

**THE PERCEPTIONS OF ADULT LEARNERS ABOUT THE ADULT  
BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING PRACTITIONERS TURN-  
OVER AT THE WITBANK EDUCATION CIRCUIT**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I **Hangie Veniel Ngobeni**, hereby declare that this mini-dissertation for the Master of Public Management degree at the University of Venda, hereby submitted by me, has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other institution, and that this is my own original work in design and execution and that all reference materials contained herein have been duly acknowledged.

.....

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Date

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## DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my Mom Mrs Ngobeni Margereth, My Wife Mrs Ngobeni Gladys, my three lovely kids Vukona, Vukosi and Vukulu for their overwhelming love and continued positive support and encouragement throughout the course of my study.

## ABSTRACT

Adult basic education and training in South Africa is viewed as an instrument for social, economic and political development. However, over the years, the programme faced challenges relating to recruitment and retention of suitably qualified practitioners, resulting in high staff turn-over. The study focused on the perception of adult learners about the adult basic education and training practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit to gain insight into the magnitude of the problem and recommend ways and strategies to address the identified challenges. The study used a mixed method approach, incorporating elements of both quantitative and qualitative research approach. The research sample comprised adult learners, educators, Adult center managers and adult basic education and training coordinators using purposive sampling technique. Data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires and analyzed using the eight steps of Tesch in Cresswell (2009:186).

The results of the study revealed that the participants were to a large extent, aware that ABET practitioners' turnover is a serious problem at the Witbank education circuit. The study participants revealed that lack of commitment and recognition by government to address ABET practitioner turnover decisively is impacting negatively on learners' motivation, morale, study progress and their relationship with practitioners. This leads ABET learners to not take the ABET programme seriously, and drop of the programme due to lack of progress whereas most ABET practitioners take ABET as a waiting station for better jobs. A number of strategies can be employed to address the challenge of ABET practitioners' turnover. Amongst others are the following: the basic working conditions of ABET practitioners should be improved. This will automatically translate into job satisfaction and long tenure, thereby counteracting current levels of high staff turnover. ABET practitioners should also be afforded relevant skills development programmes to ensure continuous professional growth and development.

**Key words: Adult Basic Education and Training, Adult Learner, Centre, Facilitator, Practitioner, Turnover**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AL	Adult Learner
ALC	Adult Learning Centre
AP	Adult Practitioner
DoE	Department of Education
FET	Further Education and Training
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OBE	Outcome Based Education
PALC	Public Adult Learning Centre
SAQA	South African Qualifications Act
SBA	Site Based Assessment
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study focused on the perceptions of adult learners about the Adult Basic Education and Training practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit. The introduction and background of the study comprises the problem statement, aim of the study, as well as specific objectives of the study. It also highlights the critical research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and limitations of the study. Furthermore, it discusses the research methodology and design, relevant literature and also defines operational concepts. It ends with an outline of the way in which the study is organized.

#### 1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Department of Education (DoE) conceptualized Adult Basic Education and Training (hereafter referred to as ABET) in South Africa as a foundation towards life-long learning and development (Adult Basic Education and Training Act No 52, 2000; Department of Education, 1995; 2000). The ABET initiative is generally viewed as an instrument for social, economic and political development. Most importantly, ABET also recognizes prior learning and/or experience. In order for the ABET initiative to adequately achieve its objective, the programme must be able to recruit suitably qualified ABET practitioners and retain them in the system (Adult Basic Education and Training Act No 52, 2000; Department of Education, 2000).

The challenge of high turnover amongst ABET practitioners poses a serious risk to the survival and sustainability of ABET programmes. Additionally, high staff turnover amongst ABET practitioners may negatively affect ABET learners (Department of Education, 1995; 2000). There are no specific research studies and literature that examined how the ABET practitioner turn-over affect the adult learners' learning experience. This notable gap in the knowledge base of ABET requires urgent attention and the study is an attempt to close the gap. Thus, this study focused on the perceptions of adult learners about the Adult Basic Education and Training practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit.

The Emalahleni Municipal area, which means the “place of coal”, consists, inter alia, of the towns of eMalahleni, Kwa-Guqa, Ga-Nala and Ogies. The town of eMalahleni was established in 1903 (Emalahleni Local Municipality, 2017). It was named after a ridge of white rock located near the present railway station. In the early years, this ridge was a halting place for transport wagons and a trading post. eMalahleni has a large collection of heritage assets, which are currently under threat from rapid development. Emalahleni is probably the most industrialized municipal area in Nkangala, and its landscape features mainly underground and opencast coalmines. This area has the largest concentration of power stations in the country. Its mining and industrial history is reflected in the area’s heritage places. These include elements of industrial history, military history, architectural/engineering and graves, which should be protected and conserved (Emalahleni Local Municipality, 2017).

Emalahleni Local Municipality is located within the Mpumalanga Province and is situated in the jurisdictional area of the Nkangala District Municipality (Emalahleni Local Municipality, 2017). The district is located to the North-West of the province and is the smallest district in land mass (21%) and has the second largest population concentration (35%) in the province (Nkangala District Municipality, 2017). It covers an area of about 2677.67 km<sup>2</sup> in extent. The Nkangala District Municipality is made up of six local municipalities, namely:

- Emakhazeni Local Municipality
- Steve Tshwete Local Municipality
- Thembisile Hani Local Municipality
- Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality
- Emalahleni Local Municipality
- Victor Khanye Local Municipality

Emalahleni Local Municipality is strategically located within the Mpumalanga provincial context as it serves the function of a gateway municipality and town into the province for eight of the nine provinces of South Africa (Emalahleni Local Municipality, 2017). Its proximity to the Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni and the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipalities which jointly constituted the largest economy in the country, serves the municipality favourably.

The road infrastructure connecting Emalahleni to the rest of the country is also very well maintained and serviced by logistics freight activities which makes the significance of the municipality in the Industrial Development and Transportation strategies of the country recognised. Connecting the municipality to the rest of the country as mentioned above is the significant road infrastructure consisting of the N4 and N12 freeways. The N4 and the N12 converge at Emalahleni town and then the N4 proceeds from there to Nelspruit and Maputo (Emalahleni Local Municipality, 2017).

The southern areas of the Emalahleni Municipality form part of the region referred to as the Energy Mecca of South Africa, due to its rich deposits of coal reserves and power stations such as Kendal, Matla, Duvha and Ga-Nala, while the new Kusile power station is located a few kilometers to the east of Phola in the Victor Khanye municipal area. The southward road and rail network connect the Emalahleni area to the Richards Bay and Maputo harbours, offering export opportunities for the coal reserves. Emalahleni comprises all racial groups with 321,668 Black Africans, Coloureds 6 717, Indians or Asians 3562, Whites and others 1, 626. African/Blacks are 81. 3%, 0. 9% Asians, 1. 7% Coloureds, 15. 7% Whites and 0, 4% others (Emalahleni Local Municipality, 2017).

### **1.2.1 Education Indicators**

Educational attainment is a key indicator of development in a population. To evaluate long-term provision of education, it is important to disaggregate educational attainment for persons older than 20 years. This is an ideal group since they would have completed attending educational institutions, indicating that the level of education they have is the final one (Statistics South Africa, 2012). Statistics South Africa generated a measure of educational attainment for persons over age 20. This group is expected to have completed educational enrolment and therefore, giving a good measure for completed level of education.

The findings of census 2011 published by Stats SA (2012) show the following:

- Best ranking of 20+ with no schooling, 5.8% - 14 993 people (16.3% of Nkangala's number)
- Population 20+ with matric & higher 45.3% - third best of the 18 municipal areas
- Functional literacy rate (15+ with grade 7+) - improving and highest in province

- Matric pass rate in 2012 at 72.0% - 7th highest in province – declined the last year and university/degree admission rate low at only 19.0% in 2012

Statistics obtained from data published by Statistics SA (2012) following the 2011 census.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The ABET practitioner turnover affects adult learners' learning experience in different ways, including their negative impact on their motivation to study, relationships with their educators and throughput rate. The DoE (1995), through its White Paper on Education (1995), emphasizes that every person has the right to basic education including children, youth, and adults. However, the current state of the ABET programme in relation to adult practitioner turn-over compromises this position and creates a dilemma for the department. There is no study that explored and examined the relationship between practitioner turnover and learner experience. This creates a problematic gap in the literature. It is imperative that this relationship be examined and understood. One way of understanding the impact of ABET practitioner turn-over on learner experience is the exploration of adult learners' perceptions about the impact of practitioner turnover. The ABET practitioner turnover affects both the adult learners and the ABET practitioner negatively and if left unaddressed, it could lead to serious problems. Therefore, this study sought to uncover the impact of the ABET practitioner turn-over on adult learners and other role players in order to recommend strategies to address the problem.

Among the challenges that could result from lack of action is that the ABET programme itself would fail. This is because the ABET practitioners would become demotivated, their morale decline and seek greener pastures somewhere else. Similarly, the adult learners would eventually drop out of the programme. The adult learners benefit greatly from a stable relationship with the ABET practitioner which requires a long time to develop. However, if the practitioner does not stay longer, the learner might end up demotivated to continue with the studies and drop out. The ABET programme might eventually lose its popularity among its potential clients as they develop a negative perception about the programme. Thus, it is important to understand the perceptions of learners so that the ABET programme facilitators and managers may continuously work on improving such perceptions.

Failure to improve such perceptions might lead to the broader community not supporting the programme and consequently, not benefiting from it. If the community support the

programme and understand how the programme benefits them, they are likely to support it and encourage adult learners to work hard to complete the programme. The community will also take it upon themselves to effectively tap into the skills of adult learners where necessary. Otherwise, the ABET programme risks losing its credibility. The loss of credibility will eventually lead to the shutting down of the programme. Thus, this study sought to answer the following question: What are the perceptions of adult learners about the Adult Basic Education and Training practitioner turnover at the Witbank education circuit?

#### **1.4 AIM THE STUDY**

The main aim of this study is to gain insight into the perceptions of adult learners about the ABET practitioners' turnover at the Witbank education circuit in order to advance recommendations on ways and strategies to address the problem.

#### **1.5 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- To describe the challenges faced by adult learners in relation to ABET practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit.
- To determine ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experience of the ABET programme.
- To formulate specific recommendations aimed at resolving the challenges faced by ABET learners at the Witbank ABET centres.

#### **1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions of the study are as follows:

- What are the challenges faced by ABET learners in relation to ABET practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit?
- What are the different ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experience of the ABET programme?
- What recommendations can one make for resolving the challenges faced by ABET learners at the Witbank ABET centres?

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study is essential to researchers for stimulation of the development of new theories on challenges facing adult learners and how such challenges can be addressed. This implies that the study may help close the knowledge gap that exists in relation to understanding the challenges faced by adult learners in relation to adult practitioners turn-over. This will in-turn feed into the body of literature that remains incomplete given the knowledge gap identified. This study will benefit ABET learners, ABET practitioners and ABET centre managers as well as the Department of Education and the community at large. The benefit to ABET practitioners relates to improvement in the ABET practitioners' basic working conditions that may result from the realization that their high turn-over impacts negatively on the programme and needs to be stopped. With regards to ABET learners, the study will lead to the improvement of their academic performance and learning experience once the issue of high turn-over is addressed. Furthermore, the study will benefit ABET learners through improvement of their knowledge and skills. The Witbank community will benefit from an increased pool of ABET graduates and their marketability. The Mpumalanga provincial Department of Education will benefit from findings and recommendations of the study which they can use for improvement of the ABET programme in the province.

## **1.8 DELIMITATIONS/ SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study is delimited on the perceptions of ABET learners about the challenges they face relating to ABET practitioner turn-over at Witbank education circuit. The study was conducted on ABET centres around the Witbank education circuit. This study was conducted at Mpumalanga province, Nkangala Education district under Witbank Circuit at Emalahleni sub-district. Emalahleni is situated about 133km east of Johannesburg. Emalahleni is situated in the west of the capital city of Mpumalanga, Nelspruit, and the distance between Emalahleni and Nelspruit is 220 km. The participants of the study comprised ABET learners, ABET practitioners, Centre managers and ABET Coordinators within the Witbank education circuit.

## **1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Lack of adequate funding to cover research expenses such as field work compromised the quality of research. Restricted access to sensitive information which was regarded as privy only to senior public officials due to security reasons was another possible limitation. The

qualitative aspect of the study took a lot of time in data gathering or collection, making it expensive. The sharing of personal information expected in a qualitative study might have led to self-report bias where the participants shared what they thought the researcher wanted to hear instead of being true and genuine. Some ABET Co-coordinators were difficult to secure and that led to the delay in giving information due to their busy schedule. The guaranteeing of research participants' anonymity as well as proper and timely planning served as possible solutions to the limitations identified above.

## **1.10 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS**

Below are the definitions of operational concepts used in this study.

### **Adult Basic Education and Training**

Adult Basic Education and Training is defined as “all learning programmes for adults from Levels I to IV, where level IV is equivalent to Grade 9 in public schools or Level I on the NQF” (Adult Basic Education and Training Act No 52, 2000). Adult basic education is equated with nine years of schooling. It includes the two fundamental learning areas of Language, Literacy and Communications, and Numeracy/Mathematical Literacy, as well as a growing number of core learning areas, including Natural Science and Technology; as well as the learning areas in the elective category, which include Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME), Tourism, Agricultural Science and Ancillary Health Care (Department of Education, 2000).

For the purpose of this study, Adult Basic Education and Training refers to the provision of basic literacy and academic education to adult learners.

