

Customer care at University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg – an investigation into services received by students from support departments during registration

by

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Declaration

This study is the original work of the author and has not been submitted for another degree. Where use has been made of the work of others it has been duly acknowledged in the text.

Praversh Jeebodh Sukram

Abstract

This study examines customer care at University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg (UNP). It investigates the quality of service received by students, from support departments, during registration.

Data was collected via a simple random sample within the three libraries (Main, Law and Life Sciences) on campus. This ensured that students from the different faculties had an equal probability of being part of the survey, providing a true representation of the campus population. The research instrument was a questionnaire, 300 of which were administered to establish the attitude and helpfulness of staff from the departments of Finance, Financial Aid, Library, Risk Management Services, Student Admissions, Student Counselling and Student Housing. A total of 287 students responded.

The software package that was used to run all the analyses was SPSS version 9. Results are graphically displayed in the form of bar graphs, tables and a pie chart.

Interpretation of the results reveals that the overall rating for all departments ranged from average to excellent.

Recommendations are made in light of the results of the survey and the literature reviewed.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Statement of the problem

Higher education institutions in South Africa are facing a number of challenges. One of these challenges is the competition these institutions are confronted with, both from within South Africa and from overseas institutions. Many of these institutions have embarked on expensive marketing campaigns to attract prospective students.

The University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg (UNP) is facing such competition from higher educational institutions in Pietermaritzburg. Varsity College, Damelin and Technikon Natal together with local and overseas based distance education institutions are targeting the same market as UNP. The message is quite clear, competition is not only local but also global.

While the qualifications offered by UNP are recognised and respected internationally, it should not be the only factor that provides UNP with a competitive advantage. Competing institutions are also marketing themselves as providers of qualifications that are internationally recognised. UNP can differentiate itself by offering a superior service to its students, their customers. Cook (2002: 3) stated that successful service organisations constantly strive for higher levels of customer service. Innovative methods need to be found to provide ways that will enhance the customer experience.

Owing to the marketing campaigns of competing institutions, prospective students are much more informed as to what is available in the market place and the choices that they have. They also have high expectations of the service they want to receive.

Dorrian (1996: 34) argues that organisations throughout the world find themselves doing business in an era where it is easier than ever before either to be copied by a competitor or to copy a competing firm. Technology transfer, product design, packaging, pricing and promotion are all areas that can be copied. Uniqueness in the marketing mix has become

more and more difficult to achieve. However, customer care is one area that is extremely difficult to copy because it is provided by people. It is not uncommon for firms in the same industry, that display similar organizational, technological and marketing characteristics, to demonstrate different levels of competitiveness because of their employees' attitudes towards customers. Companies can therefore differentiate themselves from their opposition by the degree of customer care they provide.

1.2 Background of the study

On 19 October 2000 a workshop on Customer Care was held at (UNP) in the Council Chambers. In her introduction, Prof. Brenda Gourlay, the Vice Chancellor and Principal of the University, stated that the University's executive fully supported a customer care initiative. A similar workshop was held at the UND campus.

The workshop which was facilitated by a consultant, Paul Dorrian and Ann Sayers of Pick and Pay, was attended by a number of Heads of Department of UNP all of whom had demonstrated a willingness to embark on a customer care initiative.

Paul Dorrian referred to hypercompetition which has resulted in the erosion of competitive advantage, the emergence of new competition, the falling entry of barriers and the greater role of people in the organisation.

Ann Sayers spoke about the experiences of Pick and Pay in implementing their customer care project. Although they are a commercial concern the principles that they used could be applied to the University's customer care programme.

An interesting observation at the workshop was that the majority of participants were support staff rather than academic staff. The University has since launched its CARE (Courtesy, Accountability, Respect, Efficiency) initiative.

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the overall customer care strategy of the University.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine the type of service UNP offers its customer, the student. This study will focus on the support staff with the desired result that support staff will become more customer focused.

The emphasis of the study will be to determine student responses to the type of service they have received during the registration process. It is usually at this stage that students gain their first impressions of the University and it is hoped that this study will contribute to making this impression favourable. No study has been undertaken with regard to customer care during the registration process at UNP. The study will not cover academic services.

The support staff departments that are involved with registration will be targeted. These departments are:

1. Finance
2. Financial Aid
3. Library
4. Risk Management Services
5. Student Admissions
6. Student Counselling
7. Student Housing

1.4 Hypotheses

This study hypothesizes the following:

Hypothesis 1. Customer care at UNP is perceived to be different by students from different racial groups. The null hypothesis is that there is no perceived difference about customer care at UNP by students from different racial groups.

Hypothesis 2. Customer care at UNP is perceived to be different between postgraduate and undergraduate students. The null hypothesis is that there is no perceived difference about customer care at UNP between postgraduate and undergraduate students.

Hypothesis 3. Customer care at UNP is perceived to be different between male and female students. The null hypothesis is that there is no perceived difference about customer care at UNP between male and female students.

This hypothesis will be tested using Mann Whitney U tests which tests for differences between two independent variables.

1.5 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter 2 will provide a literature review and look specifically at literature on customer care in organisations. Chapter 3 provides an overview of UNP's registration process. The research methodology is presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 discusses data analysis and the results of the research with the aid of graphs. Conclusions and recommendations are suggested in Chapter 6. The appendices present the questionnaire that was administered and the tables for the Mann-Whitney U tests.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Over recent years organisations have increasingly emphasised customer care as a means of gaining competitive advantage. In fact the last 20 years of the 20th century should have been the years when customer service flourished. When Tom Peters and his co-authors wrote the Excellence books, they prompted a whole new attitude to customer service. There was a genuine new enthusiasm, at least at managerial levels, for a focus on the customer and their needs (Clegg 2000: 12).

The continued focus on customers is an imperative given the realities of the marketplace in which good service is still the exception, the customers' idea of good service has been transformed and competition has not remained still.

Universities have also been affected by the realities of the marketplace. They find themselves facing increased competition from other universities and also from other higher education institutions. Like business organisations they need to place a greater emphasis on the type of service they provide. There is an urgent need for universities to offer excellent service to their customers. This study examines customer care at UNP. It investigates the quality of service received by students from support departments, during registration. The topics that will be dealt with in the study are: the student as customer, the marketisation of higher education, customer care and customer service, customer relationship marketing, internal marketing and service culture and customer care training.

2.2 The student as customer

During a customer care workshop at UNP on 19 October 2000, certain participants felt that the term 'customer' should not be used to refer to the students of the University. They felt that the term 'customer' is only applicable to the business world. On the other hand there were participants who felt that in today's economic climate, the University should operate like a business.

But can universities operate as if they were ordinary businesses competing to sell products to consumers? While dependence on government subsidies for some two-thirds of running costs ensures that universities will never yield a profit, we do live in economic reality and in many ways a university's activities do resemble that of a business. Universities have to meet a payroll; they cannot spend more than they take in, they have employees who do a job in exchange for a salary, and they are increasingly pressed to raise funds from private sources and to put in competitive tenders for grants (Bertelsen 1998: 140).

Scott (1999: 195) argues that it is time for educational institutions to face two facts: they are in a competitive battle for students, and students are customers. He goes on to state that students are not the only customers of higher education. Other customers or stakeholders include parents, society in general, the government, and the research community.

2.3 The marketisation of higher education

From as early as 1985 colleges, universities, and other educational institutions showed an interest in marketing because of declining enrollments, rising costs, and an uncertain future. They realized their dependence on the marketplace (Kotler and Fox 1985: 15).

The marketisation of higher education has been promoted as encouraging diversity, quality, and an improved experience for the student-as-customer/consumer.

Most well managed organizations today, by chance or design, whether profit or non-profit, know their clientele well and recognise the importance of implementing formal marketing programmes (Bruwer 1996: 120).

There is an attractive simplicity to the logic inherent in the assumption that students will benefit from the marketisation of higher education. It goes something like this: students who pay for their education will demand more from the provider of that education; institutions that compete for the revenue derived from the students will be more responsive to student demands, and the quality of the tertiary education experience for the student will improve (Scott 1999: 195).

Bruwer (1996:121) states that, put in the simplest terms possible, marketing is a matching process. It involves identifying societal needs and matching them to organizational capabilities and objectives - what the organization wants to be, and what it can be. If the identification and matching processes are true, then an exchange takes place – normally money for services or products. Exchange is the act of obtaining a desired product or benefit from someone by offering something in return. Public higher educational institutions are resource-dependent. Without the ability to attract students, money, staff and equipment, exchange does not occur and the institution will cease to exist.

Higher education is mainly a public service, with much in common with other services. It is classified as a service that is essentially intangible, together with other services such as insurance and travel services. The most distinctive feature of public higher education services is the so-called nonprofit basis upon which they are supposed to be provided (Bruwer 1996: 120). Hence universities and technikons in South Africa are in the public higher educational category as they are at present still predominantly government-subsidised. There are two important assumptions made in this regard. The first is that any organization benefits from the careful examination of the needs of its clients and customers. The second is that services such as the higher education service are particularly vulnerable when they fail to listen to their customers. The term 'marketing' to most people connotes an activity peculiar to the business world alone. To some marketing seems to be synonymous with selling and as a result, they feel it has no place in higher education. This is not true. Marketing is compatible with the educational mission. Public higher educational institutions establishing mutually satisfying exchange relations with their key publics will generally fare better than less responsive institutions (Bruwer 1996: 121).

A marketing orientation in a public higher educational institution is one in which the interests, needs and wants of the student as customer are central. It is largely, but not only

concerned with customer satisfaction (Owen et al 1977:592). In effect then, a marketing orientation requires the participants to recognise they are engaged in a set of relationships involving exchanges. On the one hand, there is a university or technikon marketing process which can include the set and sequence of activities that are under the control of the institution and can affect the size, quality and depth of knowledge of its student applicant pool. On the other hand, there is also the student decision-making process which includes the set and sequence of activities of university or technikon-bound matriculants who are evaluating, choosing and applying to these institutions. The sum of all this is the recognition of the importance of a harmonised and orderly cultivation of mutually satisfying relationships in terms of exchange, between the institution and its prospective student market (Gorman 1974: 243).

In South Africa during the past few years, the postgraduate and short-course education sector has been inundated with the establishment of various institutions, all claiming to provide internationally recognized, industry-tailored management programmes. Bruwer (1996: 121) stresses that there can be no question that public higher education in South Africa is now in the midst of economic hard times and that the comfort of knowing better times are ahead is not presently available.

Midrand University is among at least 100 private and foreign higher education institutions competing with South Africa's 36 public universities and technikons for the dwindling pool of matriculants who qualify for university entry. Among those marketing courses through South African business partners are British, American and Australian universities and colleges, several of which offer MBAs. The boldest is Australia's private Bond University, which has built a R20 million undergraduate campus in Sandton (Vergnani 2000: 36).

Andries Burger (2001:36), of Deloitte and Touche I-Intelligence says that this has meant that there is strong competition among the institutions to retain clients and students. One way that institutions can differentiate themselves is through service. He goes on to state that customer relationship management can assist them in building relationships and offering improved service.

For the established as well as the new corporate training institutions and private universities, this trend created a few dilemmas from the supply side. Institutions need to consider the factors that differentiate them from others, how they add value, how students and corporate clients can be retained and how to maximise revenue from students and corporate clients before they change institutions (Burger 2001: 36).

Universities need to take a closer look at how they treat their customer. They need to create and sustain a superior customer service. To become a superior customer service organization, universities need to apply the basic principles of customer care.

2.4 Customer care and customer service

Customer care has its foundations in the fundamental concepts of marketing. The philosophy of marketing is essentially that of customer orientation. This marketing orientation puts the customer at core of an organizations thinking and activity. In many organizations the philosophy is manifested in terms such as: 'everything an organization does is with the customer in mind'; 'the customer is the focus of everything we do'; 'what the customer wants is paramount'(Baker, 1999: 550).

Barker (1999: 552) states that many terms have been used both by authors and companies to label customer care activity, such as customer service, product quality, service quality and after sales service. These terms appear to have different meanings in different organizations and different situations. To clarify these terms and to emphasize the complete definition of customer care as an all-encompassing term, these four aspects are explained as follows:

1. *Customer service*. Generally includes advice and information for customers regarding the technical specifications of a product or service and after sales back-up arrangements and procedures.
2. *Product quality*. Relates to standards and measures set to ensure a product conforms to specifications and is therefore fit for its purpose and safe to use.

3. *Service quality*. Refers to the company/customer interface and relationship, focusing on the customer's experience during the process of the transaction.

4. *After sales service*. Covers after sales enquires and complaints, together with repair and maintenance procedures.

All of these aspects form part of the total customer care package which is about adopting a caring attitude by being helpful, friendly, concerned and reassuring. The aim is continuously to satisfy customer requirements and comply with expectations. In this context customer care applies to all aspects of marketing.

Kotler (2000: 428) describes a service as any act or performance that one party can offer another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product.

The most basic and universally cited difference between goods and services is intangibility. Because services are performances or actions rather than objects, they cannot be seen, felt, tasted, or touched in the same manner that we can sense tangible goods (Ziethaml and Bitner 2000: 12). Gummesson (2001: 234) concurs and further states that that services are less standardised than goods and that they cannot be stored.

So what do customers buy? Dorrian (1996: 45) states that a fundamental marketing principle is that customers do not buy physical products and intangible services. Instead they buy the benefits that those products and services will bring them.

Essentially customers buy two things: solutions to their problems and good feelings (Dorrian 1996: 45). This includes good service, reliability, as well as a quality product and/or service. If you continually give people good feelings by solving their problems, you are well on your way to creating longer lasting customer relations.

Pitt (1991: 4) argues that services are experiences, while products are objects that are possessed. Intangibility makes it difficult for management, employees and customers to assess the quality of a service. It tends to be produced and consumed simultaneously. In most

instances there are thus no intermediate distribution linkages between the producer of a service and the customer. This is particularly true in the case of labour intensive services, where quality is created during the service encounter between the service provider and the customer. Customers tend to participate in the production and delivery of the service they consume.

We need to retain customers and show appreciation for their business. By first providing the services promised, and then thanking the customer for the business, firms can go a long way toward retaining individual customers.

To be successful, customer care has to become an integral part of an organization's daily activities. It must be part of its very reason for being, and not seen as a tool to prevent customers from defecting to the opposition. To make a successful contribution to the long-term growth and development of an organization, customer care must be viewed and implemented as a company-wide concept (Dorrian 1996: 20).

Cook (2002: 3) reinforces Dorrian's belief that organisations constantly need to strive for higher levels of customer service. She states that in recent years there has been enormous pressure on service organisations to improve the way they do business with their customers.

The challenge for a business today is to 'inject' innovation into its life-blood so that it becomes part of its very being. Organisations must set about finding innovative ways to enhance customer experience.

Today more enlightened companies encompass the philosophy of marketing orientation by concentrating on 'looking after' their customers and 'maximizing' their satisfaction. Thus it is easy to see the essential foundation of a sub-philosophy centred around the concepts of customer care and satisfaction. The overall purpose of this essential foundation is to gain long-term commitment from customers.

Customer care is about one person or group of people assisting another person or group of people. When people make purchases and are parting with hard-earned money, they like to be treated properly, irrespective of their gender, age, race, colour or creed. Customers are not

interested in the problems that companies face. They are only concerned with what can be obtained from the interaction between themselves and the other party.

Customer care can incorporate anything that an organization does for, and on behalf of its customers. What form this takes will depend on a multiplicity of factors, such as the nature of the product or service, the industry, the competition and the expectation of customers. Consequently, customer care may be found somewhere between a whole range of general parameters. For example, minimum aspects of care may be sufficient to satisfy customers, or alternatively, maximum levels of care may be necessary in order to be competitive. Customer care may be deemed poor but the differentiation of the product may more than compensate for this. Alternatively, excellent care may be a core requirement for some product or services. Equally, simple care may be all that is necessary for some situations, while sophisticated care may be developed as a significant marketing differentiation. Whatever the scope and nature of customer care, two things are likely to be constant: it is determined by management and judged by customers and consumers in terms of expectations (Baker 1999 : 552).

Organisations need to have a service vision. Dorrian (1996: 53) concurs and states that the determination and embracing of the philosophy of customer care demands that it be implemented in the context of the company's strategic planning initiative. One of the most important aspects of strategic planning is to decide on the direction the organization should take in the foreseeable future. By 'direction' is meant which markets the company wishes to serve, how it proposes to serve them, and what its competitive advantages will be.

Cook (2002: 37) describes a vision as a torch-bearer for the purpose of an organisation. It answers the question, 'What are we here for?' It provides a view of a future that is different and better than the present. She agrees that creating a vision should engender a common understanding of the principal tasks of the organisation. It should allow employees to identify with the objectives of the organisation and establish a common sense of purpose.

It is therefore only proper and indeed prudent that customer care be included in and become an integral part of, the company's strategic planning. The first step is to ensure a customer-orientated strategic plan, and the formulation of a culture of customer care in the organization. It is for the senior management to craft a service vision statement for everyone

in the company to use as a point of reference. To create a valuable and practical service vision statement, it is advisable to 'speak' to your customers via market research to identify their expectations of your company, what it is about your organization that delights or displeases them. After all, if the service vision statement is going to guide all company personnel towards providing a level of service and customer care that will outshine the opposition, it is logical to assume that the best guidance will come from the customers.

Although the service vision encapsulates top management's attitudes towards and desires for the level of service the company will provide to external and internal customers, as many company personnel as possible should be consulted about its content. It will also encourage the departments that have identified their own internal customers to apply the service vision internally. This will assist in creating internal harmony, the result of which will be improved service to the company's external customers. Top management should have the final say since it is ultimately responsible for steering the ship (Dorrian 1996: 53).

Dorrian (1996: 54) maintains that the service vision is the first step in building a culture of customer care in a company. It must be communicated throughout the whole organization, at all levels. A system needs to be established whereby it is presented to everyone and feedback should be requested as to its applicability. The vision should be reinforced at every opportunity and be formulated in such a way that it informs all employees of management's expectations. Everyone must know how committed top management is to the concept of customer care or the initiative runs the risk of being perceived as a 'flavour of the month' by staff further down the corporate ladder. Management must be seen to drive the process and to put into practise what is expected of staff.

The company's vision of customer care will also have implications for the positioning of the organization in the marketplace. To a large extent, it will lay down quite clearly the expected behaviour from all employees towards the company's customers. It therefore provides the company, including staff, with a particular perspective of the world, and this should be communicated to the company's customers via behaviour indicating that the company means business. This will obviously create a favourable picture in the minds of customers. Not living up to customer expectations as set out in the vision will have the reverse effect (Dorrian 1996: 55).

Dorrian (1996: 58) goes on to state that there are basically two kinds of service quality which influence a company's image in the market place. The first can be termed 'technical quality' (the technical aspects of the business) - the technology that enables the company to function. This type of service quality is easy to manage. If a computer malfunctions it can be repaired. The right level of technology can be purchased and properly skilled people can be recruited to operate that technology.

Then there is 'people quality' - all the factors that influence the level of customer care and service a company provides to its customers through its staff. This includes attitudes and service mindedness of staff, interdepartmental relationships, and the appearance and impact made by staff on the customer. These factors are difficult to control and manage because they depend on people.

2.5 Dimensions of customer care

The interrelationships between quantitative hard standards and qualitative soft standards can be seen in the following diagram.

