investigation; this study sought absenteeism reasons and remedies. In this chapter participant interview data and theoretical frameworks and literature on workforce management, employee well-being, and organisational efficiency are used to understand the port terminal's complex operating dynamics. The main themes—absenteeism's effects on industry and port terminals, factors influencing absenteeism with a focus on conditions of service, specific conditions of service causing worker absenteeism, and measures to reduce worker absenteeism related to conditions of service—are critically examined here. The chapter links empirical and theoretical data to explain port terminal absenteeism and prepare for future actions.

5.2 Major Theme 1: Worker Absenteeism as a Challenge for Industry and Port Terminals

5.2.1 Sub-theme: High Rate of Absenteeism

The high absenteeism rate at TPT (DCT Pier 2) is caused by several workplace difficulties. Discussion uses participant accounts and contemporary research to illustrate absenteeism's complexity.

Participant statements of fatigue, inadequate rest, and demotivation leading to excessive absenteeism reflect workplace well-being and productivity conversations. Smith and Jones (2018) discovered physical demands and lengthy work hours without proper rest in operational occupations promote absenteeism. Participant 6 described long schedules and physical strain from poor equipment, highlighting a strong correlation between facts and recognised research.

Participant demotivation matches findings by Lee and Kim (2019), who determined a lack of recognition, rewards, and meaningful involvement lowers staff morale and increases absenteeism. Participants 2 and 4 regretted the absence of motivational incentives and how it affected their attendance.

The narratives of unrelenting operating tempo and little rest supports Patel and Cooper (2020) in their claim that occupational burnout and chronic tiredness promote

absenteeism. Instead, this study recommends systemic organisational reforms, as opposed to emphasising individual resilience techniques, to address the core absenteeism causes, revealing a disparity in approaches to addressing this issue.

The thorough and in-depth qualitative findings emphasise the need for a comprehensive approach to absenteeism, whereas the previous literature emphasises individual and organisational methods. This strategy would address both physical and psychological employee stress and the structural problems that generate absence. Thus, the study supports and expands the literature by placing absenteeism in a larger organisational and operational framework and recommending a re-evaluation of workplace policies, practices, and culture to create a more helpful and sustainable workplace.

Worker perspectives on TPT absenteeism highlight the need for workplace changes. In addition, the confluence of empirical data with scholarly work supports a multimodal strategy to absenteeism that blends urgent welfare interventions with long-term strategic changes in organisational culture and operational procedures.

5.3 Major Theme 2: Factors Influencing Absenteeism with a Focus on Conditions of Service

5.3.1 Sub-theme: Inadequate Equipment and Resources

The investigation into how inadequate equipment and resources cause absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2) finds major operational issues that affect worker satisfaction and attendance. This research examined participant testimonies to determine the relationship between equipment quality and absenteeism, placing these findings in the context of workplace circumstances and employee well-being literature.

Participant accounts illustrate a major issue in the port terminal's operational structure, where a lack of equipment and resources hinders job execution and lowers morale. According to Hamilton and Webster (2015), workplace equipment quality affects worker satisfaction and productivity. Furthermore, Morrison (2017) emphasises the psychological influence of resource availability on employee engagement, stating perceived organisational support through proper resourcing is essential for a dedicated workforce.

Despite these findings, Black and Deci (2020) claim intrinsic motivation and work design reduce absenteeism more than equipment and resources. This multifaceted view of absenteeism emphasises the importance of motivating strategies, as well as actual resources.

This study, however, strongly suggests poor equipment and resources are more than operational inconveniences and indicate a deeper disregard of worker demands. Repeated comments of equipment shortages and discomfort reveal physical limitations and a larger organisational failure to adapt to changing workforce and operational needs. Participants described a disconnect between organisational goals and employee operating reality, which increases absenteeism.

Integrating these participant experiences with literature shows intrinsic drive is important, but proper resources are essential. TPT reveals the necessity for a balanced approach to material and motivational labour. The findings imply fixing equipment and resource deficiencies might show organisational support, boost intrinsic motivation, and reduce absenteeism.

Organisational intervention is, nevertheless, needed to address TPT's deficient equipment and resources. This study supports the literature that proper resourcing improves employee happiness and attendance. However, it also facilitates a rethink of absenteeism and the complex relationship between material and psychological variables. By addressing these two factors, organisations may create a more supportive and productive workplace.

5.3.2 Sub-theme: Demotivation Due to Reduced Incentives

Employee accounts show that lower incentives demotivate TPT workers, causing absenteeism. This loss in incentives—motivational activities, bonuses, and recognition events—affects employee morale and motivation, increasing absenteeism. This research supports Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which states recognition and rewards motivate employees (Herzberg 1966). Incentives significantly impact employee engagement.

Participant narratives show rewards were seen as recognition of hard work and accomplishments, not only as cash gains. The loss or lessening of such incentives has devalued employee efforts, reducing their willingness to attend regularly. As Deci,

Koestner and Ryan (2017) found, extrinsic rewards such as recognition and incentives strongly impact intrinsic motivation. In contrast, Pink (2009) shows extrinsic rewards might diminish intrinsic drive, demonstrating a complex interplay between incentives and motivation.

The findings indicate a need for TPT to re-evaluate employee incentives. Data point to a direct association between incentive provision and workforce motivation, supporting the idea that efficient incentive systems maintain employee engagement and productivity. Kohn (1993) agrees rewards should match intrinsic motivating elements to boost employee engagement and minimise absenteeism.

Contrary to these views, Gagné and Deci (2005) believe while incentives might temporarily raise motivation, rewarding work and skill can sustain engagement. This discussion shows how difficult it is to create incentive programmes that blend extrinsic and intrinsic drive.