### **Adult learner**

According to Taylor, Marienau and Fiddler (2000:36), adult learners are “those adults who engage in learning activities that may promote any sustained change in thinking, values, or behaviour. Adult learners participate in many types of formal and informal education activities that they hope will help them function effectively in the changing world around them. They have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions, and a need to be seen and treated as being capable of taking responsibility”. Illeris (2006:19) defines an adult learner as

“any adult individual engaged in a process that leads to permanent capacity change and which is not due to biological maturation or ageing”.

For the purpose of this study, an adult learner is anyone above school going age that is formally engaged in learning activities.

### **Facilitator**

Schwarz (2005) defines a facilitator as a “person who explicitly helps a group solve a substantive problem and learn to improve its process at the same time”. Murphy (2005) refers to a facilitator as a person “who guides a group through processes to discover its specific outcomes by serving the group in whatever ways needed to help it be successful in its assignment”.

In the context of this study, a facilitator refers to an adult educator who mediates the learning and teaching programmes of adult learners.

### **Public adult learning centre**

The Adult Education and Training Act 52 (2000) defines a public adult learning centre as ‘a centre established to offer adult education and training’. The term ‘adult learning centre’ refers to “any organised educational institution where persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong, develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour” (UNESCO, 2009).

A public adult learning centre in the context of this study refers to a centre registered with the Department of Education and Training for providing basic education and training to adult learners.

## **Turn Over**

Turnover is defined as the termination of an employee's membership in an organization (Gomez-Mejia, 2001).

## **Community**

Community is defined as “a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint action in geographical location or settings” (MacQueen, McLellan, Metzger et al., 2001). Minkler, Meredith and Wallerstein (2003) define community as “characterised by a sense of identification and emotional connection to other members, shared symbol systems, shared values and norms, mutual influence, common interests and a commitment to shared needs”.

For the purpose of this study, community refers to all participants who are engaged in the teaching and learning process of adult learners.

## **Centre**

Centre means a public or private centre (Adult Education and Training Act 52, 2000).

## **Centre Manager**

Centre Manager means the head of a public centre appointed by the Head of Department in terms of the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998.

## **1.11 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

This research report consists of five chapters which are as follows:

### **Chapter 1: Introduction and Background of the study**

This chapter provides the introduction and background of the study. This chapter discusses several aspects such as the problem statement, aim of the study, specific objectives of the study, critical research questions, as well as hypotheses. In addition to these, it also discusses the significance of the study and the delimitation of the study. It also explains the limitations of the study, brief literature review, definition of operational concepts and organisation of the study.

### **Chapter 2: Literature review**

This chapter provides insight to relevant literature on the perceptions of adult learners about the challenges they face in relation to Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) practitioner turn-over at the Witbank education circuit. The literature review comprises the history of adult basic education and training in South Africa; staff turn-over within the ABET sector including types of turn-over, turn-over intention, causes of turn-over, impact of turn-over, and strategies for managing turn-over.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology used when conducting the study. This section also provides an outline of the population of the study, sampling method used, sampling size, data collection, and pilot study. Two data analysis methods used, that is thematic analysis and statistical analysis are also discussed. Ethical considerations and the organisation of the study are also discussed.

### **Chapter 4: Data presentation, analysis and interpretation**

This chapter focuses on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data. Data collected through questionnaires is analysed using a computer programme called the Statistical Package

for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22.0. The information is presented in tabular form, and frequencies and percentages will be shown. Data collected through interviews is analysed by thematic analysis. The information is grouped into memos and coding. The information is presented in a narrative form.

## **Chapter 5: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter concludes the research and provides the following information: summary of research, conclusions, and recommendations for further study. This chapter outlines the major findings on the perceptions of adult learners about the Adult Basic Education and Training practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit. It also states the conclusion for the findings of the study and makes recommendations for future studies such as areas with gaps which may need future studies by other researchers.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The following section presents a preliminary literature review on the research study. In this section, the researcher presents a review of literature associated with the study topic.

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The chapter provides a review of available literature in the area of ABET practitioner turnover and its impact on adult learners. The first part of the chapter begins with a detailed background of the Witbank district municipality, which is the geographic context of the research. The chapter goes further to discuss pertinent themes including ABET, Adult learner, practitioner and turnover. The discussion of each theme will include the review of literature on each theme/concept. This is followed by the discussion of factors affecting the theme/concept; cause and effects as well as interventions made to address challenges associated with each theme. It then goes on to describe the scenario of employee turnover and retention in the ABET sector. The chapter ends with identification of problem areas and research gaps in the context of practitioner turnover and retention in ABET.

#### **2.2 A HISTORY OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The Department of Education (DoE)'s national definition of Adult basic education and training (hereafter referred to as ABET) in South Africa is: "adult basic education and training is the general conceptual foundation towards life-long learning and development, comprising of knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation and transformation applicable to a range of context. ABET is flexible, developmental and targeted at the specific needs of particular audiences and, ideally, provides access to nationally recognized certificates" (DoE, 2007:8). Similarly, Nambinga (2007) defines ABET as a basic life skills education and training offered to adults. She further argues that ABET is comprised of the acquisition of basic skills, literacy and numeracy as well as provision of opportunities

for life-long learning and development (Nambinga, 2007). Meyer (2002) argues that the ABET system is based on the principles of Outcome Based Education (OBE) and thus, points to the significance of recognition of prior learning and/or experience. The main objective of the government's policy on ABET is based on the desire to build a just and equitable system that is capable of delivering quality education and training to adult learners across the Republic of South Africa (DoE, 2007). Education in South Africa is considered an essential component of the reconstruction, development and transformation of society. It is therefore included as part of the basic human rights listed in the Bill of Rights (1996). The Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) enshrines the right of all citizens "to a basic education, including ABET, and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible" (Constitution of South Africa, Chapter 2:29). The DoE (1995) through its White Paper on Education (1995) emphasizes that every person has the right to basic education including children, youth, and adults. The formulation of the ABET policy was part of a larger process of developing general and new policy frameworks for all aspects of education and training for the new democratic South Africa. The interim ABET policy was adopted by the then Minister of Education, Professor S. Bengu in September 1995 and was known as the National ABET Framework: Interim guidelines. A national pilot project known as Ithuteng (ready to learn) campaign was launched during 1996 (Department of Education, 2007). Due to the legacy of apartheid system of separate development, the majority of adults were illiterate despite their desire to acquire education. According to DoE (2007), about 9.4 million adults with less than nine (9) years of schooling expressed the desire and the ability to (re)enter the education and training system through ABET. The success of the ABET programme depends largely on the stability of its practitioners and their availability to serve adult learners on an on-going basis. Thus, the issue of the ABET practitioners' turnover and its impact on adult learners require close monitoring and analysis. This is particularly important given the fact that ABET practitioners are employed on a contract basis and are never given permanent positions leading generally to high turnover.

## 2.3 TURN OVER AS A CONCEPT

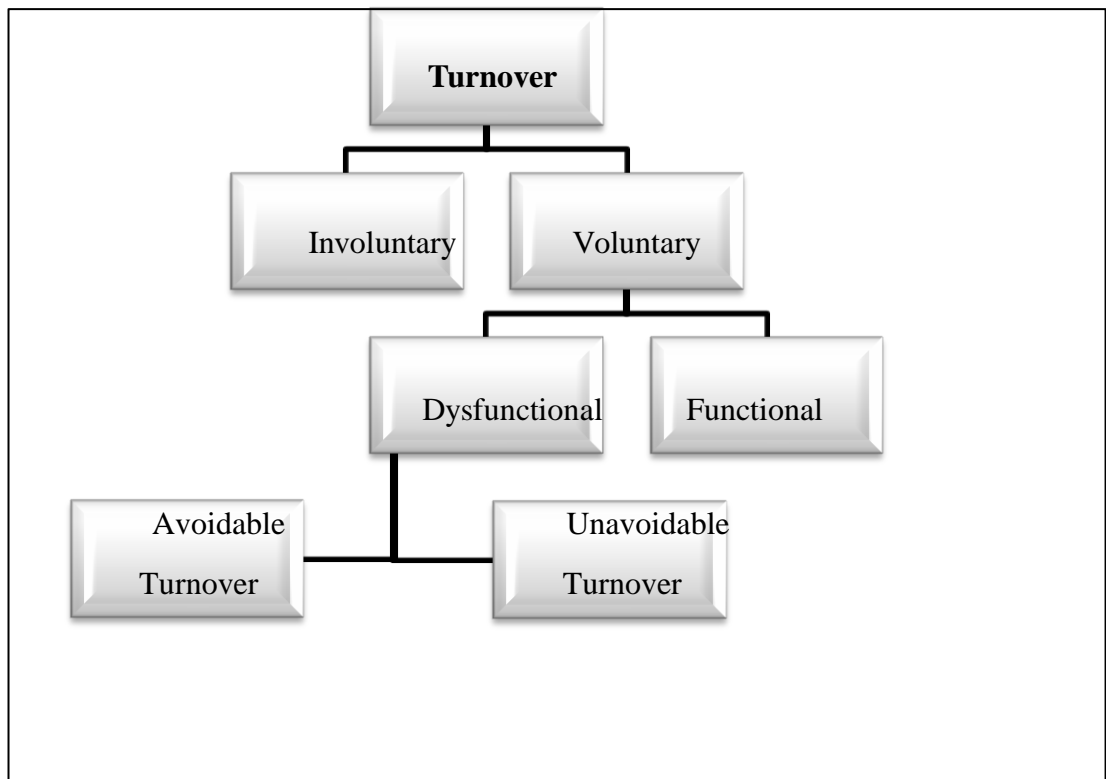
The following section will discuss turnover as a factor in the life and functioning of organizations. The challenge of turnover is a common problem facing organizations today. As a result, the study of employee turnover has gained momentum over the years, leading to a large body of research on the topic of employee turnover. Turnover is often a great loss for an organization both in human capital and in the cost that follows the departure of the employee and the process of getting a new employee (Heavey, Holwerda, & Hausknecht, 2013). It is necessary that before one discusses the phenomenon of employee turnover, proper definitions of turnover should be explored. According to Hom and Griffeth (1994), employee turnover refers to ‘voluntary terminations of members from organizations’. Ivancevich and Glueck (1989) argue that staff turnover is the net result of the exit of some employees and entrance of others to the organization. Kossen (1991) defines turnover as the amount of movement in and out (of employees) in an organization. While, Abassi and Hollman (2000) define employee turnover as the rotation of workers around the labour market, between firms, jobs and occupations, and between the states of employment and unemployment. A number of terms have been used for employee turnover, such as quits, attrition, exits, mobility, migration or succession (Morrell et al., 2004).

Employee turnover is classified into two categories, as either voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary turnover refers to termination initiated by employees while involuntary turnover refers to a situation when an employee has no choice in the termination of employment as it might be due to long-term sickness, death, moving overseas or employer-initiated termination (Heneman, 1998). Voluntary turnovers are further distinguished into functional and dysfunctional turnovers. Functional turnovers are the resignation of substandard performers and dysfunctional turnovers refer to the exit of effective performers. Dysfunctional turnover is of greatest concern to the management due to its negative impact on the organization’s general performance. Dysfunctional turnover could be further classified into avoidable turnover (caused by lower compensation, poor working conditions, etc.) and unavoidable turnovers (like family moves, serious illness, death, etc.) over which the organization has little or no influence (Taylor, 1998).

A low level of employee turnover is acceptable in any occupation, in that it offsets potential stagnancy, eliminates low performers, and encourages innovation with the entry of new blood. However, high levels of employee turnover lead to low performance and ineffectiveness in organizations, and results in a huge number of costs and negative outcomes (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Several researchers have found that high turnover rates might have negative effects on the profitability of organizations (Aksu, 2004; Hinkin & Tracey, 2000). Curtis and Wright (2001) argued that high turnover can damage quality and customer service which provide the basis for competitive advantage, thereby inhibiting business growth. Also, it has been observed that people who leave are those who are most talented as they are the ones likely to get an opportunity elsewhere (Hinkin & Tracey, 2000). Turnover often ends up in valuable talent moving to competing entities (Stovel & Bontis, 2002). Therefore, it is only desirable that management should accord special attention to prevent turnover and puts in place a sound strategy for improving staff retention.

For most part, voluntary turnover is treated as a managerial problem that requires attention, thus its theory has the premise that people leave if they are unhappy with their jobs and job alternatives are available (Hom & Kinicki, 2001). Therefore, most studies have focused on voluntary rather than involuntary turnover (Wright, 1993). Griffith et al. (2000) conducted a review research on employee turnover and described the most-cited variables that affect turnover. The model developed by them incorporates the factors that explain the turnover process. It includes variables related to both job content and external environment factors that explain turnover. It is generally believed that the process of employees' turnover is the reversed transformation process of employees' retention psychology and behaviours. There are two major reasons why turnover is a central issue in the field of HRM across the globe. First, turnover is related to low organizational knowledge, low employee morale, low customer satisfaction, high selection costs, and high training costs (Talent Keepers, 2004). Research has also shown that high employee turnover is related to lower organization performance (Glebbeck & Bax, 2004). Second, the decision to turnover is often the final outcome of an individual's experiences in an organization (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

**Diagram 2.1: Framework of Staff Turnover**



Griffeth and Hom (2001) provided a framework of staff turnover as represented in

Diagram 2.1

According to the diagram above, satisfaction with aspects of the job will be negatively related to intention to quit, and dissatisfaction will be strongly related to turnover. Organizational commitment predicts turnover better than job satisfaction (Griffeth et al., 2000). These answers suggest that job satisfaction may be a more distal effect upon turnover intentions than organizational commitment.