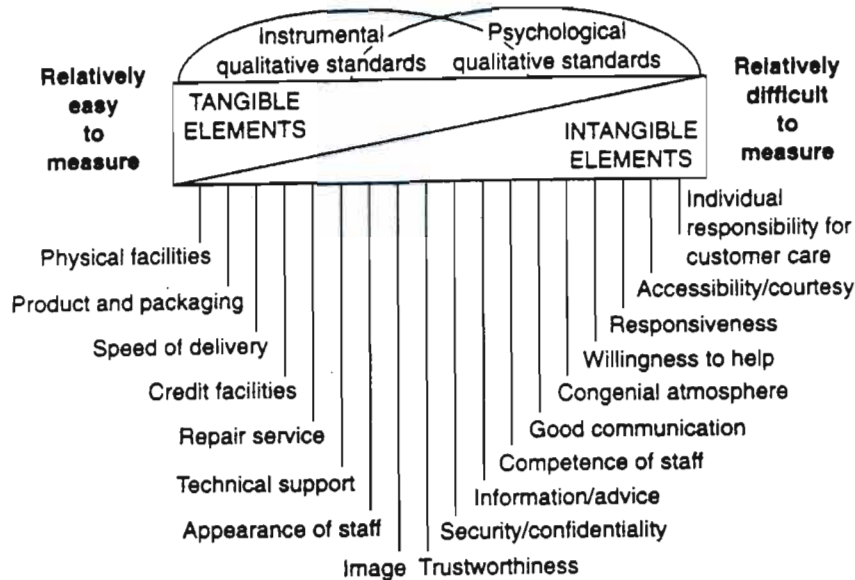


Figure 1 Dimensions of customer care (Baker, 1999: 554)

This model illustrates the range of factors that can be included in the complete definition of customer care. These elements range from the hard, tangible aspects such as packaging, to the soft, intangible aspects such as the degree of courtesy and consideration experienced by the customer.

Many aspects of customer care are difficult to measure and evaluate by both customers and companies. An examination of the nature of the characteristics upon which they can be evaluated allows for classification of goods or services into three categories. These classifications are 'search' properties, 'experience' properties and 'credence' properties (Baker 1999: 553).

Search properties are those which a customer can determine prior to purchasing a product, for example, packaging and price. Experience properties are those such as courtesy, ease of

contact, dependability, and as such can be discerned only after purchase or during consumption. Credence properties are those qualities or attributes which consumers may find impossible to evaluate even after purchase and/or during consumption, perhaps because they do not have the knowledge or skill to do so and therefore have to rely on the professional credence of the supplier.

In the dimension model shown in Figure 1, there are relatively few search qualities. Those that may contain search properties are those which are part of instrumental 'hard' dimension of customer care. In fact, it can be argued that the majority of elements listed in Figure 1 contain more experience and credence properties than search properties. Experience and credence qualities have been described as those which are less absolute, more conditional, less concrete and more intangible than search qualities. Consequently, this makes the evaluation of experience and credence qualities more difficult for consumers and for organizations.

Barker (1999: 554) argues that the variables in the dimension model which primarily have experience and credence properties are also those which are part of the psychological 'soft' dimension of customer care. For example, courtesy and responsiveness of staff can be evaluated only through experiencing these dimensions. Similarly, security and confidentiality must have an inherent credence to be accepted. Where there are more search qualities in evidence it is easier for the producer to determine, offer and standardise those qualities. This is manifested in dimensions such as credit facilities, product and packaging, speed of delivery, and comparisons between competitive offerings. Thus, there is a tendency by management to concentrate on the instrumental standards and a corresponding difficulty in defining and measuring psychological standards. In the case of 'hard' instrumental standards, which are primarily tangible, management can identify customer expectations by various quantitative methods and can therefore set appropriate specifications, rules or procedures to allow for those requirements. In this respect, many companies will have data on aspects such as the time period customers perceive to be reasonable in waiting for delivery of the product just purchased, or how long they would be prepared to wait for it to be repaired after a breakdown. Similarly, management can set standards relating to a product's fitness for use, performance, safety and reliability. Further, it can set procedures for what the company should do if the product breaks down.

2.6 Relationship marketing

Relationship marketing essentially represents a paradigm shift within marketing - away from an acquisitions/transaction focus toward a retention/relationship focus (Ziethaml and Bitner 2000: 138). Relationship marketing is a philosophy of doing business that focuses on keeping and improving current customers, rather than on acquiring new customers. This philosophy assumes that customers prefer to have an ongoing relationship with one organization than to switch continually among providers in their search for value.

From the early 1980s relationship marketing was in ascendancy. Relationship marketing can be traced back to services marketing literature, though arguably it can be said to have originated in industrial marketing (Peck et al 2000: 2). In its earliest guises, relationship marketing focused simply on the development and cultivation of longer-term profitable and mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and a defined customer group.

Anderson and Kerr (2002: 2) define customer relationship management (CRM) as a comprehensive approach for creating, maintaining and expanding customer relationships. The word 'comprehensive' implies that CRM is not the sole responsibility of one department in an organization, CRM must be the way of doing business that touches all areas of an organization.

Another key word in the definition is the word 'approach'. An approach is a 'way of treating or dealing with something'(Anderson and Kerr 2002: 2). CRM is a way of thinking about and dealing with customer relationships. The word strategy can be used here as well because, done well, CRM involves a clear plan. In fact an organization's CRM strategy can serve as a benchmark for every other strategy in an organization. Any organizational strategy that does not serve to create, maintain or expand relationships with an organization's target market does not serve the organization.

Strategy is the art of creating value. It provides the intellectual framework, conceptual models and governing ideas that allow a company's managers to identify opportunities for bringing value to customers and for delivering that value at a profit. In this respect, strategy is the way a company defines its business and links together the only two resources that really matter in

today's economy: knowledge and relationships or an organization's competencies and customers (Peck et al 2000: 407).

Strategy sets direction for an organization and any strategy that gets in the way of customer relations is going to send an organization in a wrong direction. This can also be considered from a departmental level. Just as the larger organization has strategies, departments of the organization should have their own strategies for employee retention, productivity, scheduling, and the like. Each of these strategies must support managing customer relationships.

The words 'creating, maintaining and expanding' demonstrates that CRM is about the entire customer cycle. When implementing a CRM strategy, an organization will capture and analyse data about its targeted customers and their targeted buying habits. From this information, customer behaviour can be understood (Anderson and Kerr 2002: 4).

Peck et al (2000: 2) state that these are turbulent times in the world of organizations. Behind the turbulence lies a series of frequently cited environmental factors: technological advances and the deregulation of markets, creating intensified global competition. These forces have changed and continue to change the dynamics of the marketplace, raising the profile of time-based competition and causing shifts in channel power. The world is becoming a buyers market, where increasingly discerning customers are freer than ever to select from their global marketplace.

Nash (1999: 6) argues that each customer is different and therefore an organisation's relationship with them needs to be tailored to match their needs. This requires a flexible approach which will allow an organization to map itself consistently and competitively to customers' demands in terms of products, services and channels.

Customers are increasingly prepared to shop around and compare products and services between suppliers. Add this to the widening market choice and price transparency and one will have all the ingredients to generate customer 'promiscuity' - a willingness to buy almost anything from anywhere (Nash 1999: 30). In this environment, the successful companies will be the ones that identify and retain their profitable customers and nurture them.

He goes on to state that there are three principal reasons why customers defect:

- *Curiosity* - the customer moves through their own choice to try an alternative offering
- *Competition* - the customer is enticed through the result of a rival's action
- *Complaint* - the customer takes their business elsewhere because they are dissatisfied

Companies need to use CRM to mitigate or remove these threats to retain their customers.

Peter Drucker said, 'The purpose of a business is to create customers' (Anderson and Kerr 2002: 1). Implied in his work is the importance of 'keeping' those same customers and maintaining their relationship with you. In short customers want to do business with organizations that understand what they want and need. CRM is about managing relationships more effectively so that an organization can drive down costs while at the same time increasing the viability of its product and service offerings.

Research by Frederick Reichhold and Earl Sasser of the Harvard Business School shows that most customers are only profitable in the second year that they do business with you. Initially new customers cost you money - money spent on advertising and marketing and money spent learning what they want and teaching them how best to do business with you (Anderson and Kerr 2002: 1).

CRM is about creating the feel, as Anderson and Kerr state (2000:5), of high touch in a high tech environment. The concept quickly broadened to encompass internal marketing in acknowledgement that the successful management of external relationships was largely dependent on the alignment of supporting internal relationships. Relationship marketing represents the convergence of marketing, customer service, and total quality movement, underscores the notion of internal alignment, and stresses the cross-functional and process-dependent nature of relationship marketing (Peck et al 2000: 3). Explicit in this proposition is the recognition that customer satisfaction and loyalty are built through the creation of superior value for the customer, and that value is created throughout the organization and beyond.

The Relationship Marketing philosophy that is now emerging is grounded on the tenet that as long as customers and consumers continue to perceive that they are receiving superior value from a specific source of supply, they will remain loyal. Whilst it should be emphasized that the conventional marketing mix elements - product, price, promotion and place - are still critical, they need to be augmented by elements which enable customer and consumer value to be enhanced. Peck et al (2000: 408) suggest that there are three particular elements that can powerfully impact on customer and consumer value: people, processes and proactive (and personalized) service.

People

One of the most critical changes in marketing thought that has occurred over the last two decades has been the recognition that 'people are the brand'(Peck et al 2000: 408). Hence the significant attention that is now paid to attracting, training and motivating employees who can share the values of the business and project those values at every point of customer and customer interaction. Much has been written about the connection between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction and the importance of the 'internal market' is now generally recognised.

Nash (1999: 66) states that the quality of a company's relationship management is determined by its culture and ethos and ultimately, by its staff. A CRM strategy can only succeed if it is supported by a corporate culture that understands and is aligned to customer- focused objectives. Professor Richard Scase, professor of organizational behaviour at University of Kent, says that CRM depends on trust, co-operation and open working relationships. He goes on to state that it needs lateral communications that work by virtue of the fact that they cut across hierarchies.

Creating openness in the workplace is probably one of the hardest things to achieve. People, processes, organization, culture and leadership (all those things that in the past have been given low priority) may all have to change. And given that there is usually resistance to change, this might be thought an insurmountable obstacle. But, provided the exercise is approached with care, fundamental cultural changes can be made (Nash 1999: 67).

Process

The means by which value is created for customers and consumers is through what is now called 'processes'. Processes are, in a sense 'the way we do things' (Peck et al 2000: 408). In other words, they are linked sets of activities that enable market demand to be satisfied. The core processes of any business will include:

- the new product development process
- the order fulfillment process
- the supplier management process
- the customer management process (Peck et al 2000: 408).

Whilst individual businesses will need to redefine these processes to fit their own particular circumstances, it is self-evident that the creation of customer value is achieved through these fundamental tasks. In a sense the core processes are the means by which we attain the goal of 'the right product in the right place at the right time'.

The critical features of processes are that they are market facing. They are interactive - cutting across conventional functions and hence must be managed on a cross-functional basis. Most importantly, they are the means by which customer and customer value is generated and determined.

Proactive/personalized service

One of the keys to success in today's demanding markets is the way in which customers are supported and serviced. Customer service is defined here as the totality of all the encounters between a supplier and a customer that together combine to enhance the value of the 'offer' to that customer. In other words, customer service is the result of the combined impact of all the points of contact between the firm and its customers.

Customer service is increasingly seen as a powerful differentiator in markets where the core product is essentially the same as competitors' offerings and where they are readily available alternative sources of supply. Because customer service innovations can often be adopted by

competitors there is a significant advantage to be gained from seeking out the precise requirements of individual and then, whenever possible, personalising and customizing the service package. It should also be recognised that the concept of proactive and customised service is as relevant to business-to-business markets as it is to customer markets. Peck et al (2000: 410) refers to diverse companies such as Procter and Gamble and Dow Chemicals who use different channels and service packages to meet the needs of customers who have widely differing needs.

Organizational characteristics

There are some familiar features of organizations that achieve and maintain high levels of customer retention. These characteristics tend to transcend industry sector, product type and customer base.

The first is lack of complacency. The organisations that manage customers well are never in stasis. They constantly review and reassess their customers, products and services, and the next potential source or sources of competition.

Companies that take this approach have also recognised that in developing the products and services that their customers want, they themselves do not have to create all the value. Partnering, alliances, acquisitions and brand relationships can help in the development of new products and services that truly reflect customer demand and so engender loyalty. Typically, such companies are also keen to invite comment and feedback from their customers and learn by it.

Organizations that are good at CRM also recognise that the value that their employees place on the customer is directly proportionate to how much value the company puts on its employees (Nash 1999: 35). Learning, empowerment, accountability and the encouragement of initiative again require courage but reap benefits.

2.7 Managing and maintaining delivered satisfaction

Because the quality and strength of customer relationships is so critical to the survival and profitability of any business, it is essential that the processes that deliver satisfaction, as well as the customer perceptions of performance, are regularly monitored. In the same way it is now widely accepted that the quality of physical products is dependent upon the control of the process that manufactures them, so too the quality of customer service is determined by the extent to which the delivery process is under control. Service process monitoring should be continuous and, in particular, all potential 'fall points' should be identified and, if they cannot be made fail-safe, should be carefully controlled. Managing the 'moments of truth' makes the difference between customer satisfaction and customer disappointment in any service process (Peck et al 2000: 422).

Employee satisfaction studies as well as customer satisfaction studies should form an integral part of the management of the service delivery process.

Research has shown that external customer satisfaction is directly proportional to employee satisfaction. This means that the quality of support given to internal customers predicts the quality of service given to external customers (Anderson and Kerr 2002: 4).

2.8 Internal marketing and service culture

The quality of service delivered to external customers is often determined by the quality of service that internal customers – employees – provide to each other.

Marshall, Baker, Finn (1998: 382) emphasise that 'internal customer service' is different from the idea of 'internal marketing'. The former focuses on how employees serve other employees, while the latter focuses on how the company serves its employees.

Peck et al (2000: 313) argue that internal marketing is concerned with creating, developing and maintaining an internal service culture and orientation, which in turn assists and supports the organization in the achievement of its goals. The internal service culture has a vital impact on how service-oriented and customer-oriented employees are and, thus, how well

they perform their tasks. It tells employees how to respond to new, unforeseen and even awkward situations. The development and maintenance of a customer-oriented culture in the organization is therefore, a critical determinant of long-term success in relationship marketing. It is an organization's culture - its deep-seated, unwritten system of shared values and norms - which has the greatest impact on employees, their behaviour and attitudes. The culture of an organization in turn dictates its climate - the policies and practices which characterize the organization and reflect its cultural beliefs.

Poisant (2002: 47) adds that corporate culture is to an organisation what an anthem is to a country. It represents the spirit, traditions and soul of an organisation. It is the foundation on which organisations are built and perpetuated. It is the most important characteristic of a company because it regulates internal behaviour and governs outside impressions. It is also the most difficult element of an organisation to change.

Dorrian (1996: 104) supports this by stating that for the development of a culture of customer care, there must be commitment from every person in the company, starting from the top. To ensure a culture of customer care within an organization, it is logical to assume that staff need to be aware of the importance of developing and maintaining a high standard of service. To achieve this awareness top management must:

- Decide on the standards for staff behaviour towards customers. They must then commit themselves to keeping and implementing these standards.
- The company's selection and recruitment policies and procedures must ensure that people who are willing to meet the established standards are recruited.
- Existing staff should be trained to meet the standards that the management team have established. It is also imperative that an evaluation programme be devised to assess whether the standards are being met, and that all staff are given feedback on their progress.
- Staff need to be rewarded for the success they achieve in providing outstanding customer care according to the standards that have been established.

Adhering to these issues should reinforce the necessity for employee commitment to a high degree of service quality. However, it is important to note that success in this regard can only be achieved if management shares the entire customer care programme with every staff

member. Enthusiasm must be shared. Management enthusiasm should not be allowed to lead to a dictatorial or autocratic manner of complementing ideas. Everyone should be encouraged to participate in developing ideas. For any customer care initiative to be successful, it has to be meaningful to staff. This means encouraging people to think about customer care in terms of the jobs they do and motivating them to develop ideas to improve customer care.

Everyone should be aware that the real purpose of the business is to attract and keep customers. This is the best way to ensure staff take full ownership of customer care initiatives. Having staff take responsibility for a customer care philosophy also means explaining to them that when customer dissatisfaction exists, for whatever reason, they also have to take responsibility for this (Dorrian 1996: 105).

The basic premise behind the development of internal marketing is the acknowledgement of the impact of employee behaviour and attitudes on the relationship between staff and external customers. This is particularly true where employees occupy boundary-spanning positions in the organization, which can result in them being close psychologically and physically to the organization's customers as they are to other employees within the company, or perhaps closer. The skills and customer orientation of these employees are, therefore, critical to the customers' perceptions of the organization and their future loyalty to the organization (Peck et al 2000: 314).

Employee satisfaction in internal markets is a prerequisite to customer satisfaction in external markets. Cook (2002: 165) mentions organisations such as Thomas Cook which take responsibility for employees' health, safety and welfare by organising facilities such as gyms, swimming pools, crèches and private health care. The basic philosophy is that if management wants its employees to do a good job with customers, then it must be prepared to do a good job with its employees. Unhappy employees will make for unhappy customers, so unless employees can be taken care of, the success of the organization on its ultimate, external markets will be jeopardized.

Internal marketing is seen as a way of integrating various functions to enable staff to work together across functional boundaries and aligning those cross-functional teams with internal and external customer needs and expectations, so that their work is attuned to the company's

mission, strategy and goals. This gives rise to the notion of the internal customer. That is, every person working within an organization is both a supplier and a customer (Peck et al 2000: 315).

Underpinning any successful relationship marketing strategy has to be a corporate culture that recognises that the delivery of customer and consumer value is the primary purpose of the business. Relationship marketing strategies can only succeed where there is a close alignment between the mission, the rhetoric and implementation.

Not only do senior managers need to 'walk the talk' but they must constantly seek to motivate and empower those they work with to seek constantly to improve the quality of relationships with customers, both internal and external.

Internal communication, training and development play a key role here. Creating a sense of common purpose and establishing shared values is an essential foundation for relationship-based marketing strategies (Peck et al 2000: 427).

A further and critical prerequisite for success in bringing about a relationship culture in an organization is an appropriate performance measurement system. Performance management, culture change and behaviour are all closely intertwined. David Packard, one of the co-founders of Hewlett Packard, was reported to have said that 'Marketing is too important a function to be left to the marketing department' (Peck et al 2000: 428). In a sense this philosophy is the basic premise that underpins the new paradigm of relationship marketing.

As stated above, changing the culture of an organisation can be very difficult. Dr Rob Yeung of business psychologists Nicholson McBride said that older styles of management are based on assumptions about how to get the most out of their employees. He further stated that a lot of early work on motivation assumed that employees are intrinsically lazy, unambitious, irresponsible and not to be trusted. Management styles took this into account and not surprisingly, when people are treated as irresponsible and lazy, they respond by becoming irresponsible and lazy, and a culture of control is the result (Yeung in Nash 1999: 67).

Changing the way an organization functions internally cannot be done quickly. In recent decades organizations have been moving towards flatter structures with fewer levels of hierarchy. Moving from a traditionally hierarchic culture to one of employee empowerment however, requires significant changes in processes and systems. New behaviour patterns have to be promoted in such a way that they are seen to be non-threatening and a desirable object.

Yeung further goes on to state that the first stage in a culture change programme is to identify the current culture by talking to the people in the business. Managers and longer serving employees will have a different view of what has and has not worked in the past, while newcomers will have a more realistic perspective on how outsiders perceive the company's culture (Nash 1999: 68).

The next stage involves canvassing people at all levels of the business to determine what the new culture should look like. Giving people an opportunity to contribute to shaping the future direction of the company, encourages buy-in and gives staff a psychological stake in the project.

For it to work, however, the project must be given right status within the company otherwise people who need to be involved will not be released from their normal duties. Some might find working on a project like this challenging as it will be very different from their normal operational job and be prepared to make an effort. Getting the right input and the right degree of commitment are essential in getting the right direction (Nash 1999: 68).

Richard Scase states that a new style of management has to encourage enthusiasm. Where people don't feel their talents are been fully utilised, both the organization and the country suffer a loss of creativity and innovation (Scase in Nash 1999: 68). Employees must be informed what management is doing and why, so that they understand the benefits and what is in it for them. Ultimately management wants to change the way they behave. This is a major undertaking. It is not just about retaining managers to be nicer to employees, but putting feedback mechanisms in place so that employees can influence their managers' behaviour.

