

**DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE QUALITY  
DELIVERED BY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AT ONE SITE OF A SOUTH AFRICAN  
COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITY**

**MXOLISI WALTER NTOYAKHE**

**2018**

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**By**

**MXOLISI WALTER NTOYAKHE**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Masters of Management Sciences  
in Administration and Information Management

In the

Department of Information and Corporate Management  
Faculty of Accounting and Informatics  
Durban University of Technology  
Durban, South Africa

May, 2018

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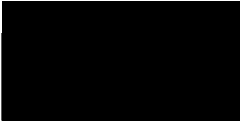
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I, Mxolisi Walter Ntoyakhe hereby declare that the work that is present in this dissertation is based on my own research, and that I have not submitted this dissertation to any other institution of higher education to obtain an academic qualification.

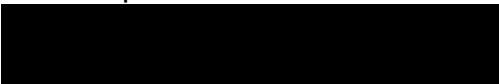
  
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## ABSTRACT

Over the last decade the institutional framework within which most universities in South Africa operate has undergone major transformation forcing the higher education sector to become more competitive in its approach to attracting and retaining quality students. Against this background, service quality has been put forward as a critical determinant of competitiveness. Higher Education Institutions are increasingly placing greater emphasis on meeting students' expectations and needs. As institutions of higher learning become more student orientated, student perceptions of higher educational facilities and services are becoming more essential. It is clear that there is a need to measure students' experience of service quality in order to develop innovative academic structures, facilities and services to retain and attract new students. Therefore, this study used a mixed research approach and a nonprobability sampling technique to identify the sample size.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the students' experience of service quality delivered by administrative staff at one site of a South African Comprehensive University. Underpinned by the Gap Model of service delivery and an adapted SERVQUAL instrument, this study sought to determine perceptions and expectations of service quality across five dimensions, namely: tangibles; reliability; responsiveness; assurance; and empathy. Questionnaires were used as data collection instrument to collect data from two hundred and sixty (260) registered students; twelve (12) academic departments, residence and library administrative staff members. Questionnaires were used to gather data from administrative staff of academic department, library and residence; and registered students in one comprehensive university in South Africa. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 was used to analyse the data. Statistical tools that include frequencies, mean scores and tabulations were utilized to present the data from findings. The Wilcoxon signed ranks test was also utilized to further analyse the significance of the gaps. Various gaps between students' perceptions and expectations indicating dissatisfaction with administrative services particularly among the students were identified. The findings from the study indicated that, a negative service quality gap exists at selected site of Comprehensive University in SA. The

findings further suggested that issues such as service quality planning and monitoring, establishing recovery mechanisms for service failures, and student-driven service design and standards need to be high on the agenda at higher education institutions to ensure service quality. All five dimensions of SERVQUAL indicated a negative score or quality gap suggesting that the administrators of selected departments need to urgently close the gaps that exist at their institution; key recommendations were thus made to improve the gaps identified. Frequent interaction between the administrators and the students is recommended for the university as it provides important information on student expectations and perceptions. Continuous employee training to improve the existing skills is also recommended for comprehensive university employees as it can have a good impact on meeting the students' expectations of the service quality dimensions. The study therefore, concluded that the university needed urgent intervention in terms of developing proper academic support structures, facilities and quality services that would satisfy the needs of students.

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## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS STUDY

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CLTD	Centre for Learning and Teaching Development
CU	Comprehensive University
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DUT	Durban University of Technology
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
IREC	Institutional Research Committee
ITS	Integrated Tertiary System
LIS	Library Information Services
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NPHE	National Plan for Higher Education
PALs	Peer Assistant Learners
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SA	South Africa
SACU	South African Comprehensive University
SAUVCA	South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In a world of global competition, quality service is a key success factor (Diedericks, 2012) and the most powerful competitive trend currently shaping marketing and business strategy is service quality, according to Abdullah (2006c). It has also been found that student perceptions of service quality in higher education (HE) are not directly involved with the content and delivery of course units, but rather with the tangible and intangible services which support these core activities (Shamsudin, Romle and Halipah, 2015; Saberi and Romle, 2015). According to Chiware (2010) the quality of services delivered will largely depend on the historical structures of higher education institutions (HEIs).

HEIs across the world have introduced processes of quality assurance and the increasing competition among HEIs to attract the best students, with a view to achieving high academic standing, requires them to pay more attention to service quality issues (Green and Ramroop, 2014). Students' perceptions of the HE experience have therefore become increasingly important as HEIs have attempted to become more student-centred (Khodayari and Khodayari 2011; Yusof and Romle, 2015).

This study investigates students' experience of service quality delivered by administrative staff at one site of a South African comprehensive university (SACU). In order to measure service quality the study uses the SERVQUAL model which was originally developed by Ziethalm, Parasuraman and Berry in the 1980s (Gibson, 2009) and which is still considered one of the best tools in this field. This enables the identification of gaps in required standards of service delivery across five service dimensions, namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibility. In this study SERVQUAL was used to assess students' perceptions of service quality offered by administrative staff within three key departments in the University, namely the

library, academic administration and residence administration. The instrument enabled the researcher to evaluate the gaps between the perceived and expected administrative service currently offered to the student community.

## **1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

Internationally there have been structural and environmental changes in HEIs (Sahney, Banwet and Karunes, 2003), often involving an increase in the number of science and technology institutions merging with universities (Gbadamosi and de Jager, 2009). This was so especially in South Africa where the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE, 2001) brought with it changes and challenges to the higher education landscape including the mergers of various HEIs.

In 2005, the university selected for this study was established through a merger between two former technikons and a university. This merger established it as a new comprehensive university (CU) with four campuses. The researcher is employed as an academic administrator on one of these campuses (the selected site). Ideally any institution of higher learning should have well recognized and highly skilled academics and efficient administrative staff who have the students' best interests at heart. It should also be able to provide a safe learning environment with well-equipped lecture venues and laboratories (Naidoo, 2011). However, at the selected institution students appear to be experiencing problems with each of the three departments which are the focus of this study in terms of service delivery. These challenges are likely to have a negative impact on students' academic progress and also on the image of the university as a whole.

As indicated above, for the purposes of this study the following departments have been selected as being of particular importance to students' and also ones where a number of problems appear to arise:

- Academic administration. Students frequently complain that when visiting these departments there is no one available to assist them in the front office.

- Student Affairs Department (Residence Section). Students often complain that room allocation is not done according to academic performance, as required by the university regulations, but that favoritism is shown to students known to the person allocating the rooms.
- Library and Information Service (LIS) Department. Students also complain that the latest text books are not available in the university library thus increasing their expenses. Library staff encourage students to use the online service to access books but students also complain that provision is not made for adequate training in online access skills (Source: students' personal comments).

Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler (2009) define services, including educational services, as 'deeds, processes and performances'. Quality is described as the measurement of how well the product or service of the organization conforms to the customers' wants and expectations. Quality is the ability of the organization to meet or exceed customer expectations (Brink and Berndt, 2010). Jain, Sinha and De (2010) define service quality as the extent to which a service meets or exceeds the expectations of customers.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Service quality is an extensive strategic force and a key strategic issue in all service industries, including HEIs (Kimani, Kagira and Kendi, 2011). These authors also suggest that in order to understand how students evaluate a service, it is necessary to determine their perception of service quality. In the experience of the researcher, students have persistently been found to complain about a lack of 'customer care' provided by the academic departments where students fail to get informative information to assist them, for instance, incorrect capturing of Dual Performances (DPs) and poor feedback about other general academic queries. There are also complaints that the allocation of residence rooms is often done, not by academic performance as required, but by being known to by the rooms' allocators. There are also frequent complaints about poor maintenance of residences due to shortages of material and other things. Students also complained about shortage of prescribed books, computers and photocopy machines in the Library which is a serious concern.

The literature indicates that no recent studies have been conducted specifically concerning students' experience of service quality delivered by administrative staff within these departments of a comprehensive university in South Africa. The dissertation is able to provide this addition to the current literature.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN**

Areas of concern include, amongst others, the lack of support from the administrative staff experienced by students in these departments. The aim of the research is to investigate students' expectations and experiences of these services on the selected site and also to investigate these expectations and experiences from the perspective of each of the administrative staff members who service these departments. More specifically, the following objectives were set in order to achieve this aim:

- To determine students' experience of service quality in the selected departments on the selected site.
- To measure the gaps between the expectations and perceptions in service quality using the SERVQUAL score.
- To explore and describe factors that negatively or positively influence the experience of students regarding the quality of this service.
- To explore and describe factors that negatively or positively influence the ability of the administrative staff, who service these departments, to provide the expected levels of service, from the perspective of these staff members themselves.

This research was a case study conducted within a mixed method paradigm using both quantitative and qualitative methods. A non-probability (convenience) sampling method was used to select the respondents and collect data from students and academic and support service administrators (staff) who participated. Convenience sampling method was used to gather data from staff and students in order to ensure sufficient data to meet the objectives of the study. The sample was made up of students, academic,

residence and library administrators. Data was collected from administrative staff of academic, residence and library departments.

It is envisaged that the findings of this study will make recommendations for improved service quality to be provided by administrative staff at the selected site. The recommendations should have relevance for other sites of the university and possibly for other South African universities.

### **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.**

The research should assist in strengthening the quality of service rendered to students by academic administrators, library and residence administrative staff at the selected site. The results of the study should expand the knowledge base of administrators of the university. This will offer management an insight into students' experiences of service quality provided by administrative staff in the specific departments. This study hopes to influence the formulation of policies, procedures and interventions which will enable the CU to improve the quality of service provided to its students.

Given the highly competitive HE environment and increasing demand for quality services from both students and parents, if it is to remain competitive and to attract good caliber students it is important that the university targeted in this study continues to improve and to ensure that it is in a position to offer quality services to all of its students.

### **1.6 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS**

This study consists of six chapters:

#### **1.6.1 Chapter one: Introduction**

Chapter one is an introduction and it provides the rationale for the study. This chapter also indicated the aims and objectives for the study and the situation faced by the selected CU in terms of quality of service delivered by administrative staff.



### **1.6.2 Chapter two: Literature review**

Chapter two provides a literature review which covers the structure of HE in South Africa and the establishment of CUs. It also analyzes and reviews literature on service quality, SERVQUAL theory, dimensions of service quality and the Gap Model. Documentation concerning service quality within the administration of academic affairs, residences and the university library of the selected institution, along with the training of administrative staff; student orientation; and the potential causes of service quality gaps will be reviewed and discussed. The Gap Model of service quality as the theoretical framework of this study is also explained with the emphasis of Gap 5 as defined by the SERVQUAL model. The value of the model in terms of identifying staff and students' expectation and perception of service quality is explored.

### **1.6.3 Chapter three: Research methodology**

Chapter three discusses the research design and methodology used for the study. It describes the development of the sampling plan; the choice of data collection instrument; the design and distribution of questionnaires to students and to administrative staff within the academic, residence and library departments.

### **1.6.4 Chapter four: Research findings and discussions for students' questionnaire**

Chapter four presented the results and discussed the findings obtained from the students' questionnaires in relation to the service provided by the three administrative departments namely, academic department, and residence and library administrators.

### **1.6.5 Chapter five: Research findings and discussions for administrative staff questionnaire**

Chapter five presents the results and discusses the findings obtained from the academic department, residence and library administrators' questionnaires.

### **1.6.6 Chapter six: Conclusion and recommendations**

Chapter six discusses the conclusion and recommendations arising from the findings and provides a brief discussion of the limitations of the study along with suggestions for further research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter provided an introduction to the study. The research problem was identified and the aim of the study was presented together with the research objectives. This chapter will provide information on the structure of higher education (HE) in South Africa (SA) as an introduction to a discussion of the relevant literature underpinning the study. Literature relating to quality of service in the higher education sector is relatively new (Sultan and Wong, 2010) and research in the field is still significantly underdeveloped (Beaumont, 2012:12) particularly when compared to the volume of research in this field conducted in the commercial sector (Sultan and Wong, 2010:259-272). However, the study of service quality in general has been widely debated in market literature for a number of years (Brady and Cronin, 2001: 34-39).

Like other service providers, HEIs provide services to their stakeholders – primarily students. Other stakeholders involved in the HE context include parents, regulatory and accreditation authorities, funding bodies and society at large (Khan, 2012). There is also a great deal of debate as to the best way to define service quality in higher education (Becket and Brookes, 2006:123-142).

According to Van Schalkwyk (2011), there are increasing calls for accountability, higher demand for quality by all the stakeholders involved, and greater emphasis on efficient and effective management. This can be obtained through the delivery of excellent service quality (Kheng, Mahamed, Ramayah and Mosahab, 2010). For example, a study conducted by Gbadamosi and De Jager (2009:890) indicated that students' experience of services at South African universities were significantly lower than they expected. They noted particular areas of concern as being related to registration of students; the use of casual staff at busy registration periods, fewer staff members being

available than were needed for computer facilities; unsatisfactory allocation of rooms in residences and poor support from administrative staff in general.

## **2.1 DEFINITIONS**

### **2.1.1 'Customers' in the higher education context**

In higher education, the definition of 'customer' is rather different from the manufacturing or general services meaning since groups such as students, employers, academic staff, government and families are all customers of the education system with a diversity of requirements (Owlia and Aspinwall, 1996:18). Forde (2010:14) defines a customer as a person, company, or entity which buys goods or services produced by another person, company or other entity. A customer is someone who purchases or rents something from an individual or organisation (Noel, 2011:19). In this context, the customers referred to are registered students of a selected Comprehensive University in South Africa.

### **2.1.2 Service Quality**

Crosby (1979:15) suggested a conceptualization of service quality as conforming to needs and requirements. Another early definition was presented by Juran (1988), describing service quality as meeting users' expectations, whereas Zeithaml (1988) defined it as superiority or excellence in service delivery. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988:12-40) defined service quality as a 'global judgement or attitude relating to the overall excellence or superiority of the service.' Sharif and Kassim (2012) claim that, as service quality is usually consumer driven, it is difficult for service providers to understand and apply "service quality" in any single way or to define it in a standardized fashion. Khodayari and Khodayari (2011) argue that perceived service quality reflects the difference between consumer expectations and perceptions. According to Lovelock and Wirtz (2011), the level of service quality can be measured by how much the service provided to consumers exceeds their expectations. Jain, Sinha and Sahney (2011) proposed a model based on the conceptualization of service quality, which suggests that it is a multidimensional and hierarchical construct. However, they also suggest that service quality in HE can be narrowed down into two primary categories, namely, (1)

programme quality (curriculum, university–industry interaction, input quality and academic facilities) and (2) quality of life (non-academic processes, support facilities, campus and interaction quality).

The section below discusses structure of higher education in South Africa.

## **2.2 HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

SA is a developing country with a population of approximately 50.59 million people (Statistics SA, 2011:6). The political landscape of South Africa underwent radical changes when the Government of National Unity was established in 1994 (Bitzer, 2009:3). Numerous transformations were effected to remedy inequalities created by the apartheid era (Badat, 2010:4). The National Planning Commission's proposals for higher education in South Africa must therefore be seen against a line of policy initiatives, from the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI) in 1991, the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) in 1996, the Department of Education's white paper in 1997 and its National Plan in 2001, to former minister of education Kader Asmal's mergers of 2003. All these policy documents struggled with the same basic issues which were equity, efficiency, democratic participation and development. In each of the documents, the four central elements of higher education policy worldwide were addressed in different ways and with different emphases. But the dominant policy challenge, brought back from exile by anti-apartheid intellectual Harold Wolpe in 1990, was seen to be the tension (trade-off) between equity and development (Cloete, 2011).

The restructuring of the higher education system was one of the measures used by the Department of Education to transform education after apartheid (Qhobela, 2009). Restructuring can be understood as a process that has no beginning and no end (Le Grange, 2011). The areas that were deemed lacking included, among others, the definition, purposes and goals of higher education; policy design and implementation in the areas of governance, funding, academic structure and programmes, and quality assurance; also laws and regulations related to HE; and the transformation of HE institutions (Badat, 2010:4).

The institutional mergers of 2003 were “convincingly sold” by then education minister Kader Asmal as an attempt to restructure the apartheid HE landscape (University world news, 2011). The restructuring and transformation of South African HE was introduced where technikons were merged with universities to form ‘Comprehensive Universities’ and ‘Universities of Technology’ (Du Pré, 2009). The centre piece at the beginning of the higher education legislation section states that:

Higher education is the major driver of the information-knowledge system, linking it with economic development. Universities are key to developing a nation. They play three main functions in society. Firstly, they educate and train people with high-level skills for the employment needs of the public and private sectors. Secondly, universities are the dominant producers of new knowledge, and they critique information and find new local and global applications for existing knowledge. Universities also set norms and standards, determine the curriculum, languages and knowledge, ethics and philosophy underpinning a nation's knowledge-capital. South Africa needs knowledge that equips people for a society in constant social change. Thirdly, given the country's apartheid history, higher education provides opportunities for social mobility and simultaneously strengthens equity, social justice and democracy. In today's knowledge society, higher education underpinned by a strong science and technology innovation system, is increasingly important in opening up people's opportunities. (Department of Higher Education, 2003:262).

Higher education must cultivate the knowledge, competencies and skills that enable graduates to contribute to economic development, since such development is required to move towards greater social equality and social development (Badat, 2010:16). The selected CU was established in 2005 in accordance with these initiatives and other government legislation (Higher Education Act, 1997 No. 101) (Government Gazette no. 1855). It offers tuition on four campuses with eleven delivery sites covering a radius of 1000 km. It includes the rural and peri-urban divides of the Eastern Cape which is

plagued by widespread poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and poor access to basic service delivery. Students are largely drawn from this catchment area. In this context, it describes itself as a “developmental university that is scientific, technological, innovative and responsive”. It is therefore geographically situated in a disadvantaged area and consequently has had its own financial difficulties.

Although intentions to merge institutions were understood to be well researched, they had a huge impact, sometimes good but often bad, on financial administration processes. This was the case at the selected institution and a memorandum requesting the intervention of the DoE in the affairs of the university was consequently submitted to Dr Blade Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education and Training (DHET). An independent assessor was appointed by the minister to report on the affairs of the CU after receiving complaints about poor governance and financial mismanagement. Consequently the institution was placed under administration because it could not afford to pay the R68 million monthly salary bill (Skiti, 2011a) and it faced possible retrenchments (Skiti, 2011b). According to Sehoole (2005) infrastructure integration is the most complex, messy and drawn-out component of mergers in transitional contexts. Unrest on campus accompanied by destruction of buildings followed, and this inevitably severely affected service delivery, for instance the burning of a library resulted in loss of study material and computers.

### **2.3 PURPOSE OF A COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITY**

CUs are unique institutions within the HE domain with regard to the broad range of knowledge offerings that they provide, from career-focused to professional and from specialist to general academic along a horizontal axis (Boulton and Lucas, 2011:2512). The term ‘comprehensive’ is used by higher education institutions in a number of different national systems and the terminology can become confusing (Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET, 2004:3). For institutional classification systems in the United States, the term was developed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning to refer to those universities and colleges that offered a wide range of baccalaureate degrees and a limited range of master’s degree with no

graduate programmes at the doctoral level (DHET, 2004:3). South African comprehensive universities are characterized by diversity, accessibility, student mobility, responsiveness and flexibility. The primary aim for establishing a comprehensive institution was to strengthen the provision of technikon programmes through ensuring that these are available throughout the country (DHET, 2004:1). The NCHE, which was established in 1996, proposed 'the establishment of a single coordinated system that would provide coherence from a set of planning, funding and quality assurance systems thereby overcoming the challenges of the previous system' (DHET, 2004:1). The emergence of the comprehensive universities also brought about opportunities to pool resources and increase capacity (Dlamini, 2008:27).

One of the university's mission statements is to ensure that quality is maintained and this commits the institution to institution-wide quality management, value and to rewarding excellence and upholding and protecting the integrity of the University (University website, 2015). In keeping with this commitment, in April 2009, the Executive Director of the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) secured the consent of the then Vice Chancellor (VC) and senior management that they would participate in an institutional audit in April 2010, later postponed to April 2011. This audit visit took place from 3-8 April 2011, and was conducted by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), a sub-committee of the national Council on Higher Education (CHE), whose mandate is to ensure quality assurance in higher education in SA, in accordance with the Higher Education Act, Act 101 of 1997. According to the resulting report into the affairs of the university presented by the Independent Assessor, Prof. D.J Ncayiyana, the following challenges were among those faced by the university (DHET: 2011):

- Lack of financial sustainability as the university struggled to pay salaries for staff members.
- Insufficient campus and residence security (for example two staff members had recently been held up at gun point on the campus).
- A lack of any computer terminals where students are able to work and avoid walking to the library at night.



- Significant incidents of overcrowding and squatting in residences
- A lack of reading space, computer access or provision of appropriate book collections in the library, including insufficient provision of prescribed textbooks.

In October 2011 the HEQC sent an executive summary of their report to the university with thirty recommendations highlighting areas that needed attention. A summary of the recommendations made by HEQC which are specifically relevant to this research follows (CHE, 2011):

### **Recommendation 9**

University must urgently develop a plan for making student residences safe; fast track the maintenance schedule of existing student residences. Communal and study space be made available and residence rules be enforced

### **Recommendation 17**

University must establish a collective understanding of quality and its monitoring across the institution; review systems to link academic and financial planning and quality management in a transparent manner; and review administrative support to manage these processes and systems.