According to the diagram illustrated above, the structural model suggests that job satisfaction is a predecessor to organizational commitment which is turnover intention's antecedent. It is also illustrated that job satisfaction has a negative relationship with turnover intention. The diagram above further states that job satisfaction has a positive relationship with organizational commitment. If people are satisfied at work, it will have a positive influence on organizational commitment and decrease the chances of employees intending to leave. If employees are dissatisfied at work, it will have a positive influence on turnover intention and negative influence with organizational commitment (Griffeth et al., 2000).

## **2.4 CAUSES OF STAFF TURNOVER**

Though there are many causes of staff turnover in an organization, none of those has negative impact on wellbeing of an organization. Organizations should differentiate between voluntary and involuntary turnover and take actions on the one under their control. Voluntary turnovers are those caused by the employee out of his/ her own choice (e.g. to take job in other organization for better salary) while involuntary turnovers are because of the decision of management (e.g. dismissal for gross misconduct). In general, all resignations not formally initiated by employers are voluntary resignations (Loquercio et al., 2006).

## 2.5 EFFECTS OF STAFF TURNOVER

This section will discuss the different consequences of staff turnover to point out turnover as a crucial organizational issue. Although turnover may also bring positive consequences, for instance the reallocation of organizational resources (Staw, 1980: 258), the section focuses on the negative consequences of turnover. Three important negative consequences which have an impact on organizational effectiveness are discussed below: the impact on organizational cost, operational disruption and demoralization of organizational membership. Employee turnover is expensive from the view of the organization. Voluntary quits which represents an exodus of human capital investment from organizations (Fair, 1992) and the subsequent replacement process entails manifold costs to the organizations. These replacement costs include for example, search of the external labour market for a possible substitute, selection between competing substitutes, induction of the chosen substitute, and formal and informal training of the substitute until he or she attains performance levels equivalent to the individual who quit (John, 2000). Addition to these replacement costs, output would be affected to some extent or output would be maintained at the cost of overtime payment. Research estimates indicate that hiring and training a replacement worker for a lost employee costs approximately 50 percent of the worker's annual salary (Johnson et al., 2000) – but the costs do not stop there. Each time an employee leaves the firm, we presume that productivity drops due to the learning curve involved in understanding the job and the organization. Furthermore, the loss of intellectual capital adds to this cost, since not only do organizations lose the human capital and relational capital of the departing employee, but also competitors are potentially gaining these assets (Meaghan et al., 2002). Therefore, if employee turnover is not managed properly, it would affect the organization adversely in terms of personnel costs and in the end; it would affect its liquidity position. However, voluntary turnover incurs significant costs, both in terms of direct costs (replacement, recruitment and selection, temporary staff, management time), and also (and perhaps more significantly) in terms of indirect costs (morale, pressure on remaining staff, costs of learning, product/service quality, organizational memory) and the loss of social capital (Dess et al., 2001).

## **2.6 THE IMPACT OF TURNOVER ON ORGANISATIONAL COSTS**

Organizational efficiency has been shown to be highly correlated with a low turnover rate. Studies dealing with the impact of turnover are dominated by a concern with organizational effectiveness, which is defined “as the extent to which the system achieves its goals “(Price, 1977: 110). The financial impact of turnover is usually expressed in monetary terms. Cascio in 1991 made the most significant contribution in this respect, discussing the extent to which turnover costs are important (Tziner & Birati, 1996). According to Cascio, the summation of the components of the three major categories should constitute the expense of an employee turnover (Tziner & Birati, 1996: 114). Additionally, several other studies extended Cascio’s list with further categories. In their study, Tziner and Birati (1996) argue that Cascio neglects to discuss the distinction between functional and dysfunctional turnover, namely the “cost of the reduced productivity of the new worker during the period required for the level of performance of the previous employee to be reached” (Tziner, 1996:114). If bad performers choose to leave, this could carry beneficial outcomes for the organization. However, if it is a dysfunctional turnover, then the loss of an esteemed employee can engender a loss of productivity. Another category is named the “vacancy costs” that refers to the expenses that are incurred due to increased overtime or temporary workers that are employed to complete the tasks of the vacant position.

## **2.7 OPERATIONAL DISRUPTIONS**

Operational disruption occurs when high interdependence of work roles within the company exists. The loss of key members in an organization which is characterized as being highly interdependent and specialized can influence the ability of other remaining members to fulfill their work task. In some companies, higher turnover rate is expected to be found in lower hierarchy levels. Replacing these positions is not that difficult for the organization. The author argued that “the higher the level of position to be filled, the greater the potential for disruption” (Staw, 1980: 256). This problem can be solved with back-up personnel or employees can be trained to have multiplicity skills (Staw, 1980: 256)

## **2.8 DEMORALIZATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

The demoralization of organizational membership refers to the impact of turnover on attitudes of the remaining members. If a person decides to leave for an alternative position in an external environment, it may provoke a reflective sentiment with remaining members, such as questioning their own motivation to stay in the organization. Thus, turnover can cause additional turnover by stimulating deterioration in attitudes towards the organization (Staw, 1980: 257).

The perceived reason of leaving is one essential factor for demoralization of organizational membership. If the reason for quitting is a non-organizational matter, such as family issues or location change, then the feeling of demoralization is less existent. Yet, if the reason is rather dependent on organizational dimensions such as pay or supervisory support, then it will likely lead to demoralization. “If those who leave are members of a cohesive work group or possess high social status among the organizational membership, then turnover will likely lead to greater demoralization” (Staw, 1980: 257).

## **2.9 STEPS THAT CAN BE TAKEN TO DEAL WITH TURN-OVER (RETENTION STRATEGIES)**

The following section will outline steps that can be taken to deal with staff turnover also commonly known as staff retention strategies.

### **2.9.1 Strategies to minimize employee turnover**

Management has several policy options that can serve as strategies to minimize employee turnover when confronted with problems of employee turnover. These include changing (or improving existing) policies towards recruitment, selection, induction, training, job design and wage payment. Policy choice, however, must be appropriate to the precise diagnosis of the problem. Employee turnover attributable to poor selection procedures, for example, is unlikely to improve where the policy modification focuses exclusively on the induction process. Equally, employee turnover attributable to wage rates which produce earnings that are not competitive with other

firms in the local labour market is unlikely to decrease where the policy adjustment is merely done to enhance the organization's provision of on-the-job training opportunities. Given that there is an increase in direct and indirect costs of labour turnover, therefore, management are frequently exhorted to identify the reasons why people leave the organization so that appropriate action is taken by the management. Extensive research has shown that the following categories of human capital management factors provide a core set of measures that senior management can use to increase the effectiveness of their investment in people and improve overall corporate performance of business:

Employee engagement, the organization's capacity to engage, retain, and optimize the value of its employees hinges on how well jobs are designed, how employees' time is used, and the commitment and support that is shown to employees by the management would motivate employees to stay in organizations. Knowledge accessibility, the extent of the organization's "collaborativeness" and its capacity for making knowledge and ideas widely available to employees, would make employees to stay in the organization. Sharing of information should be made at all levels of management. This accessibility of information would lead to strong performance from the employees and creating strong corporate culture (Meaghan et al., 2002). Therefore; information accessibility would make employees feel that they are appreciated for their effort and chances of leaving the organization are minimal.

Workforce optimization, the organization's success in optimizing the performance of the employees by establishing essential processes for getting work done, providing good working conditions, establishing accountability and making good hiring choices would retain employees in their organization. The importance of gaining better understanding of the factors related to recruitment, motivation and retention of employees is further underscored by rising personnel costs and high rates of employee turnover (Badawy, 1988; Basta & Johnson, 1989; Garden, 1989; Parden, 1981; Sherman, 1986). With increased competitiveness on globalizations, managers in many organizations are experiencing greater pressure from top management to improve

recruitment, selection, training, and retention of good employees and in the long run, would encourage employees to stay in organizations.

Job involvement describes an individual's ego involvement with work and indicates the extent to which an individual identifies psychologically with his/her job (Kanungo, 1982). Involvement in terms of internalizing values about the goodness or the importance of work made employees not to quit their jobs and these involvements are related to task characteristics. Workers who have a greater variety of tasks tend stay in the job. Task characteristics have been found to be potential determinants of turnover among employees (Couger, 1988; Couger & Kawasaki, 1980; Garden, 1989; Goldstein & Rockart, 1984). These include the five core job characteristics identified by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1980): skill variety, which refers to the opportunity to utilize a variety of valued skills and talents on the job; task identity, or the extent to which a job requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work - that is, doing a job from beginning to end, with visible results; task significance, which reflects the extent to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether within or outside the organization; job autonomy, or the extent to which the job provides freedom, independence, and discretion in scheduling work and determining procedures that the job provides; and job feedback, which refers to the extent to which the job provides information about the effectiveness of one's performance (Tor et al., 1997). Involvement would influence job satisfaction and increase organizational commitment of the employees. Employees who are more involved in their jobs are more satisfied with their jobs and more committed to their organization (Blau & Boal, 1989; Brooke & Price, 1989; Brooke et al., 1988; Kanungo, 1982). Job involvement has also been found to be negatively related to turnover intentions (Blat & Boal, 1989). Job satisfaction, career satisfaction, and organizational commitment reflect a positive attitude towards the organization, thus having a direct influence on employee turnover intentions.

Job satisfaction, job involvement and organizational commitment are considered to be related but distinguishable attitudes (Brooke & Price, 1989). Satisfaction represents an effective response to specific aspects of the job or career and denotes the pleasurable or positive emotional state

resulting from an appraisal of one's job or career (Locke, 1976; Porter et al., 1974; Williams & Hazer, 1986). Organizational commitment is an effective response to the whole organization and the degree of attachment or loyalty employees feel towards the organization. Job involvement represents the extent to which employees are absorbed in or preoccupied with their jobs and the extent to which an individual identifies with his/her job (Brooke et al., 1988). The degree of commitment and loyalty can be achieved if management enrich the jobs, empower and compensate employees properly.

Empowerment of employees could help to enhance the continuity of employees in organizations. Empowered employees are found where managers supervise more people than in a traditional hierarchy and delegate more decisions to their subordinates (Malone, 1997). Managers act like coaches and help employees solve problems. Employees, he concludes, have increased responsibility. Superiors empowering subordinates by delegating responsibilities to them lead to subordinates who are more satisfied with their leaders and consider them to be fair and in turn, perform up to the superior's expectations (Keller & Dansereau, 1995). All these make employees to be committed to the organization and chances of quitting are minimal.

Employee retention is recognized as an important subject of inquiry by researchers. The Harvard Business Essentials (2002) defines retention as the converse of turnover being voluntary and involuntary. Retention activities may be defined as a sum of all those activities aimed at increasing organizational commitment of employees, giving them an overall ambitious and myriad of opportunities where they can grow by outperforming others (Bogdanowicz & Bailey, 2002). It is a voluntary move by an organization to create an environment which engages employees for a long term (Chaminade, 2007).

Literature has overwhelmingly proven the importance of retaining valuable workforce or functional workforce for the survival of an organization (Bogdanowicz & Bailey, 2002). Mak and

Socketel (2001) noted that retaining a healthy team of committed and productive employees is necessary to maintain corporate strategic advantage. Hence, organizations must design appropriate strategies to retain their quality employees. Empirical studies (e.g. Harris, 2000; Kinnear & Sutherland, 2000; Maertz & Griffeth, 2004; Meudell & Rodham, 1998) have explained that factors such as competitive salary, friendly working environment, healthy interpersonal relationships and job security were frequently cited by employees as key motivational variables that influenced their retention in the organizations. Two-factor theory propounded by Herzberg et al. (1959) is an important theory that explains what satisfies or dissatisfies employees and hence, serves as an important framework for employee retention. Herzberg et al. (1959) proposed a two-factor theory or the motivator-hygiene theory. According to this theory, there are some job factors that result in satisfaction while there are other job factors that prevent dissatisfaction. The opposite of “Satisfaction” is “No satisfaction” and the opposite of “Dissatisfaction” is “No Dissatisfaction”.

## **2.10 PRACTITIONERS’ TURNOVER WITHIN ABET IN SOUTH AFRICA**

ABET in South Africa has been one of the neglected aspects of educational development. With the coming to power of the new democratic government in 1994, things have changed. ABET has now become one of the priority areas targeted by the government. Though adult education in South Africa has never reached the required scale to satisfy national need, it has had a rich history (French, 2003:27). It has been closely associated with (on both sides) national and local struggles for liberation. It supported, for a time, especially in the 1980s and early 1990s, a vibrant “establishment” of alternative educators in three major universities, as well as in a range of NGOs. It was the subject of intensive and ambitious efforts in policy creation from 1989 to about 1997, all assuming the centrality of adult education to the task of equity and redress in a new regime. Proud achievement in developing, writing and publishing of adult learning materials was a great success.

Above all, South Africa has been struck by the transformative potential of the radical and humanistic traditions of adult education (French, 2003:28). This potential is not easily achieved but it has seen glimpses of its ability to change lives, and more especially, to shift the patterns of

thought, selfhood and action that inhibit growth. French (2003:31) argues that the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS), instead of serving the transformational goals of equity and redress, is more an instrumentalist strategy for servicing the skills needs of large-scale business and industry. A challenge to meet most major targets of job creation or wealth distribution is noticeable.