Genuine employee empowerment should let people make decisions about their own futures, with the opportunity to contribute towards the organization. Progress should be carefully measured so that obstacles can be overcome as soon as they are identified and improvements recognised and rewarded.

Poisant (2002: 116) states that recognising and rewarding employees is one of the most powerful motivational tools managers have. Recognition can substantially aid in providing employees with positive experiences. The employees share that positive attitude with customers.

Changing culture takes a lot of time. The biggest danger to projects like this is that they outlive the normal lifespan of a management team (Nash 1999: 69). The temptation to clear out all projects that have not been completed when a new team takes over, should be resisted, otherwise all the investment will be wasted and morale will be seriously damaged.

Patience and determination will ultimately be rewarded. Successful introduction of CRM along with changes to culture and working methods can bring enormous benefits. An organization's relationship with both its customers and employees will change for the better. This can only have a positive effect on the organization's position in the marketplace.

2.9 Customer Care Training

Training and education are critical success factors in the deliverance of a quality service, as the training and education ethos determines what service is to be delivered and how this service will, in effect be delivered. Based on this fundamental fact, the importance of investing in training and education cannot be over-emphasized, as the labour force is the most expensive asset. If no formal training and education development exists in an organization then the values adopted within the organizational structure are left uncontrolled (McAtarsney 1999: 636).

To implement a customer care policy in an organisation the support of the employees is crucial. Bailey (1996: 36) concurs and states that customer care is a by-product of internal relationships and culture. The way the customer is treated is closely dependent on how the

staff feel about their jobs, and the situation in which they do them. This atmosphere within a company is reflected at every level, but generated at the top. Customer care training should echo this. He stresses that training should start at the top, but the courses at each level should differ to reflect the different outcomes which are required. Beginning at the top suggests that customer care strategy, rather than training is the starting point. Until senior management treat customer care as part of business strategy long term change is unlikely.

Dorrian (1996: 100) supports this argument and suggests that to improve the level of service provided to customers, it is up to senior management to create an environment in which the following three golden rules are adhered to by everyone in the company:

- Since customer care is part of everyone's job description, all company personnel must move away from a 'That's not my job' mentality.
- The best service provider is the person who has the tools and resources to do his or her job - someone who knows with confidence that he or she has the ability to give the customer the best possible service.
- It is vital that frontline personnel have a high energy levels, a sense of accomplishment and even a sense of excitement towards customers.

Customer care training for senior managers needs to be about development and implementation of customer focus. Statements about improved care are cosmetic until the business mission, plus beliefs and values which underpin the culture, become truly customer centered. Training should target real understanding of customer requirements. This means involving managers in research aimed at understanding both internal and external customer views. Only by taking part can they really begin to appreciate the situation. It also helps them model the behaviours of staff who have a successful track record of customer care (Bailey 1996: 37).

Staff training is about attitudes more than skills. It is about wanting to help customers rather being told to want them. The management programme is the controlling factor. Genuine commitment from managers is quickly apparent to staff.

People who find themselves in leadership roles have the obligation and the responsibility to inspire others to achieve great heights in customer care. Quite simply, if company employees

do not see their managers setting an example, it is unlikely that they will be inspired to create the level of customer service expected of them.

It is important to remember that good service is about exceeding expectations, not just meeting them. When policies become too rigid, problems occur every time a situation is outside the rules. Staff must be empowered to make decisions even though some of these decisions will be less than perfect. They must also receive management support if they make mistakes, and coaching to try to avoid similar occurrences.

Dorrian (1996: 91) maintains that it is the staff who will make customer care happen, and the quality of customer care emanating from the organization is directly related to how motivated staff are to deliver it, it makes sense to do everything within management's power to ensure that they are happy and satisfied to work. If they are happy employees, they will make the customers happy too.

He goes on to suggest that if a company wants staff to become more caring the following categories should be standard practice for behaviour within the company. These categories are: accessibility, competence, peace of mind, credibility, understanding customers' needs, reliability, communication, responsiveness and courtesy (Dorrian 1996: 92).

Accessibility

It is absolutely crucial that customers have access to the people they want and need to deal with. If customers are unable to do this, the organization is putting up barriers between the organization and its customers. Being accessible to customers shows that the organization cares and is committed to ensuring that contact with the organization will be unhindered. Staff must be approachable. They must display a willingness to assist people.

Competence

Caring people are almost always competent people. If they are competent, they care about their ability to delight customers and the impression created in the customer's mind about the

company. Competence in customer care and in being a caring person is something that can be improved by paying attention to and acting upon the following issues:

- *Knowledge*: Knowing as much as possible about the product and/or services provided. Staff should be trained in all aspects of customer care and in the systems of the company
- *Skill*: Staff should have the necessary skills to deal with customers in a caring and understanding way and must identify customer needs, thereby solving problems and giving good feelings
- *Excellence*: Caring people are always striving to be excellent in whatever they do. This usually means being alert and on the lookout to help customers and colleagues. Caring people are always willing and able to take action to solve problems. They never shirk responsibility and always take responsibility for delighting the customer.
- *Pride*: Caring people take pride in what they do. Customers like to deal with people that take pride in their work. It is important to remember that the behaviour that staff extend towards a customer projects an image of the organization in that customer's mind. A sloppy manner will be associated with a sloppy company. It is the customer's opinion that matters.

Peace of mind

In addition to accessibility and competence, creating peace of mind for customers is probably one of the fastest ways to build strong and lasting relationships. People like to do problem-free business; they do not like to feel frustrated, feel anxious or become angry. It is therefore imperative that everyone in the organization treats customers in such a manner that peace of mind ensues. The following guidelines give an indication of how this can be done:

- Ensure that effective communication exists amongst staff and between staff and customers. Remember that customers like to be treated with courtesy. Staff need to be courteous to customers, no matter how difficult the situation may be. Discourteous staff will leave the customer with a bad experience of the company. Motivational guru Lou Tice stated that all meaningful and lasting change must start from the inside and work its way out (Tice in Dorrian 1996: 94). This is so true of organizational behaviour. One of the truisms is that if staff are to become more caring towards the

company's customers, managers must become more caring towards them, and encourage and motivate them to become more caring towards one another. The more courteous staff are towards one another, the more courteous they will be towards customers.

- Staff must be well trained to understand a customer's specific needs at the moment of contact. For example, if the customer wants to see the manager, a manager must be available. Furthermore, it is important for personnel to develop their ability to truly understand the customer's needs and not what personnel think they need.
- Staff must have a responsive attitude and show willingness to help the customer as well as each other. Customers do notice things. If staff are highly responsive to one another, this will filter through and have an impact on the company's ability to look after customers.
- Having a credible image helps to create peace of mind. Customers like dealing with honest companies they know they can trust. Staff must be honest and accept blame, if and when problems arise, to ensure that the customer's experience with the company is a smooth and pleasant one.
- Customer should never be named as a reason of fault. Not only will this be perceived as unprofessional, the customer may begin to wonder if the same is said about him or her.
- Creating peace of mind means being reliable, never letting colleagues or customers down and letting customers know that they can always count on an organization and its staff.
- Never argue with a customer, ignore a complaint or use bad language.

Credibility

Customers prefer to deal with people they can trust and whom they feel give them a fair deal. While an organization has credibility it is something to treasure, damaged, it maybe difficult to repair, and it can never be certain if the customer will trust the organisation again. In order to build trust and credibility staff should:

- Be sincere. Caring for customers must come from the heart.

- Keep promises. This is also an insurance policy for when things do go wrong. Customers are more likely to overlook the odd thing going wrong if the organization has a reputation for keeping promises than if they are usually broken.
- Stick to the facts; don't create false impressions. Be straightforward and honest.
- Never pass the buck or refer the customer to another person or department unless it is necessary. If it is not attended to, credibility will be lost.

Support and reinforce credibility by projecting a professional image:

- Maintaining a neat appearance
- Behaving properly in the presence of customers. Staff should not smoke cigarettes, chew gum, read magazines or chat on the phone while in a frontline situation because the reaction of customers and staff will be negatively affected.

Understanding customers' needs

Staff should make sure that they fully understand customers' needs, so that you can effectively satisfy those needs. This applies to every encounter with the customer. To understand customer requirements, staff must:

- Ask the right questions about the issue at hand. Apart from providing the relevant information to delight the customer, asking questions helps staff to retain control of the situation and lets the customer see how serious staff are about assisting him or her.
- Listen to customer responses. Take time to listen to what the customer is saying. Quality listening leads to quality advice and action.
- Confirm understanding of the customer's needs in order to take correct action

Reliability

Caring people are reliable people; customers and colleagues can depend on them. Being a reliable manager will inculcate reliability in staff and give customers and staff

a sense of trust. If managers are not reliable, the chances are that staff will not be either. Reliability means:

- Being on time with whatever one does - being punctual at meetings, with deadlines, with deliveries and at work.
- Responding promptly - never allowing the telephone to ring more than three times before answering it, taking accurate messages and following up on promises. It also means attending to basics such as returning calls and doing so when one says that one will do so.
- Being accurate in whatever one undertakes.

Communication

It is very important to communicate effectively with staff and customers. Caring people know the importance of communicating properly, and they take pride in the fact that their customers and colleagues understand issues clearly. Avoiding misunderstandings forms part of creating customer delight. Misunderstandings can be avoided by:

- Using words the customer understands.
- Making whatever is said, a positive statement and avoiding the use of negative words; people do not like to hear that something cannot or will not be done. This is often regarded as somewhat confrontational. Rather the other person should be told that the matter will be investigated and action taken.
- Be clear about what is meant. Both parties must know exactly where they stand.
- Looking at the customer when he or she is speaking in a face-to-face situation.
- Staff should provide their name when a customer telephones. The caller needs a name to relate to, not an unidentified voice.
- Always restate what the customer has said. This lets the customer know that they have been understood. This is a good technique when handling complaints.
- Keeping the customer informed

Responsiveness

Caring people are very responsive. They respond to customer queries and problems in a highly efficient manner. Help staff to be responsive in a quick, efficient, helpful, positive and decisive manner.

- Ensure that staff are equipped to handle a customer query.
- Answer telephone queries on the same day.
- Acknowledge correspondence from customers and respond accordingly within 14 days.

Courtesy

Caring people are courteous:

- They treat the customer with respect.
- They call customers by their names.
- The customer is always told the truth.
- They always use a polite tone of voice - they never shout or raise their voice when dealing with a customer.
- They are always polite to customers.

Caring people put their customers at ease, never place blame on customers for any mishap, and never make them feel guilty for their actions, particularly when they raise a complaint. Because they are friendly, their customers leave with a positive attitude.

Caring people are usually happy people because they enjoy their work. They are interested in their customers as people and are always willing to be of assistance.

Customers have confidence and in their company, which means that they have confidence in making the decision to buy.

Bailey (1996:38) stresses that it is the manager's job to produce the customer satisfaction mission and strategy. Managers should take inputs and advice from all levels of staff, but the final decisions on positioning and broad strategy are the

responsibility management. Every other step on the continuum should involve both staff and managers.

Only by involving staff at every level can the company get a real view of what can be done and the best way to do it. Dorrian (1996: 90) maintains that customer care should be the priority of every employee. The manner and care taken in delivering the product or service can often be more important than the product or service itself. In the delivery of customer care, it is the people that count - whether or not they are in direct contact with the customer. When one thinks about it, all customer care is, is one person or group of people looking after the interests of another person or another group of people, in a manner that will leave them delighted. Therefore, the level of customer care or service that an organization provides to its customers is directly related to how caring the staff is.

Bailey (1996: 38) concludes that as products improve – and the good ones do so continuously, driven by customer demand and competition – so service becomes a competitive edge. The so-called non-product benefit is becoming the differential advantage. In fact, service is likely to be remembered long after the product is obsolete. For this reason service standards must be based on customer requirements, not on the companies' perception of what they might be.

2.10 Conclusion

The literature reviewed demonstrates that customer care principles apply to any organization. Customer care represents the core of service marketing activity. A customer's feelings, perceptions and requirements in respect of a product or service should be central to an organisation.

What also emerged is that consistency is vital in maintaining standards of performance.

Crucial for the development of a culture of customer care is the commitment of every person in the organisation, starting from the top. Senior management must set the tone for the entire organisation. After this, the responsibility should cascade down through

the company, through the various levels of management, until it reaches everyone who is employed within its ranks.

Chapter 3

The University's Registration Process

3.1 Introduction

The logistical aspects of registration on the UNP campus is co-ordinated by the Department of Student Academic Affairs. Preparation for the following year's registration usually begins in September after the University's sessional dates have been finalised. A registration package is sent to students before registration, providing details about registration. At UNP two days are set aside for student registration.

3.2 Financial Clearance

Both new and returning students are encouraged to obtain financial clearance prior to the day of registration. If this is done before the payment deadline, the student's registration form will indicate that the student has financial clearance.

A recommendation is made to students who have been offered a place in Residence to arrive on campus before the day of registration in order to complete the financial aspects of registration. Students applying for financial aid are also encouraged to make contact with the Financial Aid Counsellor, if they have not heard from the Financial Aid office by a certain date. These recommendations are made to ensure that students avoid waiting in queues on registration day.

The registration package also provides similar recommendations for sponsored students, bank loan students and self-funded students. For security reasons, no cash is accepted by the department of Finance on registration days. Instead, students are encouraged to make direct deposits at any First National Bank branch.

3.3 Registration

Registration for first year students usually takes place on the Friday prior to the commencement of lectures. For returning students, registration takes place on the Monday prior to the commencement of lectures. Registration takes place on the Golf Road Campus at the Commerce and New Arts Buildings.

There are a number of steps in the registration process. These steps are included in a guide sent to students with their registration package.

Step 1.

Students collect their registration form and course insert sheet from the Faculty Office staff situated in the Commerce Broadwalk. If the student has financial clearance reflected on their registration form, they can then proceed to step 2. If not, they need to go to Student Fees at the Department of Finance with a copy of their bank deposit slip, confirming that they have made payment.

Step 2.

Students are requested to check and correct all information on the registration form and complete their course insert sheet. Staff from the Department of Admissions are present to assist with queries.

Step 3.

This step requires students to consult with academic staff regarding the modules that they want to register for.

Step 4.

Students then proceed to the Deans in the New Arts Building for academic approval and their signature. A student cannot proceed further until the Dean has authorised their registration.

Step 5.

Students proceed to the computer room for data capture of registration information and the issue of a student validation card. A student is not registered until he/she has completed this step.

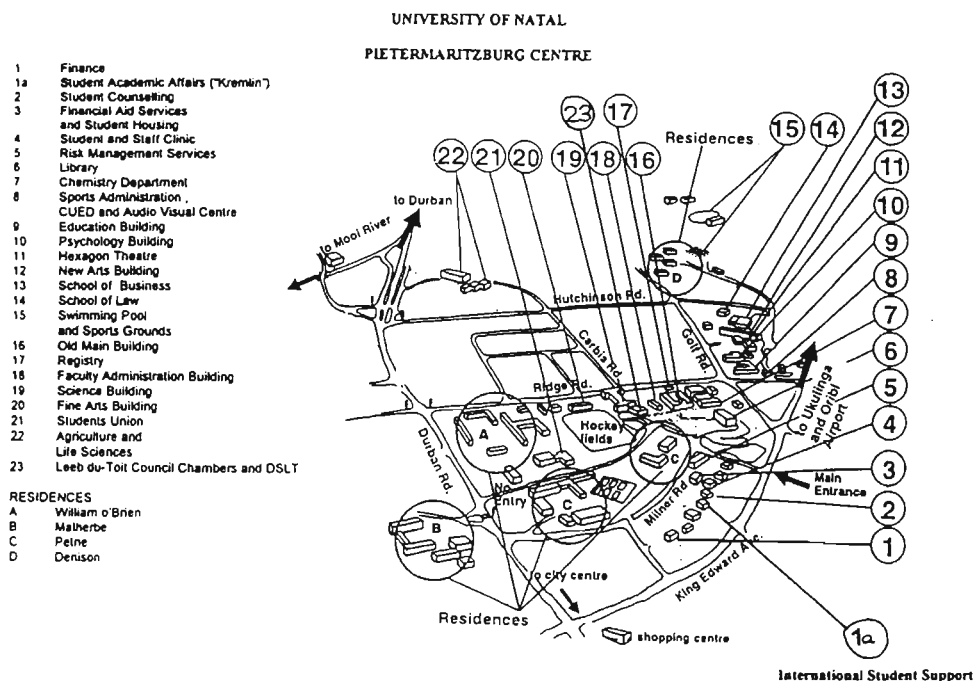
Step 6.

Students then proceed to Risk Management Services and produce their student validation card and their ID book or any other proof of identity, for the issue of a student card.

Step 7.

Finally, students proceed to the Library desk for Library registration.

These procedures are accompanied by a map (copied below), which directs students to the relevant sections.



3.4 Conclusion

Registration packages that are sent to students provide information to assist them during registration. If guidelines in this package are adhered to, registration can be a smooth process.

All relevant departments meet after registration to review the process. A lot of effort has been made to ensure that the registration process is as comfortable as possible for the student. Processes are constantly reviewed and improved upon.

Chapter 4

Research Methodology

4.1. Research Methodology

This research attempts to establish the type of service received by students from support staff departments during registration.

4.2. Pilot Test

A pilot test was conducted on five students. These students understood what was required in answering the questionnaire. One student felt that the number 7 in section A, which asks respondents about their race, was not appropriate. After explaining that race would be useful to determine the type of service received by different race groups from the departments, the student understood its relevance.

4.3. Sampling Methodology

Data was collected via a simple random sample within the three libraries (Main, Law and Life Sciences) on campus. This ensured that students from the different faculties had an equal probability of being part of the survey, providing a true representation of the campus population.

The research instrument was a questionnaire (see Appendix 1). Questionnaires were randomly given out to students at different time intervals.

The following departments were surveyed under the following attributes using a Likert Scale. A Likert scale is used in studies of attitudes, in which raw scores are based on graded alternative responses to each of a series of questions (Everitt and Wykes 1999: 105).

DEPARTMENT	ATTRIBUTE
Student Admissions	Helpfulness of staff
	Attitude of staff
Finance	Fees payment process
	Helpfulness of staff
	Attitude of staff
Financial Aid	Advice about student loans and bursaries
	Helpfulness of staff
	Attitude of staff
Library	Helpfulness of staff
	Attitude of staff
Risk Management	Helpfulness of staff
	Attitude of staff
Student Counselling	Course selection advice
	Helpfulness of staff
	Attitude of staff
Student Housing	Helpfulness of staff
	Attitude of staff

The Likert scale had the following measurements:

1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied and 5 = very satisfied.

As the study attempts to measure the attitudes and feelings of people, the data analysed from this survey is clearly non-parametric in nature and non-parametric statistical techniques are employed. Non-parametric statistical techniques are

statistical methods which do not assume a particular form for the probability distribution of the observations. Consequently the techniques are valid under relatively general assumptions about the underlying population (Everitt and Wykes 1999: 56). The software package used to run all the analyses is SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientist), version 9.

4.3. Questionnaire Design

Section A consists of demographics. This was employed to gain information about the type of respondents and also to look at the groupings within and across the population represented.

Section B requires respondents to tick an appropriate box that reflects their level of satisfaction with the service received from the departments under study.

Section C provides respondents with an opportunity to provide an overall rating for the departments under study. An open ended question allows them to state which department or departments need to improve their services offered.

4.4. Research Validity and Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha was calculated as part of the reliability test to assess how reliable the results were and whether similar results to generalise would result if the sample size was increased. A value of 0.7 or higher is a very good value that can lead one to state that one will get the same results if the survey was carried out with a larger sample of students.