### **Recommendation 22**

The HEQC recommends that the University urgently address the resource needs of its libraries which will require realistic and phased funding arrangements – to augment its book and journal resources, provide internet access, increase the number of professional staff and improve the physical facilities.

### **Recommendation 23**

The HEQC recommends that the University ensure the adequacy of computers for both students and staff; and address the maintenance and implementation of existing software to manage administrative and educational processes.

## **2.4 COMPETITIVE ADVANTANGE ON SERVICE DELIVERY**

In today's competitive environment, rendering quality service is a key for success, and many experts concur that the most powerful competitive tool currently reshaping marketing and business strategy is service quality. Service quality is closely tied to an increase in profitability and is linked to presenting an essential competitive advantage, which is formed through word-of-mouth communications, consumer loyalty and service differentiation (Kimani, Kangira and Kedi, 2011). Service quality is regarded as an important dimension of competitiveness (Ali, Khan and Rehman, 2012:273-266). Universities have realized that their long-term survival depends on how good their services are and that quality sets one university apart from the rest (Tsinidou, Gerogiannis and Fitsilis, 2010:227). As a result, service excellence is becoming a major component of higher education institutions' drive to achieve and maintain sustainable competitive advantage (Khan and Matlay, 2009:771). Hence, service quality becomes the means for many institutions to retain student numbers and to capture the educational market (Yeo, 2008:266).

Different market forces have cast their shadow on the higher education (HE) sector. In the United States such forces have changed the landscape of the education market from being supply driven to demand driven and from a seller's to a buyer's market (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2006). All these forces and challenges require HEIs to pay careful attention to their student market and competitive environments. These include the increased competition for funds and students between both traditional and non-traditional universities; and the decrease in resources available to HEIs (Oliff, Palacios, Johnson and Leachman. 2013; BIS, 2011). HEIs in South Africa have increased tuition fees to compensate for declining state funding – but with significant recent repercussions.

In times of fierce tertiary education competition where various institutions of higher learning offer similar products in terms of fees and educational programmes; student service differential can provide an organisation with distinct competitive advantage (Gyamfi, Agyeman and Otto, 2012:21). Since severe competition results in little

variation of facilities, the quality of student services has been regarded as one of the main factors deciding whether or not the institution operates successfully.

## **2.5 DELIVERY OF QUALITY SERVICES TO STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

In South Africa, traditional students and their expectations have changed and are still changing according to Gbadamosi and de Jager (2009:880). These authors add that today's South African higher education students comprise both young and mature students and they also include more working class people, more women and more part-time students. There are undoubtedly different groups of students who may have both different objectives in studying and different perspectives of their role as customers (Eagle and Brennan, 2007:47). A well-equipped library with updated books and upgraded computers; excellent service by academic administrators and comfortable residence could improve academic achievement.

According to Sharabi (2010:318), both the students and their parents are looking for added value for their money and higher education institutes have to deliver quality that is compatible with students' expectations and needs (Smith, Smith and Clarke, 2007: 334). It is therefore important for universities to fully identify with their mission, the students they serve and their needs and expectations (Manuel, 2008:12). Continuous improvement of existing standards is necessary for increased student satisfaction (Gbadamosi and de Jager, 2009:877). Customer satisfaction can be defined as the attitude or feeling of a customer towards a product or service following its usage (Tsinidou, Gerogiannis and Fitsilis, 2010:228).

## **2.6 TRAINING OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

One of the major areas of the Human Resource Management function of particular relevance to the effective use of human resources is training and development (Khan, Khan and Khan, 2011:62-68). Training is the learning process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, sharpening of skills, concepts, rules, or changing attitudes and behaviors to enhance the performance of employees (Kavanagh and Thite, 2009:310). Training is a constant process which enables administrative staff in

universities to continuously develop their capabilities in order to improve efficiency and the standard of service provided by the organization (Elnaga and Imran, 2013:137-144). According to Blanchard and Thacker, 2010; training is defined as a planned and systematic effort to provide and enhance administrative staff in universities with the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to their job, through learning experiences with a view to their working more efficiently. Noe (2010:345) defines training as a “planned effort by a company to facilitate administrative staff training in universities in learning job related competencies.” In addition, lists of competencies that are important for job success (knowledge, skills or behaviours) are added. Development in administrative staff training in universities “refers to formal education, job experiences, relationships and assessments of personality and abilities that help them perform effectively in their present or future job or institutions” (Noe, 2010:346). One way to train administrative staff in universities is through “off job training” where employees are required to attend training sessions to learn a task (Nischithaa and Narasimha Rao, 2014:51). The latest version of this type of training of administrative staff is Integrated Tertiary System (ITS) for registering students, capturing marks, printing class lists and updating students’ information. This type of training should be done in a neutral venue away from staff work stations to avoid being disturbed by staff members requesting work to be done in line with their normal work schedules. Popoola, Adesop and Ajayi (2013) conducted a study in Nigerian Universities where it was found that the universities’ administrative staff lacked adequate mentoring skills, information and training. It was also shown in the Malaysian educational development agenda (Austrade, 2007) that the training of non-academic staff was not part of that agenda, creating concerns about the quality of service administrative staff would be able to provide within Malaysian higher education institutions. In the eyes of the students, the contact personnel are an important dimension of a service organization’s image and reputation because they are generally the first point of contact in the service encounter (Ong, 2013:40-43). Banwet and Datta’s (2003) study stresses that all employees of a university should adhere to the principles of quality student service in order to deliver total student satisfaction. Nguyen’s (2010) research emphasizes that the performance of administrative staff helps to attract student groups and define corporate reputation.

According to Desimone and Werner (2012:12), training and development focuses on changing or improving the knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals. Without adequate training, service providers can be a liability, because poorly trained and unprepared front-line staff can damage the students' experience and, in time, the organization's reputation and sustainability (Ong, 2013:43). Ultimately, the improvement of knowledge, skills and attitudes of the workforce empowers organizations to remain competitive in the global economy (Aguinis and Kraiger, 2009:452). Employees, who learned from the training they have attended, will apply the knowledge and skills that they learn to their workplace following the training, which in turn enables them to provide better services to their students (Zumrah, 2014:112).

A significant aspect of the training of administration staff at universities should encompass ways/methods of providing/facilitating students' orientation.

## **2.7 STUDENT ORIENTATION (SO)**

Student orientation is a period of time at the beginning of the academic year at a university or other tertiary institution during which a variety of events are held to orient and welcome new students (Elloff, 2014). Cook (2006); Hassanien and Barber (2007); Shupp (2009); and Upcraft, Gardner and Barefoot (2005) confirm that orientation programs play a key role in connecting students to other individuals and resources in order to assist with their success at university, providing them with the opportunity to become familiar with the university, its administrative and academic services, and to meet faculty staff and administrators. Providing a good orientation program also allows the institution to convey important information about the institution and the support systems available, and to meet the expectations of students (Twale and Schaller, 2003). A student orientation programme focuses primarily on the realization of the interests and needs of these "customers" and delivers appropriate solutions to their requests (Bellou, 2009).

Through the initiative of the Centre for Learning and Teaching Development (CLTD) at the selected CU, registered students are taken around the campus in the company of Peer Assistant Learners (PALs) to visit all lecture halls, libraries, health service centers, residence departments, admissions, and the finance section, so that they will later be able to visit those places in their own time without difficulty. The purpose of SO is to familiarize students with campus environment and physical facilities (Library, Laboratories, Academic and Student Services Departments) and to introduce them to university services which will provide a significant support for their educational and personal goals. This can also create an atmosphere that minimizes anxiety, promotes positive attitudes, and stimulates an excitement for learning – providing a welcoming atmosphere for students to meet faculty, staff, and continuing students, as well as other new students. The following section will look at service quality in higher education (HE) more generally.

## **2.8 SERVICE QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

The definition of HE quality which will be accepted will differ depending upon the various stakeholders who experience the different services provided by HEIs. However, students are the main stakeholders of any higher education institution, and their experience in engaging with the different services provided during their student years can be taken to comprise service quality (Jancey and Burns, 2013:311-322). Quality of service to students can be interpreted in many ways including ensuring the effective delivery of all services experienced and competent staff behaviour by administrative employees (Naidoo, 2011b:4). It is an established fact that positive perceptions of service quality have an important influence on student satisfaction (Alves and Raposo, 2010:73-85). Service quality in higher education should also be viewed in terms of the quality of an institution's reputation, its legacy and history, the quality of its academics, the scope of the offerings, the throughput rate, research outputs, community engagement, customer retention, the scope of the alumni and their impact on society (Schalkwyk and Steenkamp, 2014:88). Since the 1990s, HE worldwide as well as in South Africa, has experienced intense changes including an increase in the size and diversity of the student population, a greater demand for quality by all stakeholders

involved, more responsibility for research and teaching, as well as more emphasis on efficient and effective management.

According to Cheng and Tam (1997:22-31) “education quality is rather vague and controversial concept”, and HE is a service that is predominantly intangible, perishable and heterogeneous according to Gruber, Fuß, Voss and Gläser-Zikuda (2010:105-123). Ziethaml, Bitner and Gremler (2009), define services, including educational services, as “deeds, processes and performances”. According to Botha (2009:17-31), regulatory measures initiated by government in the tertiary education sectors had increased over the previous ten years and in the South African HE environment, quality assurance activities involving the development of explicit quality assurance policies, the establishment of quality assurance structures and the regular evaluation of institutional performance have become common features (Ferreira, 2003; Mhlanga, 2008). This promotes the need for HEIs to continue to deliver a quality service and satisfy its participating customers to achieve sustainability in a competitive service environment (DeShields, Kara and Kaynak, 2005:128-139). Naidoo (2015:42) argues that since tertiary education forms part of service market it is important to identify its quality variables and understand how it affects the students and staff within the university environment.

O’Neil and Palmer (2004:39-52) define the achievement of service quality in HE as addressing the discrepancy between students’ expectations and their perceptions of delivery. For the purpose of this study, and following this definition, service quality in HE is defined as “meeting and exceeding students’ expectations and perceptions by constantly rendering a reliable service that conforms to pre-determined requirements”.

The SERVQUAL model underpinning the study will be discussed in the next section.

### **2.8.1 Service Quality (SERVQUAL Model)**

The SERVQUAL model was originally developed by Ziethalm, Parasuraman and Berry in 1985, but its continued use indicates its continuing value. SERVQUAL is a multi-item

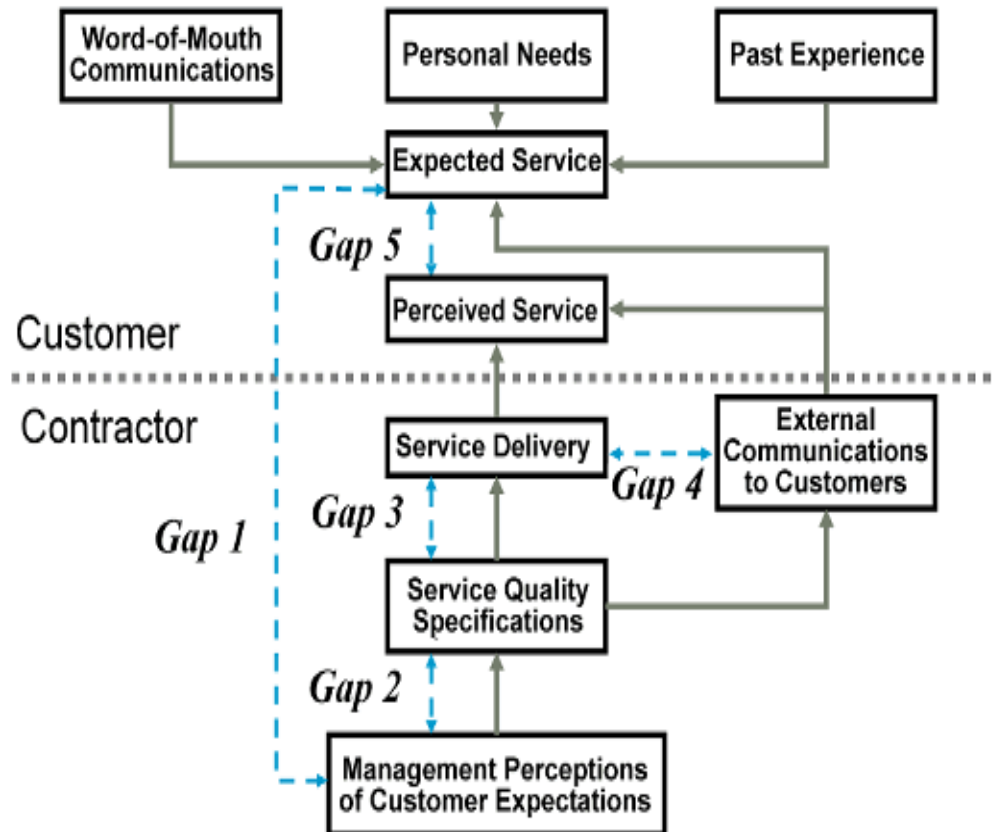
scale developed to assess customer perceptions of service quality in service organisations and it measures service quality as the discrepancy (gap) between a customer's expectations of a service offering and the customer's perception of the service received (Parasuram, Berry, and Zeithaml, 1988). Sharabi (2010:317) discovered that institutions that concentrate mainly on customer needs will remain competitive. Dehghan, Shahin and Zenuouzi (2011) add that currently most organisations are coming to realise the importance of customer-centred ideas, and one of the key challenges they are facing is how to manage service quality. As noted by Narang (2012:359), the SERVQUAL scale and its adaptations have been widely used in various services including banking, retail, wholesale, health and education. Foster also notes that tool is used by many organisations (Foster 2010:257).

Researchers and academics have used a wide number of indicators for their analysis: from the simplest indices such as SERVQUAL (Chou, Liu, Huang, Yih and Han, 2011:2117-2128). The scale breaks down the notion of service quality into five (5) service dimensions namely tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. The SERVQUAL instrument can determine the relative importance of the five service quality dimensions in influencing the customers' (or students') overall quality perception. However, customer expectations need to be properly understood to successfully manage them and service gaps should be identified from a customer's perspective (Miremadi, Ghalamkari and Sadeh, 2011:58-62).



# ServQual

Source: Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, Delivering Quality Service



**Figure 2.1:** SERVQUAL Model

Foster (2010) further states that SERVQUAL identifies five discrepancies or "gaps" that may cause problems in service delivery and therefore influence customer evaluations of service quality.

- Gap 1: the gap between customer expectations and management's perception of these expectations.
- Gap 2: the gap between management's perception of what customers (students) want and the specifications that management develops to provide the service.
- Gap 3: the gap between the service quality specifications (delivery systems) and the service that is actually provided.

- Gap 4: the gap between what the service system actually provided, and what the customer is told it provides (a communication gap).
- Gap 5: the gap between customers' perceptions of service performance and their expectations.

According to Shahin (2007:2) where these gaps are found they will normally arise from the following:

**Gap 1: Customers' expectations versus management perceptions:** as a result of the lack of a marketing research orientation, inadequate upward communication and too many layers of management.

**Gap 2: Management perceptions versus service specifications:** as a result of inadequate commitment to service quality, a perception of unfeasibility, inadequate task standardization and an absence of goal setting.

**Gap 3: Service specifications versus service delivery:** as a result of role ambiguity and conflict, poor employee-job fit and poor technology-job fit, inappropriate supervisory control systems, lack of perceived control and lack of teamwork.

**Gap 4: Service delivery versus external communication:** as a result of inadequate horizontal communications and propensity to over-promise.

**Gap 5: The discrepancy between customer expectations and their perceptions of the service delivered:** as a result of the influences exerted from the customer side and the shortfalls (gaps) on the part of the service provider. In this case, customer expectations are influenced by the extent of personal needs, word of mouth recommendation and past service experiences.

## 2.9 DIMENSIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) originally proposed ten dimensions of service quality with five basic gaps to be analyzed. These 10 dimensions are: tangibility,

reliability, responsiveness, competence, courtesy, credibility, security, access, communication and understanding the customer. Their research was later refined leading to the development of SERVQUAL scale which measures customers' perceptions or service quality. Original ten dimensions were later compacted into five which are:

### 2.9.1 Reliability

Yeo (2008) states that the discrepancy between the service promise and service delivery is often mainly due to inaccurate communication from advertisements and exhibitions. Many organisations oversell their services, resulting in over-extended promises. Bloise and Tankersley (2004; 75-89) believe that delivering a service and meeting commitments timeously, in keeping with the promised service timelines in a professional manner, will influence a customer's perception in a significant way. The employees at the institution should perform the desired service level correctly the first time. It also means the organisation keeps its promises within the specific time frame set out. If this delivery is done in an efficient manner, it will enhance the perceived quality for the customer (Brink and Berndt, 2010). Lovelock and Wright (2007) are of the opinion that reliability is the most important factor in customers' assessment of service quality. Chowdhary and Prakash (2007:493-509) agree that, of all the dimensions of service quality, reliability is the most important. It is because customers can rely on the service provider to keep promises and perform with the best interests of the customers at heart. Reliability therefore influences the assessment of other quality dimensions. Reliability improvements are at the forefront of service quality enhancement efforts because unreliable service means promises not being met on the attributes that customers care about. If the main service is not performed reliably, customers may assume that the organisation is incompetent and may switch to another organisation.

### 2.9.2 Responsiveness

According to Govender, Veerasamy and Noel (2014), responsiveness refers to the promptness and willingness to serve demonstrated by staff during the service

encounter. This dimension focuses on attentiveness and timeous dealing with customers' requests, queries, complaints and problems. Responsiveness in the HE setting will be shown in the time period that students have to wait for help, receive feedback to queries or attention to problems as well as the ability of administrative staff to develop personalized solutions for students (Govender, Veerasamy and Noel, 2014:467). The staff at the institution must be willing and be ready to serve and help students. It is vital that the staff at the university be knowledgeable about the service they represent. Blose and Tankersley (2004:75-79) contend that, whether the interaction occurs face-to face or telephonically, the degree to which the service personnel exhibit the ability to handle matters effectively, and whether they care about attending to the customer's request, will undoubtedly impact on perceptions of service quality.

### 2.9.3 Assurance

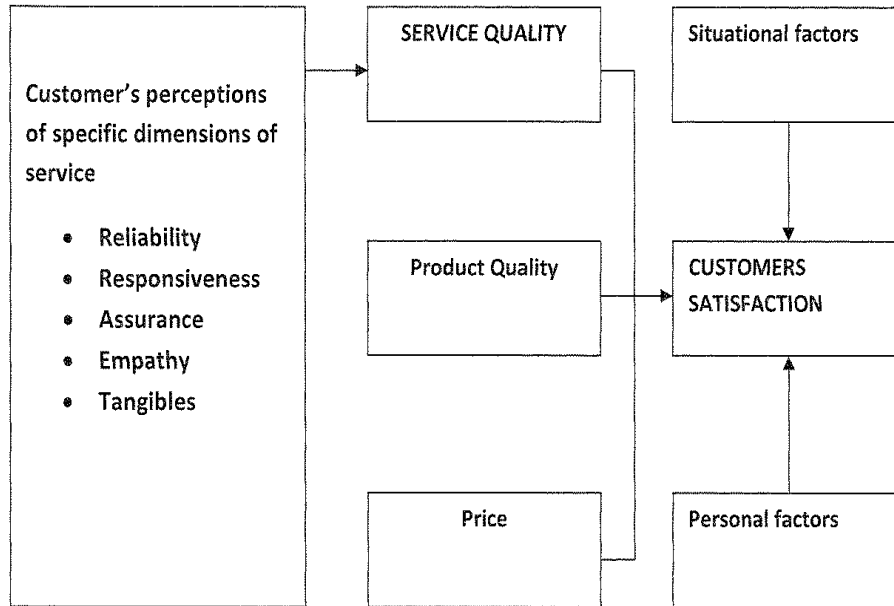
Assurance relates to the ability of staff to provide a courteous and secure service. Arasli, Mehtap-Smadi and Katircioglu (2005) state that assurance constitutes employees' knowledge, courtesy and ability to inspire trust and confidence in the customer. Similarly Dhurup, Singh and Surujlal (2006:39-54) believe that assurance represents courtesy, credibility and competence on the part of employees. This dimension is central to service quality since customers are confronted with a high level of risk or uncertainty about their ability to evaluate outcomes. Bruhn and Georgi (2006) advocate that assurance is associated with the institution's ability to provide the service, mainly in terms of the knowledge, friendliness and trustworthiness on the part of employees. Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler (2006) explain that trust and confidence can be enhanced by the individual who links the customer to the organisation. In a HE institution, the key people that link the customer to the company would be the academic and frontline staff. The institution must provide assurance that employees have the ability to convey trust and confidence. To this end, an institution, with a strong brand, can communicate a signal of trust and confidence. The assessment of service quality depends to a large extent on how customers perceive the actual performance based on their expectations.

#### 2.9.4 Empathy

Empathy refers to the provision of caring and individualised attention to the customer. The focal point of empathy highlights the message that customers are unique and special. Curry and Sinclair (2002:197-205), view empathy as providing caring, personalized attention to its customers. It is a challenge for HE institutions to exceed customer expectations in this regard. The number of customers that the service provider has to deal with at one given time has a bearing on the level of individual attention that can be given to each customer. Brink and Berndt (2010) are of the opinion that HE institutions and their employees must try to understand the students' problems and strive to carry out duties with the students' best interests in mind. Yeo (2008:266-286) believes that there is a great need for managers to adopt a more customer-oriented approach by showing a human dimension to their interactions with customers. Listening, understanding and communicating with the customer forms the foundation of empathy, for example students should be addressed by their names. According to Gorgi, Siami and Nouraei (2011), empathy means treating people based on their special features and characteristics, so that customers can be satisfied that the organization appreciates them and that they are important to it.

