Language Studies Bursary Scheme Research Report

Submitted to the Department of Arts and Culture
South African Cultural Observatory

Language Studies Bursary Scheme
Research Report 28 JUNE 2019
First Draft

Submitted to the Department of Arts and Culture:
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Executive Summary

The aim of this research was to assess the impact of DAC Language Studies Bursaries on the students who received DAC Bursaries during the period 2015 to 2018. The Department of Arts and Culture is responsible for protection, preservations and support of the South African Arts, culture and heritage. To this end, bursaries were allocated made available to a number of student during the previously mentioned period in order to help the students complete their studies during the period under review. A structured questionnaire was used as a method of data collection. Two methods of data collection were applied, namely, emails and telephonic surveys. No sampling framework was formulated. The idea was to capture all students listed in the database. One hundred and ninety four (194) students were listed and only 94 could be reached and interviewed successfully.

The findings show that a large majority of the recipients were females. The results further show that a large number of the recipients were in their mid-40s at the time of taking up the bursary. The mean age of the respondents is 42 years. A large number of recipients were black compared to other races. More than half of the recipients were registered for higher degrees, namely, Honours and Masters’ Degrees with less than 10% registered for undergraduate degrees.

Approximately one-third of the respondents had not yet completed their studies at the time of conducting this research. This is due to a number of reasons, namely, supervisors related problems, insufficient funding, personal reasons including sicknesses. Only three (3) out of 29 students had cancelled their studies.

An overwhelming majority of the students were fully employed and just about 20% indicated that they were unemployed. Ninety three (93%) percent of them are employed in the language sector. Their occupations ranges from being a language teacher to being an interpreter in court.

There are various community engagement projects in which the bursary recipients are involved. This is a way in which the respondents are ploughing back to their communities. Some of these activities including voluntary work, reading for the partially sighted, training court interpreters and helping young people to read and write stories in IsiXhosa. Regarding self-employment, none of the students but one, who is self-employing. However, this respondent does not employ any staff in the business.

With respect to geographical location of the respondents, there is a noticeable change of locations from either the villages to the townships or from the townships to the suburbs. Nonetheless there is no strong evidence to suggest that these movements were due to accessing bursaries for their studies. There is also no strong evidence to suggest that the employment of these students is a direct consequence of access to bursary. Notwithstanding, it can be concluded that access to DAC Bursary has provided good opportunities to the students to qualify themselves in Higher Degrees and also to positively affect their communities; a situation which would not have been realised had it not been for the bursary. A much more holistic support programme to students is recommended.
1. Aims and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of DAC Language Studies Bursaries on the students who received DAC Bursaries during the period 2015 to 2018.

The period under review covers the following financial years:

- 2015/16
- 2016/17
- 2017/18
- 2018/19

The scope of this report focuses on the impact the Language Studies Bursary Scheme as implemented by the Nelson Mandela University over the period stated above.

1.1 Background to the Language Bursary Scheme

The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) is a department of the South African government, headed by the Minister of Arts and Culture. The DAC is responsible for the promotion, development, protection, preservation and support of the South African arts; culture and heritage, as well as the countries monuments; museums and heritage sites. The Department of Arts and Culture is offering bursaries to students wishing to enroll for degrees majoring in African Languages, Translation Studies and Linguistics. In a bid to build capacity in language practice and to elevate the status of previously marginalized official languages, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) grants financial support for students in the abovementioned degrees. Language practice is a field of study which involves the work that is done by language practitioners including, but not limited to translators, interpreters, language planners, terminologists, lexicographers, text editors and any language related work. Language practitioners render specialized language and communication services over a broad spectrum of fields. Language practitioners in African languages are in high demand in South Africa, especially in the development of these languages. Career opportunities for students of African Languages would include those of translator, interpreter, lexicographer, terminographer, language planner, editor, document design and editor, and human language technologist. Although the DAC cannot guarantee employment, it does recognize the need for qualified language practitioners in South Africa.

The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) granted the Nelson Mandela University (NMU) an amount of R3 055 000.00 for the period 2018-2020 to be awarded as bursaries to Undergraduate, Honours and Masters students pursuing studies in the field of Languages. An amount of R1 000 000.00 was granted for the year 2018. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the NMU and the DAC was signed on the 31 January 2018. The Research Capacity Development Office (RCD) of the NMU, together with the two departments (Department of Applied Language Studies and Language and Literature), through a newly appointed bursary administrator took responsibility of administering the bursary grant.