4.5. Representativeness

The size of the sample was calculated, after consultation with a statistician from the Department of Statistics (UNP), to be about 300 with a 5% tolerance level. However,

only 287 students responded to the survey. This is still a tolerable sample size from which to infer conclusion.

4.6. Limitations of the study

The questionnaires for this study was administered in June. There was a concern that June is long after registration and the respondents could have forgotten their experiences of registration.

Chapter 5

Results

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

The table below reflects descriptive statistics for the following variables and provides the responses that was most frequent i.e. modal:

VARIABLE	MODAL VALUE	RESPONSE
Full/part time students	1	Yes
Post/undergraduates	2	No
First/other years	2	No
Gender	2	Female
South African/Other	1	Yes
Faculty	2	Science & Agric
Race	1	Black
Student Admissions helpfulness	4	Satisfied
Student Admissions attitude	4	Satisfied
Finance fees	4	Satisfied
Finance help	4	Satisfied
Finance attitude	4	Satisfied
Financial Aid advice	3	Neutral
Financial Aid help	3	Neutral
Financial Aid attitude	3	Neutral
Library help	5	Very satisfied
Library attitude	5	Very satisfied

VARIABLE	MODAL VALUE	RESPONSE
Risk Management help	4	Satisfied
Risk Management attitude	4	Satisfied
Student Counselling advice	3	Neutral
Student Counselling help	3	Neutral
Student Counselling advice	5	Very satisfied
Student Housing attitude	3	Neutral
Overall rank: Student Admissions	3	Neutral
Overall rank: Finance	3	Neutral
Overall rank: Financial Aid	3	Neutral
Overall rank: Library	5	Very satisfied
Overall rank: Risk Management	3	Neutral
Overall rank: Student Counselling	3	Neutral
Overall rank: Student Housing	3	Neutral

It is interesting to see from the above table that modal responses for different departments were consistent i.e. Finance got a modal response of 4 under all the variables measured (fees, help, attitude). Furthermore it is evident that the modal response towards Financial Aid, Student Counselling and Student Housing were just 3 which is a neutral response. In the overall rankings it is also seen that the students seemed to be very satisfied with the services of the Library and just neutral with the rest of the departments. A mode of any data set is that observation or data point that is the most frequent response or data point. In this case, this mode will be a modal response i.e. an opinion or response that is the most frequent one.

5.2 Frequency tables

A frequency distribution is a division of a sample of observations into a number of classes, together with the number of observations in each class (Everitt 1999: 72).

Full-time students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	269	93.7	93.7	93.7
	no	18	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	287	100.0	100.0	

94% of respondents were full-time students and 6% were part-time students.

The valid percent is the actual number or percentage of respondents that really participated in the survey.

5.3. Categorized frequency tables:

Case Processing Summary

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
	gender	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Full-time students	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Postgraduate students	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
First year students	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
South African students	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Faculty	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Race	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Admissions: helpfulness of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Admissions: attitude of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%

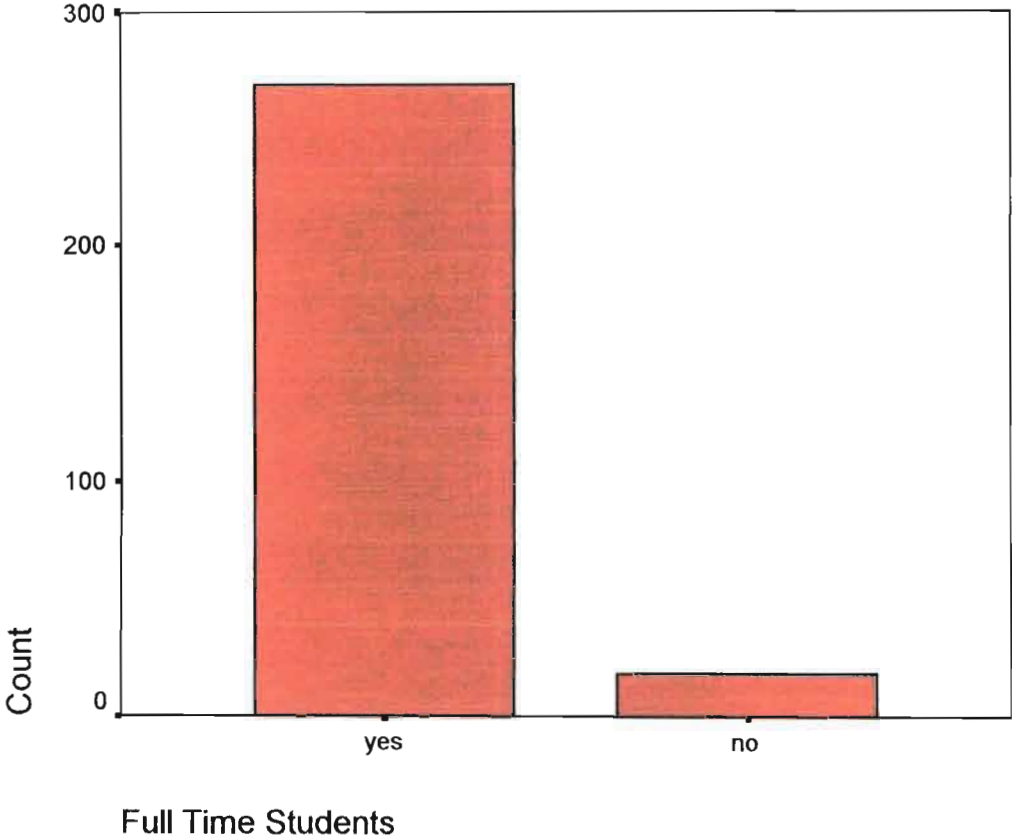
		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
Finance: fee payment process	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
Finance: helpfulness of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Finance: attitude of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Financial Aid: advice about student loans and bursaries	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Financial Aid: helpfulness of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Financial Aid: attitude of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Library: helpfulness of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Library: attitude of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Risk Management : helpfulness of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Risk Management : attitude of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Counselling: course selection advice	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Counselling : helpfulness of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Counselling :attitude of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Housing: helpfulness of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Housing: attitude of staff	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Admissions	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Finance	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Financial Aid	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Library	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Risk Management	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Counselling	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%
Student Housing	male	98	70.5%	41	29.5%	139	100.0%
	female	88	59.5%	60	40.5%	148	100.0%

For more categorised tables refer to appendices.

5.4. Bar Graphs:

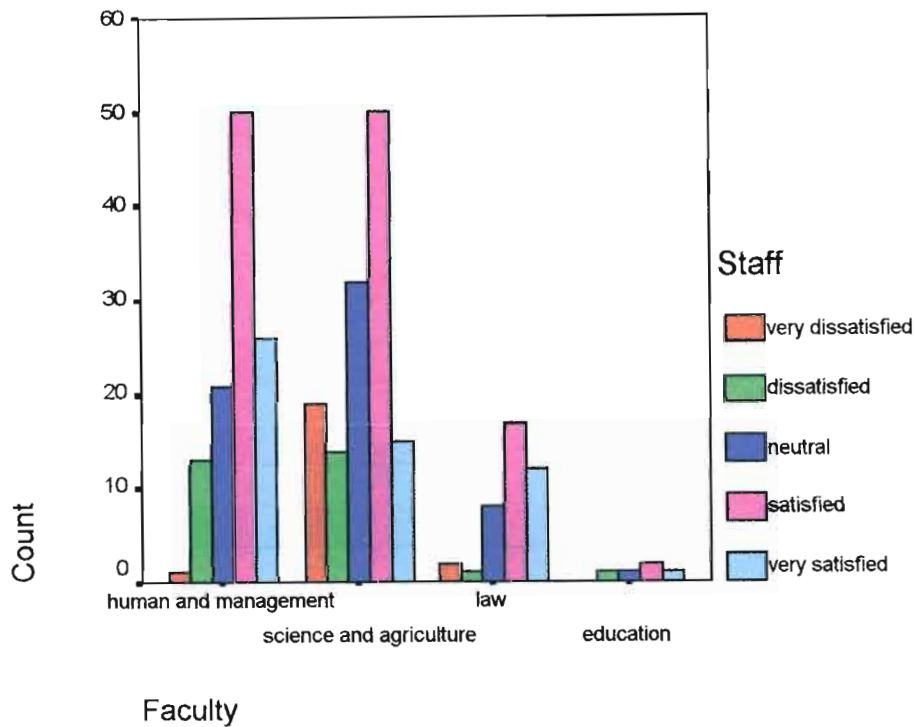


From the above figure it is clear that more full time students than part time students who participated in the study.

5.5 Categorised Bar Graphs for the different departments

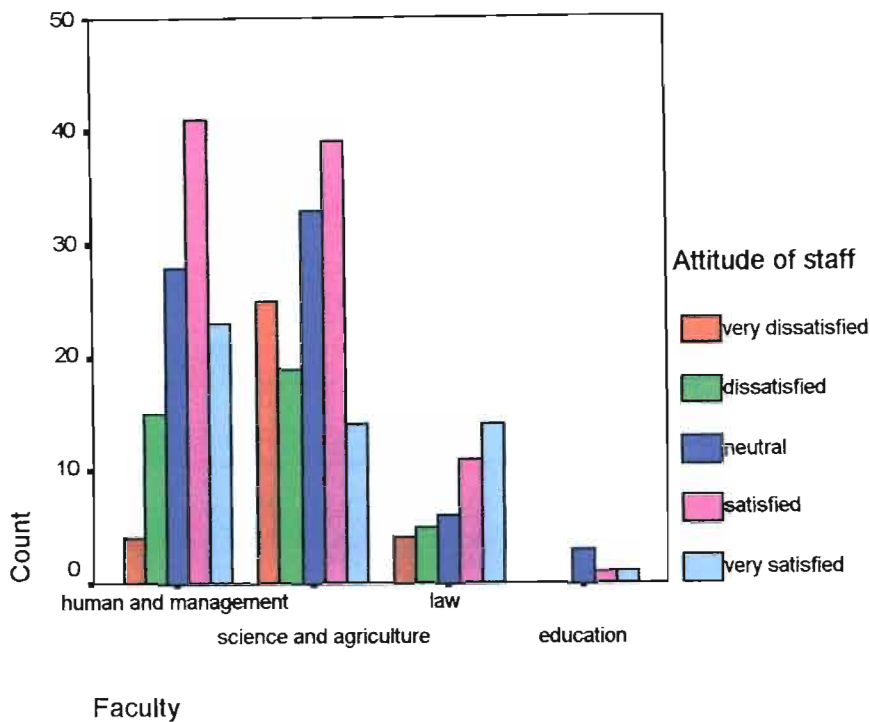
The x axis represents the faculties while the y axis refers to the number of respondents.

5.5.1 Department: Student Admissions



It is evident from the above graph that the majority of the students from all the faculties were satisfied with the helpfulness of the staff from the department of Student Admissions. However about 30 students from the Science and Agriculture Faculty and 20 from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences were just neutral with the helpfulness of staff.

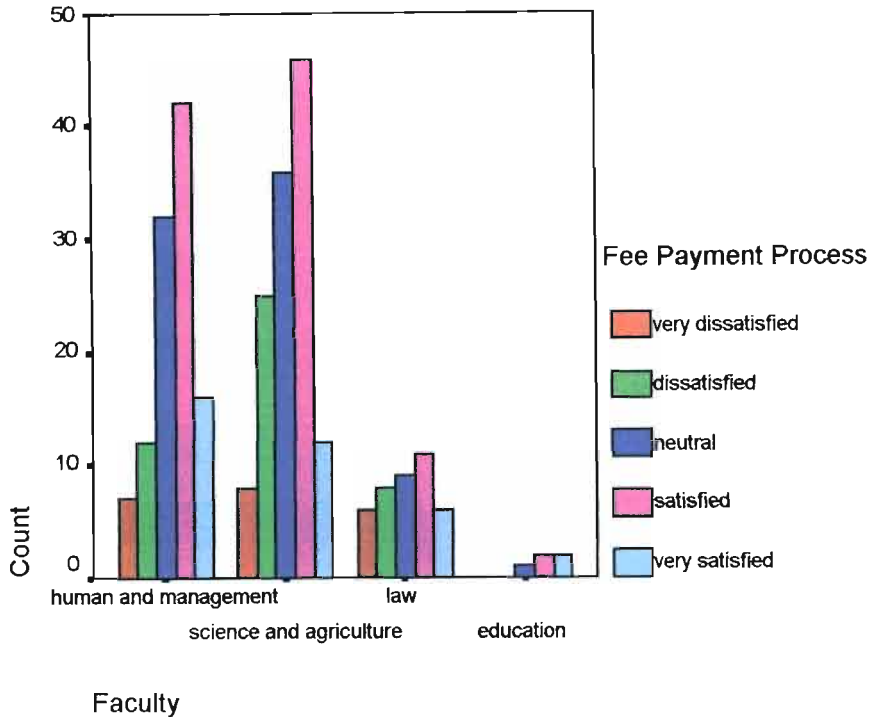
Student Admissions cont.



It is clear from the above graph that the majority of the students in the Faculties of Human and Management Sciences and Science and Agriculture were satisfied with the attitude of staff from the Department of Student Admissions. However, there were also a large number of students from both these faculties – just under 30 from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences and over 30 from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture, that were neutral with regard to the attitude of the staff. About 25 students from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture were very dissatisfied with the attitude of the staff. The same faculty has just under 20 students who were dissatisfied with the attitude of staff.

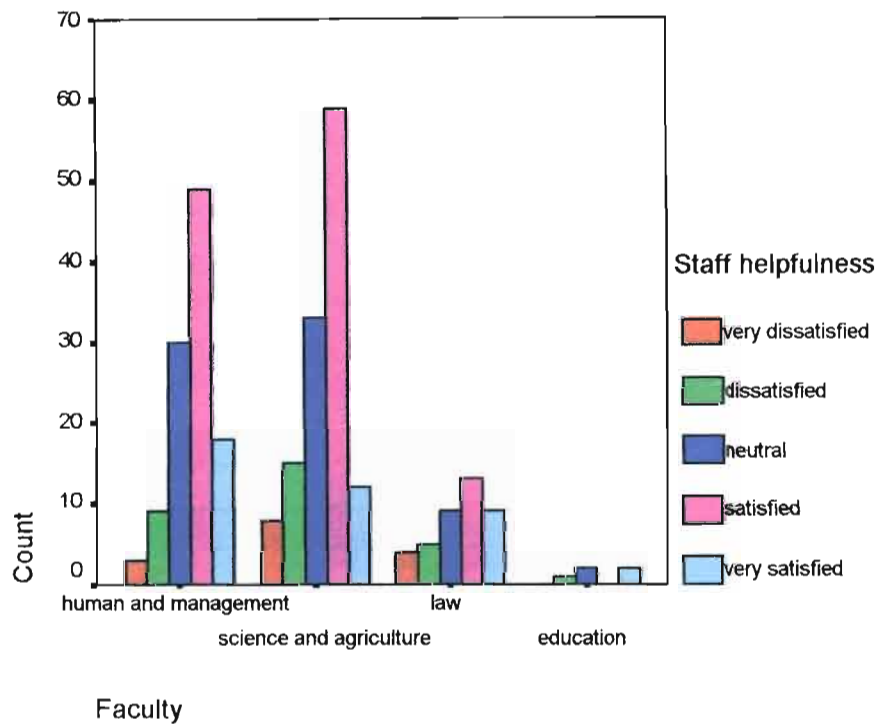
Over 20 students from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences were very satisfied with the staff's attitude, while the majority of students from the Faculty of Law were also very satisfied with the attitude of the staff.

5.5.2 Department: Finance



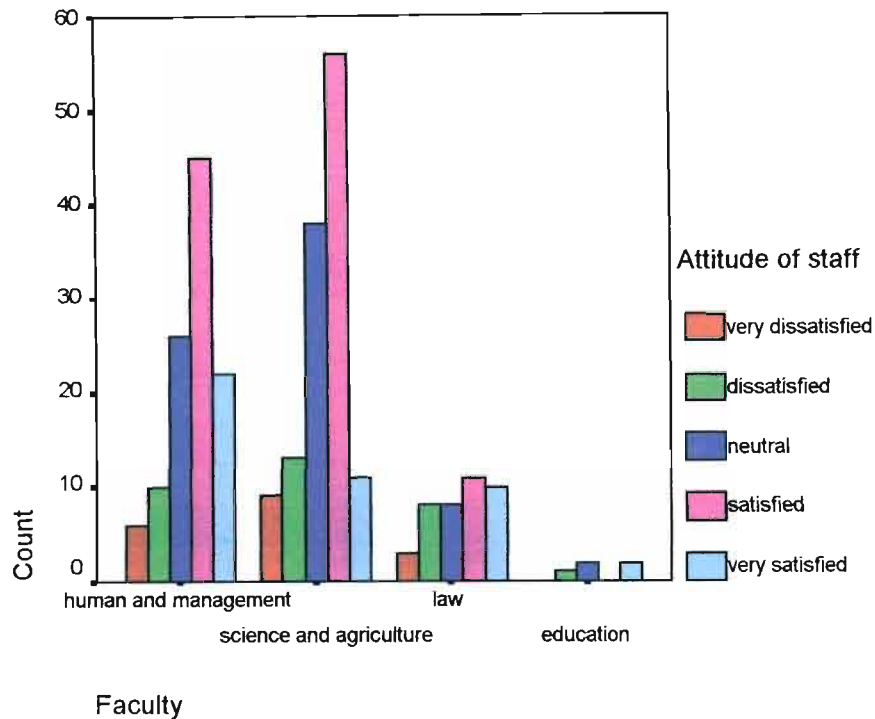
This graph demonstrates that the majority of respondents were satisfied with the fee payment process. About 35 students from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture, just over 30 from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences and just under 10 from the Faculty of Law were neutral about the fee payment process. Approximately 25 respondents from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture, 12 from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences and 7 from the Law Faculty were dissatisfied with the fee payment process.

Finance cont.



This graph reflects that the majority of students from all the faculties are satisfied with the helpfulness of staff. Approximately 30 students from the Faculties of Human and Management Sciences and Science and Agriculture are neutral regarding the helpfulness of staff from the Department of Finance.

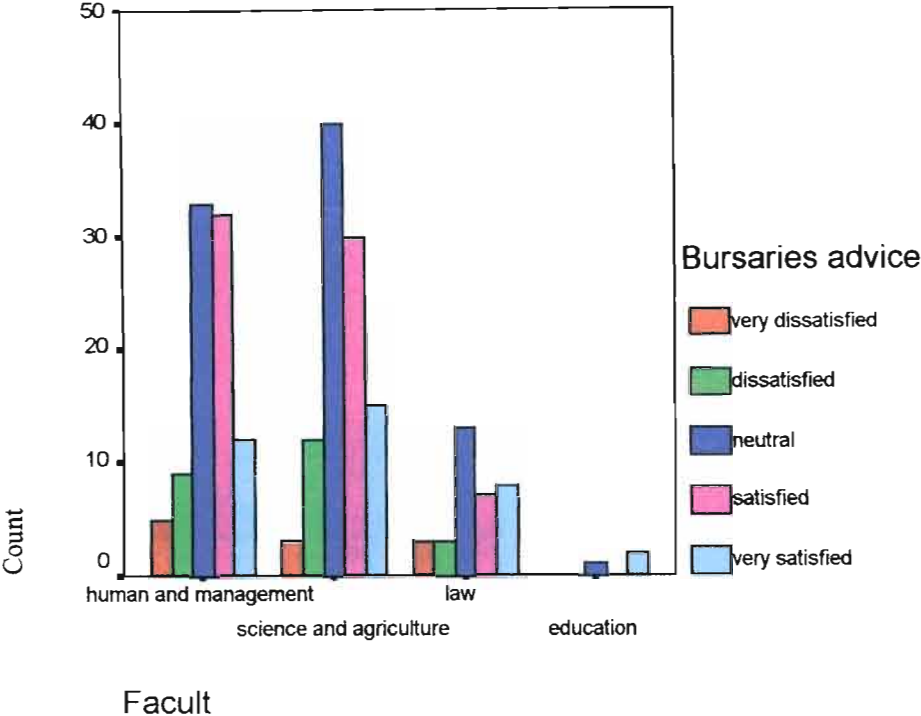
Finance cont.