#### 2.9.5 Tangibles

According to Van de Westhuizen (2014:411) tangibles are viewed as facilities, equipment and personal appearance of staff at the institution. Tangibles provide physical representations that students will use to evaluate service quality. Learning experience and orientation cannot entirely be evaluated by grades alone (Yeo, 2008). Most institutions use tangibles in conjunction with the other service quality dimensions to develop a service quality strategy for the organization (Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler, 2006).



Source: Brink & Berndt (2005: 59)

**Figure 2.2:** *Linkage between service quality and customer satisfaction*

These dimensions of service quality should also encompass methods of providing service quality in academic administration.

## 2.10 SERVICE QUALITY IN ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION

According to Cambridge Dictionary (2016) administration refers to arrangements and tasks required to control the operation of a plan or organisation. At grassroots level administration involves the staffs who deal directly with the students. Gonzalez (2015) adds that working as an academic secretary means that you are continuously working with new technology. Academic secretaries have opportunities to work with a wide variety of different individuals in the field of higher education. When the operation of an administrative office is explored, it is seen to be a system consisting of various components working together to attain a goal, such as lowering cost, and improving quality and service as perceived by the customers in the market it serves (Keyte and Locher, 2004:1). Although academic administrators do not have control over the resources of the institution, a difference can be made. If all four management processes are utilized, involving planning, organizing, leading and controlling,

successful processes and procedures can be established, a motivated working team can be motivated to perform well, and excellent service can be delivered (Prinsloo, 2013:25).

“Administrators’ in academic affairs and those located at different levels in the administrative hierarchy perceive themselves as having an ability to enact change” (Eddy and Van der Linden, 2008:39). Good leadership characteristics are needed for academic administrators to make a success of their office administration. They must be able to implement an effective office system and apply effective information technology. If effective problem-solving techniques are applied, office productivity is promoted. Factors influencing an effective administrative office include good leadership, effective office systems, office productivity, effective information technology and problem-solving solutions (Prinsloo, 2013:26). Evaluation of the service provided is important. For instance, if students make an application for exemption of credits and their applications are processed quickly and they are then notified by phone if the applications have been successful, they will tend to be satisfied with the quality of that service.

Academic administration is very close to students. Paperwork required for student enrolment, printing proof of registration, capturing marks and issuing of progress reports are being done by this department. (Roland, 2009:62) emphasizes that non-academic personnel need to be service-oriented rather than merely administratively efficient. It is suggested that in order to achieve this academic institutions should keep their academic administrators happy. If they are treated well by their internal service providers such as management, payroll and benefits staff, human resources and other departments, academic administrators will deliver good service to their students. Academic administrators also need to be empowered to be able to implement service recovery. It often happens that they need to walk the extra mile with a student and exceed the student’s expectations, especially when mistakes have been made (Williams, 2012:535).

## **2.11 SERVICE QUALITY IN STUDENT RESIDENCE**

The literature review reflects the fact that most research on student housing derives from Europe and North America and, to a lesser extent, Australia, with little research on student housing in developing country contexts, including SA. In Europe, most students live at home, with relatives or on their own, rather than in residences. However, there are distinct regional and national differences in each of these categories (Ministerial report on student housing at SA Universities, 2011). For HEIs, academic productivity is amongst the most important 34 components of success. Indeed, it creates differentiation in the market; not only in terms of providing unique knowledge, but attracting more good students. According to Adewunmi, Omirin and Famuyiwa (2011:149-168) academic productivity is highly dependent on the indicators like facilities available to students and support services. Therefore, a strong area of consideration must be the physical environment of universities. Residence life is a unique student-experience associated with special benefits. Several researchers have considered “student residence” as one of the most adequate facilities provided by the higher learning institutions. For instance, Najib, Yusof and Abidin (2011:200-212) noted that students’ intellectual capabilities can be expanded through facilitation of a good physical environment at their residence halls. Again Hassanain (2008:212-225) found that desirable educational outcomes and mutual interests among students can be fostered through adequately planned residential facilities.

Residence on the selected site are currently housing 254 students and a new residence which will house a further 360 students is under construction. The administration of these facilities however consists at present of only one administrative assistant and one residence officer. An allocation procedure for residence is based on academic merit for continuing students. Those achieving 60% qualify for a double room and those achieving 70% and above qualify for a single room. First year registered students are considered according to the distance of their homes from the university. To qualify for residence they must reside at least 50km away from the institution. A first come first served criteria is also in operation here. All students are required to abide by the



residence rules contained in the university General Prospectus from page 100-103 (Student Orientation, 2015:25-26).

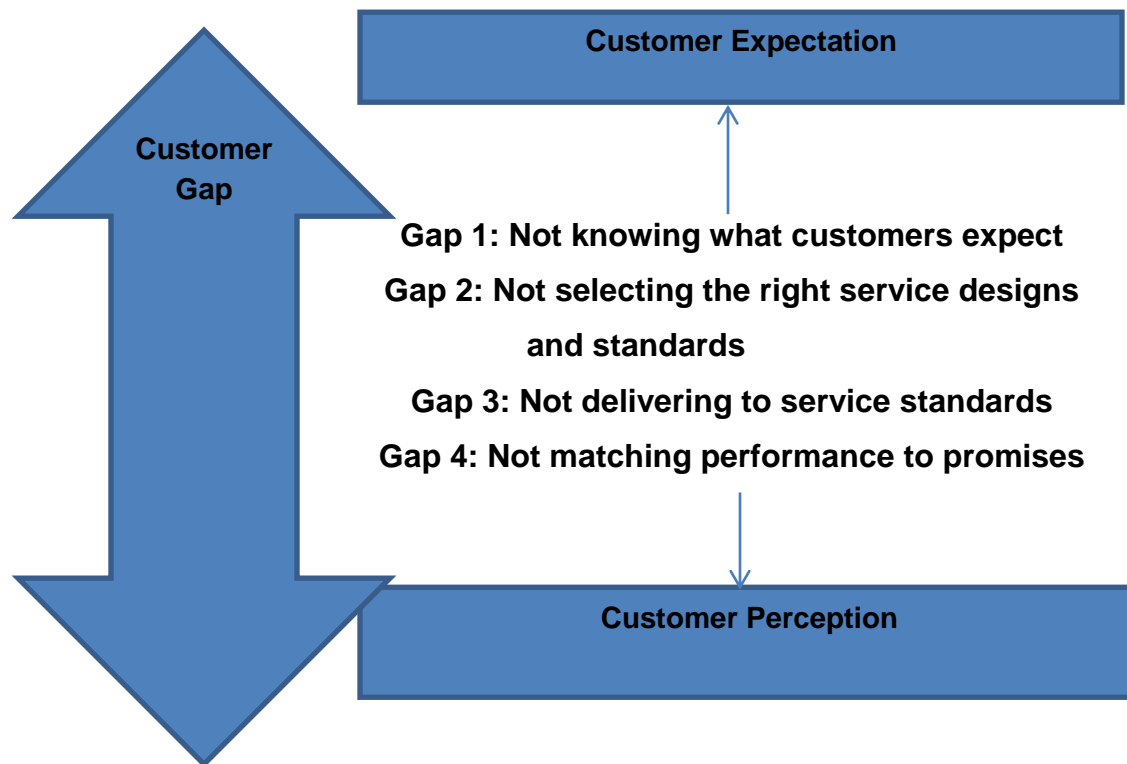
The following section will deal with service quality in Library Information Services (LIS).

## **2.12 SERVICE QUALITY IN LIBRARY INFORMATION SERVICES (LIS)**

The university's vision is to provide and promote quality information services that support teaching, learning and research activities of the university, using modern technologies and indigenous knowledge to achieve life-long learning. Rendering relevant, dynamic and up-to-date library and information services to university clientele and general public (University website).

Technology plays an essential role in higher education in general, and in the academic libraries in particular (Hsu, Cummings and Wang, 2014:137). Rovito (2010) notes that present-day academic libraries are now expected to compete with commercial service providers such as Google. Advocates of technology claim that the internet, for example online databases, eliminate time and geographical constraints. Bakti, and Sumaedi (2013) investigated the relationship between library customer loyalty, service quality, and customer satisfaction in a university library service in Indonesia. This research reveals that service quality has a direct effect on customer satisfaction which, in turn, influences library customer loyalty. California State University-Sacramento implemented a laptop rental program to increase the overall library user traffic and to aid students' use of academic resources (Gu, 2011). After implementation of the program, with 180 wireless laptops put into circulation, feedback solicited through a survey accessible from the laptop loan program website was generally positive.

## 2.13 GAP 5 - CUSTOMER GAP



**Figure 2.3:** *Customer Gap*

According to Boshoff and du Plessis (2009:48), the gap bounded by the consumers' expectations and perceptions of the service delivery process is known as Gap 5 and is often affected by or calculated by the other four gaps (Gaps 1, 2, 3 and 4). The immediate focus of this study is to evaluate the Gap 5 service quality gap in a higher education context. The Gap 5 is the discrepancy between the actual customer expectations for service quality and the customer perceptions of the actual service delivery. This gap forms the basis of a customer orientated definition of service quality, but other gaps are contributors to the service quality gap that may be perceived by customers (Nitecki and Herson, 2000). A positive gap arises in Gap 5 results when customers' perceptions of service exceed their expectations. A negative gap arises when expectations are not met, pointing to a need for service improvement (Silvestro, 2005).

Expected quality is what the customer expects to receive from HEIs' and the perceived service is what the customer perceives he/she received from the HEIs'. (Kotler and Keller, 2006; Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, (1985:41-50); Zeithaml and Bitner (2003:41); Mullins, Walker, Boyd and Larreche (2005:424); Dehghan and Shahin (2011)). Zheng (2012) indicated in her study that universities specifically should strive to increase students' satisfaction by providing the level of services they expect. In the light of the above, the SERVQUAL instrument was used to measure service quality experienced at one site of the selected SA Comprehensive University.

## **2.14 CONCLUSION**

Since higher education institutions in South Africa have experienced dramatic changes in their structuring, funding and student numbers, the development of service quality as a source of competitive advantage is becoming increasingly important and literature pertaining to this was discussed in this chapter. To understand the effects of these changes and importance of service quality in South African higher education, the chapter also presented an overview of changes in South African higher education and the establishment of comprehensive universities. The chapter also analyzed and reviewed literature on service quality, SERVQUAL theory, dimensions of service quality and the Gap Model. In addition the chapter discussed service quality in academic administration, and in residences and university libraries (including the services provided in the specific university relevant to this study) along with student orientation, the training of administrative staff, and potential causes of service quality gaps.

Overall the research has added to the literature by providing a case study of current service delivery challenges in a public university in South Africa. The dissertation has indicated not only the nature and extent of the shortcomings, but also that the causes rest more with the lack of resources available for funding this university than with any shortcomings in the administrative staff themselves who, in this instance, were appropriately qualified and were themselves aware that the services they provided were not of a fully acceptable standard. It can be inferred that other public universities may well be facing the same challenges.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology employed in this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will report on the method and structure behind this study. More specifically, the design, participants, and sampling, research instruments, ethical considerations, data collection, analysis, verification, sources of error, and research limitations will be explained.

#### 3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Howell (2013) defines methodology as a general research strategy that outlines the way in which a research project is to be undertaken and, among other things, identifies the methods to be used. In other words, research methodology is a process used to collect data and information for the purpose of making various decisions and interventions. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010:2), “research is a systematic process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting data in order to increase the understanding of a phenomenon about which we are interested”. Research methodology is the overall approach to research linked to the paradigm or theoretical framework while research method refers to the systematic strategy to investigate research questions through data collection, data analysis or sampling procedure (Cibangu, 2010:178). To clarify further, research methodology can be seen as a set of rules, principles and formal conditions that ground and guide scientific inquiry in order to organize and increase our knowledge about a particular phenomenon (Rajkomaar, 2015:65). The research methods specify the practical implementation of the scientific inquiry in terms of the data collection, analysis and interpretation (Gelo, Braakmann and Benetka 2008:270). This chapter discusses the above process. For the purpose of this study a mixed method approach was followed.

## **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The choice of a research design is guided by the researcher's assumptions, skills and practices and influences the manner in which data is collected (Nieuwenhuis, 2013:70). A research design serves two purposes: firstly, to serve as a bridge between the research question and the execution or implementation of the research (Terre-Blanche and Durrheim, 2004); and secondly, to present an overall relationship between the research question and the data collected (Englander, 2012). A research design is a plan that involves deciding on the relevant research paradigm and philosophy, research approach, method, data collection techniques and data analysis (Myers, 2009:19). According to LeCompte and Schensul (2010:87), every systematic activity undertaken by human beings needs a plan of action. Therefore, a research design is a blueprint that shows a logical sequence of how the empirical data is linked to the research question and how each step fits into the entire project (Yin, 2009:26). Creswell (2009:3) adds that research designs are plans and procedures for research that limit the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis to obtain responses to research questions or problems. In this study, data were collected from students and administrative staff of residences, library and academic departmental secretaries. Four sets of questionnaires were distributed, one to students' and the other three to administrative staff of selected departments.

There are three types of research designs: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods (Creswell, 2009:3; McMillan and Schuhmacher, 2006:22).

### **3.2.1 Qualitative research**

Qualitative research allows researchers to examine people's experiences in detail by using a specific set of research methods such as in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (Hennink, Hunter and Bailey 2011). All qualitative studies serve three purposes, namely to explore, describe and explain. The research design should serve one or more of these purposes (Babbie, 2010). Also, qualitative methods deal with social and cultural constructions of its own variables (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2011:5).

### **3.2.2 Quantitative research**

The focus of this method is on explanation, the testing of hypotheses and statistical analyses (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2011:5). Therefore, measurements of quantities, amount intensity and frequency are crucial elements of this method. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012: 162) explain that quantitative research sets out to examine the relationship between variables. Creswell, Klassen, Clark and Smith (2011:4), further describe quantitative research as the mode of enquiry aimed at testing theories and hypotheses, collecting descriptive information and examining relationships between variables. Creswell (2009:4) agrees that quantitative research is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables in turn can be measured; typically on instruments so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures (Rosentreter, 2012:49). Thus more emphasis is placed on this analysis of causal relationships between variables and not on processes (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013:17). Also, this method is suitable for structured, standardized and abstract approaches to collecting and analyzing empirical data. In this study, data was collected in a standard manner and it was ensured that the closed ended questions posed were expressed clearly and administered to a sufficiently large number of respondents (273) which represented 260 students and 13 administrative staff members.

### **3.2.3 Mixed method approach**

The research design of the current study aimed to be qualitative and quantitative, hence to employ "mixed methods". The word "quality" places emphasis on processes that are not experimented upon, or measured in terms of quantity, amount and frequency (Creswell, 2013; Hennink, et al., 2011). There are several disadvantages to the use of qualitative research (Creswell, 2003). Firstly, subjectivity may lead to difficulties in establishing valid data collection. Secondly, the scope might be limited due to insufficient breadth in data collection approaches. Thirdly, qualitative research is time-consuming in terms both of the collection and of the analysis of data (Creswell, 2003). Finally, owing to the judgments that led to the selection of the sample, the results of the study cannot be generalized to the entire population. Focusing on participants' natural

settings means that the underlying assumptions and attitudes are examined from the context within which they occur (Babbie, 2010; Brown, 2009; Creswell, 2013). However, an advantage of the use of a qualitative research design is that the benefits of navigating participants' lived experiences place qualitative research on a road of discovery that the quantitative researcher is unlikely to navigate in the same way (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, qualitative research can improve the efficiency of quantitative research by combining quantitative and qualitative research into a singly study (Hussain, 2016: 99-100). In this research project open ended questions were used to allow for this qualitative approach to provide in-depth probing of the respondents' initial responses. The strength of this method is found in the use of multiple forms of data and drawing data from all possibilities. This method is convenient when neither a quantitative nor a qualitative method is sufficient to answer the research questions fully (Creswell, 2009:18). Hesse-Biber (2010:3) explains that mixed method design involves the collection, analysis, and integration of quantitative and qualitative data in a single or multiphase study. A quantitative approach allows either a small or large number of participants to give clear answers to what is required in the questionnaire. The open-ended questions used in this study enabled participants to give their opinions as to what improvement (s) they wanted in selected departments in the University (Creswell, 2014:43-48). According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2011:65) qualitative studies are concerned with non-statistical methods and small samples, often purposively selected. The questionnaires included open ended questions as well as close ended questions. Closed questions require the respondents to choose from a limited number of potential answers (Wilson 2010:154). When questions are worded in a way that requires a narrative response, they are known as open-ended questions (Treiman 2009:03). The advantage of open-ended questions according to Wilson (2010:154), is that the respondents are not restricted to a preselected view. The use of mixed methods therefore allowed for a range of appropriate answers to be obtained to the critical questions set out in the research aims and objectives.



### **3.3 POPULATION AND TARGET POPULATION**

A population refers to a collection of individuals, items or units which share the same features pertinent to the study (Quinlan, 2011:206). In an ideal world, researchers would prefer to collect and analyze data that includes all the members of a population under investigation, known as a census or universe (Hair, Celsi, Money and Page, 2011:163; Quinlan, 2011:206). However, this is in fact very seldom possible, because of time, access and money constraints (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012:258). Whitley Jr. and Kite (2013:485) explain a target population as a group of people to whom the results of the research will relate. The target population can be described as a collection of communities, people, organizations or things that the researcher is interested in exploring or investigating (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010:196).

In this study, there is a total of approximately 3176 students (Institutional Research and Planning {IRP}: 2016), two faculties and nine departments on the university site being investigated. This constituted the target population of the study. Only three departments were investigated in the study. Two-hundred and sixty students (260) and fifteen (15) academic administrators and support service administrators in the chosen departments at the site were selected from the target population for this study. The reason for targeting academic administrators, library, and residence administrative staff members and students was because there were complaints about how the academic secretaries handle students' queries and about errors they make in capturing of marks and registration of students. According to the Independent Assessor (2011) students and staff complained about inadequate reading space, computer access and book collections in the Library. Students also complained about aspects of the University residences, including lack of accommodation, safety issues and poor residence allocation. Administrative staff also complained about the students' behavior, saying that they can be rude and insulting when they were not satisfied with the responses they get from staff. A further indication of the need for administrative improvement in residences was the Audit Committee's recommendation that the University must urgently develop a plan for making student residences safe and for fast tracking the maintenance schedule of existing student residences. The Committee pointed out the

resource needs of the libraries which would require realistic and phased funding arrangements in order to augment its book and journal resources, provide internet access, increase the number of professional staff and improve the physical facilities. The Committee also noted that there was a need to ensure the adequacy of computers for both students and staff; and address the maintenance and implementation of existing software to manage administrative and educational processes.

### **3.4 SAMPLING**

According to Rajkoomar (2015:83), sampling is an important step in the research process because it helps to inform the quality of inferences made by the researcher from the findings. Sekaran and Bougie (2010:266) describe sampling as a suitable population quantity derived from that specific population or group, chosen by the researcher. There are two main types of sampling design: probability and non-probability sampling (Sekaran and Bougie, 2009:267; Jackson, 2011:117-118).

Jackson (2011:117) explains that when a researcher uses probability sampling; each member of the population has an equal likelihood of being selected to be part of the sample. Whereas, non-probability sampling is used when individual members of the population do not have an equal likelihood of being selected to be a member of the sample. Sekaran and Bougie (2009:276) state that sometimes non-probability sampling is the only way to obtain data. According to Fink (2010:91-94) convenience sampling, which is a type of non-probability sampling, may also involve participants who are selected because they are available. Non-probability convenience sampling is also usually quick and inexpensive but there is no way of estimating the probability that any population element will be included in the sample (Churchill and Iacobucci (2005:285). Convenience sampling is therefore a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher (Castillo, 2009). The researcher is of the view that the nonprobability, convenience sampling method was an appropriate sampling technique to address the objectives of the study because it was easier and more efficient to be able to use those respondents that were available and prepared to answer the questions. Data was collected from

students and staff who were easily accessible. Non-probability sampling may be done on a spontaneous basis to take advantage of available respondents, without the statistical complexity of a probability sample (Arpin, 2007:25). Mostert and du Plessis (2007:63) also state that a sample is generally preferred to a census because it is often less expensive, less time consuming and less labour intensive. Nonprobability convenience sampling focuses on how relevant the sample is rather than on how representative it is (Babbie, 2010).

### **3.4.1 Sample size**

Sample sizes larger than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate for most research (Sekaran and Bougie, 2009: 296). In total, 345 questionnaires were personally administered to the registered students at the selected CU in SA. 260 returned, this total was originated from the initial sample of 385 from which 40 students were selected for the pilot study and then excluded from the main study, which yielded a 75% response rate. Some students indicated they were busy to complete the questionnaires. The response rate was calculated as follows:

$$\frac{260}{345} \times 100 = 75\%$$

Out of a total of 13 questionnaires administered to the academic, residence and library administrators, 12 were returned (this total was originated from the initial sample of 16 administrators) from which 3 were selected for the pilot study and eliminated for the main study which resulted to 92% response rate. All questionnaires were reviewed and considered fitting for data analysis. The response rate was calculated as follows:

$$\frac{12}{13} \times 100 = 92\%$$

Another significant part in the research process is data collection.