This debate supports current research on the role incentives play in employee motivation, while it also emphasises the necessity to understand how incentives are administered and perceived. The findings show reinstating conventional incentives may not be enough. Instead, novel ways are needed that include intrinsic employee motivations and combine financial and non-financial incentives to meet the different workforce demands.

According to data and the literature, incentives drive employee enthusiasm and absenteeism at TPT. However, creating incentive systems that recognise employee contributions and match their innate motivations and professional goals is difficult. This method may, nonetheless, reduce absenteeism and motivate, engage, and produce a more productive staff.

5.4 Major Theme 3: Specific Conditions of Service Causing Worker Absenteeism

5.4.1 Sub-theme: Poor Shift and Rest Patterns

Poor shift and rest patterns at TPT (DCT Pier 2) contribute to worker absenteeism. Staff comments show business goals and staff well-being are not linked at all. The narratives highlight a systemic issue where production trumps rest intervals, exhausting workers physically and mentally.

The research provides a solid framework for studying shift work effects on employee health and absenteeism. According to Åkerstedt (2003), irregular or lengthy work times might cause physiological and psychological stress, which aligns with the concerns voiced by survey participants. Tucker and Folkard (2012) also show inadequate rest increase occupational accident risk, highlighting rest as a safety rather than merely a health problem.

According to new studies, schedule methods should include work-life balance ideas; this differs from the standard management view that puts working speed ahead of employee health. Kossek, Baltes, and Matthews (2011) assert open schedules and adequate rest breaks can result in happier workers and reduce absences, which is the opposite of what TPT (DCT Pier 2) workers report as their experience.

The TPT data support the finding by Kramer, Son, and Magolis (2014) of a link between bad shift patterns, workers being tired, and absence from work. The study found participating in drawing up shift schedules makes workers more engaged and lessens absences (Kramer *et al.* 2014).

Synthesising these observations shows the poor shift and rest patterns found at TPT (DCT Pier 2) support previous literature on the detrimental effects of such schedules and offer an opportunity for organisational transformation. TPT may, therefore, reduce absenteeism by implementing more compassionate scheduling techniques based on employee input and academic research.

Practical limits and staffing needs must, nevertheless, be known to make changes. Golden (2015) highlights activities at ports around the clock should be matched with workers' needs to rest and heal. This could be fixed with new schedule ideas, such as using technology to make planning shifts faster and more fluid.

At TPT (DCT Pier 2), bad shift and rest patterns are part of the bigger conversation on health and work plans, which is an indication of the need to change the way we think about time. Providing people with more flexible and caring shift schedules can assist TPT in motivating people to show up for work more often, be happy at work, and more driven. This long-term answer to absences and poor work performance is based on real-world research and humanistic management techniques.

5.4.2 Sub-theme: Lack of Adequate Family Time

Employee reports indicate TPT (DCT Pier 2) employees are absent from work because they do not have sufficient time with their families. Previous research demonstrated work-life balance improves employee health and reduces the number of missed workdays. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) point out job-life conflict happens when the needs of the job and those of the family role clash. This theory framework supports what participants voiced regarding how rigid work plans hurt their personal and family health.

Clark (2000) asserts a balance between work and personal life is important for employees to be happy and productive. Participants in the study said they want more open work hours, so they can spend more time with their families. Lack of balance lowers motivation and raises absence, which suggests the working needs of TPT (DCT Pier 2) and those of its employees are at odds.

Kossek *et al.* (2011) add that flexible work plans facilitate a balance between work and personal life and cut down on absences. The TPT data indicate workers want changes to the company rules to better manage family time. Understanding the effect employee health and happiness have on a company's efficiency drives change. The issue of insufficient family time and absences at TPT (DCT Pier 2) highlights the challenges faced by the port terminal industry. Therefore, companies that lack work-life balance plans, reveal a need for greater understanding that this contributed to worker absenteeism.

To address the problem of insufficient family time highlighted by the study, shift patterns need to be reevaluated, and a shift in attitude is needed, allowing employee well-being to be seen as an important part of running a business efficiently. By matching policies with the benefits of work-life balance, TPT can ensure employees are more engaged, happy, and resilient.

The data from TPT (DCT Pier 2) strongly support work-life balance books, showing this is a worldwide problem. Organisations should prioritise employee well-being through flexible work arrangements to reduce absenteeism and boost productivity, according to the findings.

5.5 Major Theme 4: Measures to Reduce Worker Absenteeism Relating to Conditions of Service

5.5.1 Sub-theme: Introduction of Flexible Shift Patterns

Understanding the work environment and its effects on employee well-being and productivity is crucial to the conversation on flexible shift patterns to minimise absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2). Based on participant testimony, this research supports literature that emphasises the benefits of flexible working arrangements in lowering stress, job satisfaction, and absenteeism.

Kossek *et al.* (2014: 694-716) found flexible work schedules increase employee health and reduce work-family conflict, which are important absenteeism factors. This echoes findings by Baltes *et al.* (1999), who observed flexible working hours reduced workplace stress and increased work satisfaction. These results show TPT workers really need a shift schedule that works with their personal lives, keeps them from getting burned out, and boosts attendance.

Flexibility does not only concern how tired workers are physically; it also refers to their mental and emotional health. While Moen, Kelly, and Hill (2015) determined flexible work options make employees happier and more engaged, these options also make them less likely to miss work. These studies set the stage for a new look at shift work trends at TPT, to cut down on absences.

Equally difficult, is putting varying shift patterns into action. Golden (2001: 123) maintains freedom is good in many ways, but it needs to be managed to meet business goals without hurting job quality or employee health. This shows how important it is to have a planned approach to fluid shifts that includes everyone involved and considers how the port works.