### **2.11. ABET TEACHERS AND TEACHING METHODS**

Kanpol (1995:67) observes that teachers must use the learner's experiences to allow a mutual connection between curriculum content and the history of learners. They must create empathy for the learners and allow students to engage in collective interpretation of their realities in a non-threatening and noncompetitive atmosphere. Teachers should adopt the Freirean approach based on working with learners to engage in open and collaborative discussion of issues. The dialogue should facilitate growth and learning of both teachers and learners (Freire & Macedo, 1997:45). Teachers should work with learners to interrogate issues they have hitherto taken for granted about their lives in order to raise their consciousness. ABET teachers should also be cultural workers sympathetic to the cause of those people's knowledge and symbols of learning.

Lake (1999:78) cautions that the selection of literacy textbooks is part of the selective tradition which privileges certain cultural constructs at the expense of others. Textbooks should be scrutinized based on how they reflect both local and national issues. They should enable learners to access alternative ways of interpreting reality. The teachers' task is primarily to help learners engage in dialogues about issues and make choices independent of the teachers' ideological persuasions. They should provide alternatives and not impose solutions on the learners. Texts are not neutral assemblages of knowledge that suddenly appear in the literacy program. They facilitate hegemonic control by the dominant group. Education is invariably implicated in the politics of domination and resistance (Apple, 1996:79).

Literacy instruction should be designed to maximise the potential for learners to empower themselves. The lessons are based on a series of prepackaged sequentially primers. Most teachers have a minimum qualification of standard seven and do not have sufficient insights or the training to empower learners (Maruatona, 1995:123). Of recent, pilot training programmes that have been conducted in countries such as El Salvador, Uganda and Bangladesh, have revealed that the level of ABET worker's education varies (Torres, 2002:30). Although these research studies on the one hand, confirm that there is no uniform qualification required for one to become a practitioner, on the other hand, they reveal that there are qualities that organisers and practitioners should possess. These qualities include: basic literacy skills, commitment or dedication to work, familiarity with learners' socio-economic level, good communication skills and respect of learners (Torres, 2002:36).

Although these qualities have also been identified as guiding criteria for the selection of Literacy promoters in the National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN), the evaluation study by the Directorate of Adult Basic Education in 1999 revealed that 29, 2% of Literacy ABET promoters lacked training, and those that received training lacked technical skills to handle certain topics. Most of the teachers in the ABET training are not well trained to teach adult learners. They were recruited to provide employment for the teeming youths who were unemployed. Therefore, they only attended workshops organised by counselor associations occasionally, which meant they required more training to suit the purpose of ABET programmes for rural women.

Rogers (1999:221) identified six literacy approaches. These are: Approach to literacy is Positive not Negative: The real literacy approach does not start off by stressing the disadvantages of being illiterate nor does it exaggerate the benefits of learning to read and write skillfully. It starts by saying that every person, whatever the level of literacy skills (even entirely non-literate), is engaged in literate task activities during their lives (Rogers, 1999: 223).

The 'real literacies approach' asserts that adults learn from their daily experiences rather than from pre-set prescribed learning programmes. Rogers (1999) also made significant contributions to the field of adult education, with his experiential theory of learning. Rogers maintained that all human

beings have a natural desire to learn. He defined two categories of learning: meaningless, or cognitive learning (e.g., memorizing multiplication tables) and significant, or experiential (applied knowledge which addresses the needs and wants of the learner, e.g., performing first aid on one's child).

According to Rogers (1969:76), the role of the teacher is to facilitate experiential learning by setting a positive climate for learning, clarifying the purposes of the learner(s) organising and making available learning resources, balancing intellectual and emotional components of learning and sharing feelings and thoughts with learners but not dominating.

Contextualisation and Decontextualization: the “real literacies approach” argues that literacy is not just decoding words and sentences, it is rather finding out the meaning of those words to create meaningful messages.

Real Literacy Material or Real Literacy Tasks: In the traditional approach to literacy learning, materials are special teaching/learning texts which providers prepare and issue or are pieces of writing created specifically to help people to learn something; for example, books, booklets and other printed materials. But in the real literacies approach, materials are not specifically written for learning. They are authentic written or printed texts which exist in the local community. For instance, these materials may include election posters, bank forms, religious materials, calendars, newspapers, and so forth (Rogers, 1999:81).

According to Knowles (1998:43), ABET facilitators should apply the following principles of adult learning:

- Adults are autonomous and self-directed. They need to be free to direct themselves. Their teachers must actively involve adult participants in the learning process and serve as facilitators for them. Specifically, they must get participants’ perspectives on what topics to cover and let them work on projects that reflect their interests. They should allow the participants to assume responsibility for presentations and group leadership. They have to be sure to act as facilitators, guiding participants to their own knowledge rather than supplying them with facts. Finally, they

must show participants how the class will help them reach their goals (e.g., via a personal goals sheet).

- Adults have accumulated a foundation of life experiences and knowledge that may include work-related activities, family responsibilities, and previous education. They need to connect learning to this knowledge/experience base. To help them do so, they should draw out participants' experience and knowledge, which is relevant to the topic. They must relate theories and concepts to the participants and recognise the value of experience in learning.
- Adults are goal-oriented. Upon enrolling in a course, they usually know what goal they want to attain. They therefore, appreciate an educational programme that is organised and has clearly defined elements. Practitioners must show participants how this class will help them attain their goals. This classification of goals and course objectives must be done early in the course.
- Adults are relevancy-oriented. They must see a reason for learning something. Learning has to be applicable to their work or other responsibilities to be of value to them. Therefore, practitioners must identify objectives for adult participants before the course begins. This also means that theories and concepts must be related to a setting familiar to learners. This need can be fulfilled by letting participants choose projects that reflect their own interests.
- Adults are practical, therefore, focus should be on the aspects of a lesson that are useful to them in their work. They may not be interested in knowledge for its own sake. Instructors must tell participants explicitly how the lesson will be useful to them on the job.
- As do all learners, adults need to be shown respect. Instructors must acknowledge the wealth of experiences that adult participants bring to the classroom. These adults should be treated as equals in experience and knowledge and allowed to voice their opinions freely in class.

## 2.12 ADULT EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

There is always a notion that adult education has never taken place in different cultural groups in South Africa. This might be due to the fact that adult education in the African communities took place orally and not in any written form as a way of passing a stored-up culture from one generation to another. as According to Bews (1935:8-9), the age-grade system of Africa, which others may take a hint or two from, provided sexual instructions, social conduct and law, military training (among warlike tribes) which was a thorough means of education.

Although adult education takes place in different cultural groups, Squelch (1993: 178-179) warns that the promotion of a particular dominant group culture in view of assimilating rich cultures and marginalising contributions from cultures that are in a minority, will in the process lead to these cultures becoming devalued, thus separating the minority group from their culture and integrating the minority into alien norms and values which will cause a crisis. The deduction that can be made in this respect is that as every culture is unique, there is some teaching that takes place in each culture which is valued by those who belong to it and that the learning that these learners bring to their learning should be respected and that new knowledge is built on the existing knowledge. The notion of lack of adult education might have resulted from the lack of linkages between the academic and life skills education. It might have happened that some academics might have considered the cultural education as inferior and as something that they could not learn anything from. The lack of intertwining the two might have led to the declining of morals and values in the society. The moral fabric of society is eroded day by day in this way.

One can boldly point out that the age-grade system of Africa was a means of teaching adults in a particular accepted age-grade norms and values that would make them acceptable in a society. It was essential therefore, to teach the adults in the making and those who were already adults to be accepted in society and face the challenges of life in that particular society with assurance. In this way, people never became outcasts in their own society. The change to literacy teaching should

not undermine this type of education and experience as an ideal education system takes place within the values and norms of society.

Hutton (1992:52-53) identifies three factors as major causes of illiteracy in South Africa: the first being that the communicative worlds were not based on literacy, but on orality; secondly, "Bantu education" which limited the participation of black people in the modern industrial and literate world; and thirdly, the disintegration of the education system and the high dropout rate from 1976 which created a new generation of illiterate and semi-literate adults. Times change and it is important that people should adapt to the times they live in. Clinging too much to the past apartheid events can be detrimental to society as a whole. Although oral communication was the order of the day in the past centuries and was effective then, the significance of literacy cannot be ruled out today. Action against illiteracy is necessary today, rather than being vocal about the causes of illiteracy in the past systems.

On the other hand, it often happens in life that people do not realise that the actions and rules that are always put in place, can either bring positive or negative effects to those who put them into practice and those they are meant for. It is therefore necessary to think deeply about what consequences the legislation that is in place will have on the lives of other people. This is a clarion call to all to think on whatever is being done, especially the legislation on education.

Hutton (1992:55) traces literacy for black South Africans and Afrikaners as far back as the 1920's with English and politics rather than literacy, and the quest for the establishment of Afrikaans as an official language respectively. As the saying goes "the road without obstacles ends nowhere", literacy in South Africa was faced with challenges. Hutton (1992:56) indicates that the coming into power of the Nationalist Party in 1948 put legal constraints and inhibitions on the provision of adult education due to undermining the policy of support for night schools by neglecting or refusing applications for subsidies. In this way, the policy was used as a political platform to

blindfold other countries that adult education was alive in South Africa while what happened on the ground was quite the opposite. This does not speak well of leaders who found it easy to unilaterally suspend a law of parliament to satisfy their own needs and purposes. The purpose in this regard was to keep people ignorant so that they could be exploited. The purpose was short-sighted as this move would also negatively affect the economic growth, as it resulted in low productivity, which is caused by low education.

### **2.13 ISSUES ON ADULT BASIC EDUCATION**

Roth (1990:27) indicates that campaigns in the third world in the 1960's were based on the misconception that they had to overcome poverty, disease and oppression as decisive factors in the struggle for prosperity and self-determination. Although these types of campaigns cannot be completely ruled out, it is important for campaigns to focus on the real problem. If this is not done, the campaigns will miss the real target. If the target is missed, people often think that campaigns are a failure, whereas the fault lies with the focus.

Roth (1990: 27) maintains that there were no literacy campaigns conducted in South Africa and the ex-Bophuthatswana. Roth (1990:27-28) however, shows that the successful campaigns were those in Vietnam, and indicates that their successes were due to the following:

- Youth groups, trade unions, church groups and women's groups were used for organisation and mobilisation of campaigns.
- The radio and the press were widely utilised.
- Songs were composed, exploiting the benefits of literacy and deriding those who made no effort to become literate.
- Prize giving ceremonies were organised in the villages in honour of the people who had conquered their illiteracy after which workers were called to register for the following literacy course.

It is through campaigns of this nature that the intention to create a literate society will be successful on a large scale. The reason why most people do not attend literacy classes is because they do not understand the reason why they have to be literate. They are completely in the dark about the benefits of literacy.

At the 1994 Conference of the Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AACE) in the Western Cape, awareness of the commitment of the democratic government to the concept of lifelong learning in principle, debate was focused only on formal schooling and the idea of an Adult Learner' Week (ALW) was mooted, the objective thereof being to strive towards bringing adult learning into the mainstream and to challenge this marginalization (Pandy, 1998:72). Pandy (1998:73-78) opines that to this effect, the Adult Educators and Trainers Association of South Africa (AETASA and ALW) started an advocacy campaign which reached 10 million people through:

- Rallying support at local levels, in the provinces and local structures
- Establishing partnerships between civil society or organisations and the state at both a national and local level.
- Providing a new way of advocacy and lobbying for adult learning, whereby the civil society and government would work together for an increased recognition and resource allocation for adult learning.
- Setting up a national toll-free helpline to provide the public with information about career choices and actual courses offered throughout South Africa.
- Making a link with countries to participate in a conference to discuss regional and international co-operation through ALW.

It is through such efforts such as the ALW that the society in the whole of South Africa will know the benefits that can be derived in life-long learning. Looking closely at the strategies that AETASA and ALW have in place to create an awareness about lifelong learning, this will bring about positive results. The only disadvantage in many efforts of this nature is that they are simply turned into events, which die a natural death after the said Adults Learners' Week. While it is

estimated that the ALW was able to reach 10 million people, the Department of Education (1997(a): 1997:90) states that the current number of ABET learners is estimated to be about 370 000, including state provision through provincial sub-directorates which reaches 140 000. This is a clear indication that not all the people who were reached through the campaign, and that those who are actually attending are too many to simply be ignored. As indicated, if a total number of 19 590 307 people in South Africa (as the Department of Education shows (1997(a):84)) do not have basic education (NQF level 1) (cf. 1.2), but only 370 000 are learning (1.9%), it means that campaigns for literacy will have to be more vigorous to win those without basic education to sites of learning.

## **2.14 TRAINING OF PRACTITIONERS**

The training of practitioners in adult education before the 1994 education system in South Africa was compartmentalised. The then departments of education and the NGO's, as per experience by the researcher while working in ABET in the Department, conducted parallel training programmes for ABET practitioners. Elsdon (1984:21) avers that no two trainers' courses can be alike and that even their organisational contexts vary widely. This would therefore suggest that programmes would be designed and implemented for as long as the powers that be wanted to, even though such parallel training programmes brought confusion to practitioners. Though the programmes cannot be the same, Elsdon (1984:29) points out that the training programmes should be based on the following:

- The development of knowledge on psychological, social and philosophical principles of adult learning and implications for the practice of work with adults;
- Studies in the characteristics and motives of learners and their relation to subject content and group relationships;
- Curriculum planning and course design; and
- Studies of the significance of inter-personal relationships in the learning context and of the formation of attitudes in practitioners and learners and of their influences.