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION**

There are two types of data collection techniques that are generally used for empirical studies (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2011:77). Primary data is collected through interviews and observations, while secondary data includes already existing sources such as textbooks, conference proceedings, journal articles, newspapers, reports, theses and dissertations, government documents and organizations' websites (Mouton, 2008:71). According to Velentgas, Dreyer, Nourjah, Smith and Torchia (2013: 109) primary data are collected by the researcher directly from the participants in person or telephone interviews, mail survey, or computerized questionnaires to address a specific question or hypothesis.

Both primary and secondary data collection methods were used in this study. Journal articles, books, dissertations and selected comprehensive university (CU) reports were used for secondary data collection. For understanding the concept and context of the study, secondary research was conducted first and was later followed by primary data using questionnaires as appropriate data collection instruments.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT**

A survey is a systematic method for gathering information from (a sample of) entities (Groves, Fowler, Couper, Lepkowski, Singer and Tourangeau, 2011:2). According to Schmidt and Hollensen (2006:139), there are four ways of collecting survey information from respondents, namely: personal; telephone; online; and postal. Posting or emailing of questionnaires are however often simply ignored by respondents due to busy work or study schedules, so the researcher opted to personally administer the questionnaires. According to Sakaran and Bougie (2016:143), personally administering questionnaires consumes a shorter period of time and is less costly. It also gave an opportunity for the researcher to introduce the research topic and to motivate the respondents to answer honestly.

The collection of data for this study took place between May and July 2016. It took most respondents a few weeks to return the questionnaires to the researcher, while there were some students and staff who took longer (some months) because of their busy work schedules during an examination period. Students' questionnaires were distributed during a slot requested from, and agreed to, by the lecturers. Students were asked to complete the questionnaire during their spare time. Residence visits were also carried out during weekends to distribute additional questionnaires to students and these were returned during the week. Staff questionnaires were personally distributed to their workstations.

### **3.7 QUESTIONNAIRES**

A questionnaire is described as a set of questions used to collect information from a group of people or an individual. The questionnaire is a very popular data collection technique that researchers use to gather information from a specific population relevant to the study (Sakaren and Bougie, 2010:197; McMillan and Sehumacher, 2006: 104). In designing the questionnaires for this study, service quality dimensions based on the SERVQUAL model proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1985) were used. These dimensions evaluate the level of service quality experienced. Open-ended and closed questions were included in all four questionnaires. The questionnaire used a Likert Scale as described by Cameron and Price (2009:349) for the closed questions. The statements were related to numbers ranging from 1 to 5, whereby 1 indicates 'strongly agree' and 5 indicates 'strongly disagree'. Malhotra (2010:322) advises that an open-ended question can be helpful in confirming whether the scale performs as expected, in relation to the other variables. The open-ended questions included in the questionnaire asked the students what improvement they would like to see in the selected departments. Closed questions required the respondent to select and answer from among a list provided by the researcher (Babbie, 2011:255). The closed questions were designed for students and staff to rate their levels of expectation as well as their perceived experiences regarding the service quality delivered.

### 3.8 DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF QUESTIONNAIRE

According to Wimmer and Mominick (2011:198), a questionnaire should be organized in a logical sequence, proceeding from the general to the specific and the transition between question sections should be clear and logical.

As discussed above, there were four sets of questionnaires, one for academic department administrators (appendix, C), one for residence administrators (appendix, D), one for library administrators (appendix, E) and one for students (appendix, F). Each of the questionnaires was divided into three sections, namely, Section A: biographical information, Section B: service quality delivered and Section C: open-ended questions for the expression of opinions as to what improvements were needed in order to deliver a quality service. In the students' questionnaire there were three open-ended questions, while one open-ended question was included in the staff questionnaires. The administrative staff who responded represented the full complement of administrators in each of the three targeted departments.

Section A of the staff questionnaires had eight similar closed-ended questions which consisted of background information about participants such as gender, age, race, home language, years of employment, status of employment and educational level. The only question which was not included in the academic department administrators' questionnaire was 'state current position' because these administrators have the same title unlike the library and residence administrators. The students' questionnaire (appendix, F) had two closed-ended questions which were different from those of staff questionnaires – these required the year of study, and checked if the student was currently staying in residence.

The **academic** department administrators' questionnaire (appendix, C) consisted of six pages including thirty-three questions. Section B had 25 closed-ended service quality questions. Question 1.5 and 1.24 were not included in other questionnaires. These questions were specifically concerned with matters that are directly involving service

rendered by academic department administrators, for instance question 1.24; academic department administration offices have adequate space for consultation of students.

The **residence** administrators' questionnaire (appendix, D) consisted of seven pages including thirty-six questions. Section B had 27 closed-ended service quality questions. Question 1.15, 1.22, 1.23, 1.24 and 1.26 were not included in other questionnaires. These questions were specifically concerned with matters that are directly involving service rendered by residence department, for instance question 1.24; the residence department has sufficient accommodation for students who qualify.

The **library** administrators' questionnaire (appendix, E) consisted of seven pages including thirty-five questions. Section B had 26 closed-ended service quality questions. Question 1.18, 1.19, 1.20, 1.21, 1.22, 1.23, 1.24 and 1.26 were not included in other questionnaires. These questions were specifically concerned with matters that are directly involving library services, for instance question 1.26 concerned whether computer programs such as Endnote, SPSS and Nvivo are provided by the library.

Section B was based/formulated on the adaptation of the SERVQUAL instrument (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988). The purpose of this section was to help the researcher to identify and understand what research structures and services are in place to control and monitor service quality provided to students and the service quality offered by administrative staff members.

The **students'** questionnaire (appendix, F) focused on quality of services delivered by administrative staff of selected departments. The questionnaire consists of eleven pages including one hundred and seven questions.

### **3.9 PILOT STUDY**

After the questionnaire had been drafted and checked for spelling, grammar and lack of ambiguity by the statistician, supervisor, co-supervisor and Institutional Research Committee (IREC), a pilot study was conducted. According to Hussain (2016:107) the pilot study ensures that problems with the questionnaire are dealt with early to avoid

limitations in the main study and adds that the pilot allows the researcher to evaluate the appropriateness of the research method and its suitability. A pilot study was conducted with twelve students and three staff members to establish whether the selected research design, methodology and the measuring instruments, based on the study, were relevant and effective.

### **3.9.1 Findings of the pilot study**

Pilot testing was done from 16 May to 23 May 2016. Data obtained indicated that respondents understood the questions (they were not ambiguous) and the gathered data appeared to cover the issues as intended. The data collected from the pilot study measured to what extent administrative staff had the knowledge needed to attend to student queries; whether they are friendly and polite to students; whether operating hours are convenient for students and whether the university has sufficient and appropriate accommodation for students. It also measured whether students have a good working relationship with administrative staff. In addition, the instrument was used to measure the service quality gap perceived by students using reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles from the SERVQUAL model. The data collected was found to be sufficient and the measuring tool used was able to collect the desired information. All questions from the pilot study appeared to be clear and unambiguous apart from the inclusion of '1-5' scoring options for each statement, since respondents were uncertain whether they were expected to respond on both expectations and perceptions This was changed to make it clear.

The pilot study therefore confirmed the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher believed that the questionnaire successfully collected the desired information and was essential in collecting data for the main study. The pilot also assisted the researcher to establish a flow in the manner in which questions were to be asked and it was useful in estimating the time and the costs involved in administering the data-collecting tool to the prospective participants. The next section will discuss the administration of the questionnaires.



### **3.10 ADMINISTRATION OF QUESTIONNAIRES**

Since the researcher is working at the selected site, all administrative staff selected was visited personally in their offices after setting up individual appointments. A sample size of 270 for students was randomly selected to participate in the study.

To coordinate the student participants, the researcher was assisted by the lecturers who provided a twenty-minute slot allowing the students to answer the questionnaires during the course of a lecture. The researcher was given an opportunity to wait for the students to fill in the questionnaires during that time. In some instances, the researcher had to ask the students to drop the completed questionnaires and consent forms with the departmental secretaries, because they had to attend other lectures. Some participants were asked to complete the questionnaires during break time and others took the questionnaires home or were approached by the researcher over the weekends.

The researcher personally delivered the questionnaires to the administrative staff and later collected those which had already been completed after a week. The respondents were asked not to discuss any questions posed to them so as to prevent any bias in the research findings. Approximately two weeks in all was allocated for the completion and collection of the questionnaire but there were problems regarding the return/response rate. This was understood to be due to the fact that the university was approaching the examination and assessment period and academic administrators were particularly busy capturing marks. The library administrators were also experiencing more requests for assistance than usual from students preparing for their examinations. However, through numerous calls and visit made by the researcher, a 100 percent return/response rate was reached. As stated by Basit (2010:94) follow-up calls usually result in improved response rate.

In order to collect the required data, the questionnaire for the main study was self-administered. A covering letter (appendix, A) and a Letter of Information and Consent (appendix, B) were attached to all four questionnaires. The purpose for disseminating

the questionnaires together with letter of information and consent was in accordance with the convenience sampling technique adopted in the study, and was also based on time constraints since, as noted, students were writing mid-term examinations (Ngibe, 2015). Respondents were assured by the researcher that any information provided would be kept strictly anonymous and confidential. The Letter of Information introduced the title of the research study and terms and conditions of participation to the study. The researcher's and the supervisors' contact details were provided in the event of participants' needing any further explanation regarding the study and their involvement in it.

The questionnaires were made available only in English as it is the medium of communication within the institution, and therefore all respondents were proficient in English.

Before the dissemination of the questionnaire, the ground work was done for the main study. Access and ethical issues related to this study are explained in the next section.

### **3.11 ACCESS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Adler and Clark (2011:40) explain that ethical principles in research are a set of values, standards and principles used to determine appropriate and acceptable conduct at all stages of the research process. Miller, Birch, Mauthner and Jessop (2012:14) define ethics as moral deliberation, choice and accountability on the part of researchers throughout the research process. Researchers examine and experiment with issues that directly affect peoples' lives, such as education, health, family life, and work, and thus have an obligation to respect the interests of subjects and their communities (Sieber, 2009:106-142). There was concern that participants might be reluctant to participate if they were uncertain as to who would collect, see, manage and store their data, how and when the data would be used, and what the possible risks and benefits would be for them. However, the researcher assured participants verbally as well as in writing that compliance with professional ethics in respect of permission, informed

consent and confidentiality would be respected. The process of ensuring adherence to these aspects of professional ethics is outlined below:

### **3.11.1 Permission**

The researcher sent a formalized written request for permission (Appendix, G) to get authority to conduct research through the office of the selected University Research Directorate. The permission letter (Appendix, H) was obtained. The research proposal, which was approved by the Faculty Research Committee (FRC) was submitted together with each of the data collection instruments (appendices, C D, E, F); Letter of Information and Consent forms (Appendix, B); letter of permission (appendix, H); and covering letters (appendices, A, B, G) to the Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC) for ethical clearance. Ethical clearance (Appendix, I) was obtained. On getting the provisional ethical approval, the researcher tested the data collection instruments by means of a pilot study. The outcome of the pilot study was submitted to IREC for full approval before data gathering for the main study. Full approval (appendix, J) for conducting the research was granted on 31 May 2016.

All sets of questionnaires contained a covering letter (appendix, A), a Letter of Information and a Consent Letter (Appendix B). Brief information about the researcher was also included and the letter also gave the participants an understanding of what the questionnaire was about.

### **3.11.2 Informed consent**

The participants in the study were clearly informed of all the consequences of the study before signing the consent form. They were also informed that participation was voluntarily and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. This study did not expose the participants to any risks or any situation that could be dangerous either mentally or physically.

### **3.11.3 Autonomy and confidentiality**

The Letter of Information and Consent letter (appendix B) also assured the participants of their anonymity, of confidentiality of the data, and the protection of their rights and welfare. The Letter of Information also gave a brief introduction to the purpose and procedures of the study. In this regard, the researcher ensured anonymity of participants by requesting them to put their signatures instead of providing their full names. As a result, their names could not appear in any document pertaining to the study. The researcher further assured the participants that their responses would be kept confidential throughout the course of the study. Only the researcher and research supervisors had access to the research data and no one was able to identify individuals from information cited in the research report. All study data is kept in a secure place and participants' identities will not be revealed during the study or when publishing the results. The materials obtained will be stored in the supervisor's store room and ultimately disposed of after 5 years in a manner that will ensure the confidentiality of the participants.

### **3.12 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

The validity of the study relies on the study reliability and vice-versa. Since the study uses mixed methods, validity and reliability will be discussed in terms of quantitative and qualitative research. Validity means that the research tool measures what it is supposed to measure. According to Bashir, Afzal and Azeem (2008:35) in qualitative research, validity means the extent to which data is plausible, credible and trustworthy. According to Zulu (2016:112) reliability in quantitative research refers to the degree to which the data collection method will yield consistent findings when a similar study is conducted. Results of the pilot study indicated that the questionnaire was clear as it answered the objectives of the study and proved to be reliable. The analysis of the questionnaires provided reliable answers to the study.

Mazzocchi (2008:10) explains that Cronbach's Alpha takes the average correlation among items in a summated rating scale and adjusts for the number of items.

Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure internal consistencies and the reliability of the items included in the questionnaire.

### **3.13 DATA ANALYSIS**

The method used to analyse the data depends on the research design (Dawson, 2009:114). As this study was conducted within a mixed-method approach, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods had to be employed. In order to analyse the qualitative data, gained through open-ended questions in the questionnaires, content analysis was employed (Rosentreter, 2012:66). According to Creswell (2012:34) quantitative data analysis refers to a "stage where the researcher, through the application of varied statistical and mathematical techniques, focuses on specific variables in the data set". Data analysis involves breaking down data into parts in order to obtain answers to the research questions (Zulu, 2016:117). According to Kent (2007:142) Cronbach's Alpha is not a statistical test, rather a coefficient of reliability. Alpha has effectively become the measure of choice for establishing reliability of multi-item scales and it was employed in this research. One of the most widely used statistical packages is the statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) (Veal 2011:418). For the purposes of this research data was captured and analyzed, by a qualified statistician, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.

#### **3.13.1 Data preparation**

Data preparation in this context means the manipulation of data into a form suitable for further analysis and processing (Ngibe, 2015:47). According to Zheng (2012:71) the raw data collected in the field is transformed into information to answer the questions.

Data coding is the first step in data preparation (Ngibe, 2015:47). Therefore, the data needs to be processed and transformed into codes. The questionnaires were pre-coded, so the first step was to capture data of all completed questionnaires on the computer to form a data set. In each questionnaire, a number was allocated by the researcher.

### **3.13.2 Statistical Analysis**

The researcher sourced the services of a statistician for the analysis of data. As mentioned above, the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was used and open-ended questions were content analyzed.

### **3.13.3 Statistical analysis subsequent to data collection**

Statistics involves collecting, summarizing, and analyzing data. Without summarization and analysis, raw data are of little value, and even sophisticated analyses cannot produce meaningful information from data that were not collected in sensible way (Peck, Olsen and Devore, 2011:7). Krishnasami and Satyaprasad (2010:161) add that 'statistical data analyses and summarizes a large mass of data into understandable and meaning form; makes exact description possible; facilitates identification of the casual factors underlying complex phenomena; enables reliable interference to be drawn from observational data; and helps make estimates or generalizations from the results of a sample survey'.

### **3.13.4 Reliability statistics**

Reliability is the degree to which the data collection techniques will produce consistent results when the unit being measures has not changed (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2007; Leedy and Ormrod, 2010). Synonyms such as "dependable", "consistent", "stable", "trustworthy", "predictable" and "faithful" are used to explain the term "reliability" (Lee and Ormrod, 2010; Salkind, 2009). Alpha was developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951 to provide a measure of the internal consistency of a test or scale; it is expressed as a number between 0 and 1 (Cronbach, 1951: 297-334). Cronbach's alpha measures how well a set of items measures a single unidimensional latent construct. When data have a multidimensional structure (a structure with many different sections), Cronbachs' alpha will usually be low. Cronbach's alpha can be written as a function of a number of test items and the average inter-correlation among the items. The nearer Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to 1.0 the better the internal consistency of the items in the scale (Horton and Kleinman 2011, 156). Below for conceptual purposes, we show the formula for the standardized Cronbach's alpha:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

As the average inter-item correlation increases, Cronbach's alpha increases as well (holding the number of number of items constant) (<https://www.scribd.com/document/270907295/Cronbach-s-alpha-pdf>). This makes sense intuitively – if the inter-items are high, and then there is evidence that the items are measuring the same underlying construct. This is what is meant by “high” or “good” reliability – how well items measure a single unidimensional latent construct which, in this case, are the five dimensions (Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy and Tangibility) which were used to test reliability using Cronbach's alpha.

### **3.13.5 Factor Analysis**

Factor analysis is used to study the patterns of relationships among many dependent variables, with the goal of discovering something about the nature of the independent variables that affect them, even though those independents variables were not measured directly. In this research, the five (5) dimensions are the independent variables and the statements that constitute them are the dependent variables. The inferred independent variables are called factors.

A typical use of factor analysis is in survey research, where a researcher wishes to represent a number of questions with a small number of hypothetical factors. For example, as part of a national survey on students' experience of service quality, respondents may want to know better about the type of service delivered by administrative staff, reflecting on issues at the local, continental and national level. Each question, by itself, would be an inadequate measure of attitude towards students' experience of service quality but together they may provide a better measure of the attitude. Factor analysis can be used to establish whether the three measures do, in fact, measure the same thing. If so, they can then be combined to create a new variable, a factor score variable that contains a score for each respondent on the factor.

Factor techniques are applicable to a variety of situations (Zhao, 2009). You need not believe that factors actually exist in order to perform a factor analysis, but in practice the factors are usually interpreted, given names, and spoken of as real things.

The mean scores were dependent for the expectations and perceptions and a gap score was found using the mean values. The results are first presented using summarized percentages for the variables that constitute each section. Results are then further analyzed according to the importance of the statements.

The two most important aspects of precision are **reliability** and **validity**. Reliability is computed by taking several measurements on the same subject. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is considered as “acceptable”. According to Pahnla and Warsta (2010) and Bhattacharjee and Sanford (2009), reliability must exceed 0.70 for each factor.

### **3.14 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

This study was conducted within a Comprehensive University and selectively focused on academic, residence and library departments. Therefore, the results and findings of this study may not be generalized to other universities. However, they can be used to improve service quality provided by academic and supporting departments to retain and attract quality students within the university selected, and many of the findings may be of interest to other similar institutions operating in similar contexts, particularly within South Africa.

### **3.15 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented the research design and methodology of the study. It was explained why questionnaires were selected to collect both qualitative and quantitative data to address the research objectives. Students’ and administrative staff questionnaires were discussed along with the conducting of a pilot study to ensure validity and reliability of the data collection instruments. The process of obtaining permission to conduct the research was explained as was the process of obtaining ethical clearance from IREC.



The next chapter presents the data analysis and discussion of the results.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS OF STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES**

#### **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter Three presented the study's research methodology and research design which included a discussion and described of how data was gathered from students and from administrators within the academic, residence and library departments of the university using questionnaires.

This chapter presents the results and discusses the findings obtained from the students' questionnaires. The questionnaire was the primary tool used. Students' questionnaires are presented separately from administrators' questionnaires, as the two sets of questionnaires focused on different aspects of service delivery. All questionnaires were reviewed and considered fit for data analysis. The data collected from the responses was analyzed using SPSS version 24.0. The results will present the descriptive statistics in the form of graphs, cross tabulations and other figures for the quantitative data that was collected. Inferential techniques include the use of correlations and chi square test values, which are interpreted using the *p*-values. The analyses of the results are presented according to each objective.

#### **4.1 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

The following statistical methods, involving descriptive and inferential analysis, were applied to the empirical data sets.

##### **4.1.1 Descriptive analysis**

A descriptive analysis allows the researcher to explore common variables within the research study, through the identification of frequency. Furthermore, a descriptive analysis also provides the researcher with an ability to compare the formation of relationships between two variables (Lacobucci and Churchill, 2010:59). This analysis

provides us with profiles of organizations, workgroups, people and other subjects on any of a multitude of characteristics such as size, composition, efficiency preference and others (Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad, 2010:161).

#### 4.1.2 Inferential statistics and Chi-square

Inferential statistics are used to make assumptions for inferences about a population from the measurement taken of sample units drawn from the population (Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad, 2010:161). There are three inferential statistical tests namely z test, *t* test and the chi-square. The z test and the *t* test, are parametric tests that require us to make certain assumptions about estimates of population characteristics, or parameters. The chi-square (also known as nonparametric test) is a test that does not involve the use of any population parameters, and the underlying distribution does not have to be normal (Jackson, 2012:190). Z-tests were undertaken on the total sample group of respondents, consisting of students' and administrators' respondents, to determine if the gender differences had an impact on the results of the final survey questionnaire. The reason for using inferential statistics and chi-square was to try to reach conclusions that extend beyond the immediate data alone. This study tried to gather from the sample data what the students might expect and perceive from selected administrators using the five Servqual dimensions.