The overall rating of this graph shows that the majority of students were satisfied with the attitude of staff. Nearly 40 from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture were neutral while over 20 students from the Faculty Human and Management Sciences were neutral.

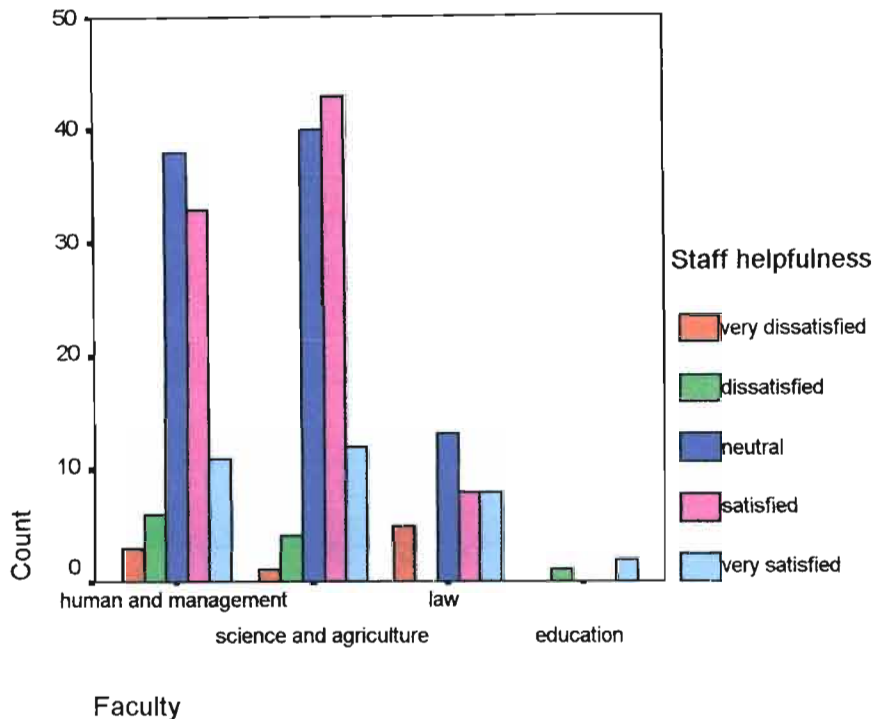
An equal number (under 10) from the Faculty of Law were both neutral and dissatisfied.

5.5.3 Department: Financial Aid



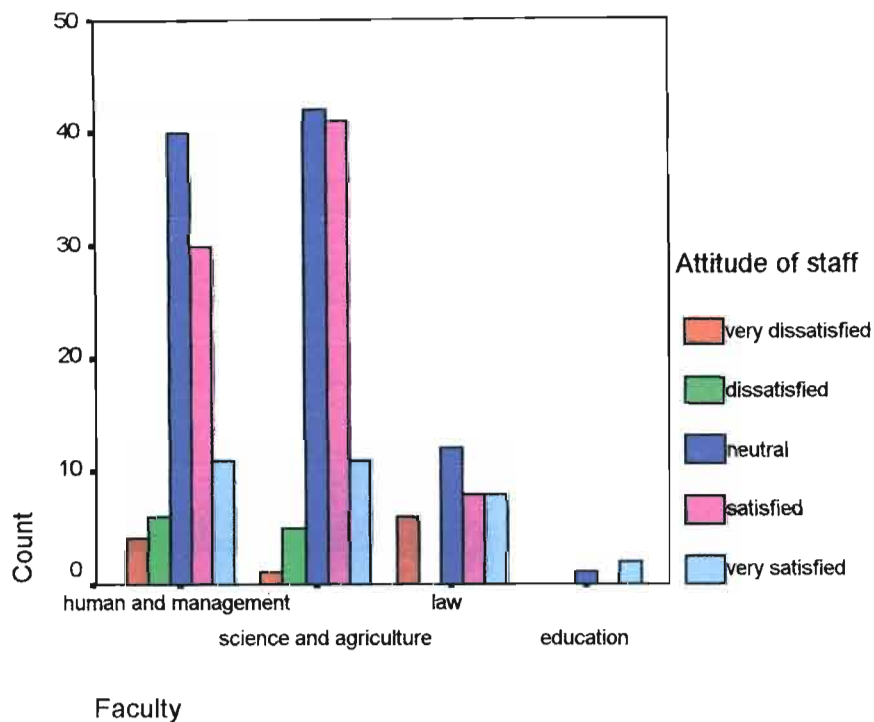
The general feeling among respondents about the advice they got regarding bursaries was neutral. Over 33 students from the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences were satisfied while under 10 students from the Faculty of Law were satisfied.

Financial Aid cont.



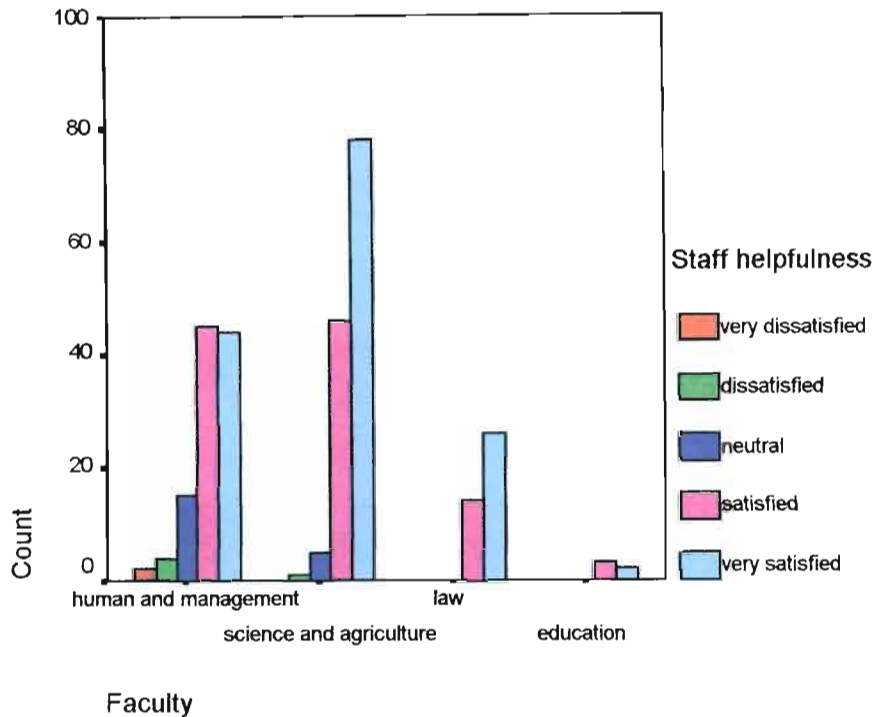
The Faculty of Science and Agriculture had over 40 students who were satisfied with the help that they received from the Department of Financial Aid. There were more respondents from the Faculties of Human and Management Sciences and Law, that were neutral with the helpfulness of staff, than that were satisfied. There was an equal number of respondents in the Faculty of Law that were satisfied and very satisfied – under 10.

Financial Aid cont.



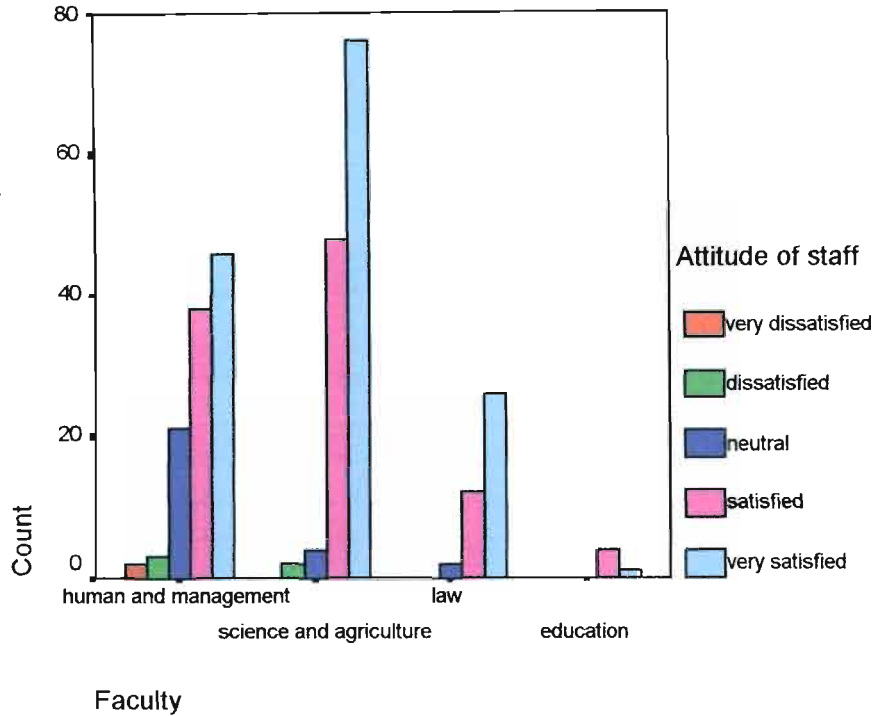
The general feeling among the majority of respondents was neutral with regard to the attitude of staff. 40 students from the Department of Science and Agriculture were satisfied with the attitude of staff, while about 30 and about 10 were satisfied from the Faculties of Human and Management Sciences and Law respectively.

5.5.4 Department: Library



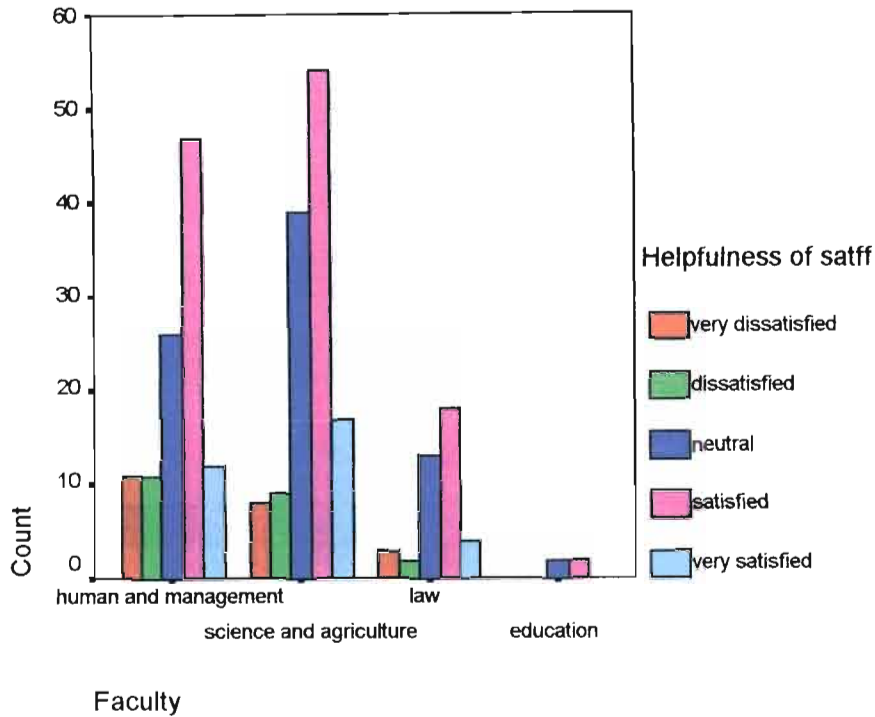
This graph reveals that the majority of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the helpfulness of staff. Close to 80 of the respondents from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture were very satisfied. The Faculty of Human and Management Sciences had over 40 students who were either satisfied or very satisfied. The Faculty of Law had more respondents who were very satisfied than satisfied.

Library cont.



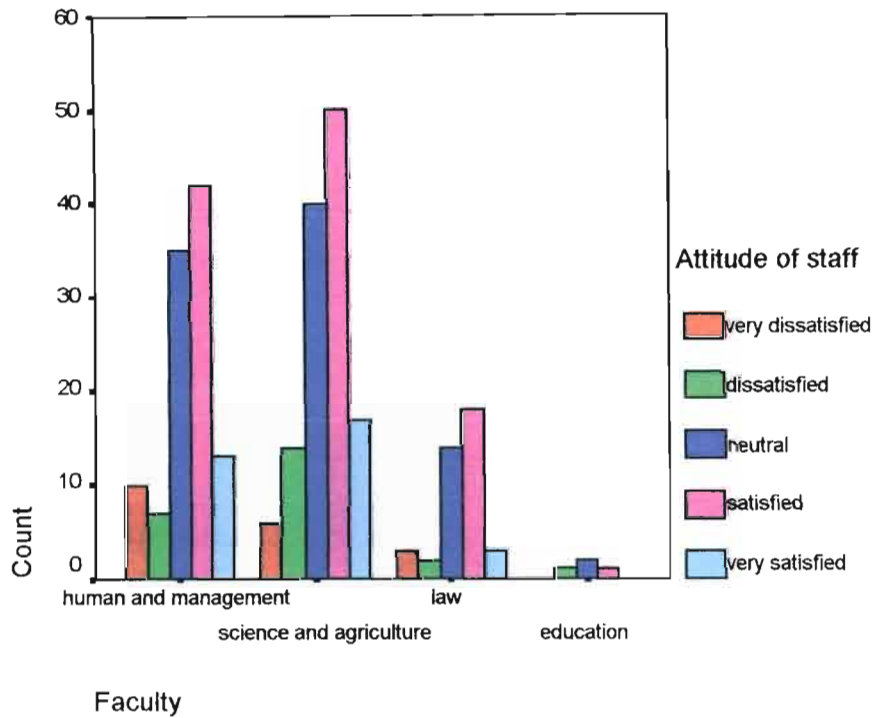
The overall rating shown on this graph reflects that the majority of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the attitude of staff. Close to 80 students from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture were very satisfied. The Faculty of Human and Management Sciences had 20 respondents who were neutral.

5.5.5 Department: Risk Management Services



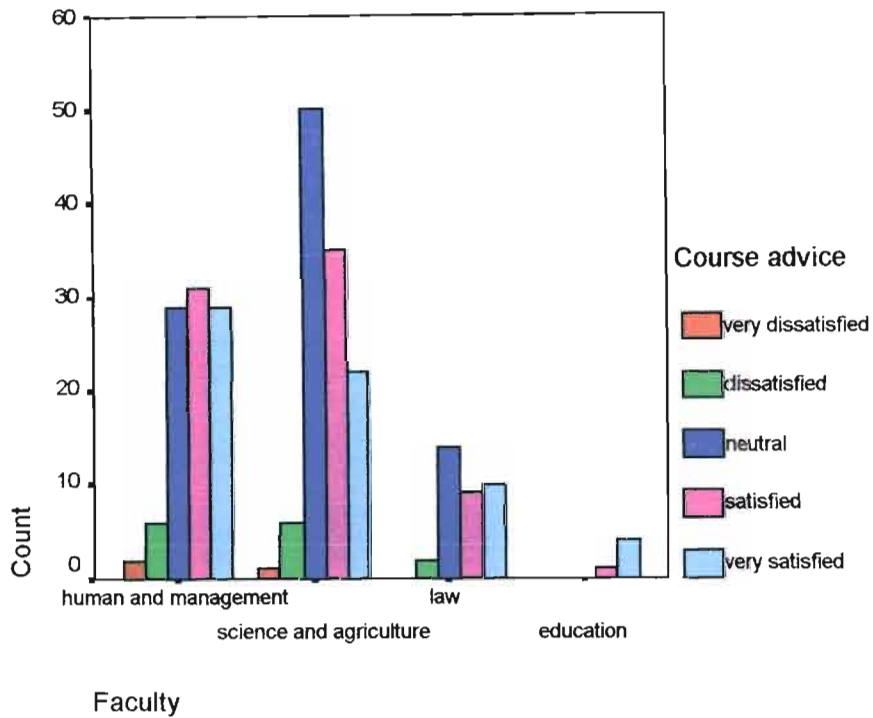
The general feeling of the majority of students was that they were satisfied with the helpfulness of staff from Risk Management Services. Just under 40 respondents from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture were neutral while about 26 from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences were neutral.

Risk Management Services cont.



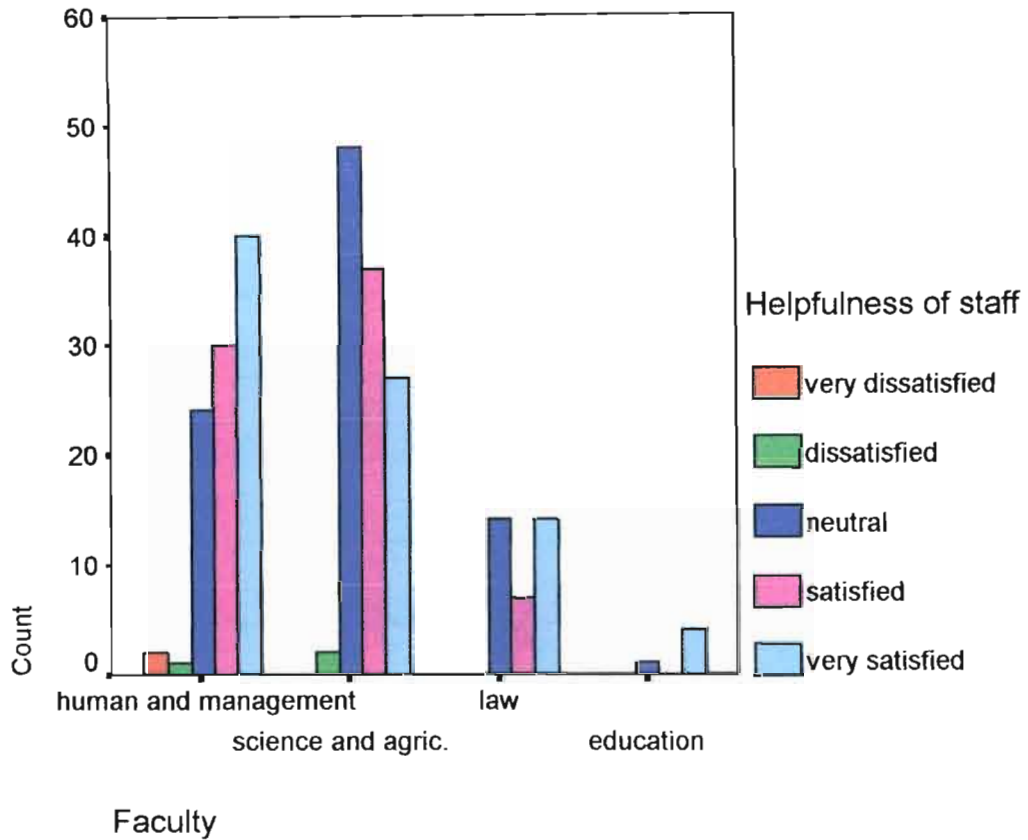
This graph indicates that the overall rating was that the majority of students were satisfied with the attitude of staff. 40 respondents from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture, 35 from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences and about 15 from the Faculty of Law were neutral. 10 students from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences were very dissatisfied.