The training of practitioners in the past departments of education was greatly lacking in this respect. In the programmes that were conducted to prepare teachers to teach adult learners, the training was based on the available materials. There was no flexibility to teach the trainees to design the curriculum and facilitation programmes. The design of the curriculum and the courses was the duty of someone who sat in the office somewhere else, who thought he/she knew what is best for those for whom the programmes were designed. Practitioners were hardly consulted to ensure whether the training programmes would meet their needs and those of the adult learners. In this way, trainees were trained to implement adult education programmes in all areas, albeit urban, rural or farming areas in the same way, although the situations were different from place to place. It is important for training to make the practitioner aware that he/she will, in some instances, work with their peers, people who are adults by nature.

There have been serious debates from the time of practice by the researcher as a practitioner on whether adult education should be professionalised or not. Dashler (1991:404) argues that professionalisation increases adult education costs and protects the financial interests of practitioners, but he (Dashler, 1991:405) points out that in the United States, although adult education is not yet professionalised, it is required that educators should have adult education teaching credentials to teach in the public adult education system.

## **2.15 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the conceptual framework in the area of adult practitioner turnover and its impact on adult learners. This chapter also discussed the pertinent themes including ABET, adult learner, practitioner and turnover. This was followed by discussing the factors affecting the smooth implementation of ABET programme at Witbank circuit. The chapter also focused on the interventions and recommendations made to address the challenges faced by adult learners at Witbank circuit.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section, the researcher discusses the research design and the methodology used to conduct the study. The section also outlines the population of the study, the sampling method, sampling size, data collection, pilot study, data analysis, ethical considerations and organization of the study.

#### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a plan on how the study will be conducted (Babbie, 2007: 87). In any research design, the researcher should know exactly what she/he wants to achieve, and the researcher should specify the plan on how to achieve (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012: 190). According to Fouche and De Vos (2011: 95), in qualitative studies, there are different designs available to be used depending on the relevance to the study.

The aim of this study was to explore and describe the perceptions of adult learners about ABET practitioners' turnover at the Witbank education circuit; therefore, the most suitable and appropriate research design employed in this study is explorative.

##### 3.1.1 Exploratory research design

According to Blaikie (cited by Fouche & De Vos, 2011:95), exploratory research is more about getting deeper understanding regarding a particular situation, persons or society. In explorative research, the researcher explores the study of interest of which has sometimes not been researched. Maxfield and Babbie's (2012:10) explanation correlates with the above author's definition as they explain exploratory research design as mostly used to explore certain issues or individuals where little is known. The purpose of exploratory study is to please the desires and inquisitiveness of the

researcher (Babbie, 2007:88; Babbie, 2008:98). In contrast, Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:47) argue that the main goal of exploratory research is to obtain more insight regarding a particular situation, individuals or society. In this design, little is known about the perceptions of adult learners about ABET practitioners' turnover and the researcher sought to explore more about the topic. Through this design, the researcher was able to explore and gain deeper insight regarding adult learners' perceptions in relation to ABET practitioners' turnover.

Explorative design was found to be appropriate in this study area where little is known about the phenomenon studied (Bhattacharjee, 2012:6). It sought to explore any phenomenon relatively unknown and create the process of building knowledge (Zainal, 2007:3). Rubin and Babbie (2005:123) also state that exploratory research is conducted to provide a foundational familiarity with a subject when a topic is relatively new and unstudied. The focus of this study was on the perceptions of ABET learners. Previous studies focused on ABET practitioners and as a result, little is known about the perceptions of ABET learners. Therefore, this study was exploratory as it sought to uncover information about a phenomenon less known. This study therefore asked the "what" question in relation to an explorative design in understanding the perceptions of adult learners about ABET practitioners' turnover.

### **3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In research methodology, the researcher should decide on the approach in which the study will be conducted. These include the research design and different types of research designs considered to be relevant to the study. For the purpose of this study, the researcher adopted qualitative and quantitative research designs which are discussed in detail below:

### 3.2.1 Research approach

According to Fouche and De Vos (2011), the topic of the research gives direction on which approach is more relevant to use for the study. The research approach can be qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods. According to Babbie (2007) and Descombe (2005), the quantitative approach is numerical. It uses numbers to describe certain phenomenon in order to generalize it to the interest population. Contrary to quantitative study, qualitative study does not use any numbers in describing the phenomenon that is being studied (Babbie, 2007). The mixed method research is a mixture of both quantitative and qualitative approaches used in one study (Maree, 2007).

This study used mixed methods approach and this involved using both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. According to Creswell (2003:19), mixed methods research involves gathering both numeric information as well as text information. This means that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information. Burns and Grove (2003:173) state that mixed methods research involves integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to generate new knowledge and can involve either concurrent or sequential use of these two classes of methods to follow a line of inquiry. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used mixed methods research. This was done because the mixed method research approach allows the researcher to corroborate data obtained from both qualitative and quantitative sources.

Babbie (2005) argues that the qualitative study has to do with experiences, feelings and attitudes and it takes place in a natural environment. Furthermore, “qualitative research aims to explore, describe and explain persons’ experiences, behaviours, interactions and social context without the use of statistical procedures or quantification, but rather, through textual data or word” (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott & Davidson, 2002:717). Similarly, qualitative research is used in studying human behaviour and certain issues linked to humans that are not measured in numbers (Rudnick, 2014). In addition, Lee (2014:94) highly converges with the two sources’ explanations stated above as he clarifies that “qualitative research is used for addressing ‘how’ questions rather than

‘how many’ for understanding real life from the perspective of those being studied, and for examining and articulating processes”.

The researcher used qualitative approach because it strongly correlates with the main characteristics of the study. The researcher sought to explore and describe the perceptions of ABET learners about ABET practitioners’ turnover at the Witbank education circuit. On the one hand, the study explored, described and provided broader insight regarding ABET learners’ perceptions regarding ABET practitioner’s turnover. On the other hand, quantitative research relies primarily on the collection of quantitative data (Bernard, 2002:27). According to Aliaga and Gunderson (1999:83), quantitative research explains phenomenon by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods, in particular statistics. The researcher used quantitative research as it works on the assumption that human cognition and behaviour are highly predictable and explainable. This was beneficial in the formulation of the hypothesis which was then be studied and proven to be either true or false. Quantitative research is also useful in the making of questionnaires where participants may answer yes or no to question and then the results can be used to make predictions.

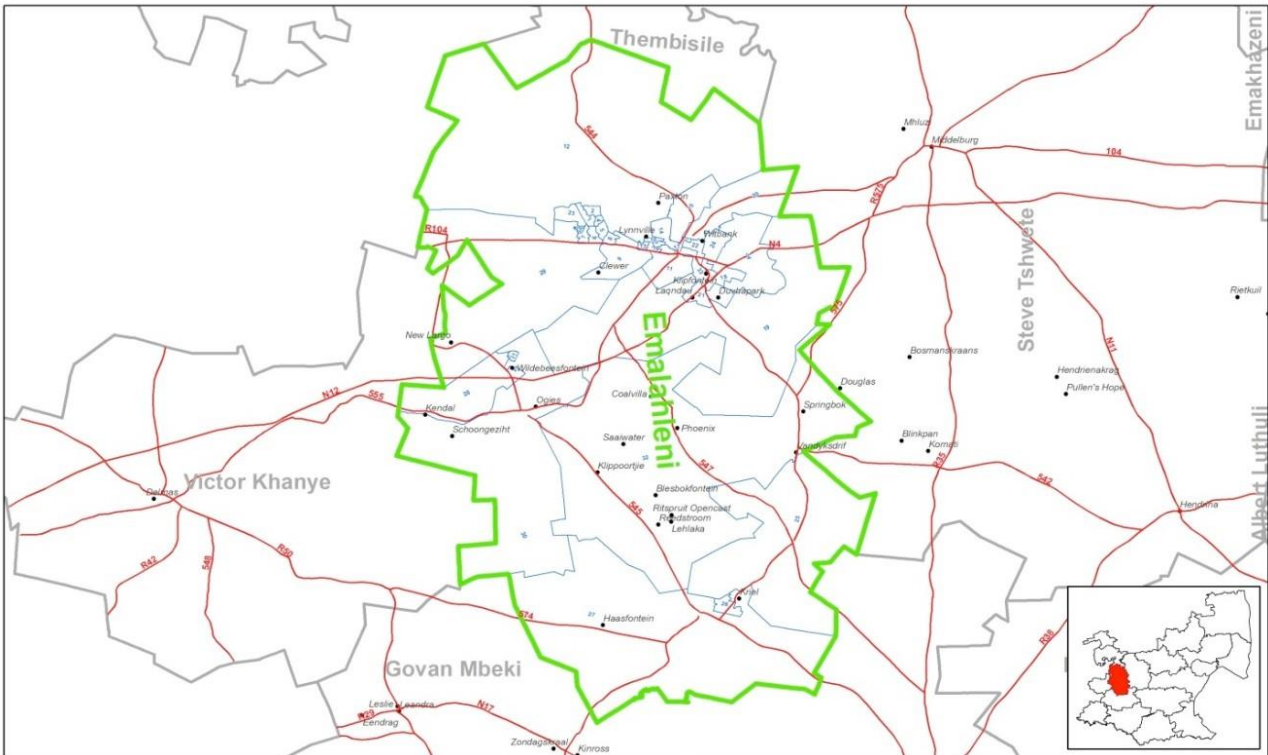
### **3.3 STUDY AREA**

According to Miller and Salkind (2002) as cited by Burns and Groove (2011:40), research setting is the location in which a research study is conducted. This study was conducted at Mpumalanga province, Nkangala Education District under Witbank Circuit at Emalahleni sub-district. Emalahleni is situated about 133km east of Johannesburg. Emalahleni is situated in the west of the capital city of Mpumalanga, Nelspruit, and the distance between Emalahleni and Nelspruit is 220 km.

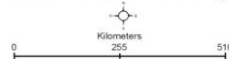
Emalahleni Local Municipality is strategically located within the Mpumalanga provincial context as it serves the function of a gateway municipality and town into the province for eight of the nine provinces of South Africa. Its proximity to the Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni and the Tshwane

Metropolitan Municipalities, which jointly constituted the largest economy in the country, serves the municipality favourably.

### 3.3.1 Map of eMalahleni



LOCALITY MAP OF EMALAHLENI(MP312)



Legend	
<span style="border: 2px solid green; padding: 2px;"> </span>	eMalahleni(MP312)
<span style="border-bottom: 2px solid red; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Main Roads
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 5px; height: 5px; background-color: black; margin-right: 5px;"></span>	Main Towns
<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span>	Municipal Varies 2011
<span style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span>	Local Municipalities 2011

Cartographer: Mulovhedzi N.E  
Date: 01 November 2012  
Tel: 013 762 0000/ 076 430 7873  
E-Mail: ndivhuwom@statssa.gov.za  
GCS: Hartbeespoek 1994

eMalahleni Local Municipality (2017); Statistics South Africa (2012)

### **3.4 POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

According to Gravetter and Forzano (2012: 138), “a population is the entire set of individuals of interest on a researcher”. Similarly, a population is a particular group of individuals who share characteristics that are of the researcher’s interest (Greeff, 2011: 223). Bless et al.’s (2006: 96) definition correlates with the two definitions given above as they also aver that population involves the group of objects or individuals that portray characteristics of the researcher’s interest. The research population comprised all ABET learners, ABET practitioners and ABET District Coordinator within the Witbank education circuit.

### **3.5 SAMPLING**

It is not easy to conduct a study to the entire population that is relevant to the interest of the researcher because of time and cost constrains. Therefore, a small group called a sample is used to represent the entire population (Babbie, 2005: 113). Sampling is a strategy that is used to utilise part of the population in the study (Maree, 2007: 79). Similarly, sampling is used to select a group of individuals that represents a population (Babbie, 2005: 113). The sample of this study consisted of ABET level Three and Four learners, ABET practitioners, the ABET centre manager and ABET District Coordinator found within the Witbank education circuit. The researcher chose the Witbank education circuit because it would be cost effective and convenient for him to access participants in this region as he works in the area. Furthermore, the Witbank circuit highly represents the population of ABET learners and practitioners in the district.

#### **3.5.1 Sampling technique**

The researcher used non-probability sampling technique in conducting this study. In non-probability sampling, chances of participants to be selected are unknown because the size of the population is unknown to the researcher (Strydom & Delpont, 2011:391). The non-probability

sampling that was used in this study is purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, the participants are selected based on the participants' qualities that the researcher regarded as of relevance to the study to be researched (Denscombe, 2005:15. In this study, the individuals who did not meet the requirement, were excluded. The selection criteria for participation in the study was as follows:

### **3.5.2 Sample Size:**

- The learners, practitioners, centre managers and District Coordinator who have been involved with ABET centres within the Witbank education circuit for more than a year;
- Newly enrolled ABET learners, newly employed ABET practitioners, and ABET centre managers were not allowed to take part in this study because the researcher was expecting to obtain data from participants who had been in the programme for a period long enough to have witnessed ABET practitioner turnover and its impact; and
- A total of sixty two (62) research participants were selected from six (6) ABET centres across the Witbank education circuit. The researcher identified and recruited forty (40) ABET learners, twenty (20) ABET practitioners, one (1) ABET centre manager, and one (1) ABET District Coordinator to participate in the study. The researcher made efforts to ensure that the participants were evenly spread across the circuit to balance the information from all areas that constitute the circuit.

### 3.6 DATA COLLECTION

Below is the description of how the researcher collected data from participants.