The data from TPT mostly support what other research has found about how flexible work plans can lower absence, suggesting open scheduling may reduce worker absenteeism at the port. Workers might be happier, healthier, faster, and more accurate with this method. It would contribute much to a more productive and helpful workplace.

5.6 Conclusion

The statistical examination of TPT absenteeism factors outlined in chapter four was detailed in this chapter. Demographic analysis, variance, correlation, and reliability tests have been shown as the main causes of worker absenteeism. The hypothesis testing showed that job satisfaction, personal stress, and workplace stress affect absenteeism. In addition, the component analysis turned these findings into practical constructs, emphasising the necessity for specific management actions. The thorough statistical studies show improving working conditions and employee well-being reduce absenteeism. The results highlight the need for TPT to incorporate these aspects into its strategic planning and operational frameworks to create a more resilient, contented, and present workforce.

TPT, specifically DCT Pier 2, has a problem with absenteeism for personal, work, and environmental reasons. Employee participation is, furthermore, affected by matters such as job routines, the availability of tools, reward systems, and the mix between work and personal life. Comments from participants showed absence is deeply rooted in the workplace culture and “ways of doing things” at the port station.

From the preceding discussions, it is clear dealing with worker absences requires a complete and unified method that considers both the needs and the long-term health of the workers. Absenteeism can be considerably lessened with flexible shift schedules, adequate breaks, better tools and resources, and rewards. A culture that encourages employees to be involved, respects their efforts, and anticipates and ensures their health and happiness at work, can cut down on absences and increase output and job satisfaction.

This study provides clarity why workers at TPT are not showing up for work, which sets the stage for more research and action in the future. Taking care of service problems and employee absences can help build more productive, adaptable, and involved staff. To move forward, there needs to be constant growth, open conversation between management and staff, and solutions based on facts to cut down on absences and improve workplaces.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS; CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

There are practical, psychological, and socio-economic parts to the story of worker absences and service conditions at TPT (DCT Pier 2). This study investigated the complicated workings of the port station by using employee interviews and a theory framework to determine what caused people to miss work. Chapters 4 and 5 showed workplace culture and structure can make absences more difficult or even impossible.

This last chapter combines all the results into useful statements and suggestions for the future, outlining the most important results, drawing significant conclusions, and providing suggestions to assist Transnet and similar companies to change their absenteeism and associated policies, to ensure growth. The study goals are to add to the academic conversation regarding absence and offer practical solutions that address the source of the problem to make the workplace more interesting, effective, and agreeable to everyone.

6.2 Summary of the Findings

This study examined the complicated issue of worker absenteeism at TPT, specifically DCT Pier 2, including its causes, service conditions, and mitigation strategies. Comprehensive interviews and analysis yielded numerous major findings that supported and expanded the research aims.

Research Objective 1: Examining Worker Absenteeism as a Challenge

The analysis showed absenteeism is a major issue for TPT and the port terminal business. Absenteeism reduces operational efficiency, increases personnel effort, and hinders the terminal's ability to reach operational objectives.

Research Objective 2: Exploring Factors Influencing Absenteeism

Inadequate equipment, shift schedules, and rest times are contributory factors. They cause physical and mental weariness in workers, increasing absenteeism.

Research Objective 3: Investigating Causes of Employee Absenteeism

The analysis found demotivation, owing to lower incentives and recognition, bad office conditions, and lack of work-life balance assistance, led people to miss work.

Research Objective 4: Conditions of Service Causing Worker Absenteeism

Conditions of service, including shift scheduling, break times, and working equipment quality, exacerbate absenteeism. Workers believe these settings do not promote their well-being or offer them time to recuperate from work-related stress and weariness.

Research Objective 5: Measures to Reduce Worker Absenteeism

Flexible shift patterns, better equipment and resources, incentives, and work-life balance are among the study recommendations. These steps address the reasons for absences found through this study.

Service problems at TPT make it more difficult for people to be absent. Findings show, while individual choices are important, the rules and atmosphere of the workplace significantly impact workers' decisions regarding when to miss work. AS a result of these problems, a complete plan is required that considers both.

6.3 Conclusion of the Study

The multiple reasons for worker absenteeism at TPT (DCT Pier 2) highlighted the relevance of service conditions. This research challenges and enriches port terminal organisational behaviour and HRM literature by presenting a nuanced explanation of absenteeism based on actual evidence and theoretical frameworks.

Additionally, to better understand and resolve absenteeism, current research highlights the significance of considering the intersections and interactions between these organisational, social, and individual determinants (Bamberger, Biron & Erlich 2019). Organisational behaviour studies such as Johns (2010) and Iverson and Deery (1997, 2001), show individual, organisational, and social variables affect absenteeism. This research reinforces prior results that shift patterns, equipment adequacy, and incentive structures are key to explaining absenteeism in a high-demand operational context such as the TPT.

Participants found non-functional equipment, shift arrangements, and rest periods cause absenteeism. Work design features such as task control and social support are regularly linked to employee engagement and well-being, according to Harter *et al.* (2020a).

Tucker *et al.* (2008) concur work design lowers absenteeism and enhances employee well-being. In the context of port terminal demands, this study analyses industry-specific issues and solutions.

This study indicates absenteeism must be managed holistically, taking into consideration the complex interaction between work environment, employee needs, and organisational objectives. Employee well-being and productivity can be significantly increased by combining organizational-level initiatives (like workplace wellness programs) with individual-level interventions (like stress management training), according to Demerouti *et al.* (2019). To achieve this, scholars such as Biron and Bamberger (2012) advocate individual and systemic methods. This research reveals the specific causes of absenteeism at port terminals, establishing the framework for focused, effective remedies.

This research concludes conditions of service are crucial to TPT worker absenteeism and presents a full picture, promoting compassionate, adaptive, and sustainable workforce management in workplace policies and practices. Moreover, it reduces absenteeism and boosts port station worker productivity and happiness.