#### 4.1.3 KMO and Bartlett's test

Results of the KMO and Bartlett's test of appropriateness are presented in the table below.

KMO and Bartlett's Test						
	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.965			
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6005.998			
		df	465			
		Sig.	0.000			
KMO and Bartlett's Test						
	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.935			
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3608.428			
		df	465			

		Sig.	0.000			
			Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
				Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.
	ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION	E	0.965	6005.998	465	0.000
		P	0.935	3608.428	465	0.000

**Table 4.1: BTS and KMO test**

The result indicated that all collected data from students and supporting departments were appropriate for the purpose of factor analysis (BTS = 6005.998, sig. = 0.000, sampling adequacy = 0.965; BTS = 3608.428; sig. = 0.000, sampling adequacy = 0.935; BTS = E-6005.998, P-3608.428; sig. = E-0.000, P-0.000, sampling adequacy =E-0.965, P-0.935. The result indicated that there are sufficient items for each factor. The two tests support the appropriateness of the principal component technique (*see appendix K*).

## 4.2 RESPONSE RATE

In total, 345 questionnaires were personally distributed to registered students at the selected university. Out of the 345 questionnaires disseminated to participants, 260 questionnaires were returned, which yielded a 75% response rate. This total was drawn from the initial sample size of 385, from which 40 students were selected for the pilot study. The participants who were part of the pilot study were excluded from the main study. Since the questionnaires were hand delivered to the participants, it was hoped that a 100% response rate was going to be achieved, however, some students felt that the questionnaire was too long and they were too busy to complete it, and others misplaced the questionnaires.

Out of a total of 13 questionnaires, personally distributed to the academic, residence and library administrators, 12 were returned (this total was originated from the initial sample of 16 administrators), from which 3 were selected for the pilot study and eliminated for the main study, which resulted in a 92% response rate. All questionnaires were reviewed and considered fitting for data analysis.

### **4.3 PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS**

Presentation of findings from students, academic, residence and library administrators were analyzed separately in order to provide a clear overview of the findings. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze responses to closed questions, and, where possible, frequency distributions were presented in tables, cross tabulation and graphs. Content analysis was used to analyze responses to open-ended questions, and findings are presented in a narrative form. The presentation of the findings from students' questionnaires begins with an analysis of biographical data from Section A, followed by Section B which focuses on services delivered by academic, residence and library administrators to students.

### **4.4 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

The research instrument consisted of 207 items, with a level of measurement at a nominal or an ordinal level. The questionnaires were divided into 3 sections which measured various themes as illustrated below for three different areas of investigation.

**Section A:** Biographical data

**Section B:** Service quality delivered by academic, residence and library administrators. SERVQUAL dimension analysis of the five dimensions viz. reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles.

**Section C:** Open-ended questions

Presentation of the results will be as follows:

### **4.5 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

Descriptive statistics of biographical information acquired from students' respondents will be discussed in this section. According to Peck, Olsen and Devore (2011:7) descriptive statistics are methods employed in summarizing the acquired data into frequency and percentage distribution.

#### 4.5.1 Cross tabulation \*Age and Gender

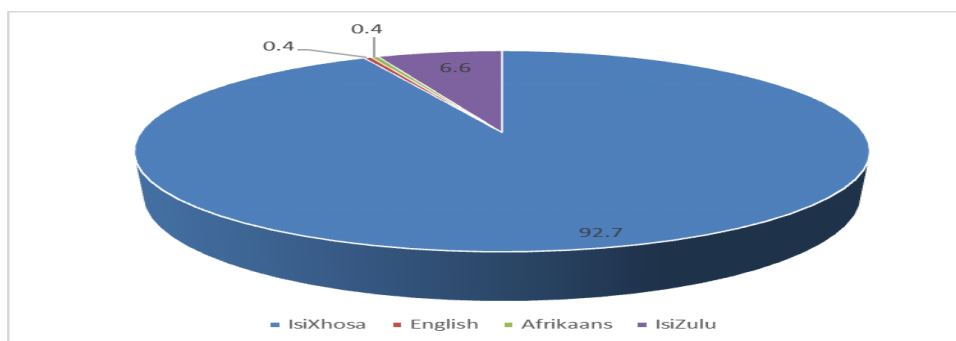
			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Age	18 - 24	Count	80	126	206
		% within Age	38.8%	61.2%	100.0%
		% within Gender	69.6%	86.9%	79.2%
		% of Total	30.8%	48.5%	79.2%
	25 - 31	Count	26	13	39
		% within Age	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Gender	22.6%	9.0%	15.0%
		% of Total	10.0%	5.0%	15.0%
	32 - 38	Count	8	5	13
		% within Age	61.5%	38.5%	100.0%
		% within Gender	7.0%	3.4%	5.0%
		% of Total	3.1%	1.9%	5.0%
	39 - 45	Count	0	1	1
		% within Age	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% within Gender	0.0%	0.7%	0.4%
		% of Total	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%
	> 45	Count	1	0	1
		% within Age	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Gender	0.9%	0.0%	0.4%
		% of Total	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%
Total	Count	115	145	260	
	% within Age	44.2%	55.8%	100.0%	
	% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	44.2%	55.8%	100.0%	

**Table 4.2:** Cross tabulation \*Age and Gender

Table 4.2 above indicates that the majority of the respondents were females 145 (56 percent) while 115 (44 percent) were males. The majority of the respondents,

206 (79 percent), were between the ages of 18-24 years, 39 (15 percent) were between 25-31 years, 13 (5 percent) were between 32-38 years of age, 1 (0.4 percent) was between 39-45 years of age, and 1 (0.4 percent) of the respondents was above the age of 45 years. This reflects that the population in this study was dominated by female students (56 percent) and the majority of the participants were between the ages of 18-24 years. Furthermore, all respondents 260 (100 percent) were African.

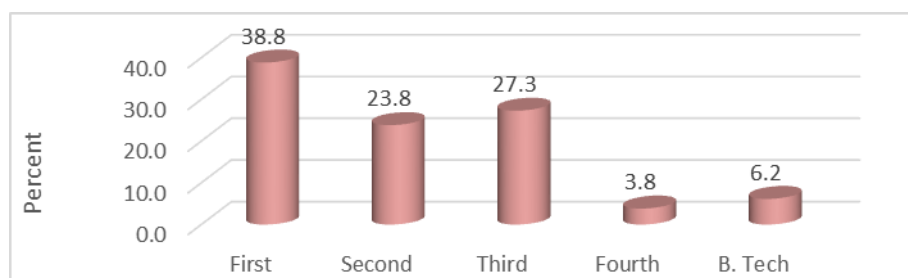
#### 4.5.2 Please indicate home language



**Figure 4.1:** Home language

**Figure 4.1** above shows that the majority of the respondents' 240 (92.7 percent) home language was IsiXhosa, while 17 (6.6 percent) were IsiZulu, 1 (0.4 percent) was English, and 1 (0.4 percent) was Afrikaans. The dominance of isiXhosa as the participants' home language is due to the fact that the university is situated in the Eastern Cape Province, an area where majority of the population have IsiXhosa as their home language.

#### 4.5.3 Please indicated year of study



**Figure 4.2:** Year of study

**Figure 4.2** above shows that the largest number of respondents, 101 (38 percent), were first year students, 62 (23.8 percent) were 2<sup>nd</sup> year students, 71 (27.3 percent) were 3<sup>rd</sup> year students, 10 (3.8 percent) were 4<sup>th</sup> year students and 16 (6.2 percent) were postgraduate (Btech) students. The majority of respondents, 190 (73.1 percent), were staying at a university residence, while 69 (26.5 percent) had private accommodation and 1 (0.4 percent) is unknown.

#### 4.6 SECTION B: EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS (SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS ANALYSIS)

This section analyses the data gathered from the students concerning the expected and perceived services provided by administrators within the academic, residence and library departments.

##### 4.6.1 Reliability Statistics

The reliability test results are presented in *table 4.3* below and they were conducted on SERVQUAL sections namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles on all the questionnaires distributed to the participants

		Expectations (E)		Perceptions (P)	
		N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Academic Administrators	Reliability	6	0.831	6	0.755
	Responsiveness	4	0.862	4	0.761
	Assurance	8	0.927	8	0.878
	Empathy	6	0.912	6	0.816
	Tangibles	7	0.913	7	0.807
Residence Administrators	Reliability	6	0.926	6	0.816
	Responsiveness	7	0.940	7	0.876
	Assurance	6	0.938	6	0.850



	Empathy	6	0.911	6	0.814
	Tangibles	10	0.935	10	0.861
Library Administrators	Reliability	8	0.952	8	0.901
	Responsiveness	5	0.902	5	0.825
	Assurance	5	0.939	5	0.878
	Empathy	7	0.928	7	0.868
	Tangibles	8	0.925	8	0.788

**Table 4.3:** Reliability test table

Briefly, the reliability test proved that the questionnaires were reliable and significant in collecting data as the overall reliability scores for each section/department are high (0.913 for Expectations and 0.807 for Perceptions in Academic Administration; 0.935 for Expectations and 0.861 for Perceptions in Residence Administration and 0.925 for Expectations and 0.788 for Perceptions in Library Services Administration). This signifies a high degree of acceptable, consistent scoring for the different categories of this study. All of the categories exceed the standard required value of 0.700.

#### 4.6.2 Factor Analysis

As discussed in Chapter 3 above factor analysis is used to study the patterns of relationships among many dependent variables, with the goal of discovering something about the nature of the independent variables that affect them, even though those independent variables were not measured directly. In this research, the five (5) dimensions are the independent variables and the statements that constitute them are the dependent variables. The inferred independent variables are called factors.

#### 4.6.3 Why is factor analysis important?

Factor analysis is a statistical technique whose main goal is data reduction.

The matrix tables are preceded by a summarized table that reflects the results of KMO and Bartlett's Test. The requirement is that Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling

Adequacy should be greater than 0.50 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity less than 0.05. All of the conditions are satisfied for factor analysis for the section relating to Academic Administrators. The other two sections (Residence and Library Administrators) had similar results. That is, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy value should be greater than 0.500 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity sig. value should be less than 0.05. Factor analysis is done only for the Likert scale items. Certain components divided into finer components. The KMO and Bartlett's test graph is attached as *appendix K*.

#### 4.6.4 Section analysis

The section that follows analyses the scoring patterns of the respondents per variable per section.

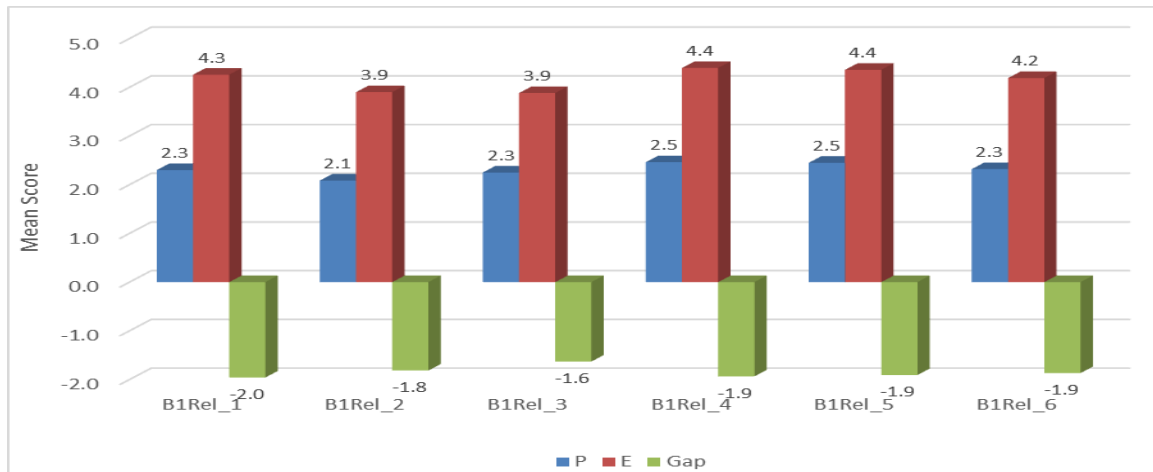
Figure 4.4 to 4.18; 4.20 to 4.24; 4.25 to 4.29 and 4.32 to 4.36 below indicate the mean scores for each statement, as well as the gap scores (which is the difference between the expectations and perceptions) for each component. Service quality for each dimension is captured by the difference score G (representing perceived quality for the item), where  $G: (\text{gap}) = P (\text{perceived}) - E (\text{expectation})$  and where P and E are the average ratings of a dimension's corresponding perception and expectation statements respectively.

The statements in each figure are indicated on the horizontal axis. The mean scores are indicated on the vertical axis: perception (P: blue bar), expectations (E: orange bar). The gap scores (G: grey bar) between P and E are discussed under each dimension.

##### 4.6.4.1 **Section analysis for Academic Administrators**

4.6.4.1.1 Reliability: this section deals with the ability of the academic administrators to perform the promised services dependently and accurately

#### **Reliability**



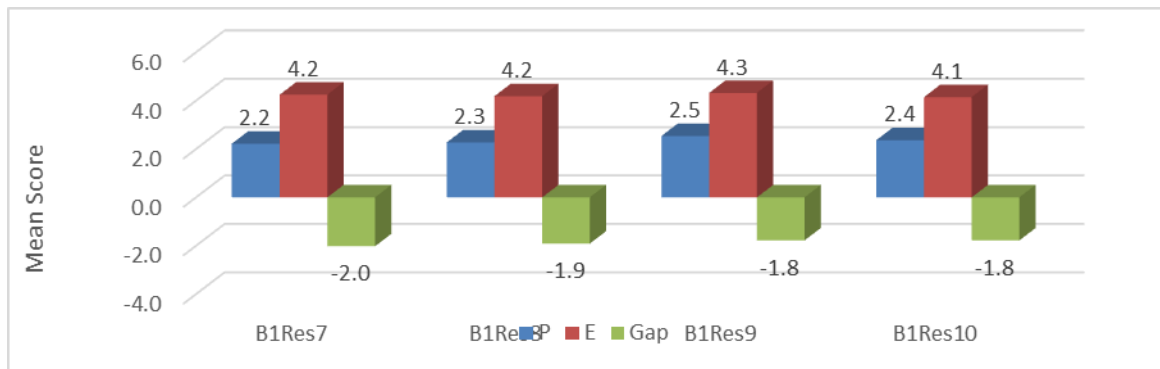
**Figure 4.3: Reliability dimension score**

The overall gap score of -1.8 is similar to the individual gaps for each statement. A gap score of approximately -2 is considered significant. The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 4.2$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perceptions score (2.3) average between the levels of agreement and neutral. The statement whether the institution provides services within the time might reasonably expect (stat 1) resulted in the highest gap score of -2.0. The statements as to whether academic administrators solved problems and dealt with complaints with concern and sympathy (stat 4); behaved in a manner that gave the students trust and confidence in them (stat 5) and provided a service which was dependable and reliable (stat 6) resulted in the next highest gap scores of -1.9. The statement as to whether academic administrators have the requisite knowledge to answer questions relating to courses offered (stat 2) resulted in a gap score of -1.8. The lowest gap was -1.6 given in response to the statement concerning accurate and retrievable records being kept by administrative staff (stat 3). This means that the students were not entirely satisfied with the information given to them by administrators in any of the services tested by the model. Clients normally expect services they receive to be carried out reliably, accurately, effectively and within a good turnaround time (Reddy, 2014). Rosa, Gama and Silva (2012) state that when a student requests a service, the institution or department must adequately fulfil that request. Gaps result because the measure of students' expectations and their perception of the services actually received, does not

match. This dimension shows that the ability for the academic administrators to perform the service dependably and accurately needed improvement across all dimensions measured. The next dimension focuses on responsiveness of the academic administrators.

4.6.4.1.2 Responsiveness: this section investigates the willingness of academic administrators to help students and provide a prompt service

### Responsiveness



**Figure 4.4:** Responsiveness dimension score

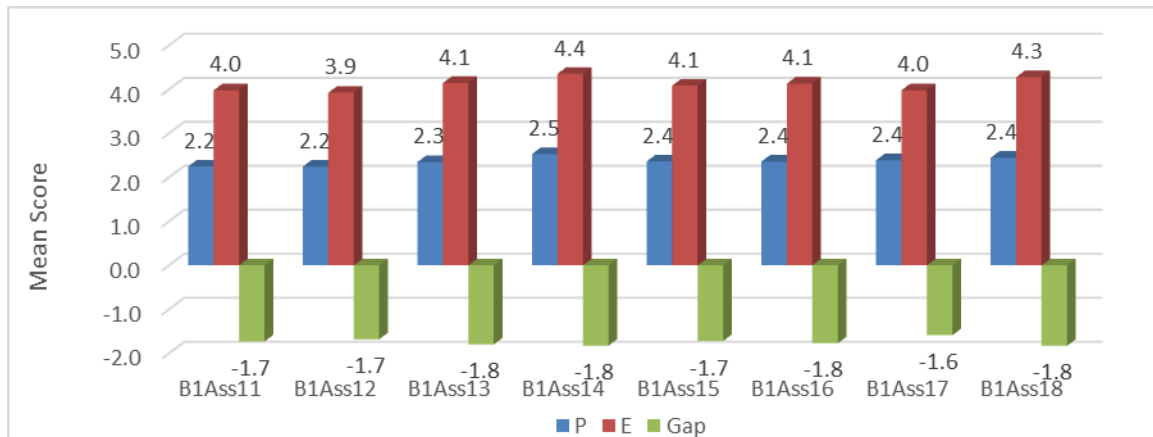
The overall gap score of -1.8 is similar to the individual gaps for each statement. The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 4.1$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perceptions score (2.3) average between the levels of agreement and neutral. This indicates that the respondents felt that the services provided by the academic administrators were somewhat lacking. The significance of this difference is tested below.

The highest gap is -2.0 based on statement 7 on whether academic administrators deal with queries within the university efficiently and promptly. The statement whether administrative staff show willingness to assist students (stat 8) resulted in a gap score of -1.9. The statements whether administrative staff: were never too busy to respond to a request for assistance (stat 9), and whether they can be contacted easily by telephone (stat 10) resulted in similar gap scores of -1.8 indicating the lowest gap scores in this dimension. Academic administrators are perceived not to be willing to assist students as expected and that the students are also not fully informed about the types services

rendered. As highlighted above, the promptness and efficiency of academic administrators in dealing with students' queries within the institution, has recorded the highest gap score of -2.

4.6.4.1.3 Assurance: this section considered the knowledge and courtesy of the academic administrators and their ability to convey trust and confidence

**Assurance**



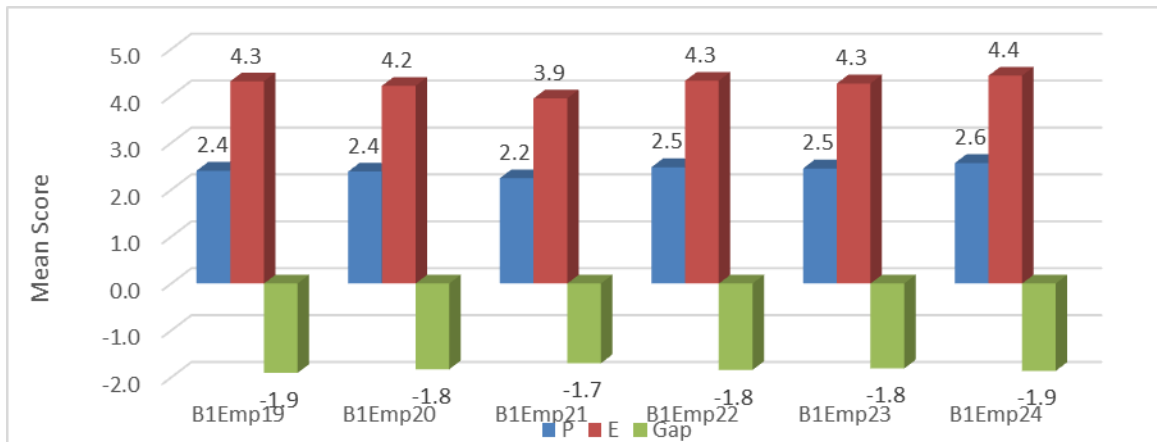
**Figure 4.5:** Assurance dimension score

The perceptions score (2.3) average between the levels of agreement and neutral. The largest gap score of -1.8 referred to statements whether academic administrators make students feel entirely safe in dealing with their transactions (stat 13); are friendly and polite (stat 14); have adequate staff members to carry out the duties and services they provide (stat 16), and are always willing to help students (stat 18). Statements on whether academic administrators deal with queries within the institution efficiently and promptly (stat 11), respect confidentiality when information is disclosed to them (stat 12) and have the knowledge needed to answer customer enquiries (stat 15) had a gap score of -1.7. The lowest gap score is -1.6, based on the statement whether academic administrators provide helpful answers which are easy to understand when handling student queries (stat 17). Therefore, respondents were not entirely happy with the way the academic administrators communicated, meaning that the information communicated to them was sometimes inaccurate and not always easy to understand. Noe (2010) states that, in building trust and good collaborative working relationships, it

is essential to have good communication skills and therefore, in this case, the ability to convey clear and precise information to students. The students also did not feel completely secure nor did they entirely trust academic administrators in terms of information protection during the problem-solving process. The findings suggest that there is certainly a gap in terms of trust that needs be addressed in order to enable academic administrators to follow all the necessary steps to protect students' information. It is important to gain students' trust as emphasized by Montoya, Massey, and Khatri (2010) who believe that trust is at the core of the relationship.