#### Methods of data collection

The researcher used two data collection tools, namely; interview guide for semi-structured interviews (qualitative data) and a questionnaire for quantitative data.

According to Greeff (2011:352), “Semi-structured interviews are used to gain a detailed picture of a participant’s beliefs about perceptions or accounts of a particular topic”. According to Denscombe (2005:167), in semi-structured interviews, the researcher prepares a list of questions that will provide relevant answers. However, the participant has an opportunity to elaborate more on their answers as the questions are open-ended. Moreover, the researcher conducted the semi-structured interviews by using interview guide, which consists of open-ended questions that he had planned to ask in order to collect data relevant to the study. According to Greeff (2011:352), the questions covered in the interview guide should be relevant to the study in order to obtain relevant data. It is very important for a researcher to be familiar with the questions he wants to ask as this creates a flow in a conversation (Babbie, 2007:314).

The researcher made use of a digital recorder when conducting interviews with the consent from the participants to collect information. According to Creswell (2013:166), a digital recorder can be used in collecting data. However, notes should also be made.

Additionally, questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from participants. According to McMillan (1993:23), a questionnaire is an economical object with standardized questions which ensures anonymity. Questionnaires are based on an established set of questions with fixed wording and sequence of presentations, as well as a more or less precise indication of how to answer each question (Bless & Higson, 2000:105). The researcher used a structured questionnaire. The researcher chose a day to distribute the questionnaires. The researcher collected the same questionnaires the day after the distribution. The questionnaires were collected for data analysis.

### **3.7 PILOT STUDY**

According to Burton (2000b:426), a pilot study is done so as to remove major biases, check wording in questions or to test whether the questionnaire solicits the required data from the participants. A pilot study is a mini-version of a full – scale study or a trial run done in preparation of the complete study. The latter is also called a feasibility study (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2004: 187). For the pilot study of this research, the researcher interviewed three participants comprising of an ABET learner, ABET practitioner and an ABET Centre Manager. The above participants also received three questionnaires to complete for the purpose of collecting quantitative data. The participants selected for the pilot study possessed the same characteristics as the final 62 participants who participated in the study. The three participants chosen for the pilot study were not be part of the final study of this research. This pilot study was done to check whether the data collection tools were able to collect the kind and quality of data they were designed to collect. The data collection tools were modified accordingly as they were found to require further minor modifications.

### **3.8 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis is a mechanism for reducing and organising data to produce findings that require interpretation by the researcher (Burns & Grove, 200-3:479). According to De Vos (2002:339), data analysis is a challenging and creative process characterised by an intimate relationship between the researcher and the participants and the data generated. Two data analysis methods were used, namely, thematic analysis and statistical analysis. The quantitative data collected through questionnaires was analysed using a computer programme called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0. The quantitative data is presented in tabular form, showing frequencies and percentages. In qualitative research, data analysis is a process of understanding and making sense of the information which the researcher has collected so that it can be communicated to others (Creswell, 2009:183). Blank (2004:188) asserts that it is a process of organising the mass of data into different categories to discover themes emerging from the information. Qualitative data analysis occurs concurrently with data collection to

afford the researcher the opportunity to abandon data collection techniques which are not working for the study and adopting those that works to fulfil the goal of the study (Merriam, 2002:14).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher analysed the data guided by the following eight steps of Tesch in Creswell (2009:186).

- The researcher wrote down word for word the interviews he audio-taped. Once he had completed this, he went through the transcriptions to familiarize himself with the content. He made some notes as he read and made sense of the content.
- The researcher made a random selection of pieces of document from the transcripts produced. He then went through it and made sense of its contents. He noted his thoughts in the margins of the document.
- When the researcher completed this task for several participants, he identified emerging themes from the transcripts. He put similar themes together. He also listed these themes in columns headed “frustration”, “sadness”, “demoralized”, “anger”, “disruptions and “disorganised”.
- The researcher then found a fitting abbreviation for each of the identified themes.
- The researcher made a final decision on the abbreviation for each theme or category and alphabetized the codes.
- The researcher used the cut-and paste method to assemble the data or material belonging to each theme or category in one place and did a preliminary analysis.
- Where necessary, the researcher repeated or revisited the cycle or recoded the existing data.
- The researcher started to report on his research findings. Any methodological challenges experienced and their solutions and effects on the research were highlighted.

### **3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In any research study involving human beings, it is important to consider the human dignity of the people participating in the study (Gilbert, 2008:146). This is achieved through consideration of ethical principles. Ethics are the principles which guide the conduct of the social research (Ramcharan & Cutcliffe, 2001:359). David and Sutton (2011:30) allude that ethics are principles which guide the researcher to protect participants from the possible harm and to preserve their rights.

In this study, the researcher obtained approval to conduct the research through the district ABET Co-ordinator. Additionally, the researcher also ensured ethical practices to ascertain respect for the human dignity of the participants by applying the following ethical considerations:

#### **3.9.1 Voluntary informed consent**

Informed consent is a “procedure used to safeguard the rights of the participants to know that research is being conducted and to approve their participation” (Homan in Franklin, Rowland, Fox & Nicolson, 2012:1731). Sin (2005:279) also takes the view that research should be based on freely given informed consent to the research participants who have been provided with enough information on what is being done to or extracted from them, the potential risks as well as the benefits for their participation in the study. Informed consent is therefore, based on the notion that the participants of the research should be allowed to agree or refuse to participate in the light of comprehensive information concerning the nature and the purpose of the study. During the recruitment stage, the researcher explained to the participants that they have a right to choose to accept or refuse participating in the study. Participants were also provided with enough information on the kind of questions they would be asked and their right to withdraw or renegotiate consent at any point so that they could make an informed decision to participate voluntarily in the study. The researcher further provided them with a standardized form, which asked them to formally agree in writing that they have decided to take part at their own free will.

### **3.9.2 Anonymity/confidentiality**

Confidentiality refers to information that has been communicated in trust or confidence where disclosure would result in prejudice (Giordano, O'Reilly, Taylor & Dogra, 2007:264). In the view of Goredema-Braid (2010: 51), confidentiality means assuring and keeping the promise that specific details pertaining to what the participant has divulged will not be passed on to others whereas anonymity refers to the protection of specific identities of individuals involved within the research process. Anonymity is seen as a mechanism through which confidentiality is maintained.

### **3.9.3 Management of information**

Confidentiality has implications for the management of information. The researcher needs to be vigilant when disseminating research results to ensure that people are not identified from the findings (Engel & Schutt, 2009:64). It is therefore critical to alter the participants' real names; thus creating special identity codes such as pseudonyms or case numbers when reporting (Berg, 2009:90). To further ensure anonymity and confidentiality, the researcher ensured that data collected was stored separately from the identifying details of the participants and pseudonyms were used to protect the participants' identities. The audiotapes and the transcripts were destroyed when the study was completed.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion of this chapter, the subsequent research methodologies that the researcher followed when investigating the perceptions of ABET learners about the ABET practitioner turn-over at the Witbank education circuit were presented. The reasons of the choice and use of mixed research methodologies were provided in the chapter. The chapter also discussed the research design, research methodologies, study area, population of the study, sampling method and sampling size, data collection, data collection instruments, pilot study and data analysis methods as well as ethical considerations. The findings based on the analysis and interpretation of the data is presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

The following chapter presents data together with its analysis and interpretations. The first part will deal with quantitative data collected through questionnaires, followed by qualitative data collected through an interview schedule.

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter outlined research design and methodologies that the researcher followed when conducting the study. It was indicated that the study employed two methodologies: qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This chapter covers the analysis and interpretation of data of which the main aim of the study was to investigate the perceptions of ABET learners about the Adult Basic Education and Training practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit. Quantitative data which was obtained using questionnaires were analyzed using graphical statistics. Qualitative data obtained through interview schedule were analyzed and presented in tabular and narrative form. Each analysis is followed by a brief interpretation on the findings.

#### **4.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED USING QUESTIONNAIRES**

In this section, the researcher analyzed quantitative data which was obtained by means of survey questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed to 61 participants. The data is presented in a tabular form and a synthesis of the interpretation is provided.

#### 4.2.1 Section A: Biographical details of respondents

The researcher presents the biographical information of the respondents in this study. The information is presented in tabular form followed by a synthesis of the findings. The biographical information is divided into two sections; one relating to the ABET learners and the other relating to ABET practitioners.

##### 4.2.1 (a) ABET learners' biographical information

**Table 4.1: Gender of respondents (ABET learners)**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Male	10	25%
Female	30	75%
Total	40	100%

Table 4.1 created by the researcher

Out of the total number of forty (40) ABET learner respondents who participated in the study, the majority of them, seventy-five percent (75%) were females while only twenty-five percent (25%) were males. This could be attributed to the fact that males are mainly bread winners and prefer to take more stable fulltime employment which does not allow them time to study while most females are unemployed and not skilled which make them readily available to take up study opportunities whenever available.

**Table 4.2: Employment history of ABET learners**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Employed	15	38%
Unemployed	25	62%
Total	40	100%

Table 4.2 created by the researcher

Table 4.2 above shows that the majority of ABET learner respondents (62%) are unemployed, while only thirty-eight percent (38%) are employed. This situation can be attributed to the fact that the majority of the respondents (75%) are females who are mainly housewives with little education and unemployable. Due to the fast changing social and economic conditions in society, women are becoming more aware of opportunities of personal and career development and taking advantage of such opportunities. The ABET programme is one such programme that tends to attract most women.

**Table 4.3: Age of ABET learners**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
20-30 years	25	63%
31-40 years	10	25%
41-50 years	05	12%
51 and above	00	00%
Total	40	100%

Table 4.3 created by the researcher

Table 4.3 above shows that the majority of ABET learners (63%) who participated in the study were of youthful age (20-30 years), with a small percentage (25%) of middle age (31-40 years) and a smaller percentage (15%) between the ages of 41–50 years. This may be explained by the fact that young people are still eager to learn and have dreams and aspirations likely to propel them towards study and career opportunities whilst individuals at middle to advanced age tend to be less

interested in any career and study opportunities due to the fact that they are at a tipping point of their life cycle.

**Table 4.4: Level of ABET learners**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Level 3	20	50%
Level 4	20	50%
Total	40	100%

Table 4.4 created by the researcher

Table 4.4 above illustrates the distribution of ABET learners between the two levels, Level 3 and Level 4. The results shows that there is an even distribution of fifty/fifty between the two levels. The ABET programme consist of 4 levels and therefore, levels 3 and 4 represent the senior levels towards the ABET exit point.

#### ***4.2.1 (b) ABET practitioners' biographical information***

The following sub-section presents the biographical information of ABET practitioners as the second category of respondents in this study.

**Table 4.5: Gender of ABET Practitioners**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Male	5	25%
Female	15	75%
Total	20	100%

Table 4.5 created by the researcher

Out of the total number of twenty (20) ABET practitioners who participated in the study, the majority of them, seventy-five percent (75%) were females while only twenty-five percent (25%) were males. This could be attributed to the fact that males are mainly bread winners and prefer to take more stable fulltime employment and are less likely to take fixed-term employment contracts as it is the case with ABET practitioners.

**Table 4.6: Working experience of ABET practitioners**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
1-3 years	20	100%
4-7 years	00	00%
7-10 years	00	00%
Total	20	100%

Table 4.6 created by the researcher

Table 4.6 shows that all respondents (100%) in the ABET practitioner category had 1-3 years' service with the ABET programme. This can be explained by the fact that the ABET programme is structured and designed to offer fixed-term employment tenure. As a result of the above situation, ABET practitioners tend to continue job-hunting throughout their stay at the ABET programme.

**Table 4.7: Age of ABET practitioners**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
20-30 years	03	15%
31-40 years	15	75%
41-50 years	02	10%
51 and above	00	00%
Total	20	100%

Table 4.7 created by the researcher

The above table shows that the majority (75%) of ABET practitioner respondents were between the ages of 31 to 40 years, while 15% were between the ages of 20 to 30 years and a small percentage (10%) between the ages of 41 to 50 years. This 75% can be attributed to the fact that most people between the ages 31 and 40 had tried different employment options and failed and are able to settle for anything available to keep them going until another opportunity comes. Often, this category of employees are qualified, but unable to secure desired jobs of their choice in line with their qualifications. As a result, programmes such as ABET offer temporary relief while they are on the lookout for better job opportunities.

**Table 4.8: Academic qualifications of ABET practitioners**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Higher Certificate in ABET	5	25%
Diploma	15	75%
Degree (e.g. BA Ed)	0	00%
Total	20	100%

Table 4.8 created by the researcher

Table 4.8 above shows that most (75%) of the respondents are in possession of Diplomas and highly marketable for jobs, while the remaining 25% only possess the higher certificate in ABET and tend to be confined to ABET-related employment. The above picture has serious implications for the stability of the ABET programme given that those ABET practitioners with diplomas can easily find employment anywhere else outside the ABET programme while those with the higher certificate in ABET may still find employment with private or non-governmental ABET organisations or institutions.

The foregoing section presented the biographical information of the two categories of respondents who participated in the study. The information shows that in both categories, the majority of respondents were females between the ages of 20 to 40 years. Most of the ABET learners were enrolled for the ABET levels 3 and 4 and were unemployed while most ABET practitioners were in possession of a diploma and 1-3 years working experience with the ABET programme.

#### 4.2.2 Section B: Challenges faced by ABET learners and practitioners

This sub-section is divided into two sub-sections; one relating to challenges faced by ABET learners and the other relating to challenges faced by ABET practitioners regarding staff-turn-over.