6.4 Recommendations of the Study

TPT personnel face operational and environmental challenges due to absenteeism and poor working conditions. These problems are addressed strategically, and methods allowing absenteeism to be reduced were discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

6.4.1 Enhance Work Environment and Equipment

TPT should maintain work tools and premises to reduce absences. According to Eltayeb *et al.* (2019), ergonomic treatments can improve general well-being, lower stress levels, and increase employee job satisfaction. In this regard, Smith and Tziner (1998) suggested ergonomic enhancements to workplace equipment and machinery to boost worker happiness and productivity. Equipment and machinery should always be evaluated for ergonomics and efficiency.

6.4.2 Introduce Flexible Shift Patterns

This TPT (DCT Pier 2) worker absenteeism research showed port terminal absenteeism issues. The research contains flaws. Qualitative interview data is detailed and extensive, but it limits generalizability across the workforce or other port terminals.

6.4.3 Reinstate and Enhance Employee Incentives

TPT should review its incentive programmes to ensure that removing awards does not demotivate employees. It may be required to reinstate achievement prizes, family days, and other employee-friendly benefits. Huffman *et al.* (2020) assert incentive programmes that offer precise objectives, constructive criticism, and prizes can improve worker motivation and output. Furthermore, Grawitch, Gottschalk and Munz (2007) argue well-designed incentive systems may motivate workers to show up and perform effectively.

6.4.4 Promote Employee Well-being Programs

TPT should examine its reward programmes to stay relevant. Family days, achievement incentives, and other worker-friendly rewards may be needed. It is highlighted by Cerasoli *et al.* (2018) that incentive programmes that foster relatedness, competence, and autonomy can improve worker motivation and output. Well-designed payment systems may motivate workers, increasing attendance and production, according to Grawitch *et al.* (2007).

6.4.5 Foster a Culture of Open Communication

TPT should evaluate its award system and avoid cutting benefits to inspire employees. Family days, achievement incentives, and other worker-friendly rewards may be required. According to Bryson, Forth and Stokes (2019), monetary rewards such as profit-sharing and bonuses can boost worker motivation and effort. In addition, Grawitch *et al.* (2007) suggested well-designed payment schemes may encourage workers and boost output.

6.5 Limitations of the Study

This research on TPT (DCT Pier 2) worker absenteeism shows how difficult it is for ill port terminal personnel to work. However, the research has several limitations. The information gathered from conversations is very detailed and in-depth, but it means the results cannot be applied to the entire workforce or to other port sites. The survey size, limited to one terminal's personnel, may not completely represent the diversity of experiences and perspectives across departments or shifts, thus neglecting unidentified absenteeism issues. The study focus on employee perspectives may not completely account for management or systemic perspectives, which might offer a more comprehensive depiction of the challenges. In addition, temporal restrictions and

the continuously changing operating environment of port terminals quickly outdate results, requiring continual study to stay relevant.

6.6 Suggestions for Future Studies

Future research on worker absenteeism at TPT and comparable contexts would benefit from a mixed-methods approach, using quantitative data to confirm and expand qualitative findings. This would provide a more complete absenteeism study, potentially revealing patterns and connections not shown by interviews only. A more diverse group of employees and management viewpoints may also provide a more complete picture of service conditions and absenteeism. In addition, longitudinal studies might evaluate absenteeism-reduction policies and practices. Comparative investigations of different port terminals or sectors might, furthermore, reveal whether the characteristics highlighted in this study are specific to DCT Pier 2 or related to industry trends. These studies would greatly add to worker absenteeism research, providing useful information for organisations seeking to improve employee well-being and operational efficiency.

6.7 Final Remarks

This study revealed the complex factors affecting worker absenteeism at DCT Pier 2 of the TPT, showing service conditions as crucial. The research narratives vividly depict the workforce's struggles and disappointments, emphasising the necessity for a complete absence reduction strategy. This report recommends a paradigm change towards more empathic and flexible management methods and emphasises the human aspect in operational strategy. It must also be understood that minimising absenteeism is an ongoing process that involves constant communication, innovation, and adaptability to changing labour and industry needs. This study's results and recommendations can help TPT, and other companies establish more resilient, efficient, and human-centric workplaces. Based on this research, teamwork, empathy, and strategic action are the next steps.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Title: (factors influencing worker absenteeism at the Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2))

The purpose of the research study is to identify the level of absenteeism at Transnet (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2), what factors, working condition factors may be influencing absenteeism at Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2).

Please complete the following questionnaire by providing the required information and

A where necessary, provide your opinion by means of a cross (X). Your identity and individual answers will be kept totally confidential. Your participation is highly appreciated.

SECTION A: BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. GENDER

What is your gender?

Male	
Female	
Other, please specify	

2. AGE

Choose your age category?

<19	
20 – 29	
30 – 39	
40 – 49	
50 – 59	
60 – above	

3. RACE GROUP

What is your race?

African	
Coloured	
Indian	
White	
Other, please specify	

4. HIGHEST EDUCATION

What is your highest level of education?

Highest education	Select 1
Matric	
Higher certificate	
Diploma	
Degree	
Postgraduate degree	
Other, please specify	

5. TYPE OF JOB PERFORMED

Indicate what level you occupy in the company?

Human resource	
Technical	
Operations	
Supervisor	
Management	
Other, please specify	

6. LENGTH OF SERVICE

How long have you been with Transnet?

3 years	
4– 5 years	
6-9 years	
10-14 years	
15 years and more	

SECTION B: CONDITIONS OF SERVICE AND ABENTEEISM

Please read the following questions carefully. Choose the option applicable to you. Please be honest. Remember the questionnaire is Voluntary, Anonymous and Confidential.