5.5.6 Department: Student Counselling



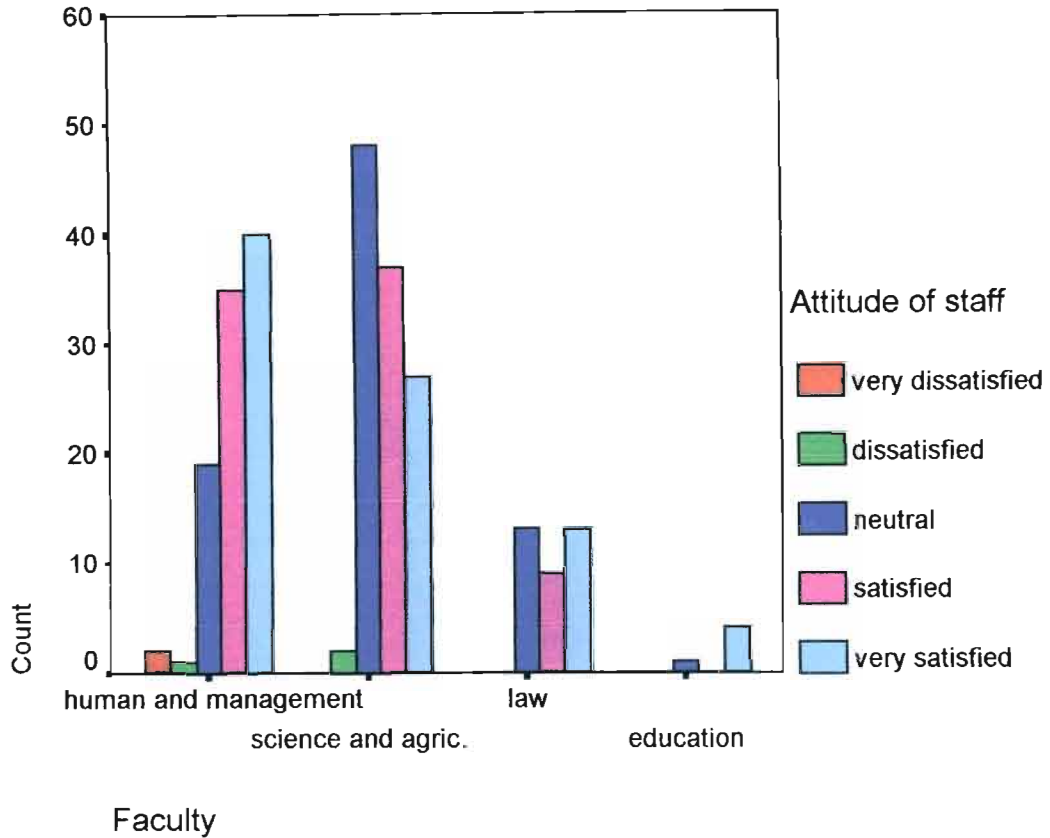
Although respondents were satisfied with the advice they were given with regard to course selection advice, the graph shows that the majority of them were neutral. About 50 from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture were neutral. Just under 30 were neutral from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences while most of the respondents from the Faculty of Law were neutral.

Student Counselling cont.



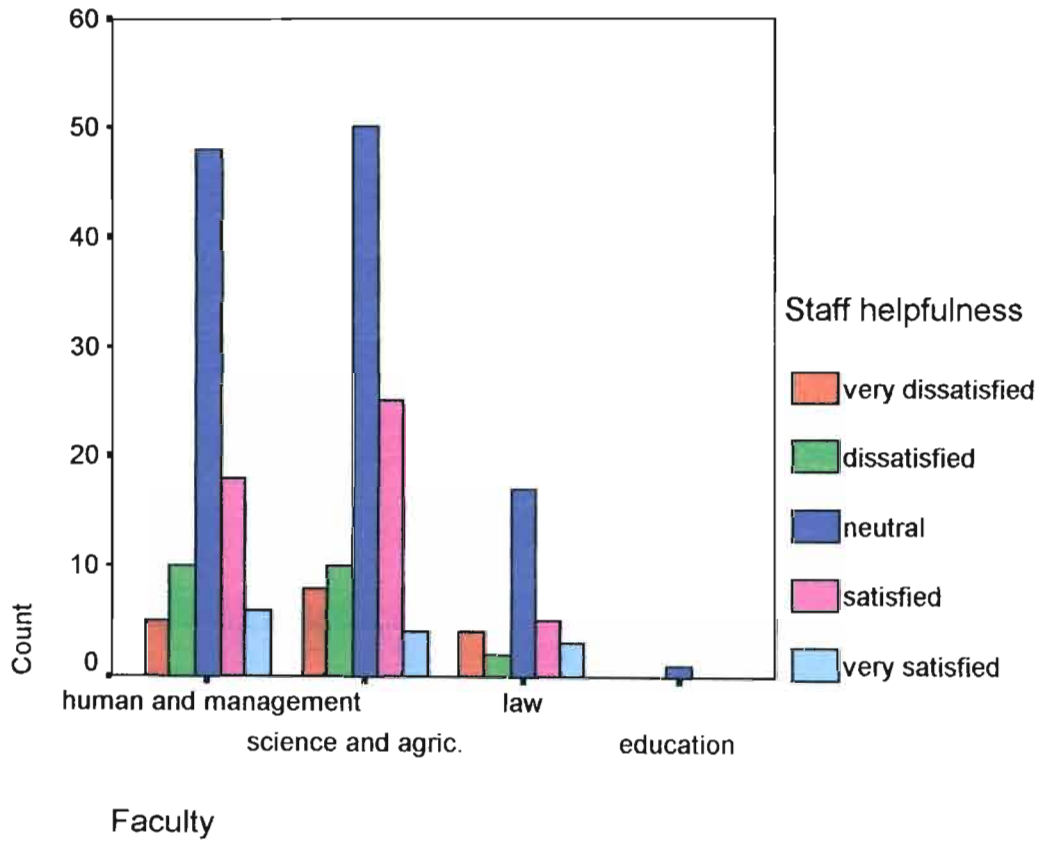
This graph indicates that 40 students from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences were very satisfied with the helpfulness of staff, while just over 25 were very satisfied from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture. An equal number were very satisfied and neutral from the Faculty of Law – over 10. The majority of students were very satisfied from the Faculty of Education.

Student Counselling cont.



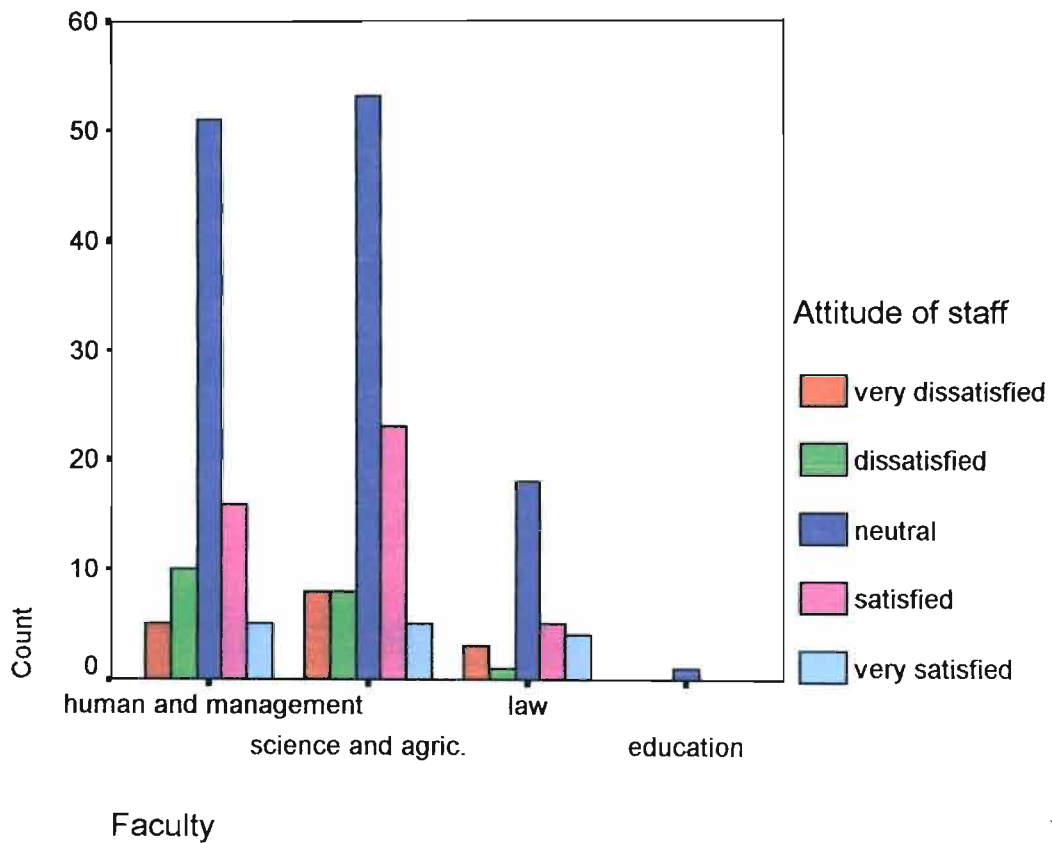
This graph reveals that the majority of the students, from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences, were either very satisfied or satisfied with the attitude of the staff. Close to 50 respondents from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture were neutral, while just under 40 were satisfied and about 27 very satisfied. The Faculty of Law has an equal number that are neutral and very satisfied – about 15. There were more students that were very satisfied than neutral in the Faculty of Education.

5.5.7 Department: Student Housing



This graph denotes that the trend was neutral with the majority of students, from all faculties regarding the helpfulness of staff.

Student Housing cont.



Similar to the helpfulness of staff graph, this graph demonstrates that the majority of students from all faculties were neutral with regard to the attitude of staff from the Department of Student Housing.

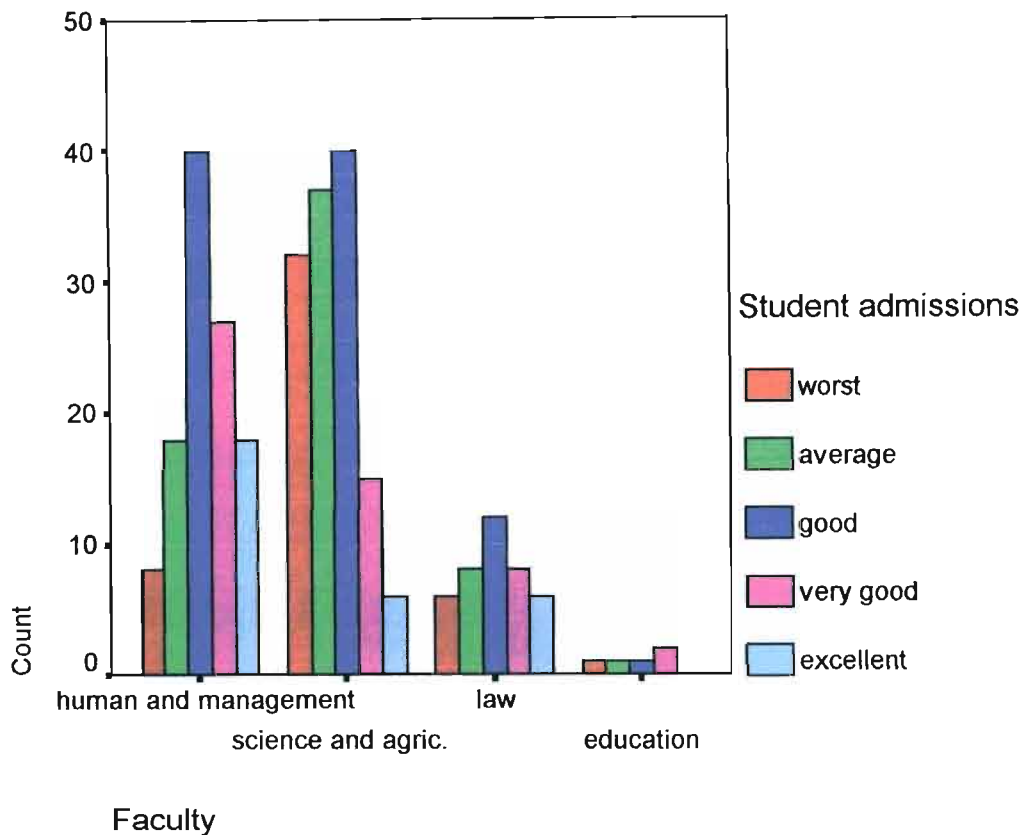
5.6 Overall Rating

Section C, no.1 invited respondents to rate the different departments. The ratings were as follows:

1 = worst; 2 = average; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = excellent

The bar graphs below reflects the results:

5.6.1 Department: Student Admissions

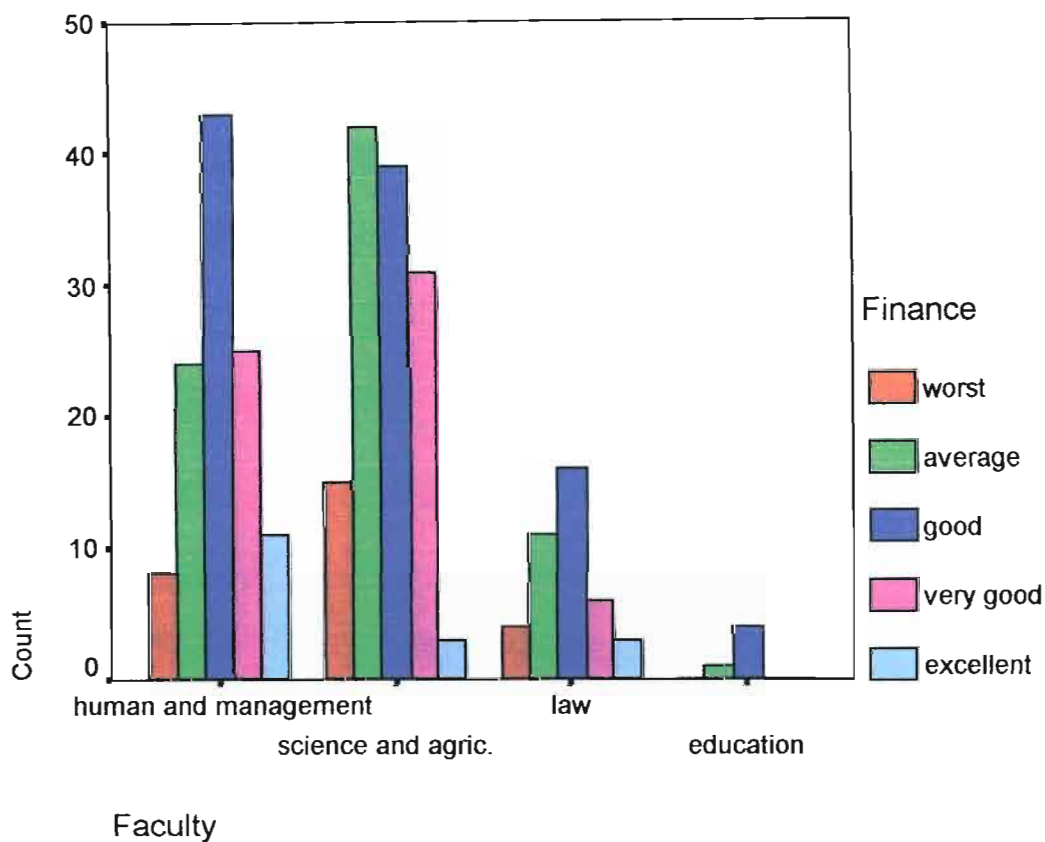


The rating by students of the Faculties of Human and Management Sciences and Science and Agriculture indicates that 40 students rated the Department of Student Admissions as good. Over 30 students from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture have either given a rating of average or worst.

Nearly 30 students from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences have rated the department as very good.

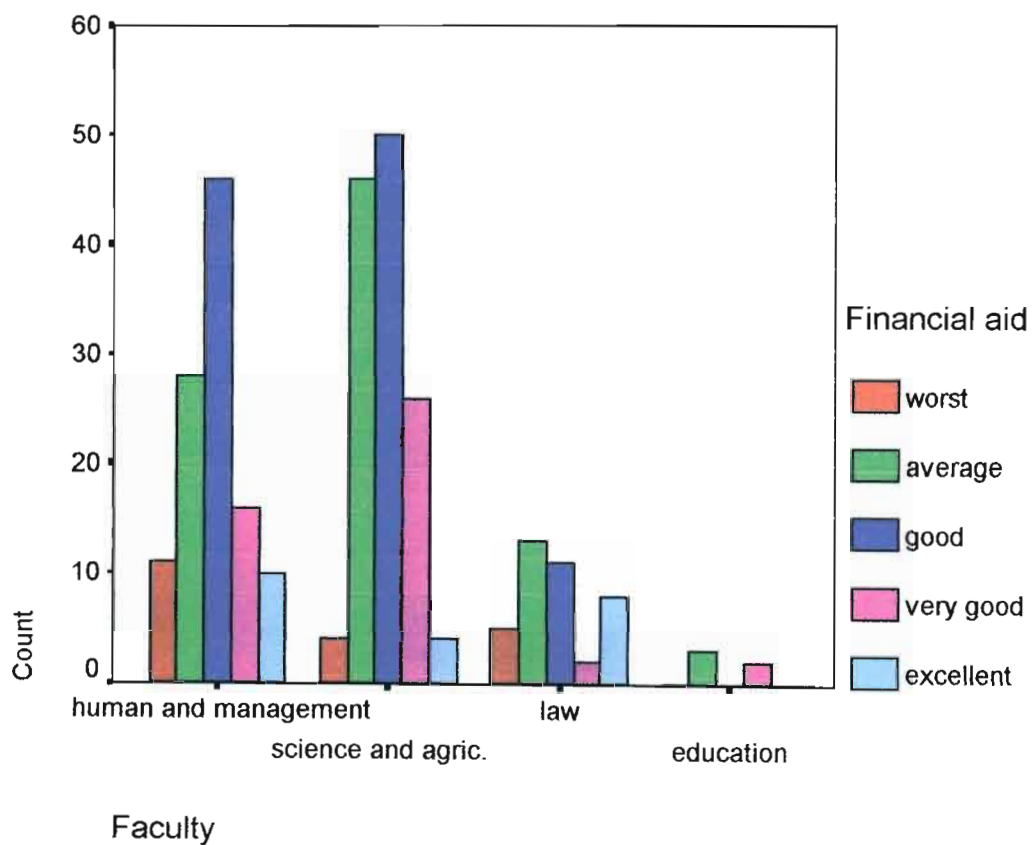
The graph indicates that the majority of respondents from the Faculty of Law have rated the department as good while the majority from the Faculty of Education have rated the department as very good.

5.6.2 Department: Finance



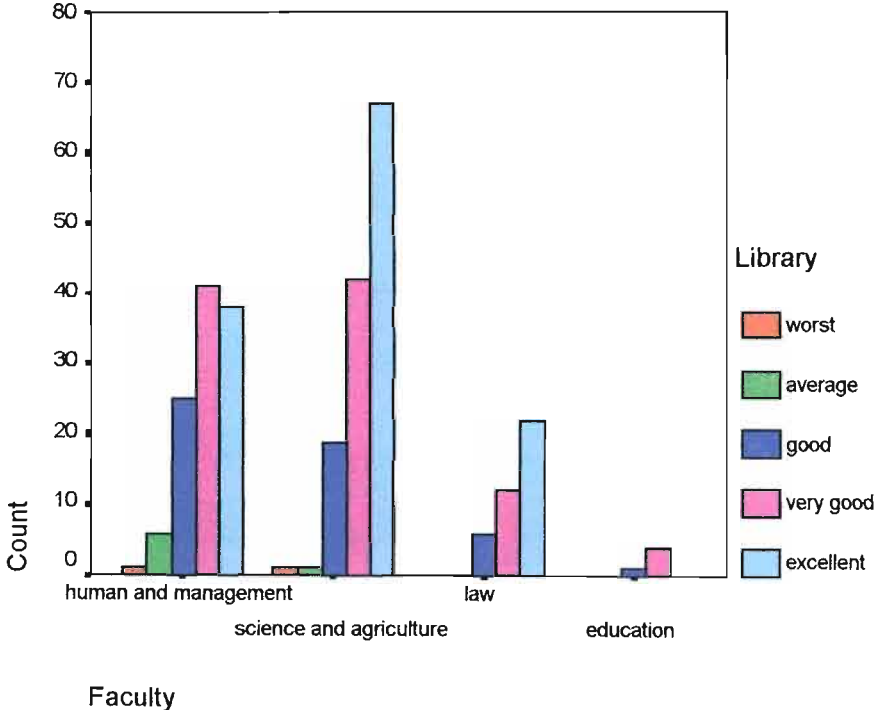
This graph reflects that the majority of the students (over 40) from the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences have rated the Department of Finance as good. Just over 40 from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture have given an average rating, under 40 a good rating and 30 students have rated the department as very good. The majority rating from the Faculties of Law and Education is good.