The RCD, in consultation with the Department of Applied Language Studies (DALS) and Department of Language and Literature (L and L), advertised the bursary grant, and followed
due process as recorded below. The DAC was acknowledged as the official sponsor of the project in the advert.

1.2 Procedure

Due process was applied as follows:

- Advertising of the bursary grant on the NMU’s communiqué (a memo), and application forms were circulated.
- DALS and L and L, together with the newly appointed administrator met to screen applications and review amounts.
- Each department (DALS and L and L) together with the administrator finalised its list of recipients.
- The administrator informed the recipients that they have been awarded the bursary.
- The administrator liaised with the finance division to allow the student to register while waiting for the funds to be paid out.
- The administrator finalised and facilitated the signing and submission of student contract for distribution of funds.
- The administrator sent the final list of DAC bursary recipients to RCD for processing of payments.
- DALS and L and L, through the administrator communicated all queries, processes and reports to the DAC.

1.3 Application of procedure

At a meeting between the departments of Applied Language Studies and Language and Literature, it was decided that the R1 000 000.00 grant for 2018 would be divided among the two departments as follows: R700 000.00 would be allocated to the Department of Language and Literature as it had a much larger number of student who applied for the grant. The remaining R300 000.00 was allocated to the Department of Applied Language Studies.

1.4 Research Methodology

This research is based on a mixed methods, namely quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. The quantitative research methodology was based mainly on descriptive statistics. The qualitative method was based on an interpretive paradigm.

1.4.1 Data collection procedures

Data was collected by use of structured questionnaires on a sample size of 94 respondents. Interviews were conducted telephonically and through emails.

1.4.2 Sampling procedures

No specific sampling technique was applied in this study because the aim was to interview every single recipient of language bursary during the period under review. The total population in the database of bursary recipients was 194. However, the respondents that could be reached successfully was 94. It was discovered that of the total of 194 students, nine students never received the bursary. Three respondents indicated that they had to cancel their bursaries due to reasons of depression. A further three respondents did not respond to the emails which contained the questionnaire. Twenty nine (29) respondents did not answer their calls. Five respondents refused to respond to the questionnaire. Forty three (43) respondents’ phones went to voicemail. Five respondents in the database were not belonging to the cohort.
being currently evaluated. This brings non-responses to 97. The response rate in this study amounts to 48%.

5. Presentation of results

This section is divided into five sections, namely, demographic information, completed versus non-completed studies and reasons for not completing, employment details, spatial location of the respondents.

5.1 Demographic information

5.1.1 Gender of the respondents

Table 1: Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cum.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21.28</td>
<td>21.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>78.72</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data (2019)

An overwhelming majority (79%) of the respondents were females whilst male respondents made up approximately 21%. This implies that the bursary mainly focused on women and this is in the spirit of the national agenda for women empowerment.

5.1.2 Age of the respondents

Table 2: Age of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Obs</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>42.23404</td>
<td>12.05848</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data (2019)

The ages of the respondents ranged from 21 years of age of 63 years. It was important to analyse the age groups in terms of gender. Age groups in terms of gender is given in table 3 below:
The majority (n=14) of the respondents in the age group of 21-28 (panel a) were mainly women. Men made up a mere (n=6). The total number of respondents in this age group was (n=20). This group makes up about 21% of the total sample. The highest number (n=8) of the respondents in the age group of 30 – 39 (panel b) was women; followed by men (n=6). This group makes up about 15% of the total sample surveyed. The overwhelming majority of the respondents in the age group of 41 – 49 (panel c) was women (n=27) followed by men (n=3). This group makeup about 32% of the total sample. The age group (50 – 56) (panel d) consisted of (n=20) females whilst males made up a mere (n = 4). This age group constitutes approximately 26% of the total sample surveyed. The age group (61 – 63) (panel e) consisted of women (n = 5) whilst men made up a mere (n=1). This group makes up about 6% of the
total sample surveyed. The percentages in the various age groupings are ranked in fig 1 below:

**Fig 1: Age groups rankings**

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41 - 49 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 56 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 28 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 63 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

Source: Survey data (2019)

The largest bubble in fig 1 above shows that the largest group in the sample is in the age group of 41 – 49 years, followed by 50 – 56 years; 21- 28years; 30 – 39 years and 60 – 63 years being the smallest size. Clearly, the bulk of the bursaries was concentrated in the age group 41 – 49 years hence its ranking is 1 in fig 1 above.

**5.1.3 Race of the respondents**

The race of the respondents is portrayed in fig 2 below:

**Fig 2: Race of the respondents**

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

Source: survey data (2019)
More than half (83%) of the respondents were black, followed by 10% coloured, one percent Indian and six percent whites.