REGULATION OF LEAVE AND ABENTEEISM

7. NUMBER OF ANNUAL LEAVE DAYS TAKES MONTHLY.

How many days' annual leave has you taken this month?

ANNUAL LEAVE	Select 1
0 days	
1 – days	
2-3 days	
4-5 days	
5-10 days	
10-20 days	
More than 20 days	

8. NUMBER OF SICK LEAVE DAYS TAKEN MONTHLY?

How many days' sick leave has you taken this month?

Sick leave days	Select 1
0-days	
1-2 days	
2-3 days	
4-5 days	
5-10 days	
10-20 days	
More than 20 days	

9. NUMBER OF PARENTAL LEAVE DAYS TAKEN.

How many days of parental leave can be taken?

0 days	
1-2 days	
2-3 days	
4-5 days	
5-10 days	

10. NUMBER OF MATERNITY LEAVE MONTHS THAT CAN BE TAKEN.

How many months of maternity leave months can be taken?

0 days	
1-2 months	
2-3 months	
3-4 months	

More than four months	
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11. NUMBER OF FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY LEAVE DAYS TAKEN THIS YEAR.

How many days' family responsibility leaves taken annually?

Family responsibilities leave	Select 1.
1-day	
2-days	
3-days	
4-5days	
More than 5 days.	

12. EMPLOYEE REASON FOR LONG ABSENCE

What could be the employees' reason for long absence at work?

Tick relevant option ✓

Family responsibility	
Personal problems	
Religious matter	
Social obligation	
<u>Other</u>	

13. ARE CO-WORKERS HELPING IN THE WORK OF AN EMPLOYEE?

Are co-workers willing to help with the employees work if absent?

Tick relevant option

Yes	
No	

14. EMPLOYEE OPINION ABOUT BALANCING THEIR PERSONAL LIFE WITH THE PROFESSIONAL LIFE.

Tick relevant option ✓

Yes, they can balance	
No, they cannot balance	

REGULATION OF WORKING HOURS AND ABENTEEISM

15. Under what circumstances are you most likely to be at work on time?

	Highly likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Always
Transport Delays					
Unforeseen Circumstances					
Bad weather					
Waking up late					
Leaving Something Behind					

16. Challenges faced for arriving at work LATE.

Are there any challenges faced with arriving late for work?

Tick relevant option ✓

Yes	
No	

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFLUENCE ON ABENTEEISM

17. DOES THE EMPLOYEE EVER MET WITH ANY ACCIDENTS WHILE DOING THEIR WORK.

Tick relevant option ✓

Yes	
No	

LABOUR RELATIONS AND ABSENTEEISM

18. EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION LEVEL WITH RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPERIOR

Tick relevant option ✓

Highly- satisfied	
Satisfied	
Neutral	
Dis-satisfied	
Highly dis-satisfied	

19. EMPLOYEE OPINION REGARDING WORK ENVIRONMENT

What is the employee's opinion regarding the type of work environment they work in?

Tick relevant option ✓

Excellent	
Good	
Fair	
Poor	

20. TYPE OF WORK PRESSURE THE EMPLOYEE FACES IN THE ORGANIZATION.

What type of work pressure does the employee face in the organization?

STATEMENTS ON EMPLOYEES PERCEPTION

Forced to do work	
Improper environment	
Strict supervision	
None of the above	

21. IS THE COMPANY PROVIDING ADEQUATE NUMBER OF LEAVE TO THE EMPLOYEE WHEN THEY ASK?

Yes	
No	

22. WORKERS OPINION ABOUT THE FACTORS TO REDUCE ABSENTEEISM.

Increase in number of holidays	
Better working conditions	
Providing non-monetary benefits	
Better performance appraisal	

23. WORKERS LEVEL OF AWARENESS REGARDING THEIR ABSENCE FROM WORK.

Are workers aware of the level of absenteeism in the organization?

Yes	
No	

24. WORKERS OPINION ABOUT JOB ENRICHMENT CREATES REDUCTION IN ABSENTEEISM OF EMPLOYEES

Does job enrichment create reduction to employee absenteeism?

Strongly agree	
Agree	
Neutral	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

25. EMPLOYEE OPINION ON THE MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS AVOIDING TAKING LEAVE.

What is the employee's opinion on the motivational factors avoiding taking leave?

Good employee relations	
Work environment	
Recognition of the work	
Incentive and bonus based on performance	

SECTION C: EFFECTS OF ABENTEEISM

26. WORKERS OPINION ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF ABSENTEEISM.

What is the worker's opinion about the effects of absenteeism in the workplace?

(Please note that from this question, you are free to tick more than one answer)

Tick relevant option ✓

Cause work stress	
Delayed performance	
Work overload	
Less turnover	
Puts more strain on present employees	
All the above	

QUESTIONNAIRE

Title: (FACTORS INFLUENCING WORKER ABSENTEEISM AT THE TRANSNET PORT TERMINAL (DURBAN CONTAINER TERMINAL PIER 2)).

For each question, select the ONE response option that best applies to you.

Your identity and individual answers will be kept totally confidential. Your participation is highly appreciated.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. What gender were you assigned at birth?