5.6.3 Department: Financial Aid



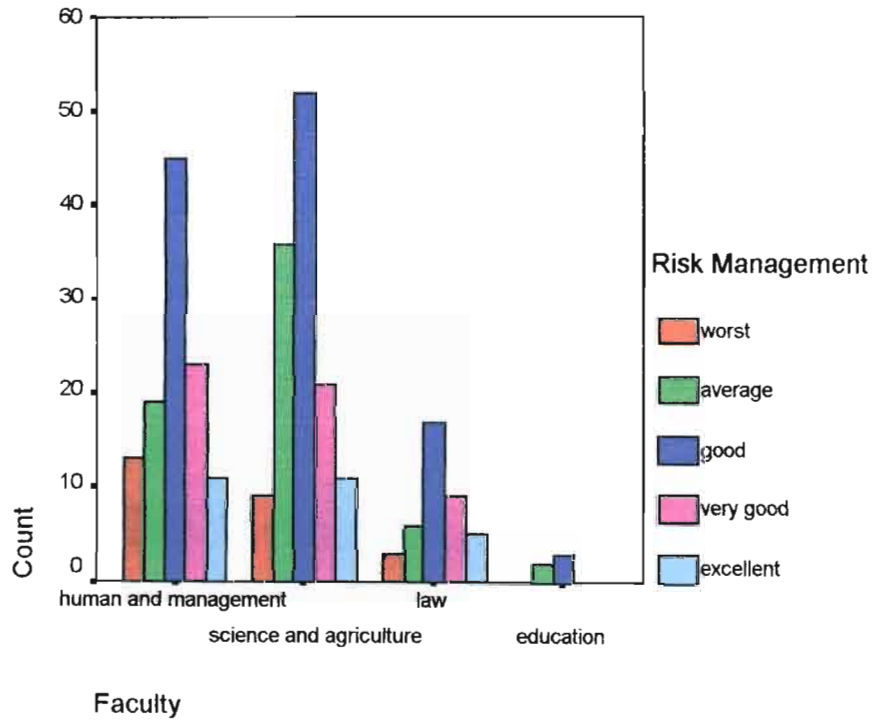
Generally the rating, as shown on the graph, for the Financial Aid department was good to average.

5.6.4 Department: Library



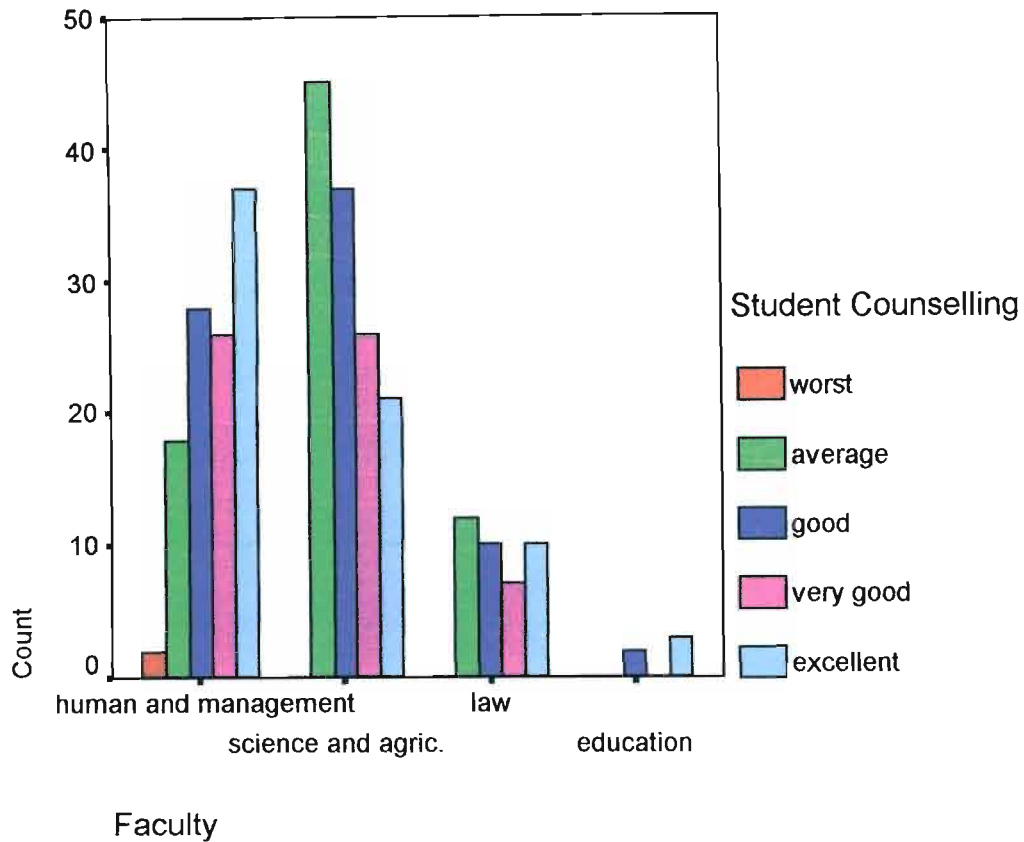
The overall rating for the Library was excellent.

5.6.5 Department: Risk Management Services



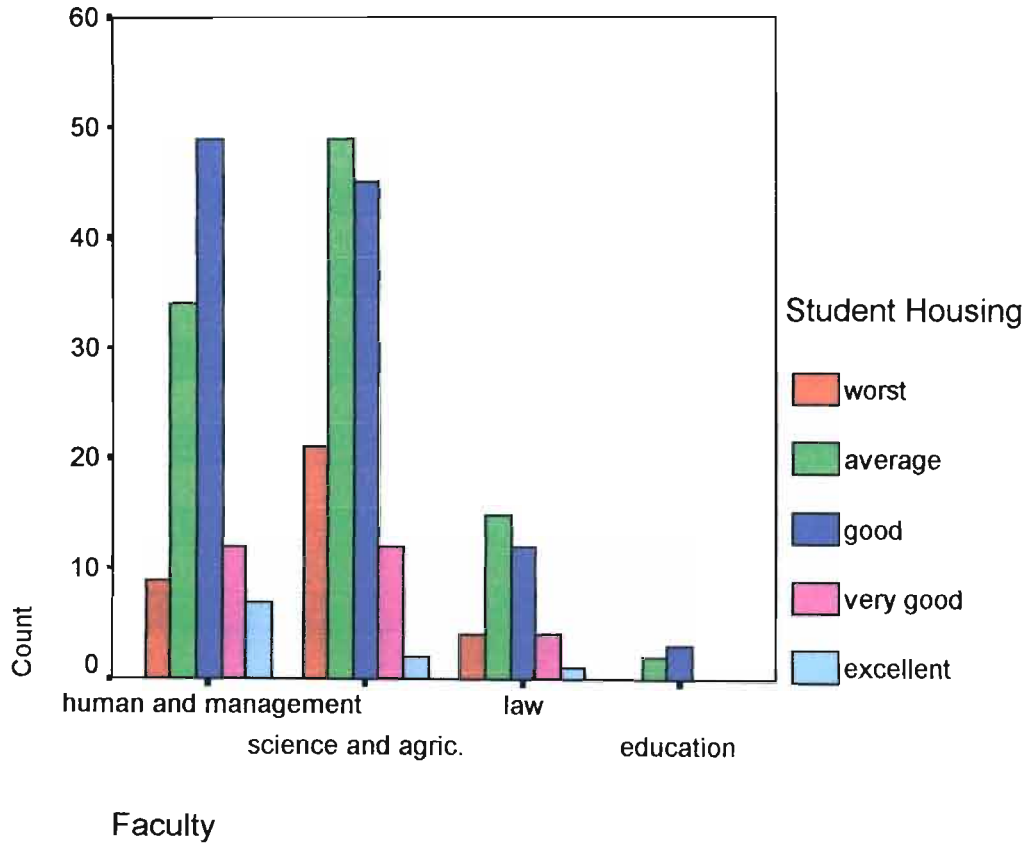
The graph reflects that the majority of respondents from all faculties have rated Risk Management Services as good.

5.6.6 Department: Student Counselling



The graph demonstrates that the highest rating for the Student Counselling department was excellent by the respondents of the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences while the highest rating by the students from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture was average. Over 10 of respondents from the Faculty of Law have rated the department as average while 10 each have either rated them as good or excellent. The majority of respondents from the Faculty of Education have rated the department as excellent.

5.6.7 Department: Student Housing



The overall rating for Student Housing was average to good.

5.7 Mann Whitney U tests

Mann Whitney tests is a non-parametric (this data is not assumed to follow any distributions) test that expose difference in the mean (the average) or median (the middle most value) responses within groups.

The H_0 (referred to below) is the null hypothesis i.e. this is suspected to be untrue and one needs to statistically reject this with statistical evidence.

The H_1 (referred to below) is the alternative hypothesis and this is what one suspects or intuitively know to be true.

A p value (probability value- or the power of the test) less than 0.05 would lead one to reject the null hypothesis.

5.7.1 Black and Coloured respondents (see Appendix 2)

H_0 : there are no differences in the perceptions between the race groups

H_1 : there are differences in the perceptions between the race groups

There are differences in perceptions in the variables, as highlighted in red, between Black and Coloured respondents with regard to the attitude of staff and helpfulness of staff from the department of Student Admissions.

5.7.2 Black and Indian respondents (see Appendix 3)

H₀: there are no differences in the perceptions between the race groups

H₁: there are differences in the perceptions between the race groups

Appendix 3 reflects that there are differences in perceptions in the variables, as highlighted in red, between Black and Indian respondents with regard to the attitude of staff and helpfulness of staff from the department of Student Admissions. There are also differences in perceptions in the variables for this department with regard to their overall rating.

5.7.3 Black and White respondents (see Appendix 4)

H₀: there are no differences in the perceptions between the race groups

H₁: there are differences in the perceptions between the race groups

There are differences in perceptions in the variables, as highlighted in red, between Black and White respondents regarding the overall rating of the department of Student Admissions.

5.7.4 Coloured and Indian respondents (see Appendix 5)

H₀: there are no differences in the perceptions between the race groups

H₁: there are differences in the perceptions between the race groups

There are no differences in perceptions in the variables between Coloured and Indian respondents.

5.7.5 Coloured and White respondents (see Appendix 6)

H_0 : there are no differences in the perceptions between the race groups

H_1 : there are differences in the perceptions between the race groups

There are no differences in perceptions in the variables between Coloured and White respondents.

5.7.6 Indian and White respondents (see Appendix 7)

H_0 : there are no differences in the perceptions between the race groups

H_1 : there are differences in the perceptions between the race groups

There are differences in perceptions in the variables, as highlighted in red, between Indian and White respondents regarding the helpfulness of staff from the department of Risk Management Services.

5.7.7 Postgraduate respondents (see Appendix 8)

H_0 : there are no differences in the perceptions between the postgraduates and undergraduates groups

H_1 : there are differences in the perceptions between the postgraduates and undergraduates groups

There are differences in perceptions in the variables, as highlighted in red, among postgraduate respondents regarding course selection advice, helpfulness of staff and attitude of staff from the department of Student Counselling.

There are also differences in perceptions in the variables, as highlighted in red, among postgraduate respondents regarding the overall rating of the department of Student Counselling.

5.7.8 Gender (see Appendix 9)

H_0 : there are no differences in the perceptions between the gender groups

H_1 : there are differences in the perceptions between the gender groups

There are differences in perceptions in the variables, as highlighted in red, in the overall rating of the department of Student Housing.

5.8 Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's Alpha was also calculated as part of the reliability test to assess how valid the results were and will we get similar results to generalise if we increased the sample size. A value of 0.7 or higher is a very good value that can lead us to say that we will get the same results if we carried out this survey with a larger sample of students. The Cronbach's Alpha for the following variables was calculated to be:

Reliability Variables = Student Admissions: helpfulness of staff, Student Admissions: attitude of staff; Finance: fee payment process, Finance: helpfulness of staff, Finance: attitude of staff; Financial Aid: advice about student loans and bursaries, Financial Aid: helpfulness of staff, Financial Aid: attitude of staff; Library: helpfulness of staff, Library: attitude of staff; Risk Management Services: helpfulness of staff, Risk Management Services: attitude of staff; Student Counselling: course selection advice, Student Counselling: helpfulness of staff, Student Counselling: attitude of staff; Student Housing: helpfulness of staff, Student Housing: attitude of staff.

Student Admissions, Finance, Financial Aid, Library, Risk Management Services, Student Counselling, Student Housing:

/Format =No labels*

/Scale(ALPHA)=All/Model=ALPHA.*

Reliability Analysis - Scale(A L P H A)*

Reliability Coefficients*

N of Cases = 186.0

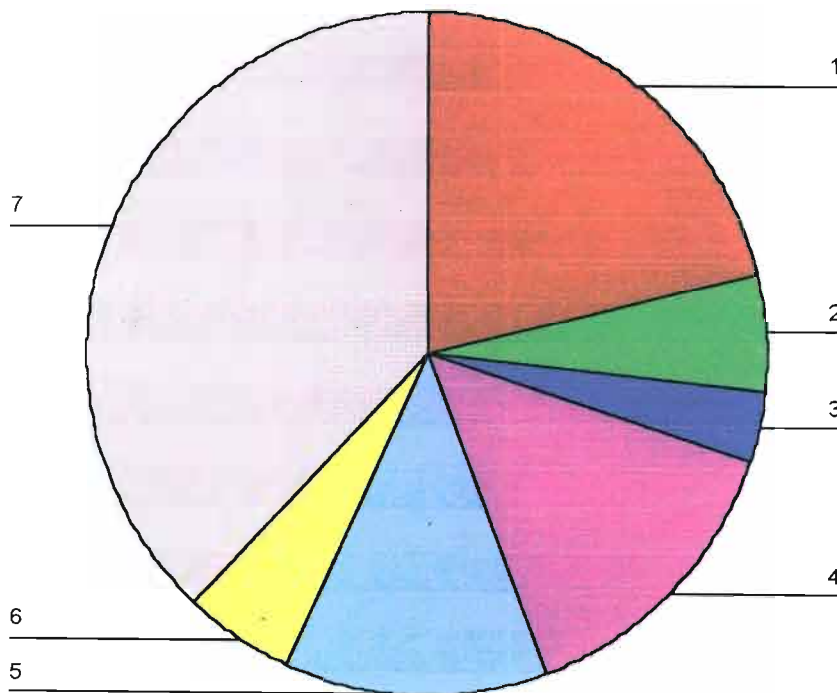
N of Items = 24

Alpha = .8693

The interpretation of the alpha calculated for all the questions is a very good one (it is > 0.7) implying that the results are a good/reliable representation of the population and their opinions about the different departments.

5.9 Results of Open Ended Question

Section C, number 2 invited respondents to identify the department or departments that need to improve the services that they offered. The pie chart below illustrates the findings:



- 1 = Finance
- 2 = Financial Aid
- 3 = Library
- 4 = Risk Management Services
- 5 = Student Housing
- 6 = Student Counselling
- 7 = Student Admissions

There were 43 respondents who indicated that the Department of Student Admissions needed to improve the services that they offered. While their overall rating was good, certain individuals were mentioned as having a negative attitude towards students.

The overall rating for the Department of Finance ranged from average to very good. There were 24 respondents that stated that this department needed to improve the services offered.

Risk Management Services had an overall rating as good. There were 16 respondents that stated that this department needed to improve the service that they offered.

The Department of Housing had 14 respondents who indicated that their service needs to improve. This department's overall rating ranged from average to good.

There were 5 respondents each who stated that the Departments of Financial Aid and Student Counselling needed to improve the services that they offered. Student Counselling had an overall rating that ranged from average to excellent while the Department of Financial Aid had an overall rating that ranged from average to good.

Although the Library had an overall rating of excellent, there were 4 respondents that indicated that the Library needed to improve the services that they offered. The attitude of staff from the Short Loan section needed improvement.

Chapter 6

Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The object of this study was to determine the type of service students received from the support departments of UNP during registration. The departments that were targeted were:

- Finance
- Financial Aid
- Library
- Risk Management Services
- Student Admissions
- Student Counselling
- Student Housing

Chapter 2 outlined literature in the field of customer care. Although no studies on customer care at universities or tertiary institutions in South Africa were located when interrogating the different databases in the Library, there were a number of books and articles that provided great insight into the principles of customer care. These principles can be applied to higher educational institutions.

Chapter 3 provided an overview of UNP's registration process.

Chapter 4 outlined the research methodology and the research instrument used. The sampling methodology was also discussed in this chapter. The results of the study were outlined in Chapter 5.

6.2. Key Findings

The overall rating for the Department of Student Admissions by the majority of respondents from all faculties was either good or very good. However, over 30 respondents from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture have given this department a rating of average or worst.

The Department of Finance received a good overall rating from the Faculties of Human and Management Sciences, Law and Education. The majority of respondents from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture have given this department an average rating.

The majority of respondents from the Faculties of Human and Management Sciences and Science and Agriculture gave the Department of Financial Aid an overall rating of good while the majority rating by the Faculties of Law and Education was average.

The overall rating for the Library was excellent.

The majority of respondents from all faculties have given the Department of Risk Management Services an overall rating of good.

The highest overall rating for the Department Student Counselling was excellent by the respondents of the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences while the highest overall rating by the students from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture was average. The majority of respondents from the Faculty of Law rated the department as average while the majority of respondents from the Faculty of Education have rated the department as excellent.

The Department of Housing received a good rating from the majority of respondents from the Faculties of Human and Management Sciences and Education while the majority of respondents from the Faculties of Science and Agriculture and Law gave this department an overall rating of average.

6.3 Recommendations

The table in Chapter 5 provided descriptive statistics for all the variables and also revealed the responses that were most frequent i.e. modal.

The modal responses for different departments were consistent i.e. Finance got a modal response of 4 under all the variables measured (fee payment process, helpfulness of staff and attitude of staff). It was also evident that the modal response towards Financial Aid, Student Counselling and Student Housing were just 3 which is a neutral response.

The overall rankings demonstrated that the students were very satisfied with the services of the Library and just neutral with the rest of the departments. The challenge for these departments is to move the responses of students from neutral to very satisfied.

Literature reviewed indicated that the development and maintenance of a customer care culture has to start with senior management who must set the tone for the entire organization. The executive of the University have stated that they fully support a customer care initiative. This support needs to filter down to the line managers of the different departments.

A good starting point for these managers would be to do a mental walk-through of what students experience from the beginning to the end of registration. Different procedures should be isolated and examined to see if the experience of the student could be enhanced.

By studying the results of the research, managers will be able to identify if there is a need for training in their department. Staff should be trained to meet and then exceed expectations at every chance they get. This should be the goal of all the departments. Everyone in the department should be focused on this goal. Once the focus of the staff changes, so will the student experiences.

A lot of responsibility rests with management in implementing a customer care training programme. Customer care training will not be successful unless staff are committed to the service being offered and feel valued in their roles. A successful training programme will enable staff to carry out their responsibilities with confidence and competence.

A first step towards implementing quality systems of staff training and development, is that a detailed job description needs to be drawn up for each employee in order to clarify responsibilities from the outset.