5.2 Degrees for which respondents were registered

The degrees for which the respondents were registered are reported in fig 3 below:

Fig 3: Degrees registered for by respondent

![Degrees registered by respondents](image)

More than half (53%) of the respondents were registered for Masters degrees, followed by 38% respondents who were registered for honours degrees and only nine percent (9%) were registered for Bachelors’ degrees. These figures suggest that DAC bursary funding at NMU went towards postgraduate students.

It was also important to find out whether or not the respondents has successfully completed their studies. This result is reported in table 4 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of registration</th>
<th>Incomplete studies</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data (2019)
The results in table 4 above show years of registrations in column 1 and years of completion from column 2 to 8.

Starting from 2009, it is notable that only one student started in 2009 and finished in that same year. Only one student was registered in 2013 and completed in 2018. The bursary recipients who were registered in 2014 were five students of which two of them finished in 2015, two in 2016 and the remainder in 2018. In 2015 there were 22 students who received bursaries and were registered in that same year. Seven of these students have not yet completed. Seven completed in that same year; four completed in 2016; three in 2017 and one in 2018. In 2016; 29 students were recipients of the bursaries and were registered. Nine of these students have not yet completed the degrees; two completed in 2016 whilst eight completed in 2017; nine in 2018 and only one completed in 2019. In 2017 there were 19 students who took up bursaries and were registered. Of these students, 10 did not complete their studies, whilst six completed in 2018 and three in 2018 respectively. There were 17 students who received bursaries and registered in 2018. Of these students, three have not yet completed their degrees whilst 14 completed in 2018. Clearly the results show that out of the total sample surveyed, 29 students (approximately one-third) who received DAC bursaries have not yet completed their degrees. It was therefore important to explore the reasons why these students did not complete their studies. The results are reported in table 5 below.

Table 5: Reasons for incomplete studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Still studying</th>
<th>Supervisor related problems</th>
<th>Cancelled</th>
<th>Insufficient funding</th>
<th>Personal reasons</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours degree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters degree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data (2019)

The above results (Table 5) show that of the total of 29 students who have not yet completed their studies, 15 of them are still studying; five students indicated that their studies were delayed because of internal supervisor related problems. One of them mentioned a case where there was a change of HoD and these affected her research progress. Three students mentioned that they cancelled their studies whilst three said that they had insufficient funding; meaning that the bursaries they obtained were not sufficient to allow them to complete their studies. The remaining three students indicated that they had personal problems including health related problems, which caused them not to complete their studies.

Some of the responses were captured verbatim in Box 1 below:
Box 1: Reasons for not completing the studies

“Needed to resubmit as Prof (supervisor) left the department and as a result could not register in time”
“I couldn’t finish my studies because I couldn’t submit work for my research and ended up cancelling my studies”
“Excessive no. of students, external supervisors delayed, never got feedback on proposals”
“Funding from the Department of Arts and Culture was not enough for my studies of which DAC paid half of the tuition only and accommodation was not provided by the DAC and I cancelled my studies”
“I had lot of personal problems and I could not finish my studies”
“I am still studying Part time”
“I couldn’t finish my studies due to doing my studies part time”
“Working full-time and I faced time limits between work and my studies”
“I couldn’t finish my studies because I’m left with treatise and I got demotivated and the bursary couldn’t fund me any longer”
“I am struggling with research and as a result I decided to discontinue with my studies”
“I am not yet done with my studies, I am left with a research treatise”
“I am still studying”
“I am still studying part time”
“Feedback not given immediately on proposal, shortage of supervisors”
“Part time studies - changed supervisor, then there was a delay with the progress report”
“I couldn’t finish my studies due to family problems”;
“I was told that the bursary had discontinued in 2017 as a result I could not complete my studies as I did not have the funds”;
“I went to study in Europe for 9 months in 2017; Major modules changed, causing a delay”; “I am still studying part time”;
“I gave up on my studies because the university department kept on changing my supervisor because of the university kept on changing HOD”
“I am still studying part time, but I am not registered this year”;
“I am still still busy with research”,
“I had personal problems at the start of the year so I wasn’t able to continue with my studies this year, however, I’m hoping to register next year”
“I got sick and I was discovered that I have cancer and I had to attend chemo treatment

Source: Survey data (2019)
6. Employment

The respondents were asked if they were employed or not. The results of employment status are reported in table 6 below:

**Table 6: Employment status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>79.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data (2019)