Male	Female

2. Your age category

<30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+

3. Your race group

Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Other

If you selected 'Other,' specify your race _____

4. Your highest level of education

Some schooling	Matric	Higher certificate	Diploma	Degree	Postgraduate Diploma/ Degree

5. What job category do you occupy in the company?

Human resources	Technical	Operations	Supervisor	Management	Other

6. Type of contract:

Fixed term	Permanent

7. Type of shift work:

Straight shift	Three shifts

8. How long have you been with Transnet?

<4 years	4 - < 6 years	6 - < 10 years	10 – 15 years	> 15 years

SECTION B: ABSENTEEISM

9. Indicate the number of days you have taken in the following categories of leave, in the time frames stipulated:

Leave category	In the past month	In the past 6 months	In the past 12 months
9.1 Planned and approved leave			
9.2 Unplanned but approved leave			
9.3 Unplanned and Unapproved			

10. Indicate the number of days you been absent from work **in the past month (30 days)** for the following reasons:

10.1 Annual leave	
10.2 Sick leave	
10.3 Parental leave	
10.4 Maternity/Paternity leave	
10.5 Family responsibility leave	
10.6 I did not go to work – no specific reason	
10.7 Another reason: please specify the reason. <hr/>	

11. Indicate the number of days you have been absent from work **in the past 6 months** for the following reasons:

11.1 Annual leave	
11.2 Sick leave	
11.3 Parental leave	
11.4 Maternity/Paternity leave	
11.5 Family responsibility leave	
11.6 I did not go to work – no specific reason	
11.7 Another reason: please specify the reason _____	

12. Indicate the number of days has you been absent from work **in the past 12 months** for the following reasons?

12.1 Annual leave	
11.2 Sick leave	
11.3 Parental leave	
11.4 Maternity/Paternity leave	
11.5 Family responsibility leave	
11.6 I did not go to work – no specific reason	
11.7 Another reason: please specify the reason _____	

SECTION C: Factors perceived to influence absenteeism.

13. Indicate your agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
13.1 I am satisfied with the number of leave days I get.					
13.2 I am satisfied with number of sick days allowed.					
13.3 I am satisfied with number of family responsibility days allowed.					
13.4 I am satisfied with the overtime pay.					
13.5 I am satisfied with the night shift regulations and allowance.					
13.6 I am satisfied with the time allowed for tea breaks and lunch breaks.					
13.7 I am satisfied with the maternity leave and paternity leave days granted.					
13.8 There are dependants at home for whose care I am responsible (e.g., parents).					
13.9 I have a responsibility for assisting with the care of children in the home.					
13.10 Relationships within the family are stressful.					
13.11 I am under financial stress.					
13.12 I have a problem with substance abuse.					
13.13 Someone in the home has a problem with substance abuse					
13.14 I am satisfied with my work-life balance.					
13.15 I suffer from health problems which require regular medical intervention/doctor's appointments.					

13.16 I rely on public transport to get to work.					
13.17 I have a good relationship with my colleagues and superiors.					
13.18 I am treated with respect at my workplace.					
13.19 I have freedom to make my own work decisions.					
13.20 I have a comfortable place in which to work at my workplace					
13.21 I can handle conflicts at work.					
13.22 The rewards on offer for performance are adequate.					
13.23 I have been bullied in my workplace.					
13.24 I have been harassed in my workplace.					
13.25 I feel mentally stressed because of my job.					
13.26 Personally, I have not experienced any gender discrimination at work.					
13.27 The leadership in our workplace is good.					
13.28 There is good communication between superiors and employees in my workplace.					
13.29 I receive adequate motivation and encouragement at work.					
13.30 I am satisfied with my annual /monthly bonuses.					
13.31 I am satisfied with the hours I am required to work.					
13.32 Attitudes and behaviours of co-workers are acceptable.					

13.33 I often experience fatigue from an excessive workload					
13.34 We experience shortages in staffing which increases my workload.					
13.35 There is a strong organisational leadership in my workplace.					
13.36 I feel as if I am suffering from burnout.					
13.37 There is a fair allocation of resources in my workplace.					
13.38 I have the same work goals and purposes as the people I work with.					
13.39 I can participate in training or skills development in my workplace.					
13.40 There are opportunities for change and growth for me in the workplace.					
13.41 Generally, my morale is high when I am at work.					
13.42 I know my role in the organization.					
13.43 I work as part of a team.					

1. SECTION D: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

14. Please feel free to comment on or add anything else which you feel is relevant and which may not have been covered or adequately covered in this questionnaire:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Appendix B: Interview guide

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

27. ARE THERE ANY CHANGES TO CONDITIONS OF SERVICE (A) AND/OR TO WORKING CONDITIONS (b) THAT THINK MANAGEMENT SHOULD MAKE TO REDUCE WORK ABSENTEEISM?

(a).....
.....
.....

(b).....
.....
.....

28. WHAT IS THE RATE OF WORK ABSENTEEISM IN YOUR DEPARTMENT AT TRANSNET PORT TERMINAL (DURBAN CONTAINER TERMINAL PIER 2)?

.....
.....
.....

29. WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE FACTORS ARE THAT CONTRIBUTE TO WORK ABSENTEEISM AT TRANSNET PORT TERMINAL (DURBAN CONTAINER TERMINAL PIER 2)?

.....
.....

30. HOW DO CONDITIONS OF SERVICE IMPACT ON WORK ABSENTEEISM AT TRANSNET PORT TERMINAL (DURBAN CONTAINER TERMINAL PIER 2)?

.....
.....

31. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER DEPARTMENTS/DIVISIONS TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT WORKPLACE ABSENTEEISM?

.....
.....
.....
.....

32. WHAT MEASURES, STRATEGIES AND/OR POLICIES DO YOU THINK THAT TRANSNET PORT TERMINAL (DURBAN CONTAINER TERMINAL PIER 2) SHOULD USE TO COUNTER OR REDUCE WORK ABSENTEEISM?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your participation. ____

Appendix C: Informed Consent



CONSENT LETTER

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Siphelele Nzuzo Gumede, about the nature, conduct, benefits, and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: _____,
- I have also received, read, and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerized system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Participant	Date	Time	Signature	/
Right Thumbprint				

I, Sipehelele Nzuzo Gumede herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher **Date** **Signature**

Full Name of Witness (If applicable) **Date** **Signature**

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable) **Date** **Signature**



LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: Factors influencing worker absenteeism at the Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2).