4.6.4.1.4 Empathy: this section considered individualized attention provided to students by academic administrators.

**Empathy**



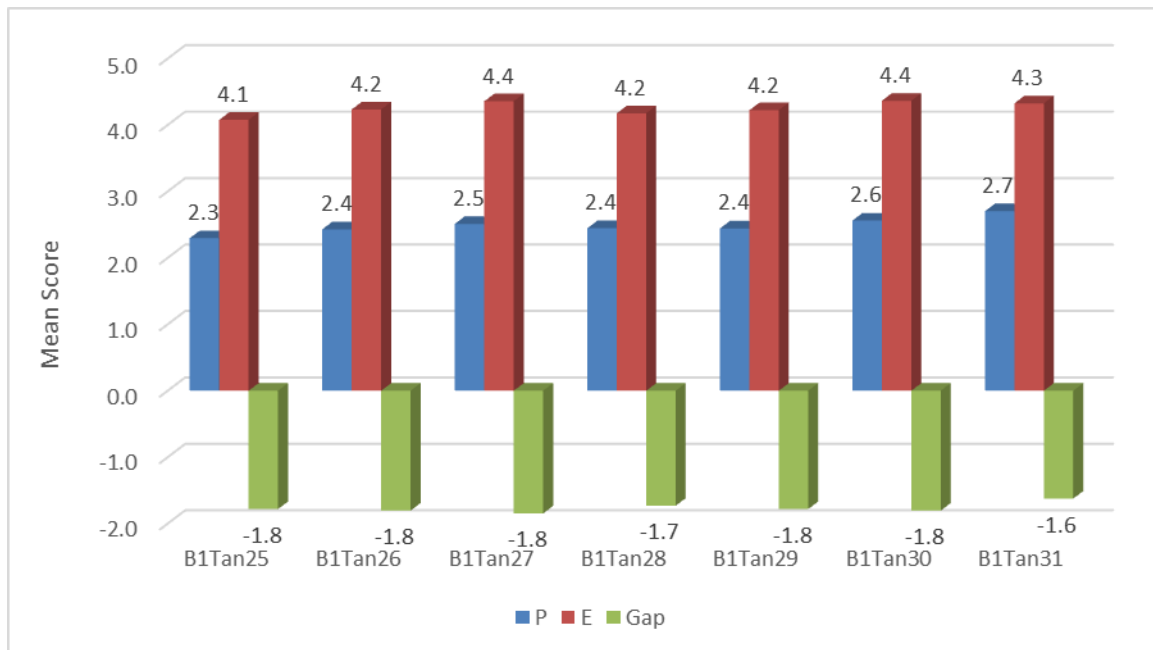
**Figure 4.6:** Empathy dimension score

The average Expectation is 4.2 while the average Perception is 2.4. The responses to the statements that the academic administrators always give students individual attention (stat 19), and whether the safety of students is guaranteed (stat 24) resulted in a high gap score of -1.9. The average gap score of -1.8 referred to statements whether students perceived that the academic administrators show a sincere interest in solving the problem (stat 20); appear to have best interest at heart (stat 22) and understand the specific needs of students (stat 23). The smallest gap score of -1.7 pertained to the students perceiving the academic administrators to have convenient operation hours

(stat 21). In this regard, the selected university conforms to the operational hours set by the University Council and the Department of Higher Education as it is a public university. In this dimension the greatest concern is in understanding and meeting students' needs.

4.6.4.1.5 Tangibles: this section investigates the facilities, equipment and personal appearance of the academic administrators at the institution

**Tangibles**



**Figure 4.7: Tangibles dimension score**

The average Expectation is 4.2 while the average Perception is 2.4. The response to whether the academic administrators had sufficient computers, printing/photocopying machines, etc., required to do their work (stat 25); have adequate administrative personnel to assist students (stat 26); that technical equipment is up to date (stat 27); tools and instruments used to provide service are appropriate (stat 29) and the appearance of offices is attractive (stat 30) resulted in gap score of -1.8, which is the highest gap score for this dimension. Statement 28 which refers to whether physical facilities are visually appealing resulted to average gap score of -1.7. The lowest gap

was -1.6 based on the statements whether power cuts, due to poor maintenance of university power facilities, seldom occur.

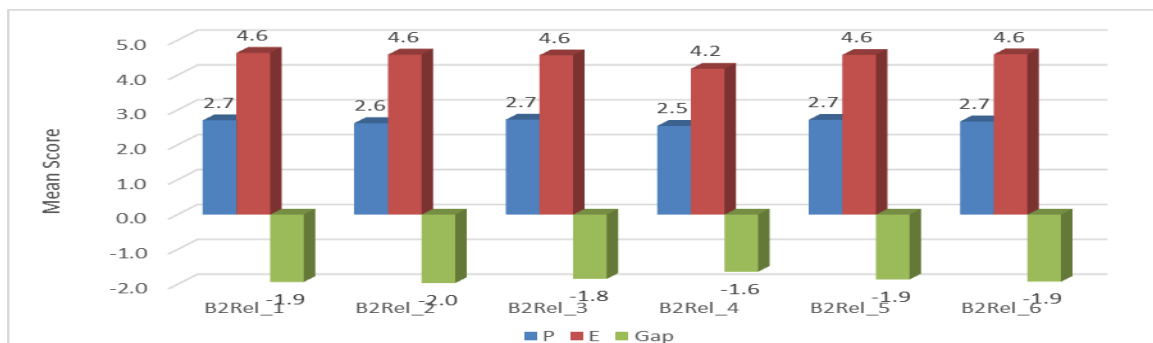
The responses indicated that the academic administrators need to promote their services effectively by being neat and smart in appearance, provide up-to-date technology to deliver the service efficiently and provide service professionally. This is emphasized by Zhao and Benedetto (2013) who state that although service quality measures customer satisfaction against a service actually delivered, students' expectations must be met in terms of designing materials and facilities appropriately and training academic administrators adequately. Academic administration was negatively perceived in terms of attraction and the visual appeal of the physical facilities and the fact is that the institution does not have signage locating the departments and administrators do not dress professionally.

The following section discusses the finding from the Residence administrators.

#### 4.6.4.2 Section analysis for Residence Administrators

4.6.4.2.1 Reliability: this section deals with the ability of the residence administrators to perform services dependently and accurately

##### Reliability



**Figure 4.8:** Reliability dimension score

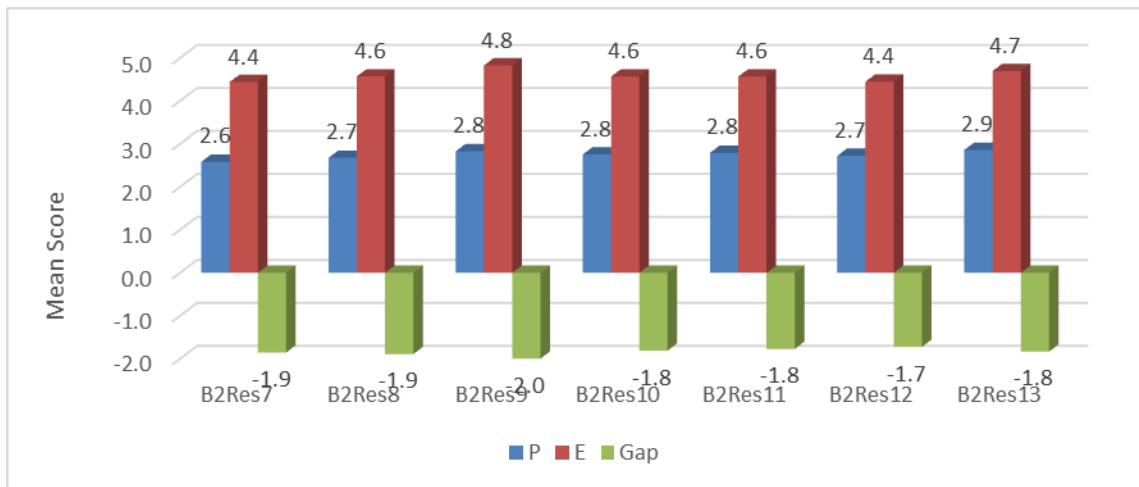
The average gap score for this dimension was -1.8. The response to the statement that the service is provided correctly the first time (stat 2) resulted to the highest gap score



of -2.0. The gap scores of -1.9 is the result of statements that the service is provided as promised (stat 1), keeps error free records (stat 5) and provides a dependable, reliable service (stat 6). The responses to the statements that the residence administrators provide a service that satisfies the needs of students (stat 3) resulted in a gap score of -1.8. The smallest gap of -1.6 pertained to confidentiality of personnel information and residence administrators perceived that students were generally happy that their personnel information is kept confidential (stat 4). According to Gunawardene (2011), reliability in the service encounter seems to focus primarily on the timeliness and accuracy of the outcome as well as dependability. He adds that there is an apparent need for communication and problem-solving support.

4.6.4.2.2 Responsiveness: this section investigates the willingness of residence administrators to help students and provide a prompt service

**Responsiveness**



**Figure 4.9:** Responsiveness dimension score

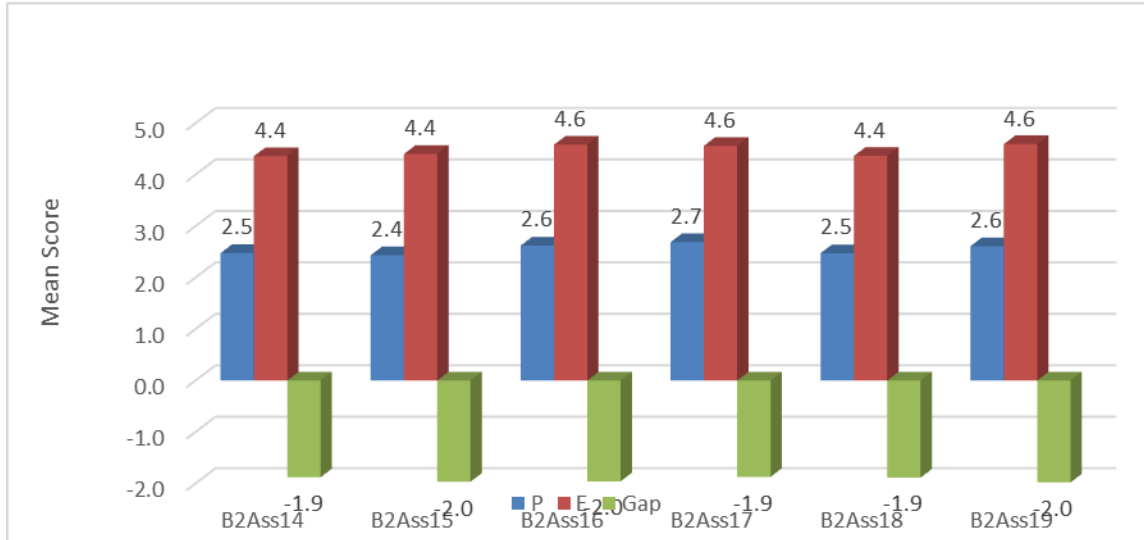
The average gap score was -1.8 which is similar to the individual gaps for each statement. The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 4.4$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perception scores (2.7) average between the levels of agreement and neutral. This indicates that the respondents felt that the services provided by residence administrators were somewhat lacking. The significance of the study is tested below.

The highest gap score of -2.0 regarding whether residence administrators speed up processes when allocating rooms (stat 9). The responses as to whether the residence administrators always provide correct information (stat 7) and whether residence administrators' always keep students updated concerning the service they provided had a gap score of -1.9. The responses to the statements regarding whether residence administrators clearly explained residence allocation criteria to students (stat 10); whether they are reliable and efficient (stat 11) and if they have an overall good approach to students resulted in an average gap score of -1.8. The lowest gap score was -1.7 regarding whether they are easily contactable by phone (stat 12).

Residence administrators are perceived not speeding up processes when allocating rooms, sometimes providing incorrect information, are not easily contacted by phone, and also not always willing to provide prompt service to students. Although the university residence policy indicated the allocation criteria for residences, students felt that administrators do not adhere to the rule of allocating rooms according to academic merit. According to Reddy (2014), it will not always be possible to satisfy every student at every service encounter but the residence administrators should always attempt to ensure that they show commitment in attempting to provide high quality of service, at every service encounter.

4.6.4.2.3 Assurance: this section considered the knowledge and courtesy of the residence administrators and their ability to convey trust and confidence

**Assurance**

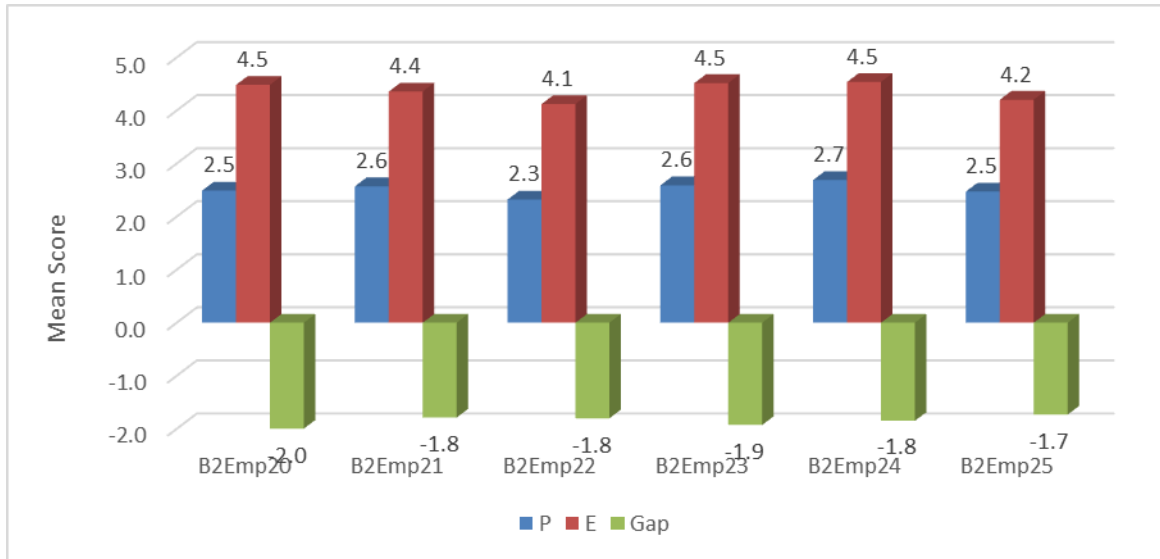


**Figure 4.10: Assurance dimension score**

Statements whether residence administrators are willing to assist students (stat 15) and whether students feel safe when dealing/making arrangements with staff (stat 19) resulted to a highest gap score of -2.0. The gap score of -1.9 pertained to statements regarding whether residence administrators are consistently courteous to students (stat 14); whether they are friendly and polite (stat 17) and whether they possess the knowledge needed to answer queries (stat 18). Respondents were not entirely satisfied with the way the residence administrators communicate, indicating that the information communicated to them was lacking somewhat in quality and not always easy to understand. The three gaps of -1.9 indicate that there are gaps in trust. This indicates that the respondents felt that the services provided by residence administrators were somewhat lacking.

4.6.4.2.4 Empathy: this section considered individualized attention the residence administrators provide to students as ‘customers’.

### Empathy

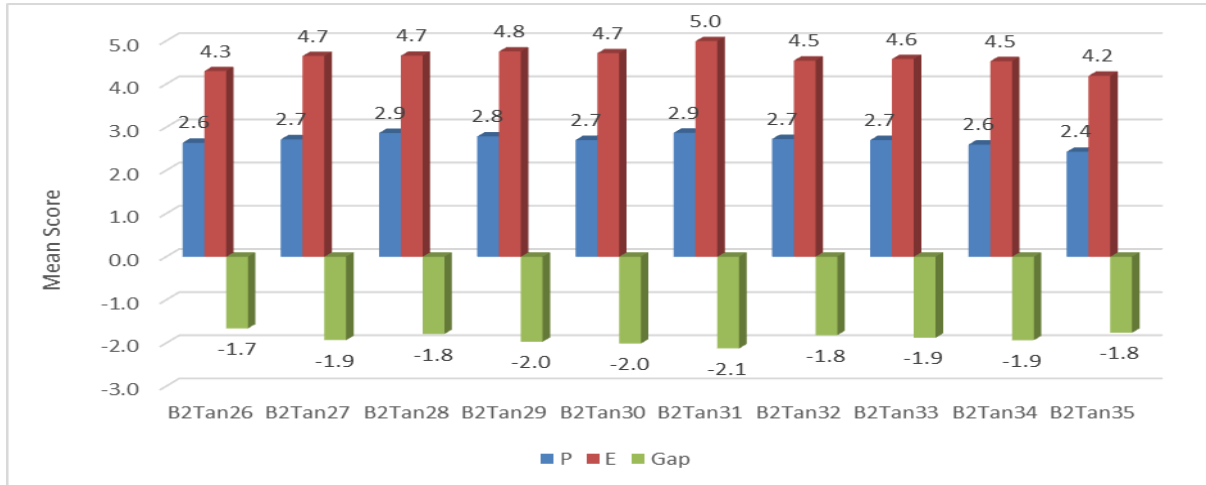


**Figure 4.11:** Empathy dimension score

This dimension had the largest gap of -2.0 which was based on the statement that residence administrators understand the needs of students (stat 20). Statement on whether residence administrators give personal attention to each student (stat 23) resulted to a gap score of -1.9. The responses to the statement as to whether residence administrators have a neat and professional appearance (stat 21); had convenient operating hours (stat 22) and have students’ best interests at heart when it comes to students’ issues (stat 24) each resulted to a gap score of -1.8. The smallest gap score of -1.7 pertained to statement 25 in which the students perceived the residence administrators to have an easy available security guide. Makarem, Mudambi and Podoshen (2009) indicate that good residence administrators enhanced by a good ‘human contact’ atmosphere in terms of the perception of overall customer satisfaction.

4.6.4.2.5 Tangibles: this section investigates the facilities, equipment and personnel appearance of the residence administrators at the institution.

### Tangibles



**Figure 4.12: Tangibles dimension score**

The average gap score in this dimension was -1.8, which was not a large gap. The average Expectation is 4.2 while the average Perception is 2.4. The highest gap score was -2.1 based on the statement whether there is sufficient residential accommodation (stat 31). Statements on whether facilities and equipment are sufficient (stat 29), the maintenance of residence is of a high standard (stat 3) resulted to a gap score of -2.0. The responses to whether the residence administrators' department had comfortable rooms in their residential accommodation (stat 27); safe accommodation (stat 33) and clean accommodation (stat 34) each resulted in gap score of -1.9. The response to whether the residence administrators' department had: fair allocation of rooms (stat 28); whether power cuts due to poor maintenance by university seldom occur (stat 32) and whether parking provided for students is sufficient (stat 35) resulted in gap score of -1.8. The lowest gap was -1.7 based on the statements whether the appearance and design of the university residences is appropriate for learning.

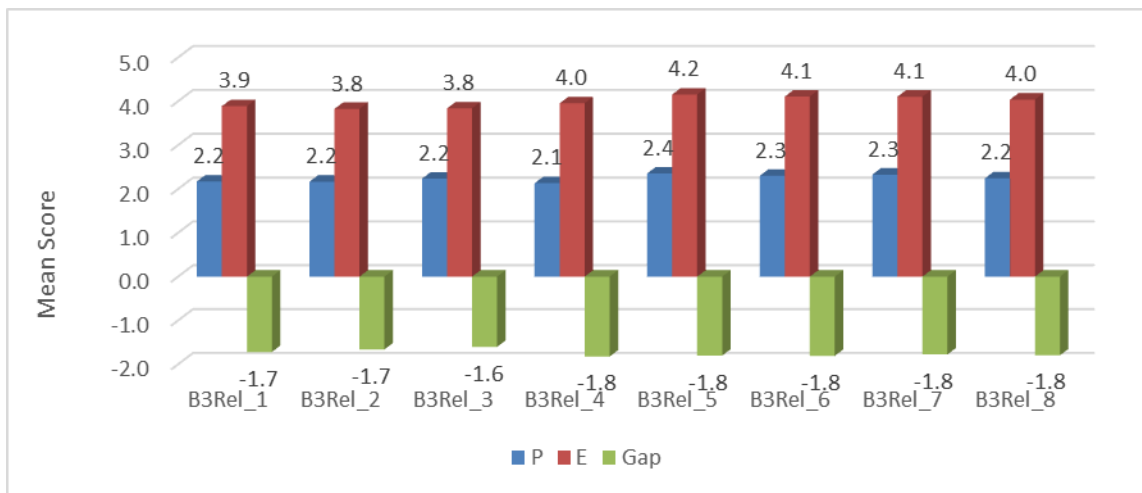
Residence administration was negatively perceived in terms of poor maintenance (broken windows, failure to paint walls) and cleanliness. Students perceived that

facilities and equipment are insufficient. Power cuts at residence occur and rooms are not comfortable because of concrete beds and thin mattress used for sleeping. Students perceived that their security is not guaranteed due to the occurrence of robbery in residences although there are surveillance cameras and also perceived that residences are not enough because most of the students use private residence.