Alongside individual job descriptions a department training plan, involving every member of the team, should be implemented. Training should include a range of awareness raising activities with the aim of raising all staff to the same level of competence after a set period of time. This should be followed up by ongoing refresher training and should be underpinned by a comprehensive staff manual containing procedural and training notes relating to every aspect of the department's operations. The manual should be updated regularly after consultation with staff. This will result in staff feeling confident in implementing agreed procedures. The emphasis on competence, in an environment of shared objectives and teamworking, could be further reinforced by weekly meetings, which would be key opportunities both to keep staff informed and crucially, a tangible means for all members of the team to take part in shared decision-making (West 1999:117).

Tucker (2002:1) states that employees should be trained to think that they are the organisation they represent. In other words, University employees must feel a sense of ownership of the University.

He goes on to suggest that employees should listen first and talk second. In applying this to the University, staff must listen from the student's point of view. They must concentrate and focus on this and must not assume that they know what the student is thinking or what they are going to say next.

It has to be emphasised that customer care is not only about teaching employees to smile. Instead it is a fundamental approach to standards of service quality. It covers

every aspect of an organisations' operations, from the design of the product or service, to how it is packaged, delivered and serviced.

Customer care involves:

1. Understanding the customers and what they expect. This understanding must not only be at top management level, but by every employee, whether they have direct dealings with the customers or not.
2. Involving all employees in both setting and constantly improving standards of service quality.
3. Developing systems, organisational structures and styles of management that enable employees at the customer interface to take customer care decisions on their own initiative.
4. Communication must be frequent, consistent and involve everyone in the company (Clutterbuck 1988: 11).

Customer care training at the University could also apply principles used at the Disney Company. At Disney staff are taught that each and every employee strives everyday to make a difference. Each staff looks for chances throughout the day to make that difference. They call it 'bumping up the lamp' and are the result for looking for common, everyday encounters that will make a difference in the lives of their customer. Questions that employees ask of themselves:

- Are we consciously focused on the goals that we set?
- Do we make an effort to be cheerful, courteous and helpful?
- Do we really listen to understand what is being communicated, or are we listening with our answer running?
- Are we consciously focused on looking for ways in the encounter to be a resource?
- Do we promise to find an answer and call back and then forget? (Poore 2001: 7).

Poore (2001: 8) goes on to explain that customer care might be common knowledge but not common practice. Using this key concept, Disney has concentrated on using a

common sense approach to achieving excellent customer service. By working behind the scenes, staff assess what an 'ideal Disney experience' would look and feel like (Poore 2001: 8). This can be done at the University as well. What would an 'ideal' experience be for our students? How far is that ideal from what is the daily reality? What are the gaps that need to be worked on to achieve that goal?

With staff competence and motivation in mind, managers should continue to place great emphasis on regular opportunities to review performance and quality improvement.

Management planning and co-ordination is very important. This process involves plenty of hard work, but the benefits reaped in improved customer service and satisfaction, along with enhanced staff morale and motivation, would make the effort immensely worthwhile. Staff must be made to feel valued and worthwhile.

If the university wants to compete both nationally and internationally, it has to embrace the principles of customer care and make them a permanent feature when interacting with their customers, the students.

6.4 Avenues for Further Research

- A similar study could be undertaken at the UND campus
- The internal marketing of the University's CARE initiative could also be explored
- A study relating to the staff training in relation to customer care could be undertaken.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. The Research Instrument

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a survey of University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg students' opinions on the quality of service received during registration.

Section A (Please tick the appropriate box)

1. Are you a full-time student? Yes No
2. Are you a postgraduate student? Yes No
3. Is this your first year at this University? Yes No
4. Are you male or female? M F
5. Are you South African? Yes No
6. Which Faculty are you registered in? 1. Human and Management Sciences
 2. Science and Agriculture 3. Law 4. Education
7. Which race-group do you belong to?
 1. Black 2. Coloured 3. Indian 4. White 5. Other

Section B

Please tick the box which most accurately reflects your level of satisfaction with the service you received from the following departments.

Department: **Student Admissions**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Helpfulness of staff					
Attitude of staff					

Any comments:

Department: **Finance**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Fee payment process					
Helpfulness of staff					
Attitude of staff					

Any comments:

Department: **Financial Aid**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Advice about student loans and bursaries					
Helpfulness of staff					
Attitude of staff					

Any comments:

Department : **Library**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Helpfulness of staff					
Attitude of staff					

Any comments:

Department : Risk Management Services

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Helpfulness of staff					
Attitude of staff					

Any comments:

Department : Student Counselling

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Course selection advice					
Helpfulness of staff					
Attitude of staff					

Any comments:

Department: **Student Housing**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Helpfulness of staff					
Attitude of staff					

Any comments:

Section C

1. What rating (1= worst; 2 = average; 3 = good; 4= very good; 5 = excellent) would you give the above departments?

Department	Rating
Student Admissions	
Finance	
Financial Aid	
Library	
Risk Management Services	
Student Counselling	
Student Housing	

2. Which of the above department/s need to improve their services offered, and why?

3. Other comments

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Appendix 2

Mann-Whitney U Test: Black and Coloured respondents

Test Statistics

	Student Admin: helpfulness of staff	Student Admin: Attitude of staff	Finance: fee payment process	Finance: help of staff	Finance: attitude of staff	Financial Aid: loan advice	Financial Aid: Helpfulness of staff	Financial Aid: attitude of staff	Library: Helpfulness of staff	Library: attitude of staff	Risk Management: helpfulness of staff	Risk Management: attitude of staff	Student Counselling: course selection advice	Student Counselling: helpfulness of staff	Student Counselling: attitude of staff	Student Housing: helpfulness of staff	Student Housing: attitude of staff	Student admission	Finance	Financial Aid	Library	Risk Management Services	Student Counselling	Student Housing
Mann-Whitney U	456.00	396.00	635.00	662.00	649.00	440.00	436.50	419.50	662.00	611.00	703.00	758.50	560.00	532.50	569.50	321.00	370.50	420.50	668.50	739.00	627.00	725.00	748.00	741.00
Wilcoxon W	561.00	501.00	740.00	767.00	754.00	4445.00	491.50	474.50	6878.00	6827.00	6698.00	6753.500	5510.000	5482.500	5519.500	5172.000	5221.500	525.500	773.500	7067.000	6955.000	7053.000	7076.000	846.000
Z	-2.722	-3.111	-1.108	-.899	-1.006	-.060	-.104	-.311	-1.030	-1.488	-.501	-.038	-.796	-1.074	-.714	-.880	-.269	-2.909	-.932	-.362	-1.330	-.473	-.290	-.348
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) p-value	.006	.002	.268	.369	.314	.952	.917	.756	.303	.137	.616	.970	.426	.283	.475	.379	.788	.004	.351	.718	.184	.636	.772	.728

a. Grouping Variable: race

Appendix 3

Mann-Whitney U Test: Black and Indian respondents

Test Statistics

	Student Admission s: helpfuln ess of staff	Student Admission : attitude of staff	Finance fee payment process	Finance: helpfulnes s of staff	Finance: attitude of staff	Financial Aid: loan advice	Financial aid: helpfulnes s of staff	Financial Aid: attitude of staff	Library: helpfulnes s of staff	Library: attitude of staff	Risk Managem ent: helpfulnes s of staff	Risk Managem ent: attitude of staff	Student Counselin g: course selection advice	Student Counselin g: helpfulnes s of staff	Student Counselin g: attitude of staff	Student Housing: helpfulnes s of staff	Student Housing: attitude of staff	Student Admission s	Finance	Financial Aid	Library	Risk Managem ent services	Student Counselin g	Student Housing
Mann-Whitney U	3835.500	4198.000	5130.500	5171.000	5212.000	3606.000	3794.500	3854.500	4682.000	4590.000	4729.500	4531.500	4082.500	4148.500	4190.500	3291.000	3397.000	3536.500	4909.000	5179.500	4882.500	5070.000	5120.000	4984.000
Wilcoxon W	8395.500	8758.000	9690.500	9731.000	9772.000	7522.000	7710.500	7859.500	9242.000	9150.000	9289.500	9091.500	7998.500	8064.500	8106.500	8142.000	8248.000	8096.500	9469.000	9644.500	9442.500	9535.000	9491.000	9170.000
Z	-3.646	-2.694	-.232	-.134	-.032	-.944	-.377	-.190	-1.543	-1.771	-1.114	-1.611	-.774	-.593	-.474	-.802	-.451	-4.280	-.995	-.207	-1.095	-.473	-.215	-.283
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) p-value	.000	.007	.817	.893	.974	.345	.706	.849	.123	.077	.265	.107	.439	.553	.635	.423	.652	.000	.320	.836	.273	.636	.830	.777

a. Grouping Variable: race

Appendix 4

Mann-Whitney U Test: Black and White respondents

Test Statistics

	Student Admissions: helpfulness of staff	Student Admissions: attitude of staff	Finance: fee payment process	Finance: helpfulness of staff	Finance: attitude of staff	Financial Aid: loan advice	Financial Aid: helpfulness of staff	Financial Aid: attitude of staff	Library: helpfulness of staff	Library: attitude of staff	Risk Management: helpfulness of staff	Risk Management: attitude of staff	Student Counseling: course selection advice	Student Counseling: helpfulness of staff	Student Counseling: attitude of staff	Student Housing: helpfulness of staff	Student Housing: attitude of staff	Student Admissions	Financial Aid	Library	Risk Management Services	Student Counseling	Student Housing	
Mann-Whitney U	2759.500	2804.000	3180.500	3180.000	3037.000	1602.000	1520.500	1471.500	3018.500	2966.000	2361.500	2695.500	1896.000	1989.000	1859.000	1453.000	1486.000	2455.000	3141.500	2839.000	2985.500	3107.000	2696.000	2930.500
Wilcoxon W	4470.500	4515.000	4891.500	9285.000	4748.000	2343.000	2261.500	2212.500	4729.500	4677.000	8356.500	8690.500	2977.000	3070.000	2940.000	6304.000	1982.000	4166.000	4852.500	4550.000	4696.500	9435.000	4407.000	4583.500
Z	-1.712	-1.516	-.033	-.036	-.544	-.491	-.957	-1.229	-.750	-.940	-2.038	-.738	-1.708	-1.298	-1.882	-.383	-.195	-2.689	-.366	-1.405	-.930	-.487	-1.879	-.909
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) p-value	.087	.129	.973	.971	.587	.624	.338	.219	.453	.347	.042	.461	.088	.194	.060	.702	.846	.007	.715	.160	.352	.626	.060	.363

a. Grouping Variable: race

Appendix 5

Mann-Whitney U Test: Coloured and Indian respondents

Test Statistics

	Student Admission s: helpfulness s of staff	Student Admission s: attitude of staff	Finance:fe payment process	Finance: helpfulness s of staff	Finance: attitude of staff	Finance: Aid: loan advice	Financial Aid: helpfulness s of staff	Financial Aid: attitude of staff	Library: helpfulness s of staff	Library: attitude of staff	Risk Managem ent: helpfulness s of staff	Risk Managem ent: attitude of staff	Student Counselin g: course selection advice	Student counselin g: helpfulness s of staff	Student Counselin g: attitude of staff	Student Housing: helpfulness s of staff	Student Housing: attitude of staff	Student Admission s	Finance	Financial Aid	Library	Risk Managem ent Services	Student Counselin g	Student Housing
Mann- Whitney U	511.5 00	440.5 00	561.0 00	568.5 00	562.5 00	395.0 00	435.5 00	405.5 00	503.5 00	452.5 00	557.5 00	591.5 00	464.0 00	439.5 00	483.0 00	236.0 00	286.0 00	583.5 00	609.5 00	601.5 00	480.5 00	581.0 00	602.5 00	629.0 00
Wilcoxon W	616.5 00	545.5 00	666.0 00	673.5 00	667.5 00	4311. 000	4351. 500	460.5 00	5063. 500	5012. 500	5117. 500	5151. 500	4380. 000	4355. 500	4399. 000	2864. 000	322.0 00	688.5 00	714.5 00	5066. 500	5040. 500	5046. 000	4973. 500	734.0 00
Z	- 1.438	- 2.080	-.969	-.908	-.957	-.553	-.056	-.431	- 1.611	- 2.109	- 1.015	-.693	- 1.145	- 1.419	-.954	- 1.035	-.040	-.764	-.520	-.544	- 1.793	-.736	-.462	-.082
Asymp. p. Sig. (2- tailed) p- value	.150	.038	.333	.364	.339	.580	.955	.667	.107	.035	.310	.488	.252	.156	.340	.301	.968	.445	.603	.586	.073	.462	.644	.935

a. Grouping Variable: race

Appendix 6

Mann-Whitney Test: Coloured and White respondents

Test Statistics

	Student Admissions: helpfulness of staff	Student Admissions: attitude of staff	Finance: fee payment process	Finance: helpfulness of staff	Finance: attitude of staff	Finance: Aid: loan advice	Financial Aid: helpfulness of staff	Financial Aid: attitude of staff	Library: helpfulness of staff	Library: attitude of staff	Risk Management: helpfulness of staff	Risk Management: attitude of staff	Student Counselling: g: course selection advice	Student counselling: helpfulness of staff	Student Counselling: g: attitude of staff	Student Housing: helpfulness of staff	Student Housing: attitude of staff	Student admissions	Finance	Financial Aid	Library	Risk Management Services	Student Counselling	Student Housing
Mann-Whitney U	267.500	229.500	334.500	346.500	355.000	179.000	176.500	181.000	323.000	289.000	338.500	358.000	214.000	207.000	218.000	98.000	117.000	294.500	352.000	318.000	290.500	388.000	322.000	377.000
Wilcoxon W	372.500	334.500	439.500	451.500	460.000	920.000	917.500	922.000	2034.000	2000.000	443.500	463.000	1295.000	1288.000	1299.000	594.000	613.000	399.500	457.000	2029.500	2001.500	2099.000	2033.000	2030.000
Z	-2.040	-2.587	-1.059	-.907	-.775	-.316	-.384	-.270	-1.330	-1.869	-.588	-.220	-1.685	-1.790	-1.590	-1.147	-.318	-1.649	-.801	-1.345	-1.773	-.281	-1.241	-.344
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.041	.010	.290	.365	.438	.752	.701	.787	.183	.062	.556	.826	.092	.073	.112	.251	.750	.099	.423	.179	.076	.778	.214	.731
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)] p-value						.793	.736	.832								.382	.825							

- a Not corrected for ties.
b Grouping Variable: race

Appendix 7

Mann-Whitney U Test: Indian and White respondents

Test Statistics

	Student Admissions: helpfulness of staff	Student Admissions: attitude of staff	Finance: fee payment process	Finance: helpfulness of staff	Finance: attitude of staff	Financial Aid: advice about student loans and bursaries	Financial Aid: helpfulness of staff	Financial Aid: attitude of staff	Library: helpfulness of staff	Library: attitude of staff	Risk Management Services: helpfulness of staff	Risk Management Services: attitude of staff	Student Counselling: course selection advice	Student Counselling: helpfulness of staff	Student Counselling: attitude of staff	Student Housing: helpfulness of staff	Student Housing: attitude of staff	Student admissions	Finance	Financial Aid	Library	Risk Management Services	Student Counselling	Student Housing
Mann-Whitney U	2386.000	2490.500	2713.500	2711.500	2648.500	1599.000	1571.000	1419.500	2608.000	2592.000	1792.500	2008.500	1813.000	1844.000	1717.000	1088.000	1036.500	2390.500	2612.500	2381.500	2743.500	2470.500	2273.500	2416.000
Wilcoxon W	6946.000	7050.500	7273.500	7271.500	4359.500	5515.000	2312.000	2160.500	7168.000	7152.000	6352.500	6568.500	2894.000	2925.000	2798.000	1584.000	1532.500	6950.500	7172.500	4092.500	7303.500	6935.500	3984.500	4069.000
Z	-1.445	-1.024	-.162	-.173	-.418	-.411	-.579	-	-.608	-.669	-	-	-	-.892	-	-.255	-.742	-	-.558	-	-.046	-	-	-.756
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) p-value	.149	.306	.871	.863	.676	.681	.563	.145	.543	.504	.002	.031	.297	.372	.129	.799	.458	.157	.577	.165	.963	.301	.094	.450

a Grouping Variable: race

Appendix 8

Mann-Whitney U Test: Postgraduate respondents

Test Statistics

	Student Admissions: helpfulness of staff	Student Admissions: attitude of staff	Finance: fees: payment process	Finance: helpfulness of staff	Finance: attitude of staff	Financial Aid: advice about student loans and bursaries	Financial Aid: helpfulness of staff	Financial Aid: attitude of staff	Library: helpfulness of staff	Library: attitude of staff	Risk Management Services: helpfulness of staff	Risk Management Service: attitude of staff	Student Counselling: course selection advice	Student Counselling: helpfulness of staff	Student Counselling: attitude of staff	Student Housing: helpfulness of staff	Student Housing: attitude of staff	Student Admissions	Finance	Financial Aid	Library	Risk Management Services	Student Counselling	Student Housing
Mann-Whitney U	7441.000	7857.000	7576.000	6964.000	7329.500	4826.000	4752.000	4770.500	7412.500	7587.000	7305.500	7338.000	4767.500	4570.000	4316.000	3880.500	4115.500	7751.500	7635.500	7338.500	7556.500	7324.000	5990.500	7652.000
Wilcoxon W	29386.000	29802.000	10277.000	28700.000	29065.500	19532.000	6405.000	19476.500	29148.500	29323.000	10231.500	10264.000	6720.500	6523.000	6269.000	16441.500	16676.500	29696.500	10638.500	10264.500	29501.500	10327.000	8993.500	10578.000
Z	-1.023	-.315	-.028	-1.110	-.460	-.115	-.300	-.254	-1.078	-.757	-.657	-.597	-2.314	-2.748	-3.287	-1.889	-1.277	-.490	-.690	-1.028	-.849	-1.159	-3.323	-.241
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) p-value	.306	.753	.978	.267	.646	.908	.764	.799	.281	.449	.511	.551	.021	.006	.001	.059	.202	.624	.490	.304	.396	.246	.001	.809

a. Grouping Variable: postgraduate

Appendix 9

Mann-Whitney U Test: Gender

Test Statistics

	Student Admission s: helpfulness s of staff	Student Admission s: attitude of staff	Finance: fee payment process	Finance: helpfulness s of staff	Finance: attitude of staff	Financial Aid: advice about student loans and bursaries	Financial Aid: helpfulness s of staff	Financial Aid: attitude of staff	Library: helpfulness s of staff	Library: attitude of staff	Risk Management Services: helpfulness s of staff	Risk Management Service: attitude of staff	Student Counselin g: course selection advice	Student Counselin g: helpfulness s of staff	Student Counselin g: attitude of staff	Student Housing: helpfulness s of staff	Student Housing: attitude of staff	Student Admission s	Finance	Financial Aid	Library	Risk Management Services	Student Counselin g	Student Housing
Mann-Whitney U	10049.000	9681.000	9040.000	9354.000	9452.500	6077.000	5979.500	6113.500	9693.000	9829.000	9207.000	9379.000	7738.000	7573.000	7356.500	5430.000	5390.500	9519.500	9357.000	9699.000	9569.500	9979.000	9588.000	8016.500
Wilcoxon W	21075.000	20707.000	19918.000	20232.000	20330.500	12632.000	12534.500	12668.500	19284.000	19420.000	18523.000	18695.000	15364.000	15199.000	14982.500	10581.000	10541.500	20545.000	20383.000	19290.000	20595.500	19570.000	20319.000	18601.500
Z	-.245	-.783	-1.236	-.768	-.610	-.886	-1.108	-.822	-.724	-.502	-.710	-.436	-.245	-.550	-.947	-.903	-1.014	-1.020	-1.273	-.669	-.988	-.247	-.726	-2.864
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) p-value	.807	.434	.216	.442	.542	.376	.268	.411	.469	.616	.478	.663	.806	.582	.343	.367	.311	.308	.203	.503	.323	.805	.468	.004

a. Grouping Variable: gender