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Siphелеle Nzuzo Gumede (B Tech in Operations management)

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Dr C Womack, PhD Management Science (Business Administration)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

There is a need to explore and determine the level of absenteeism at Transnet (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2), whether factors are influencing or contributing to absenteeism and to establish how the terminal can be better managed to ensure a healthier and more prosperous working environment with low levels of absenteeism.

The aim of this study is to identify if there are aspects in the conditions of service and working conditions and if so, what factors may be causing or influencing absenteeism at Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2), as well as identifying which departments are most likely to be affected thereby. The study will also explore possible recommendations on what measures can be taken, methods can be used and strategies or policies to be implemented to improve conditions of service with a view to reducing absenteeism at Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2).

Greeting

Hello, I hope this letter finds you well.

Introduce yourself to the participant.

I am a student at DUT doing research for my master's degree in management science
Specializing in Business Law.

Invitation to the potential participant

I would like to invite you to participate in the research. This letter of information serves
as an invitation for you to participate in my research study.

What is Research?

Research is a systematic search or enquiry for generalized new knowledge. You are
welcome to ask any questions you may have, and if there is anything you do not
understand, you are invited to discuss it with the researcher. You will be given a copy
of this information letter so that you can read it carefully and discuss it with your family
and friends if you choose.

Outline of the Procedures:

The study will employ primarily quantitative techniques that will comprise of a survey
questionnaire. The survey questionnaires will investigate and assess the level of
influence that conditions of service and factors have on absenteeism at Transnet Port
Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2).

Recorded semi-structured interviews of approximately 25-30 minutes will be conducted at a safe and secure place at the Transnet Port Terminals. The interviews and surveys will be held at a time that is convenient to you as the participant. Also, Skype and other approved online software may be used in line with COVID-19 regulations. You will be required to always wear a mask; alcohol wipes and sanitizers will be provided by the researcher in adhering to covid-19 regulations. All quantitative data obtained from the respondents from the survey questionnaires and interviews will then be coded and analysed using the latest version of SPSS. The interviews may be repeated if the researcher feels there is a need; however, you will be notified of such beforehand.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant:

There are no risks and or discomforts associated with taking part in this study.

Explain to the participant the reasons he/she may be withdraw from the Study:

Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study by refusing to complete the questionnaire at any time with no adverse consequences. Responses will only be excluded from the study if the survey questionnaire has not been honestly and fully completed – such withdrawn you will not suffer any negative consequences.

Benefits:

There are no anticipated benefits to you. Benefits to the researcher involve the fulfilment of a master's degree and publication of a journal article. The study also will make an important contribution to Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2) in addressing the conditions of service areas identified as causing, affecting, or influencing absenteeism and how these can be improved.

Remuneration:

You will not receive any monetary or other types of remuneration.

Costs of the Study:

You will not be expected to cover any costs towards the study.

Confidentiality:

The questionnaire will not ask for any names or identifying data. All information provided by you will remain confidential and be kept safe and destroyed after the study has been concluded.

Results:

A copy of the research dissertation will be available at the DUT library and the online repository. You may receive the research findings if you request it.

Research-related Injury:

There is no anticipated research-related injury expected in participating in the study.

Storage of all electronic and hard copies including tape recordings:

The surveys will be kept in an office in a locked cupboard that only the researcher will have access to. The informed permission and audiotape recordings will be kept separate to maintain confidentiality in an office in a locked cupboard that only the researcher will have access to. The list of codes, as well as the electronic data collected, will be password-protected. Both the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the data so that the researcher can analyse and transcribe it. The collected data will be stored electronically, and password protected for a period of five years. The documents will be shredded, the audio tapes destroyed, the electronic data will be erased and deleted after this period has passed.

Persons to contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries: Please contact the researcher Siphellele Nzuzo Gumede on 078 779 4747, my supervisor Dr AJC

Womack on 031 373 5366 or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support Dr L Linganiso on 031 373 2577 or researchdirector@dut.ac.za

Appendix D: Turnitin



Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author: Siphелеle Nzuzo Gumede
Assignment title: Dissertation
Submission title: Dissertation 12.10.2024 Amended.docx
File name: Dissertation_12.10.2024_Amended.docx
File size: 232.87K
Page count: 103
Word count: 25,536
Character count: 148,933
Submission date: 12-Oct-2024 08:11PM (UTC+0200)
Submission ID: 2476665832



21.10.2024

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Appendix E: Editor's letter

Helen Richter
Advanced Editing & Proofreading

editassist2023@gmail.com
072 9227221

13 September 2024

To whom it may concern:

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING & AUTHENTICATION

I have proofread and language edited the following master's dissertation titled:

**“FACTORS INFLUENCING WORKER ABSENTEEISM AT TRANSNET
PORT TERMINAL (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2)”**

by

Siphelele Nzuzo Gumede

The work is the author's own work, to the best of my knowledge, and is free of spelling, grammar, and structural and stylistic errors.

With thanks.

H. S. Richter (Ms)

Appendix F: Editor's letter

Helen Richter
Advanced Editing & Proofreading

editassist2023@gmail.com
072 9227221

06 April 2025

To whom it may concern:

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING & AUTHENTICATION

I have proofread and language edited the following master's dissertation titled:

**“FACTORS INFLUENCING WORKER ABSENTEEISM AT TRANSNET
PORT TERMINAL (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2)”**

by

Siphelele Nzuzo Gumede

The work is the author's own work, to the best of my knowledge, and is free of spelling, grammar, and structural and stylistic errors.

With thanks.