#### 4.6.4.3 Section analysis for the Library Administrators

4.6.4.3.1 Reliability: this section deals with the ability of the library administrators to perform the promised services dependently and accurately

##### Reliability



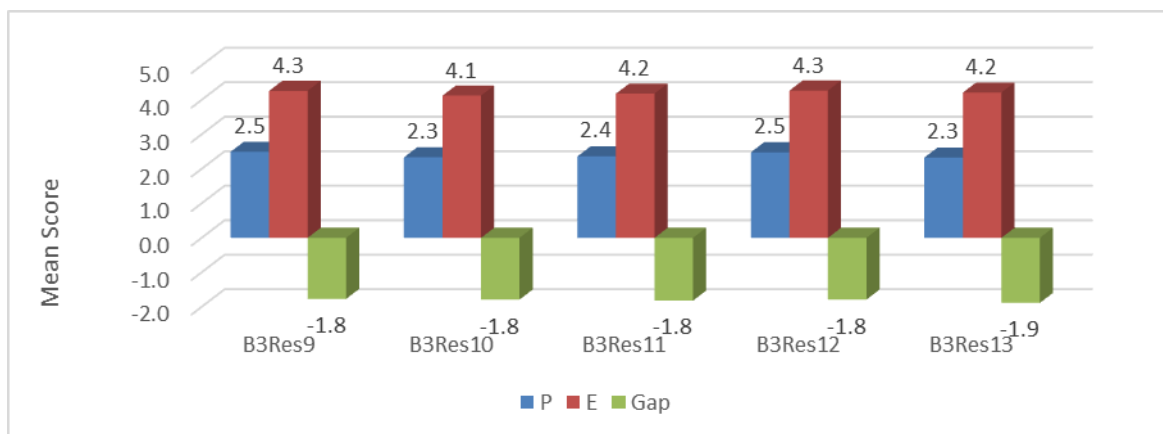
**Figure 4.13:** Reliability dimension score

The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 4.0$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perceptions score (2.2) average between the levels of agreement and neutral. The responses to whether the library department: always have readily available information (stat 4); solve the complaints and problems with concern and sympathy (stat 5); promise to perform service timeously (stat 16); are trustworthy (stat 7) and provide a dependable and reliable service (stat 8) resulted in the highest gap score of -1.8. This score indicated that the expectation was higher than perception of service delivery within these areas. The responses to whether services provided by library administrators satisfy students' needs (stat 1) and whether submitted information

is kept confidentially by library administrators (stat 2) resulted in a gap score of -1.7. The lowest gap score was -1.6 based on the statement whether administrative staff keeps accurate and retrievable records (stat 3). The students expected the library administrators to perform the promised services dependently and accurately. The resulting gaps between expectations and perceptions in terms of dependability and reliability, confidentiality, effectiveness and timeous service delivery, which comprise the service, must therefore be addressed. This dimension shows that the ability for the library administrators to perform the promised service dependably and accurately also needed improvement.

4.6.5.3.2 Responsiveness: this section investigates the willingness of library administrators to help students and provide a prompt service

**Responsiveness**



**Figure 4.14:** Responsiveness dimension score

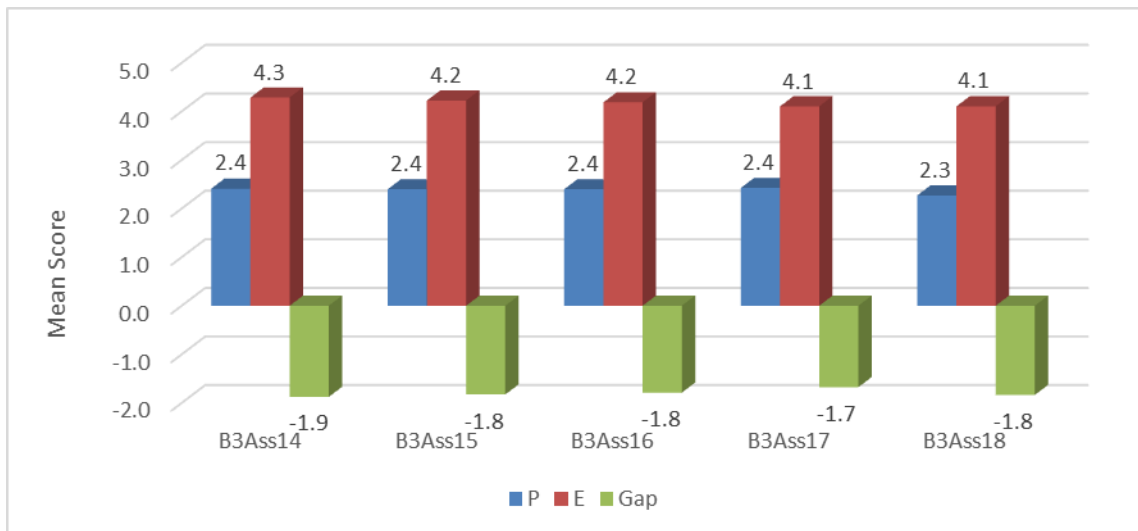
The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 4.2$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perceptions score (2.4) average between the levels of agreement and neutral.

The highest gap score was -1.9 based on the statement whether library administrators were always willing to help students (stat 13). The lowest gap score of -1.8 resulted from the statements as to whether library administrators are: sometimes too busy to immediately assist the students (stat 9); retrieve books, journals and other scholarly

publications efficiently (stat 10); respond promptly to queries (stat 11) and handle complaints constructively (stat 12). This dimension is significant since students always need information and administration services from the library administrators. The main concern of the students in this regard is timely response. Responding on time is important for students since they work according to deadlines to which they need to adhere in order to progress effectively with their studies.

4.6.4.3.3 Assurance: this section considered the knowledge and courtesy of the library administrators and their ability to convey trust and confidence

**Assurance**



**Figure 4.15:** Assurance dimension score

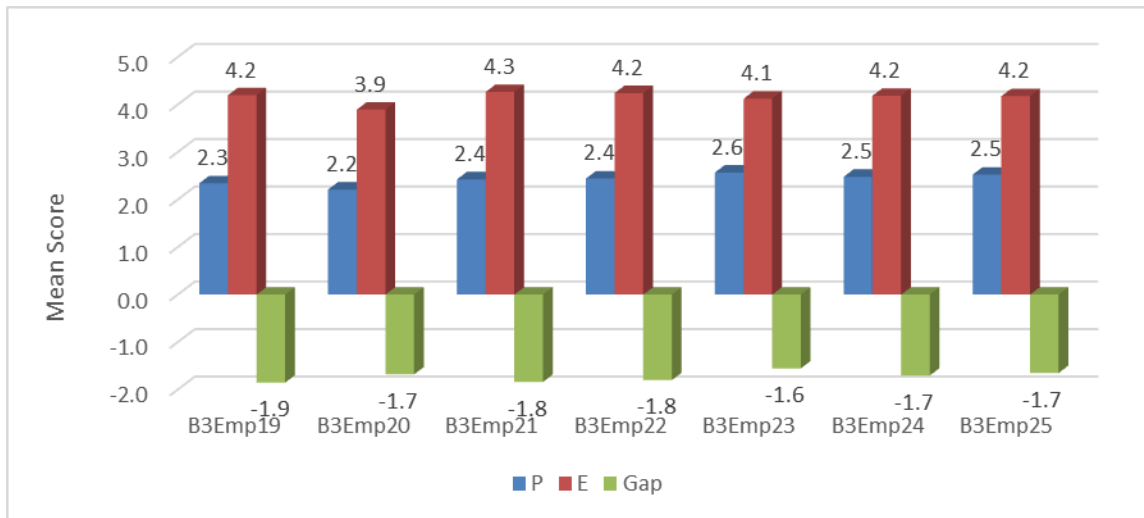
The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 4.2$ ) and corresponds to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perception scores (2.4) average between the levels of agreement and neutral. The largest gap score of -1.9 referred to statement 14 where students perceived whether library administrators are friendly and polite. The gap score of -1.8 pertained to statements regarding whether library administrators are always willing to assist students (stat 15); whether service provided is knowledgeable (stat 16) and whether students feel safe when dealing with library administrators (stat 18). The smallest gap score of -1.7 pertained to statement 17 in which students' perceived that



library administrators will provide helpful and easy to understand answers when handling queries. The findings above show that the university need to make recruitment and training as priority areas that may need assessment in order to assure correct job-fit and proficiency in dealing with students.

4.6.4.3.4 Empathy: this section considered individualized attention provided to students by library administrators

### Empathy



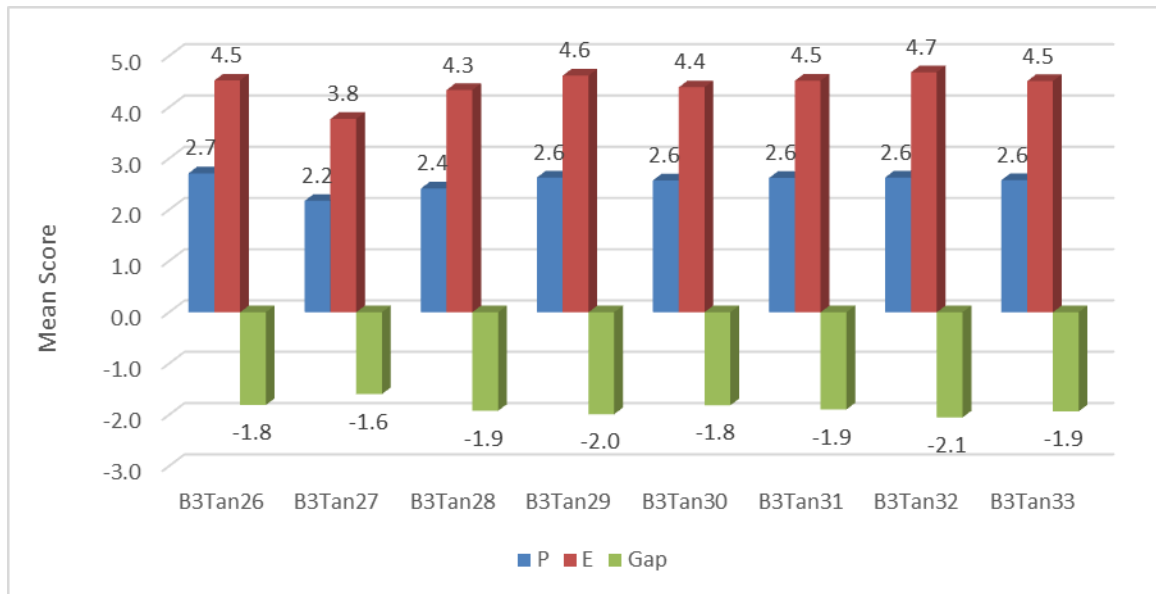
**Figure 4.16:** Empathy dimension score

The average Expectation is 4.2 while the average Perception is 2.5. In this dimension students perceived that the administrative services are offered in a manner which is caring and reasonable. This dimension had the largest gap score of -1.9 which emanated from the statement that library administrators give individual attention to each student (stat 19). The responses to statements that the library administrators attend to personal needs (stat 21) and library administrators understand specific needs of students (stat 22) resulted to gap score of -1.8. The gap score of -1.7 referred to whether students perceived that the library administrators had convenient operating hours (stat 20); are welcoming (stat 24) and had good student-staff relations (stat 25). The smallest gap score of -1.6 pertained to statement 23 in which the students

perceived the library administrators to have best interest at heart when it comes to students' issues.

4.6.4.3.5 Tangibles: this section investigates the facilities, equipment and personal appearance of the library administrators at the institution.

### Tangibles



**Figure 4.17:** Tangibles dimension score

The average gap score in this dimension is -1.8. The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 4.4$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The average Expectation is 4.4 while the average Perception is 2.6. This clearly indicates that the respondents felt that the services provided by the library administrators were below their expectations. The significance of this difference is tested below.

The highest gap score of -2.1 resulted from a response to a statement as to whether there are sufficient computers on campus for the student population (stat 32). The gap score of 2.0 was based on the statement whether library administrators have adequate printer facilities available (stat 29). The response to whether the Library department: is quiet (stat 28); whether it has modern computers with latest programmes installed (stat

31) and whether power cuts due to poor maintenance are rare (stat 33) resulted in gap score of -1.9. The responses to whether the Library Department had adequate communal areas for all students' residences (stat 26) and if the Library had wide range of books and periodicals in all areas of studies (stat 30) resulted in gap score of -1.8. The lowest gap score is -1.6 was based on the statements as to whether the library is clean (stat 27). That indicated the respondents were not entirely satisfied with the hygienic situation in the library. The findings above clearly show that the university needs to find ways to invest more on modern computers, recent academic books, journals, and better library facilities if academic excellence is to be achieved.

#### **4.7 SECTION C: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**

Open ended questions were designed for the students to express their opinions on how administration of library administrators, academic administrators/secretaries and residence administrators could be improved.

These responses confirm the qualitative information in that the greatest need felt by students is for upgraded equipment, especially computer equipment, and for the provision of more up-to-date text books. The desirability of having discussion rooms and the possibility of consultation times within the library is mentioned by several students and the need for more staff and more courteous staff is also a concern. Regarding the residence staff the responses confirm that the allocation of rooms is often experienced as unfair, and the cleanliness of both libraries and residences is sometimes mentioned as another concern – as is the noise levels in libraries.

#### **4.8 OVERALL COMPARISON OF EXPECTATIONS VS PERCEPTIONS**

The average gap for the Academic and Residence Departments is 1.9 whilst for the Library, the gap is 1.7. This indicates that the students had bigger issues with the first two than with the last. However, the gaps show overall student dissatisfaction in all three areas. A comparison of expectations vs. perceptions in the student questionnaire as a whole is illustrated in *Appendix L*.

#### **4.9 SUMMARY**

The students' questionnaire therefore indicated a negative score in all five dimensions suggesting that in the academic, residence and library department's administrators need urgently to close the gaps that exist at their institution. The students' perceptions indicate that the University needed an urgent intervention in terms of recruiting more qualified personnel and providing training to the current staff. They needed to find ways to invest more funds in modern computers, and in recent academic books and journals, and to improve the University facilities overall. Service delivery at present fails to satisfy the needs of students.

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**  
**QUESTIONNAIRES**

**5.0 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 4 presented the results and discussed the findings obtained from the students' questionnaires in relation to the service provided by the three administrative departments. This chapter presents the results and discusses the findings obtained from the academic department, residence and library administrators' questionnaires. Separate administrators' questionnaires were presented in order to focus on different aspects of their service delivery. All questionnaires were reviewed and considered fit for data analysis. The same analysis approach used for students' questionnaires was also used in analyzing these questionnaires.

The next section deals with the information gathered from **Academic Administrators.**

**5.1 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FROM ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

This questionnaire was given to the four academic administrators with the intention of evaluating the administrative services they provide. The following table provides biographical information pertaining to the academic administrators.

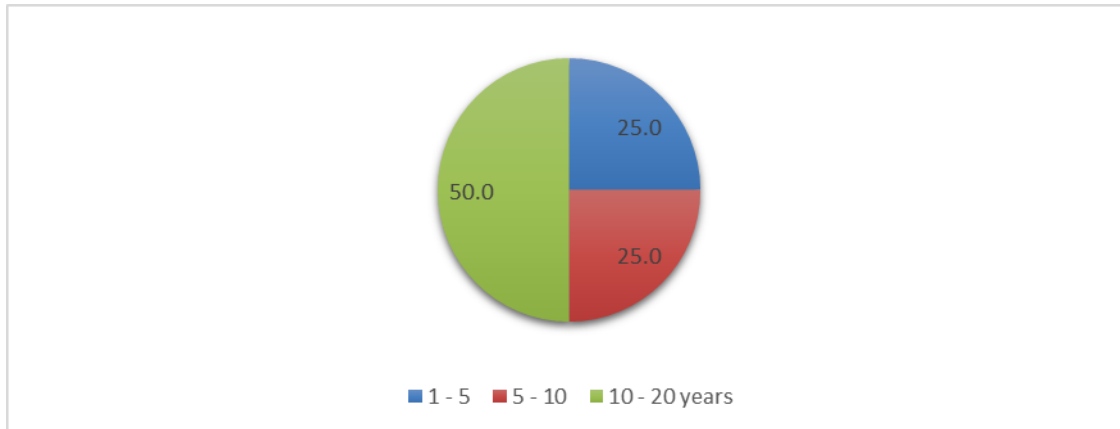
5.1.1 Cross tabulation \*Please indicate your gender and age

		Please indicate your age		Total
		32-38 years	39-45 years	
Please indicate your gender	Male	0	0	
	female	4	2	4
Total		4	2	4

**Table 5.1:** Cross tabulation \*Gender and Age

**Table 5.1** above indicates that all respondents were females 4 (100 percent). Half of the respondents 2 (50 percent) were between the ages of 32-38 years and 2 (50 percent) of the respondents were between the ages of 39-45 years. All the respondents 4 (100 percent) were black with isiXhosa as their home language.

#### 5.1.2 Number of years of service of the respondents.



**Figure 5.1:** Number of years of service

**Figure 5.1** above shows that half of the respondents, 2 (50 percent) had 10-20 years of experience, while 1 (25 percent) had 5-10 years of experience and 1 (25.0 percent) respondent had 1-5 years of experience. This shows that most of the staff members within the Department of Academic Administration had adequate experience to support students' needs. They could be expected to have acquired adequate skills to provide services that are acceptable, reliably and expected by the students.

5.1.3 Cross tabulation \*Please indicate the terms of your employment and highest qualification

		Please indicate your highest qualification			Total
		Diploma	BTech/Honours	Other, please specify	
Please indicate your nature of employment	Full time	3	3	0	4
	Part time	1			
Total		4	3		4

**Table 5.2:** Cross tabulation \*Nature of employment and Highest qualification

**Table 5.2** above indicates that the majority of the respondents 3 (75 percent) were full time employees, while 1 (25.0 percent) respondent was part time. The majority of the respondents 3 (75 percent) had a B tech/Honours, while 1 (25 percent) had a Diploma. This indicates that they were all adequately qualified.

**5.2 SECTION B: EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS (SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS' ANALYSIS)**

This section discusses information pertaining to the services delivered by academic administrators. The intention of the section was to ascertain whether the administrative staff had adequate skills and abilities to provide quality services that are reliable and of an acceptable standard. The Servqual instrument was used in this section to measure the levels of expectation and perception that the academic administrators had concerning the services they provide for students. In-depth interpretation and discussions are addressed below.

**5.2.1 Reliability Statistics**

The reliability test proved that the questionnaires were reliable and significant in collecting data. The overall reliability scores for each section/department are high

(0.907 for Expectations and 0.911 for Perceptions in this academic administrative department). This signifies a high degree of acceptable, consistent scoring for the different categories of this study. Values exceed the standard required value of 0.700.

	Expectations (E )		Perceptions (P)	
	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Reliability	5	0.793	5	0.897
Responsiveness	5	0.658	5	0.894
Assurance	5	0.560	5	0.911
Empathy	5	0.739	5	0.859
Tangibles	5	0.907	5	0.854

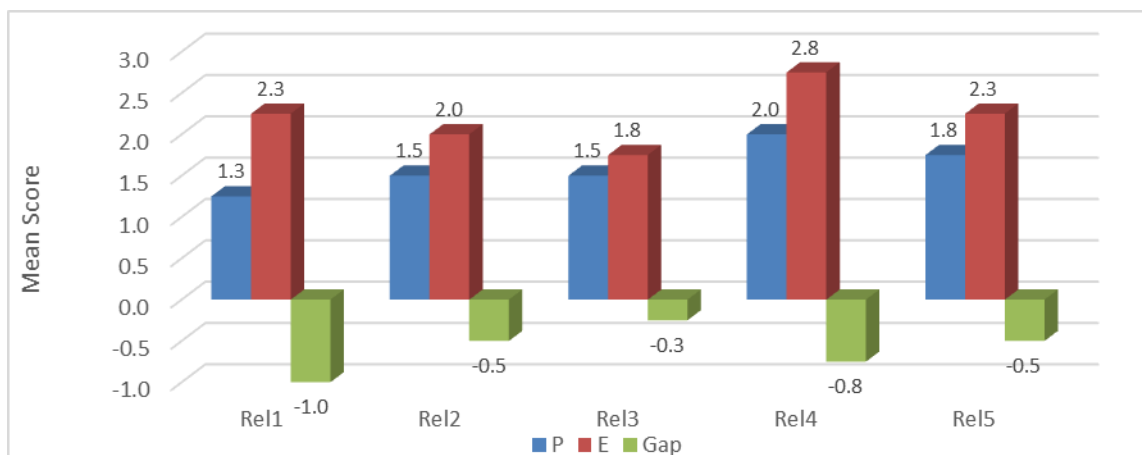
**Table 5.3:** Reliability test table

**Table 5.3** above reflects the Cronbach’s alpha score for all the items that constituted the questionnaire.

## 5.2.2 Section analysis for Academic Administrators

5.2.2.1 Reliability: this section deals with the ability of the academic administrators to perform the promised services dependably and accurately.