##### Section B1: Challenges faced by ABET learners in relation to ABET practitioner turn-over

In this sub-section, data was analyzed using tables and further divided into five themes which arose from the survey questionnaires of respondents. The first theme analyzed was based on the challenges faced by ABET learners in relation to ABET practitioner turn-over.

**Table 4.9: I am negatively affected by ABET practitioner staff turn-over**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	36	90%
Agree	04	10%
Not Sure	00	00%
Disagree	00	00%
Strongly disagree	00	00%
TOTAL	40	100%

Table 4.9 created by the researcher

The above table confirms that ABET learners are negatively affected by ABET practitioner turn-over. About 90% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree with the statement while 10% agreed. The responses in this regard affirm beyond reasonable doubt that the statement is true as stated. ABET practitioner turn-over affects ABET learners negatively.

**Table 4.10: My motivation to study is affected by ABET Practitioners turn-over**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	34	85%
Agree	06	15%
Not Sure	00	00%
Disagree	00	00%
Strongly disagree	00	00%
TOTAL	40	100%

Table 4.10 created by the researcher

Similar to the statement in Table 4.9, Table 4.10 tested the statement that ABET learners' motivation to study is affected by ABET practitioner turn-over. These findings show that there is consensus that ABET learners' motivation is indeed affected by ABET practitioner turn-over with an overwhelming 85% respondents strongly agreeing while 15% agrees. This confirms that ABET practitioner turn-over does affect ABET learners' level of motivation.

**Table 4.11: ABET Practitioner turn-over influences my study progress**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	38	95%
Agree	02	5%
Not Sure	00	00%
Disagree	00	00%

Strongly disagree	00	00%
TOTAL	40	100%

Table 4.11 created by the researcher

Table 4.11 shows that ABET practitioner turn-over has an influence on ABET learners' study progress. An overwhelming majority of respondents (95%) strongly agreed with the statement while the remaining 5% of respondents agreed with the statement. This confirms that ABET practitioner turn-over does influence ABET learners' progress.

**Table 4.12: ABET practitioner turn-over affects my relationship with my educators**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	23	58%
Agree	17	42%
Not Sure	00	0%
Disagree	00	0%
Strongly disagree	00	0%
TOTAL	40	100%

Table 4.12 created by the researcher

The above Table 4.12 shows that ABET practitioner turn-over does affect ABET learners' relationship with educators. The majority of respondents (58%) strongly agreed with the statement, while 42% agreed. This implies that all respondents agreed with the statement to varying degrees which affirms the statement.

**Table 4.13: ABET Practitioner turn-over affects my willingness to advise others to join the ABET programme as learners**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	23	58%
Agree	17	42%
Not Sure	00	00%
Disagree	00	00%
Strongly disagree	00	00%
TOTAL	40	100%

Table 4.13 created by the researcher

The above Table 4.13 shows that ABET practitioner turn-over affects ABET learners' willingness to advise others to join the ABET programme as learners. Similar to Table 12, about 58% of respondents strongly agreed while 42% of respondents agreed that indeed, ABET practitioner turn-over does affect ABET learners' willingness to advise others to join the ABET programme as learners. This implies that almost all respondents agreed with the statement.

## **Section B2: Challenges faced by ABET practitioners regarding their turn-over**

In this sub-section, data was analysed in a tabular form and further divided into five themes which arose from the survey questionnaires of the respondents. The first theme analyzed was based on the challenges faced by ABET learners in relation to ABET practitioner turn-over.

**Table 4.14: Overall, I am satisfied with my job**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	00	0%
Agree	00	0%
Not Sure	00	0%
Disagree	00	0%
Strongly disagree	20	100%
TOTAL	20	100%

Table 4.14 created by the researcher

The above Table 4.14 shows that almost all ABET practitioner respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that they are overall satisfied with their job. This implies that ABET practitioners are dissatisfied with their job.

**Table 4.15: Overall, I feel secured in my job**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	00	0%
Agree	00	0%
Not Sure	00	0%
Disagree	00	0%
Strongly disagree	20	100%
TOTAL	20	100%

Table 4.15 created by the researcher

The above table shows that the overwhelming majority (100%) of ABET practitioner respondents do not feel secured in their jobs. All respondents indicated that they strongly disagreed that they

generally feel secured in their jobs. Thus, it is confirmed that ABET practitioners are dissatisfied with their job.

**Table 4.16: I am generally anxious about losing my job**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	20	100%
Agree	00	0%
Not Sure	00	0%
Disagree	00	0%
Strongly disagree	00	0%
TOTAL	20	100%

Table 4.16 created by the researcher

The above Table 4.16 confirms that ABET practitioners are generally anxious about losing their jobs. This table reaffirms what was earlier affirmed in Table 4.15 that ABET practitioners are generally dissatisfied with their jobs and are additionally fearful of losing their jobs. The table shows that all respondents confirmed that they are anxious about losing their jobs.

**Table 4.17: I generally feel that I have adequate support**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	00	0%
Agree	00	0%
Not Sure	02	10%
Disagree	07	35%
Strongly disagree	11	55%
TOTAL	20	100%

Table 4.17 created by the researcher

Table 4.17 above shows that almost all respondents (100%) disagree with the statement that they generally feel that they have adequate support. About 55% of the respondents indicated that they strongly disagree with the statement, while the remaining 35% disagree with the statement that they generally feel that they have adequate support. This implies that they generally feel that they do not have adequate support as ABET practitioners.

**Table 4.18: I am happy with my salary and conditions of work**

Response	Frequencies	Percentages
Strongly agree	00	0%
Agree	00	0%
Not Sure	00	0%
Disagree	00	0%
Strongly disagree	20	100%
TOTAL	20	100%

Table 4.18 created by the researcher

Table 4.18 above shows that the overwhelming majority (100%) of ABET practitioner respondents strongly disagree with the statement that they are happy with their salary and conditions of work. This implies that ABET practitioners are unhappy with their salary and conditions of work.

#### **4.2.3 Section C: Ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experiences of the ABET programme**

The following section will present findings relating to survey questions under the broad theme of ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experiences of the ABET programme. This survey questions were administered to both categories of respondents (ABET learners and ABET practitioners) in the same manner and form and the results are presented jointly.

**Table 4.19: Increase learner’s contact sessions with ABET practitioners**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	40	18	100%	90%
Agree	00	2	0%	10%
Not Sure	00	00	0%	0%
Disagree	00	00	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	00	00	0%	0%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.19 created by the researcher

Table 4.19 above shows that both ABET learners and practitioners agree that increasing learner’s contact sessions with ABET practitioners is one of the ways and strategies of improving the experience of ABET learners of the programme. All ABET learners strongly agree with the statement while 90% of ABET practitioners strongly agreed with the statement and the remaining 10% agree with the statement.

**Table 4.20: Recognition of prior learning and experience in the ABET programme**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	25	17	63%	85%
Agree	10	02	25%	10%
Not Sure	05	01	12%	5%
Disagree	00	00	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	00	00	0%	0%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.20 created by the researcher

Table 4.20 above shows that both ABET learners and practitioners agree that recognition of prior learning and experience in the ABET programme is important as one of the ways and strategies of improving the experience of ABET learners in the ABET programme. An overwhelming majority of both ABET learners and practitioners (63% and 85% respectively), strongly agree with the statement while 25% of ABET learners and 10% of ABET practitioners agree with the statement and the remaining 12% and 5% of Adult learners and practitioners respectively were not sure of the statement.

**Table 4.21: Integration of learning areas**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	30	15	75%	75%
Agree	08	04	20%	20%
Not Sure	02	01	5%	5%
Disagree	00	00	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	00	00	0%	0%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.21 created by the researcher

Table 4.21 shows that the overwhelming majority, 75% of both ABET learners and practitioners strongly agree that integration of learning areas is one of the important ways and strategies of improving the experience of ABET learners of the ABET programme. Another 20% respectively agreed with the statement, while 5% respectively were not sure. This implies that an overwhelming 95% affirmed the statement.

**Table 4.22: Usage of interactive learning materials that allow learners' input and feedback in teaching and learning**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	35	19	88%	95%
Agree	05%	01	12%	5%
Not Sure	00	00	0%	0%
Disagree	00	00	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	00	00	0%	0%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.22 created by the researcher

Table 4.22 above shows that both ABET learners and practitioners agree that the usage of interactive learning materials that allow learner input and feedback in teaching and learning is one of the ways and strategies of improving the experience of ABET learners of the ABET programme. All ABET learners and practitioners affirmed the statement with an overwhelming 88% and 95% of ABET learners and practitioners respectively strongly agreeing with the statement and the remaining 12% and 5% agreeing with the statement.

**Table 4.23: Make use of relevant practical examples and scenarios in teaching and learning**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	32	14	80%	70%
Agree	05	05	13%	25%
Not Sure	03	01	07%	5%
Disagree	00	00	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	00	00	0%	0%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.23 created by the researcher

Table 4.23 above shows that both ABET learners and practitioners agree that making use of relevant practical examples and scenarios in teaching and learning is one of the ways and strategies of improving the experience of ABET learners of the ABET programme. The overwhelming majority of ABET learners (80%) and practitioners (70%) strongly agree with the statement while 13% and 25% of ABET learners and practitioners respectively agreed with the statement and the remaining 7% and 5% ABET learners and practitioners were not sure about the statement respectively.

#### **4.2.4 Section D: Recommendations aimed at resolving the challenges faced by ABET learners at the Witbank ABET centres.**

The following section presents findings relating to the recommendations aimed at resolving the challenges faced by ABET learners at the Witbank ABET centres. The recommendations are arranged according to five (5) themes surveyed through the questionnaire. The findings on each theme are as follows:

**Table 4.24: Improve the working conditions of ABET practitioners**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	32	20	80%	100%
Agree	08	00	20%	00%
Not Sure	00	00	00%	00%
Disagree	00	00	00%	00%
Strongly disagree	00	00	00%	00%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.24 created by the researcher

Table 4.24 above shows that the overwhelming majority, 80% and 100% of ABET learners and practitioners respectively strongly agree that improving the working conditions of ABET practitioners should be part of the recommendations aimed at resolving challenges faced ABET practitioners at Witbank ABET centres. The remaining 20% of ABET learners agrees with the statement. This implies that almost all respondents affirmed the statement.

**Table 4.25: Employ ABET practitioners on a full-time basis with full benefits**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	36	20	90%	100%
Agree	04	00	10%	00%
Not Sure	00	00	00%	00%
Disagree	00	00	00%	00%
Strongly disagree	00	00	00%	00%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.25 created by the researcher

Table 4.25 shows that the overwhelming majority of ABET learners and practitioners, 90% and 100% respectively, strongly agree that employing ABET practitioners on a full-time basis with full benefits is one of the ways that could be implemented in resolving challenges faced by ABET practitioners at Witbank ABET centres. The remaining 10% of ABET learners agree with the statement. This implies that almost all respondents affirmed the statement.

**Table 4.26: Incorporate skills development related programmes**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	40	18	100%	90%
Agree	00	02	00%	10%
Not Sure	00	00	00%	00%
Disagree	00	00	00%	00%
Strongly disagree	00	00	00%	00%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.26 created by the researcher

Table 4.26 above shows that the overwhelming majority of ABET learners and practitioners, 100% and 90% respectively, strongly agree that incorporating skills development related programmes is one of the ways that could be implemented in resolving challenges faced by ABET practitioners at Witbank ABET centres. The remaining 10% of ABET practitioners agree with the statement. This implies that almost all respondents affirmed the statement.

**Table 4.27: Build dedicated ABET centres**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	32	19	80%	95%
Agree	03	01	08%	05%
Not Sure	05	00	12%	00%
Disagree	00	00	00%	00%
Strongly disagree	00	00	00%	00%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.27 created by the researcher

Table 4.27 above shows that the overwhelming majority of ABET learners and practitioners, 80% and 95% respectively, strongly agree that building dedicated ABET centres is one of the important recommendations for resolving challenges faced by ABET learners at the Witbank ABET centres. Another 8% and 5% of ABET learners and practitioners respectively agreed with the statement, while 12% of ABET learners was not sure. This implies that an overwhelming 88% and 100% of ABET learners and practitioners respectively affirmed the statement.

**Table 4.28: Increase the duration and frequency of ABET learners and practitioners' contact**

Response	Frequencies		Percentages	
	AL	AP	AL	AP
Strongly agree	31	19	78%	95%
Agree	08	01	20%	05%
Not Sure	01	00	02%	00%
Disagree	00	00	00%	00%
Strongly disagree	00	00	00%	00%
TOTAL	40	20	100%	100%

Table 4.28 created by the researcher

Table 4.28 above shows that the overwhelming majority of ABET learners and practitioners, 78% and 95% respectively, strongly agree that increasing the duration and frequency of ABET learners and practitioners contact is one of the important ways and strategies of improving the experience of ABET learners of the ABET programme. Another 20% and 5% of learners and practitioners respectively agreed with the statement, while only 2% of ABET learners were not sure. This implies that an overwhelming 98% and 100% of ABET learners and practitioners respectively affirmed the statement.

### **4.3. ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED USING INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

This section presents findings of the qualitative element of the study. The findings are presented according to the structure of the interview schedule used as a research instrument for the collection of qualitative data. The qualitative data is accordingly presented in thematic and narrative form.

**Question 1:** The experiences of the ABET with regards to staff turn-over

The first question sought to find out the experiences of the ABET with regards to staff turn-over at Witbank education Circuit.