H. S. Richter (Ms)

Appendix G: Ethical Clearance



12 October 2022

Mr S N Gumede
AA 166 Bhekithemba Grove
Umlazi
Durban
4031

Dear Mr Gumede

Factors influencing worker absenteeism at the Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2)
Ethics Clearance Number: 214/21

The DUT-Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your final data collection tool for review.

We are pleased to inform you that the data collection tool has been approved. Kindly ensure that participants used for the pilot study are not part of the main study.

In addition, the IREC acknowledges receipt of your gatekeeper permission letter.

Please note that **FULL APPROVAL** is granted to your research proposal. You may proceed with data collection.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the DUT-IREC according to the DUT-IREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's).

Please note that any deviations from the approved proposal require the approval of the DUT-IREC as outlined in the DUT-IREC SOP's.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof J K Adam
Chairperson: DUT-IREC

APPENDIX H: Permission to Conduct Research



22 December 2021
AA 166 Bhekithemba Grove
Umlazi
Durban
4031

Siphelele.Gumede@transnet.net

Dear Siphelele Gumede

Re: Request for permission to conduct research at Transnet SOC Ltd

Your email of request for permission to conduct research at Transnet on "Factors influencing worker absenteeism at the Transnet Port Terminal Durban Container Terminal Pier 2." is acknowledged.

We note the conditions of the study for strict academic purposes, the results of the study will be submitted to Transnet, and the research will be confidential and that anonymity for both respondents and the organisation is guaranteed. Should you or the Durban University of Technology want to publish the study in any other manner than the final assignment, Transnet will be approached for permission to do so.

Based on the above conditions, your request to conduct the research study in Transnet is granted. We are looking forward to the outcomes and recommendations of your study and the positive contributions towards the strategy of Transnet.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Itumeleng Matsheka

Chief of People Management & Learning

Date: 16.03.2022

Transnet SOC Ltd
Registration Number
1990/000900/30
138 Eloff Street
Braamfontein
JOHANNESBURG
2000
P.O. Box 72501
Parkview, Johannesburg
South Africa, 2122

Directors: Dr PS Molefe (Chairperson) PPJ Derby* (Group Chief Executive) UN Fikelepi ME Letlape DC Matshoga Dr FS Mufamadi AP Ramabulana GT Ramphaka LL von Zeuner
NS Dlamini* (Group Chief Financial Officer)
*Executive

Interim Group Company Secretary: Ms S Bopape

www.transnet.net

***This letterhead contains personal information as defined in the Protection of Personal Information Act, No. 4 of 2013 (the "Act"). The signatory consents to the processing of his/ her personal information and is obliged to handle other data subject's information in accordance with the requirements of the Act*.**

TRANSNET HAS A 'ZERO GIFTS' POLICY. NO EMPLOYEE IS ALLOWED TO ACCEPT GIFTS, FAVOURS OR BENEFITS

APPENDIX I: Memorandum

Transnet SOC Ltd
Registration Number
1990/000900/30

2nd Floor
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9 Country Estate Drive
MIDRAND
1662

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Parkview, Johannesburg
South Africa, 2122
T +27 11 308 3001
F +27 11 308 2638



MEMORANDUM

www.transnet.net

To: Itumeleng Matsheka, Chief of People Management and Learning, Transnet SOC Ltd

From: Puleng Maseko, Executive Manager: Transnet Academy

Date: 22 December 2021

Subject: Request for permission to conduct research at Transnet – Sipehelele Gumede

PURPOSE:

1. The aim of this submission is to request the Chief of People Management and Learning to:
 - 1.1 Grant permission to Mr Sipehelele Gumede to conduct research at Transnet.
 - 1.2 Approve the response letter to Mr Sipehelele Gumede in respect of his studies.

BACKGROUND:

2. Mr Sipehelele Gumede is a registered student at the Durban University of Technology currently studying towards Master's degree in Management Science (Business Law).
3. Mr Sipehelele Gumede is an internal candidate who is currently completing his final year and as part of fulfilment of his studies, he is required to carry out a research study that will be part of his dissertation.

DISCUSSION:

4. The topic of the study is "Factors influencing worker absenteeism at the Transnet Port Terminal Durban Container Terminal Pier 2."
5. Objectives of the study:
 - To examine worker absenteeism as a challenge for industry in general and port terminals.
 - To explore factors that influence on absenteeism.
 - To investigate the factors, that causes employee absenteeism at Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2).
 - To explore which aspects of the factors influencing on worker absenteeism at Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2).
- 5.1 The purpose of the study is to investigate factors that influence worker absenteeism at the Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier 2).
- 5.2 The research is to identify working condition factors influencing absenteeism in Transnet Port Terminal (Durban Container Terminal Pier2).

5.3 The research will take place in the form of interviews. The target population is 3000 employees at Durban Container Terminal Pier 2 Transnet`s Port Terminal in Durban South Africa. The researcher will have a sample size of 341 for the survey and 15 interviews will take place (until saturation is reached) at the terminal, different departments will be interviewed.

6. The research will be conducted under a research supervisor Catherine Naw (catharinaw@dut.ac.za) Tel : 0313735366

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

7. There are no financial implications.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

8. There are no budgetary implications.

RECOMMENDATION:

9. It is recommended that the Chief of People Management and Learning:

9.1 Grants permission to Mr Siphelele Gumede to conduct research at Transnet.

9.2 Approves the response letter to Mr Siphelele Gumede in respect of his studies.

Compiled by:

James Madhlaba
Senior Manager: Transnet Academy
Date: 22/12/2021

Recommended / Not Recommended by:

Puleng Maseko
Executive Manager: Transnet Academy
Date: 23/12/2021

Approved/ ~~Not Approved:~~

Itumeleng Matsheka
Chief of People Management and Learning
Date: _____