The above results show that the overwhelming majority (79%) of the respondents reported that they were employed whilst (21%) said that they were not employed. It was important to explore the age groups of the respondents who indicated that they were employed. This finding is reported in chart 1 below:

**Chart 1: Employment status by age groups**

Source: Survey data (2019)
Looking at chart 1 above, one can notice that amongst the students who indicated that they were employed; the largest percentage (44%) were in the age group of 41 – 50 years, followed by the age group 51 – 60 years (26%); 21 – 30 years (17%), 31 – 40 years (8%) and 61 – 63 years (4%). It was discovered that a large number of the students were already working at the time if receiving the bursary either as teachers, administrators etc. It is assumed that they enrolled for their studies in order to enhance their qualifications. From the age groups of the students it can be noted that these are not necessarily new entrants in the labour market. As it can be noted in fig 1 of this report that the bulk of the bursary recipients in the sample is concentrated in the age group of 41-50 and this group consists of mainly employed persons.

6.1 Sector of employment

The respondents were asked to state whether they are employed in a language sector or not. The findings are reported in table 7 below:

Table 7: Language sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>93.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data (2019)

More than half (93%) of the respondents indicated that they were being employed in the language sector whilst the remainder (7%) said that they were not employed in the language sector.

Those respondents who are not employed in the language sector were asked in what other sectors they were employed. Four of the respondents indicated that they were employed in the education sector whilst the remaining one was employed in Public Relations and Marketing. The respondents were further asked if they were employed in the public or private sector. The results are reported in table 8 below:

Table 8: Private or Public Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>88.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data (2019)

The overwhelming (89%) indicated that they were employed in the public sector whilst approximately 11% were employed in private sector.
The respondents were asked about their contributions to their communities post interventions in their language studies. The activities and practices, which relate to community engagements, are recorded in Box 2 below:

**Box 2: Contributions to communities post language bursary intervention**

Some of the respondents indicated that they run extra classes in isiXhosa every second weekend at their schools where they are employed. They also invite students from neighbouring schools within their communities to participate in language classes. The other respondents indicated that they tutor students who struggle with English and Afrikaans. Most of the students in the Arts Faculty are not multilingual and they have been encouraging them to speak the language that they are comfortable with and they would translate for them.

Other respondents organise books for honours students at NMU and assist learners in their neighbourhoods who go to the multiracial schools with isiXhosa. One of the respondents indicate that they train and mentor court interpreters. The respondents who live in the villages help interpret for elderly people who can’t write and read English. There are also those who help with editing of manuscripts for students. One of the respondents who is also a teacher supports foundation phase teachers. She supports them with language implementation, both in home language and English. The impact on the learners’ performance in language and other subjects has improved greatly since these interventions. This includes assisting at an adult learning centre and at an NGO, helping young adults with language literacy.

We have also found that some of the respondents help white lawyers in their local towns with isiXhosa language in cases where they have to deal with Xhosa clients. They also encourage learners to read and write isiXhosa stories. They motivate day care practitioners to teach the children isiXhosa in order to preserve the language so that they do not lose their culture. One of the respondents indicated that she is writing and editing scripts for drama, poetry and also started a reading club. A local library was set up to execute these functions. There are also those who are translating for rural communities who suffer from visual impairment.

Source: Survey data (2019)

The respondents were asked whether the training they received helped them in securing the employment. None of the responses were affirmative as a large number of them were already employed at the time of receiving the bursary. This can also be detected from their age groups, with the largest being between 41 and 50 years of age. Therefore, this question is not applicable to this sample.

### 6.2 Self-employment

The respondents were asked if they had any form of self-employment and also if in cases where they self-employ any jobs were created. The results are reported in table 9 below:
Table 9: Self-employment & number of staff employed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-employed</th>
<th>Number of staff employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data (2019)

The results in table 9 above show that 91 students responded to the question. Ninety (90) students said that they were not self-employing and only one indicated self-employment. However, she does not employ any staff in her business.