**Participant A:**

*“Most ABET practitioners take ABET as a waiting station for better jobs as they go and seek employment just to keep them busy and getting money to apply for better jobs and leave ABET immediately when they get a temporary or permanent job.”*

**Participant B:**

*“I acknowledged that staff turnover is indeed a major in ABET programme as the Department don’t take ABET seriously. The Department keeps on promising good things to both learners and practitioners but the promises are not unfulfilled.”*

**Question 2:** Knowledge of the challenges faced by ABET learners in relation to ABET practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit.

**Participant A:**

*“ABET learners struggles with trust and confidence when dealing with ABET practitioners due to high levels of ABET staff turnover. He also mentioned that ABET practitioner turnover leads to drop-outs and lack of progress amongst the adult learners.”*

**Participant B:**

*“The circumstances are not conducive to the development of a bond between the learner and practitioner. As a result, the ABET learners’ progression in the study programme gets negatively affected due to low morale and demotivation.”*

**Question 3:** Suggestions about different ways and strategies of improving ABET learners’ experience of the ABET programme.

**Participant A:**

*“By formalizing recognition of prior learning. This is based on the appreciation of the fact that most adult learners come with a variety of work experiences that could add value to the programme and opportunities should be created for the recognition of such prior learning. Various creative ways of learning should be encouraged including the use of drama and music as mediums of learning in class”.*

**Participant B:**

*“Learners must be motivated to attend classes regularly and contact sessions should also be increased from six to 20 hours per week that can also help both the learners and practitioners.”*

**Question 4:** Recommendations regarding ways of resolving challenges faced by ABET learners at the Witbank ABET centres?

**Participant A:**

*“The basic working conditions of ABET practitioners needs to be improved. This will automatically translate into job satisfaction and long tenure, thereby counteracting current levels of high staff turnover. ABET practitioners should also be afforded relevant skills development programmes to ensure continuous professional growth and development”.*

**Participant B:**

*“Mechanisms should be put in place to continuously motivate learners in different ways so that they stay focused and stay in the programme until they complete. I also feel that there should be an introduction of ancillary health programmes that could lead us to some qualification. I also think that learners should be given information and guidance on establishing own cooperatives”.*

#### **4.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter dealt with presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected about the ABET practitioners’ turnover at the Witbank education circuit in order to advance recommendations on ways and strategies to address the problem. The research data were collected from two categories of respondents and participants; that is ABET learners as well as ABET practitioners. The findings of the study show that ABET practitioner turnover is indeed a real problem for the ABET programme at the Witbank education circuit. The collected data indicated that ABET learners struggle with trust and confidence when interacting with ABET practitioners; ABET practitioner turnover leads to drop-out and lack of progress amongst learners; it demotivates learners and

breaks the bond between learners and practitioners, which in turn, negatively affects their study progress.

The following chapter will present findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided data analysis and interpretation based on data collected through a questionnaire and interview schedule. The main purpose of this research study was to gain insight into the perceptions of ABET learners about the ABET practitioner turnover at the Witbank education circuit in order to advance recommendations on ways and strategies to address the problem. The study made use of mixed methods incorporating both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Consequently, questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. The collected data were then analysed and interpreted. This chapter provides findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

#### 5.2 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following section gives a summary of the main findings of the study incorporating both quantitative and qualitative aspects. The main findings are arranged in line with the research questions and objectives of the study.

##### 5.2.1 The experiences of the respondents and participants with regards to ABET staff turn-over

The quantitative data confirmed overwhelmingly (100%) that ABET practitioner turnover is a problem. With regards to the experiences of participants in both categories relating to staff turnover

in the ABET programme, all of them acknowledged that staff turnover is indeed a major challenge. ABET practitioners particularly emphasized the fact that even the ABET act acknowledges this challenge. They also highlighted that high levels of staff turnover amongst ABET practitioners is a world-wide problem not limited to South Africa. Amongst the specific challenges associated with ABET staff turnover, the participants mentioned the following: that despite ABET staff turnover being a major challenge, there is lack of commitment and recognition by government to address it decisively; that learners too, do not take the programme seriously; some participants indicated that most ABET practitioners take ABET as a waiting station for better jobs. Some of the participants indicated that there is a negative perception about ABET as it is generally perceived as a programme for the illiterates.

### **5.2.2 The challenges faced by adult learners in relation to ABET practitioner turn-over at the Witbank education circuit**

The quantitative data has undoubtedly confirmed that ABET practitioner turnover negatively affects adult learners. An overwhelming 100% of the respondents confirmed that adult learners are negatively affected and that the negative impact extends to impact negatively on motivation, morale, study progress and their relationships with practitioners. The participants indicated that ABET learners struggle with trust and confidence when dealing with ABET practitioners due to high levels of ABET staff turnover. They also mentioned that ABET practitioner turnover leads to drop-outs and lack of progress amongst the ABET learners. This is because of the fact that the circumstances are not conducive to the development of a bond between the learner and practitioner. As a result, the ABET learners' progression in the study programme gets negatively affected due to low morale and demotivation.

### 5.2.3 Ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experience of the programme

Regarding their suggestions about different ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experience of the programme, the participants suggested that learners should be motivated to attend classes regularly. They further suggested that contact session should be increased. There was also a suggestion that a strategic system of formalizing recognition of prior learning should be developed. This is based on the appreciation of the fact that most ABET learners come with a variety of work experiences that could add value to the programme and opportunities should be created for the recognition of such prior learning. They also suggested that various creative ways of learning should be encouraged including the use of drama and music as mediums of learning in class. This, they believe will make classes and contact sessions more interesting and allow for the appreciation of the diversity of cultures and religions in ABET classes.

The quantitative data surveyed the ratings given by respondents to a number of suggested solutions coming out of the qualitative data. An overwhelming 100% of respondents confirmed that one of the ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experience of the programme is to increase learners' contact sessions with ABET practitioners. The recognition of prior learning and experience as well as usage of interactive learning materials was rated the same, while integration of learning areas as well as usage of relevant practical examples and scenarios in teaching and learning was supported by the majority (95%) with only 5% of the respondents being unsure or neutral.

## 5.3 MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are the recommendations that have arisen from the findings of the study:

- The basic working conditions of ABET practitioners should be improved. This will automatically translate into job satisfaction and long tenure, thereby counteracting current levels of high staff turnover.

- ABET practitioners should be afforded relevant skills development programmes to ensure continuous professional growth and development. This can also be done by incorporating skills development in the ABET programme, for example, the inclusion of computer related skills development programmes.
- That learners should be continuously motivated in different ways to enable them stay focused and stay in the programme until they complete their qualification.
- The ancillary health programmes that could lead learners to some qualification should be introduced.
- Learners should be given information and guidance on establishing own cooperatives.

## 5.4 CONCLUSION

The research study investigated the perceptions of ABET learners about the ABET practitioner turnover at the Witbank education circuit in order to advance recommendations on ways and strategies to address the problems. Based on the findings of the study summarised above, it can be concluded that indeed ABET practitioner turnover is a real problem at the Witbank education circuit. Additionally, there is lack of commitment and recognition by government to address ABET practitioner turnover decisively. The ABET learners tend to not take the ABET programme seriously whereas most ABET practitioners take ABET as a waiting station for better jobs. ABET practitioner turnover negatively affects learners, particularly as it impacts negatively on motivation, morale, study progress and their relationship with practitioners. The ABET learners struggle with trust and confidence when dealing with ABET practitioners due to high levels of ABET staff turnover. The turnover of ABET practitioners leads to drop-outs and lack of progress amongst the ABET learners.

A number of strategies can be employed to address the challenge of ABET practitioners' turnover. Amongst others are the following: motivation of learners to attend classes regularly; increment of contact sessions; formalization and recognition of prior learning; encouragement of various creative ways of learning including the use of drama and music as mediums of learning in class;

usage of interactive learning materials; integration of learning areas as well as usage of relevant practical examples and scenarios in teaching and learning.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDY**

The study investigated. The researcher has realized that another area was not explored. It is recommended that future study should look into ways of improving the working conditions of ABET practitioners as well as how the ABET programme can be made to be learner-centred.

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## **ADDENDUM (A): A LETTER REQUESTING THE INDIVIDUAL'S PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

Dear Participant

I, **Mr. H.V. Ngobeni**, invite you to participate in a research project titled: **The perception of adult learners about the adult basic education and training practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit.**

The purpose of the research is to gain insight into the perceptions of adult learners about the ABET practitioners turnover at the Witbank education circuit in order to advance recommendations on ways and strategies to address the problem.

An hour of your time will be requested for you to complete the research questionnaire and participate in an interview provided you have signed the consent form to participate in the study. Field notes will also be taken to record your responses. During the interview the following questions will be directed to you:

- Share with me your experience of the ABET with regards to staff turn-over
- Share your knowledge of the challenges faced by ABET learners in relation to ABET practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit?
- Share your suggestions about different ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experience of the ABET programme?
- Your recommendations regarding ways of resolving challenges faced by ABET learners at the Witbank ABET centres?

Ultimately, the findings of the research will be presented to the Departmental Research and Ethics Committee in a form of a report and may be published in a professional journal. I wish to emphasise that pseudonyms will be used to protect your confidentiality and anonymity. Please do not hesitate to ask for clarification on any matter relating to the study.

Thank you in advance

.....

Mr H.V. Ngobeni

## **ADDENDUM (B): INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY**

I ..... volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by **Mr H.V Ngobeni**, a student from the University of Venda. I understand that the project is designed to gather information on the **perceptions of adult learners about the adult basic education and training practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit.**

My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty. If, however, I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.

Participation involves being interviewed only by the student researcher indicated above from the University of Venda. The interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes. I will also be requested to complete a research questionnaire as part of my participation in the study. Notes will be written during the interview.

I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect my anonymity.

I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

.....  
Signature

.....  
Date

## **ADDENDUM (C): INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **Introduction**

You are kindly requested to provide answers to these interview questions as honestly and precisely as possible, and responses to these questions will be treated as confidential. This research aims to investigate the perceptions of adult learners about the adult basic education and training practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit.

- Share with me your experience of the ABET programme with regards to staff turn-over

.....  
.....

- Share your knowledge of the challenges faced by adult learners in relation to ABET practitioners turn-over at the Witbank education circuit?

.....  
.....

- Share your suggestions about different ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experience of the ABET programme?

.....  
.....

- Your recommendations regarding ways of resolving challenges faced by adult learners at the Witbank ABET centres?

.....  
.....

## **ADDENDUM (D): RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE: ADULT LEARNERS**

### **QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE: ADULT LEARNERS**

#### **Biographical data**

Pseudonym	
Category of participant	
Age	
Gender	
Race	
Years of experience with ABET	
ABET Level (Learners only)	

#### 1. Challenges faced by adult learners in relation to ABET practitioner turn-over

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I am negatively affected by ABET practitioner turn-over					
2. My motivation to study is negatively affected by Adult Educator turn-over					
3. ABET practitioner turn-over influence my study progress					

4. ABET practitioner turn-over affect my relationship with my educators					
5. ABET practitioner turn-over affect my willingness to advise others to join the ABET programme as learners.					

2. Ways and strategies of improving ABET learners' experience of the ABET programme

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1. Increase learner contact sessions with ABET practitioner					
2. Recognition of prior-learning and experience in the ABET programme					
3. Integration of learning areas.					
4. Usage of interactive learning materials that allows learner input and feedback in teaching and learning.					
5. Make use of relevant practical examples and scenarios in teaching and learning.					

3. Recommendations aimed at resolving the challenges faced by ABET learners at the Witbank ABET centres.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
1. Improve the working conditions of ABET practitioner					
2. Employ Adult Educators on a full-time basis with full benefits					
3. Incorporate skills development-related programmes.					
4. Build dedicated Adult Education centres					
5. Increase the duration and frequency of Adult learners and Educator contact.					

## **ADDENDUM (E): RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE: ADULT PRACTITIONERS**

### **QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE: ADULT PRACTITIONER**

#### **A. Biographical data**

Pseudonym	
Category of participant	
Age	
Gender	
Race	
Years of experience with ABET	
ABET Level (Learners only)	

**B. Questionnaire:**

**1. Challenges faced by ABET practitioners in relation to ABET practitioner turn-over**

	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
1. Overall, I am satisfied with my job					
2. Overall, I feel secure in my job					
3. I am generally anxious about losing my job					
4. I generally feel that I have adequate support					
5. I am happy with my salary and conditions of work					

**2. Ways and strategies of improving Adult Learners' experience of the ABET programme**

	<b><u>Strongly Agree</u></b>	<b><u>Agree</u></b>	<b><u>Not Sure</u></b>	<b><u>Strongly Disagree</u></b>	<b><u>Disagree</u></b>
1. Increase learner contact sessions with ABET practitioners					
2. Recognition of prior-learning and experience in the ABET programme					
3. Integration of learning areas.					
4. Usage of interactive learning materials that allows learner input and feedback in teaching and learning.					
5. Make use of relevant practical examples and scenarios in teaching and learning.					

3. **Recommendations aimed at resolving the challenges faced by adult learners at the Witbank ABET centres**

	<b><u>Strongly Agree</u></b>	<b><u>Agree</u></b>	<b><u>Not Sure</u></b>	<b><u>Strongly Disagree</u></b>	<b><u>Disagree</u></b>
1. Improve the working conditions of ABET practitioner					
2. Employ ABET practitioners on a full-time basis with full benefits					
3. Incorporate skills development-related programmes.					
4. Build dedicated Adult Education centres					
5. Increase the duration and frequency of ABET learners and practitioner contact.					