7. Geographical locations of the respondents

The respondents were asked the residential areas where they were currently living and the areas where they completed matric. Areas where they completed their matric are also regarded as areas where they lived before they qualified and assumed employment. The results are reported in table 10 below:

Table 10: Geographical locations of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas where high School was completed</th>
<th>Residential areas after qualification and obtaining employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburbs</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data (2019)

The results show that from a total number of 27 respondents who lived in the villages during their high school years, six remained in the villages even after qualification and employment, whilst eight (8) moved to the townships and 13 to the suburbs. Those who went to the township schools (n=33), two (2) of them went back to the villages, 18 remained in the townships and only 13 moved to the suburbs. The respondents who went to schools in the suburb (n=12), two (2) of them remained in the townships whilst 10 remained in the suburbs. Whilst we cannot rule out completely that access to language bursary and employment thereafter has had an impact on the social lives of the recipients; there is insufficient evidence to suggest that these movements to the various residential areas were specifically because of accessing language studies bursaries and/or obtaining employment. This is mainly because some of the respondents were already working at the time of accessing the bursary. Some students were
studying part-time with full time employment and living in those areas indicated above even before they obtained a bursary.

8. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to assess the impact of DAC Language Studies Bursaries on the students who received DAC Bursaries during the period 2015 to 2018. The department of Arts and Culture is responsible for protection, preservation and support of the South African Arts, culture and heritage. To this end, bursaries were allocated to a number of students during the aforesaid period in order to help them complete their studies during the period under review. Due procedures were applied by NMU in the allocation of the bursaries and these procedures are mentioned at the beginning of this report. In order to deliver on the terms of reference provided for this project, appropriate research methods had to be applied in line with the Terms of Reference of this project. Accordingly a structured questionnaire was used as a method of data collection. This instrument (questionnaire) was completed using two methods, namely, emails and telephonic surveys. No sampling framework was formulated because the idea was to capture all students listed in the database. To this end, 194 students were listed and only 94 could be reached successfully.

The analysis of the data shows that a large majority of the recipients were females. Whether this was per chance or for strategic reasons is hard to say; but this finding is in the spirit of the national drive for women empowerment. Considering the ages of the recipients, the results show that the large number of recipients are already in the mid 40s. The mean age of the respondents is 42. These recipients are matured students who are well established in their careers. However, they aspired towards higher qualifications for advancement of their skills and knowledge in language disciplines. It is important to note that a large number of the recipients were mainly black compared to other races. Further evidence to the level of maturity of these students is the fact that more than half of the recipients were registered for higher degrees, namely, honours and masters’ degrees with less than 10% registered for undergraduate degrees.

We had found that approximately one-third of the respondents had not yet completed their studies at the time of conducting this research. This is due to a number of reasons, namely, supervisors related problems, insufficient funding, personal reasons including sicknesses and of course some of the students were still busy with their studies. It is pleasing to note that only three (3) out of 29 students who had not yet completed their degrees had cancelled their studies.

An overwhelming majority of the students are fully employed and just about 20% indicated that they were unemployed. Once again the age cohort which had the highest number of employed students was in the age group of 41 – 50 years. This is the same group which a huge bulk of the bursary recipients. Ninety three percent of them are employed in the language sector. The sector in which they work ranges from being a language teacher to being an interpreter in court whilst some help lawyers in cases where they have to deal with black clients who cannot speak English. On self-employment, only one student indicated self-employment but she does not employ anyone in the business.

There are various community engagement projects in which the bursary recipients are involved. This is a way in which the respondents are ploughing back to their communities.
Some of these activities including voluntary work, reading for the partially sighted, training court interpreters and helping young people to read and write stories in IsiXhosa.

With respect to geographical location of the respondents we have found a noticeable change of locations either from the villages to the townships or from the townships to the suburb. Nonetheless there is no strong evidence to suggest that these movements were due to accessing bursaries for their studies. Notwithstanding, it can be concluded that access to DAC Bursary has provided good opportunity to the students to qualify themselves in higher degrees and also to positively affect their communities; a situation which would not have been realised had it not been for the bursary.

9. Recommendations

The findings of this research raises certain issues that must be attended to when granting these bursaries. To start with in order to detect the effectiveness of the bursary scheme, the bursary must be targeted at the entry level instead of postgraduate and/or higher degrees. This is because a number for postgraduate students are likely to be well-established students who might be already employed. The amounts of the bursaries must be sufficient such that students do not drop out or prolong their stay in the system due to insufficient funds. Furthermore, the university must ensure that its internal processes is up to standard so that students are not delayed in their progress because of a lack of supervisory capacities. It is recommended that assistantship to students enrolled for Language Studies should go beyond just the bursary scheme. Further, in order to encourage students in Languages Degree to start one businesses and create jobs, it is recommended that a business related course should be part of their curriculum. This approach will ensure some positive social returns on public expenditure on bursary scheme. A holistic support system, which includes institutional and infrastructural support, should be provided. Finally, we recommend that a full cost benefit analysis be conducted on a larger sample in order to evaluate the economic viability of DAC Bursary Scheme.