### Reliability



**Figure 5.2:** Reliability dimension score

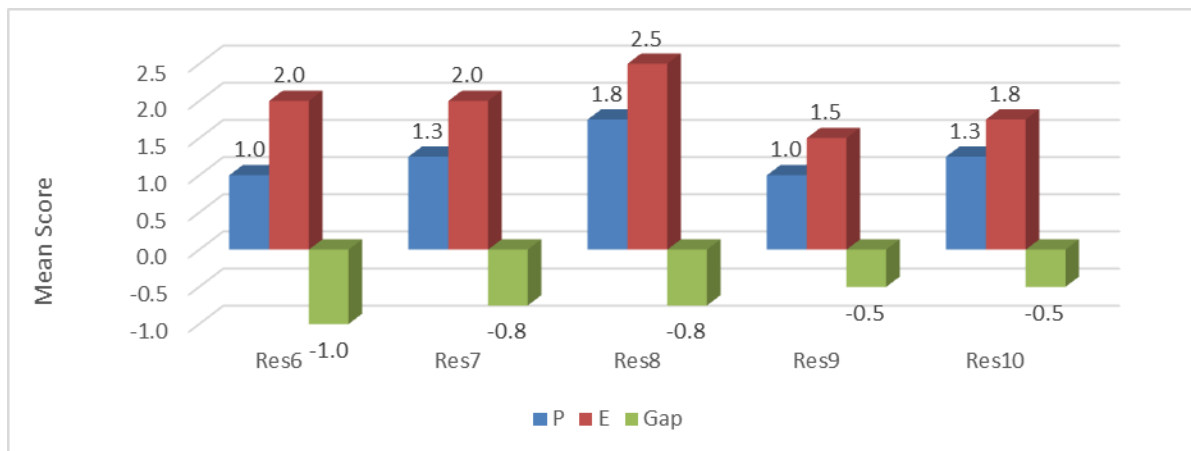
The overall gap score of -0.5 is similar to the individual gaps for each statement. The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.3$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with



each of the statements. The perceptions score average between the levels of agreement and neutral (1.8 to 2.3). The response as to whether academic administrators are willing to meet student needs (stat 1) resulted in the highest gap score of -1.0. The response to whether academic administrators deliver services correctly the first time (stat 4) resulted in gap score of -0.8. The responses as to whether the academic administrators provided accurate information (stat 2) and whether academic administrators behaved in a manner that gave students trust and confidence in them (stat 5) resulted in a gap score of -0.5. This dimension indicates that the academic administrators were aware that for them to perform the promised service dependably and accurately needed some improvement. The lowest gap of -0.3 is based on the statement as to whether academic administrators provided services at the required standard (stat 3). Williams and Buswell (2003) emphasize the importance of academic administrators taking note of the promises and the expectations they make to students. Failure to meet these expectations might have a negative effect on the image of the university.

5.2.2.2 Responsiveness: this section investigates the willingness of academic administrators to help students and provide a prompt service.

**Responsiveness**



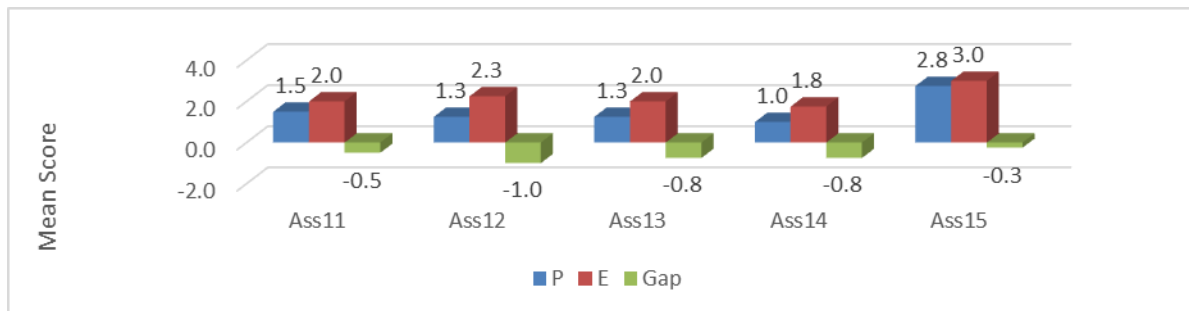
**Figure 5.3:** Responsiveness dimension score

The overall gap score of -0.8 is similar to the individual gaps for each statement. The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.0$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perception scores average between the levels of agreement and neutral (1.3 to 2.0). This also indicates that the respondents felt that the service they were providing was not as good as it could be. The highest gap was -1.0 based on the statement whether academic administrators are interested in meeting students' needs (stat 6). The responses to whether academic administrators respond to student complaints and grievances appropriately (stat 7) and whether academic administrators respond to students despite having heavy work pressure (stat 8) resulted in the average gap score of -0.8. According to Nwankwo and Aiyeku (2002:99) a high level of responsiveness is difficult to maintain due to various factors including students' temporary demands for a specific service and limited human resources.

The lowest gap score is -0.5 based on the statement as to whether academic administrators have a good working relationship with students (stat 9) and whether they have the knowledge needed to answer students' questions (stat 10) resulted in similar gap scores of -0.5, indicating the lowest gap scores in this dimension. Based on the above findings, it is clear that the respondents are not entirely satisfied with the administrative services they provide to students.

5.2.2.3 Assurance: this section considered the knowledge and courtesy of the academic administrators and their ability to convey trust and confidence.

### Assurance

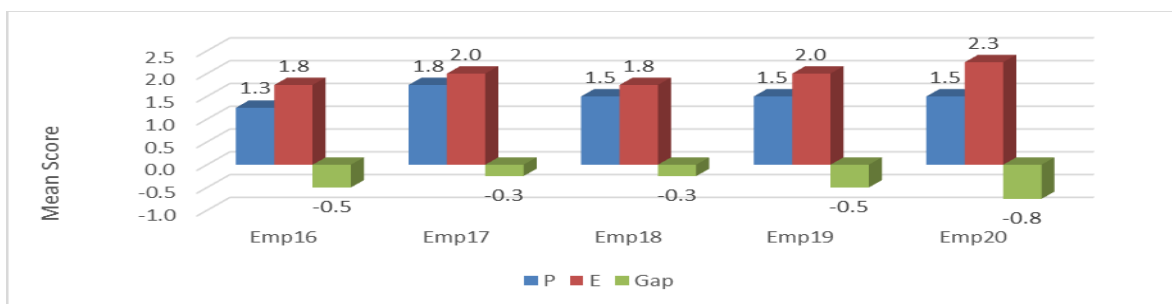


**Figure 5.4:** Assurance dimension score

Again the expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.3$ ) corresponding to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perception scores average between the levels of agreement and neutral (1.3 to 2.3). The response as to whether academic administrators have sufficient up-to-date knowledge of the service they provide resulted in a highest gap score of -1.0. A gap score of -0.8 was measured in response to statements as to whether academic administrators are always willing to assist students (stat 13) and whether they have the trust of students concerning their provision of accurate information (stat 14). An average gap score of -0.5 pertained to statements regarding whether academic administrators are constantly courteous to students (stat 11). The response to whether line management made sure that administrators are well trained to help or provide the necessary support to their students resulted in a smallest gap score of -0.3. Although the respondents have experience, they were still less than fully satisfied with their ability to build a consistent relationship with students by giving accurate, up-to-date information to help students in their academic endeavors. This has resulted in students not fully utilizing the services provided by the academic administration offices.

5.2.2.4 Empathy: this section considered individual attention the academic administrators provided to students.

### Empathy



**Figure 5.5:** Empathy dimension score

As before the expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.0$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The average Expectation is 2.0 but again the

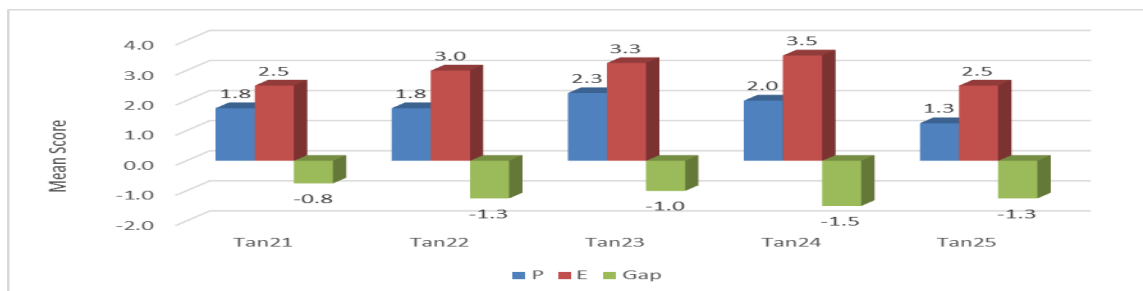
average Perception is only 1.5. They clearly felt that they could not guarantee that the services they provided were of a fully adequate standard.

The largest gap of  $-0.8$  resulted from responses to the statement that administrators are keen to ensure the safety of students in the department (stat 20). The average gap score of  $-0.5$  resulted from responses to statements as to whether administrators are willing to help students and even 'go the extra mile' to ensure that students are assisted (stat 16) and whether administrators are able to demonstrate that they have students' best interests at heart (stat 19). The smallest gap scores of  $-0.3$  pertained to the statement as to whether administrators are knowledgeable about the details of students' needs (stat 17) and are willing to collect information regularly from students in order to improve the services they provide (stat 18). According to Lamb, Hair and McDaniels (2008:353) "institutions of higher learning whose employees recognize students, call them by name and learn their students' specific requirements score very highly on empathy".

Similarly students responses as to whether they "felt that academic administrators show sincere interest in solving their problems", indicated a negative response. This now shines some light as to why students are not entirely happy with the services that they are subjected to on a daily basis.

5.2.2.5 Tangibles: this section investigates the facilities, equipment and personal appearance of the academic administrators at the institution

### Tangibles



**Figure 5.6:** Tangibles dimension score

The average gap score in this dimension is -1.3. The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 3.3$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The average Expectation is 3.3 while the average Perception is 2.3. This clearly indicates that the respondents felt that the services they are able to provide are not always adequate. The significance of this difference is tested below.

The largest gap score is -1.5 based on the statement whether offices have adequate space for student consultation (stat 24). The responses to whether the department had overall working equipment which is technologically advanced to help them do the job professionally (stat 22) and if administrators always maintain a professional appearance (stat 25) resulted in gap score of -1.3. The response to whether the academic administrators' offices are nicely painted, furnished and ventilated (stat 23) resulted in gap score of -1.0. The lowest gap score is -0.8 is based on the statements as to whether students have a good approach to staff (stat 21). This clearly shows that academic administrators did not feel they met a stipulated professional dress code and that they were not satisfied about office space provided for students' consultation. One of the issues was the constant loss of internet which resulted to a shutdown of the Integrated Tertiary Software (ITS) and all of this seems to have contributed to stress which compromised the productivity and delivery of quality services to students.

### **5.3 SECTION C: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**

An open-ended question was designed for the academic administrators to express their opinions on how their administration can be improved for better oversight of the needs of the students and, most importantly, to build a strong relationship between the students and themselves as academic administrators. They felt that the following should be done to improve their administration:

- Workshops to improve skills should be provided.
- Customer care, time management, conflict resolution training/workshop to get knowledge on how to solve students' matters need to be attended

- Students should be the first priority and
- Administrators should be treated with respect by students and line managers, and be regarded as one of the integral role players of the university.

#### **5.4 COMPARISON OF EXPECTATION VS PERCEPTION**

Noticeable is that Gap scores are not large. This is also confirmed by the difference in test (E vs P) which shows all the p-values  $> 0.05$  (implying that there is not a statistically significant difference between expectation and perceptions). The comparison of expectations vs. perceptions of academic administrators graph is attached as *appendix M*.

The next section deals with **residence administrators**.

## 5.5 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR RESIDENCE ADMINISTRATORS QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire was given to the two residence administrators in order to evaluate the administrative services they provide. The following table provides biographical information pertaining to residence administrators.

### 5.5.1 Cross tabulation \*Gender and Age; Status of employment and Years of service and Nature of employment and Highest qualification

		Indicate your age	
		25-31 years	32-38 years
Indicate your gender	Male	1	1
	female	1	1
		Indicate years of service	
		1-5 years	5-10 years
Status of employment	Contract (female)	1	
	Full time (Male)		1
		Indicate highest qualification	
		Diploma	Btech/Honours
		1	1
Current position	Residence officer (male)	1	
	Administrative Assistant (female)	1	

**Table 5.4:** Cross tabulation \*Gender and Age; Status of employment and Years of service; and Nature of employment and Highest qualification

**Table 5.4** above shows that there were two respondents, a male and a female, and their native language was isiXhosa. The female was between the ages of 25-31 years

while the male was between the ages of 32-38 years. As presented above, the male respondent was a full-time employee, while the female respondent worked on a contract basis. The male respondent had more than 5-10 years of experience and the female respondent had less than 5 years of experience. The male respondent was a Residence Officer with a BTech/Honours qualification, and the female respondent was an Administrative Assistant with a National Diploma qualification. This shows that the Residence Department had administrators who were qualified to carry out the residence administrative duties and that the principal administrator had appropriate years of experience. It must be highlighted however that these two administrators constituted the total number responsible for the Residence Department.

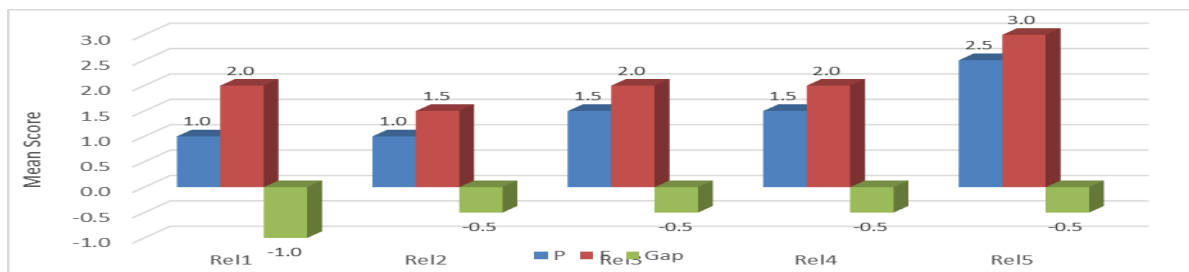
## 5.6 SECTION B: EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS (SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS ANALYSIS)

This section discusses information pertaining to the services delivered by residence administrators. The intention of this section was to ascertain whether the administrative staff had adequate skills or abilities to provide quality services that are acceptable and reliable. The Servqual instrument was also used in this section to measure and discover the levels of expectation and perception. In-depth interpretation and discussions are addressed below.

### 5.6.1 Section analysis for Residence Administrators

5.6.1.1 Reliability: this section deals with the ability of the residence administrators to perform the promised services dependably and accurately.

#### Reliability



**Figure 5.7:** Reliability dimension score

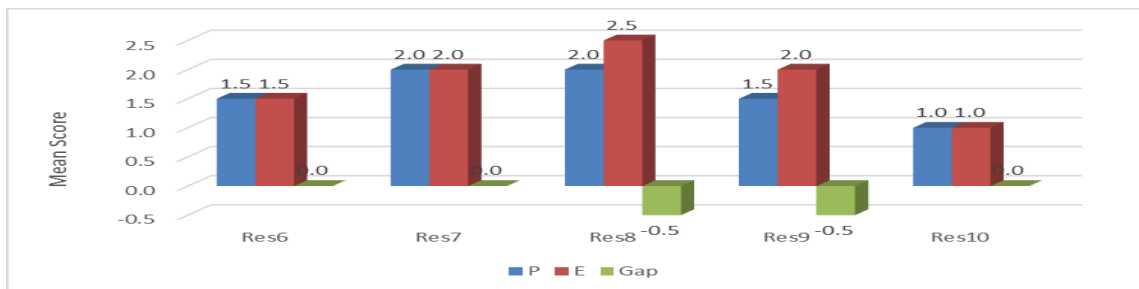


The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.0$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perceptions score average between the levels of agreement and neutral (1.5 to 2.0). This clearly indicates that the respondents felt that the services they were providing to students occupying the universities' residents were not sufficient to meet their needs. The significance of this difference is tested below.

The response to whether residence administrators are qualified to offer the services required (stat 1) resulted in the highest gap score of -1.0. The responses to the statements that the residence administrators are willing to meet student needs (stat 2); keep accurate information (stat 3); provide services as promised (stat 4) and whether students have a good approach to residence administrators (stat 5) resulted in gap scores of -0.5. The highest gap score of -1 clearly shows that there is an important shift that needs to be considered by the management of the university when it comes to this department. This is indicated by the fact that the respondents saw themselves as not fully capable of providing reliable, assured, quality services. It must be highlighted that residence administrators work under a lot of pressure as resident demands are very high, taking into account that approximately 80 percent of the students are occupying the university residences. Probably one of the factors contributing to the identified quality gaps is the lack of sufficient personnel to alleviate the pressure on the two administrators who are currently holding the position.

5.6.1.2 Responsiveness: this section investigates the willingness of residence administrators to help students and provide a prompt service

### Responsiveness



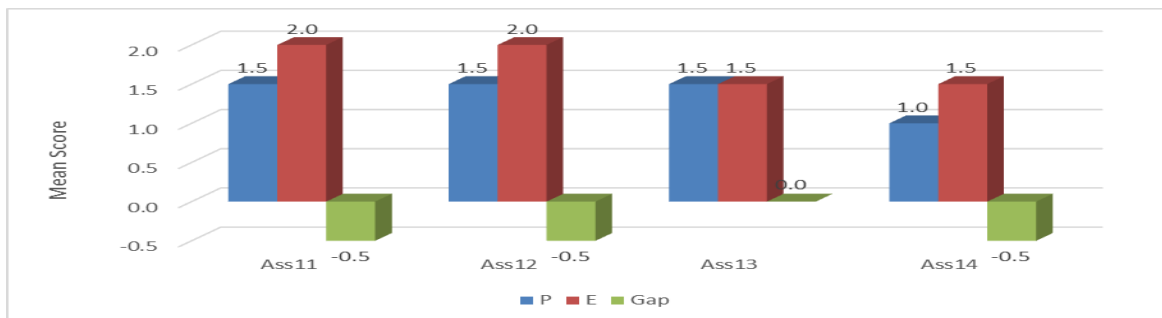
**Figure 5.8:** Responsiveness dimension score

As before, the expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.0$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements and again the perceptions scores average between the levels of agreement and neutral (1.5 to 2.0). This indicates that the respondents felt that the resident administrator-student relationship was not at a critical level but rather at a level that needed some improvement. The significance of this difference is tested below.

The responses to whether the Residence Department has a good working relationship with students (stat 8) and whether administrators are interested in meeting students' needs (stat 9) resulted in similar gap scores of -0.5 indicating the highest gap score in this dimension. Although the respondents have indicated that they do not meet all the needs of the students due to numerous challenges, it must be noted also that the respondents believed that they were eager to assist students, and to 'go the extra mile' in ensuring that the information given to students is of good quality and can be used to assist them. Furthermore, the administrators scored a positive score on the ability to respond to student complaints and grievances appropriately (stat 1.6) and also on having the knowledge and suggestions needed to answer students' queries despite having heavy work pressure (stat 1.10).

5.6.1.3 Assurance: this section considered the knowledge and courtesy of the residence administrators and their ability to convey trust and confidence

**Assurance**

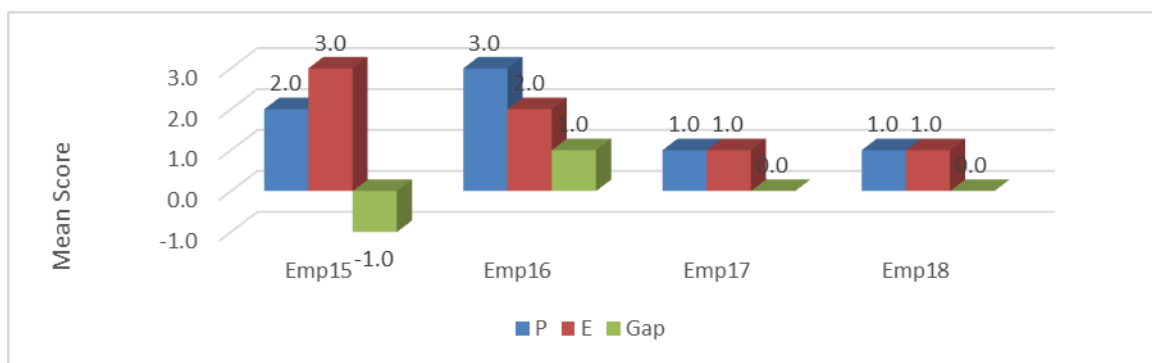


**Figure 5.9: Assurance dimension score**

As with the other dimensions the expectation scores are high ( $\geq 1.5$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perception scores average between the levels of agreement and neutral (1.0 to 1.5). The highest gap score of -0.5 related to statements regarding whether residence administrators are always courteous to students (stat 11); have enough knowledge of the service they provide (stat 12) and are always fair in the allocation of rooms to students (stat 14). This indicates that the respondents admitted that they were not entirely pleased with the services they provide to students who occupy student residences. They felt that they lacked the ability to convey clear, helpful, complete and easy-to-understand answers when they attended to student requests. This means that the administrators were not confident about the information communicated to students and did not always have up-to-date information as promised to students. The issue of room allocation to students has been inconsistent and this could be because residence administrators do not always receive prompt, recent information and support from their line managers. As advised by Kiran and Diljit (2012) line managers should focus on training residence administrators in communication and interpersonal skills.

5.6.1.4 Empathy: this section considered the individual attention the residence administrators provide to students.

### Empathy



**Figure 5.10: Empathy dimension score**

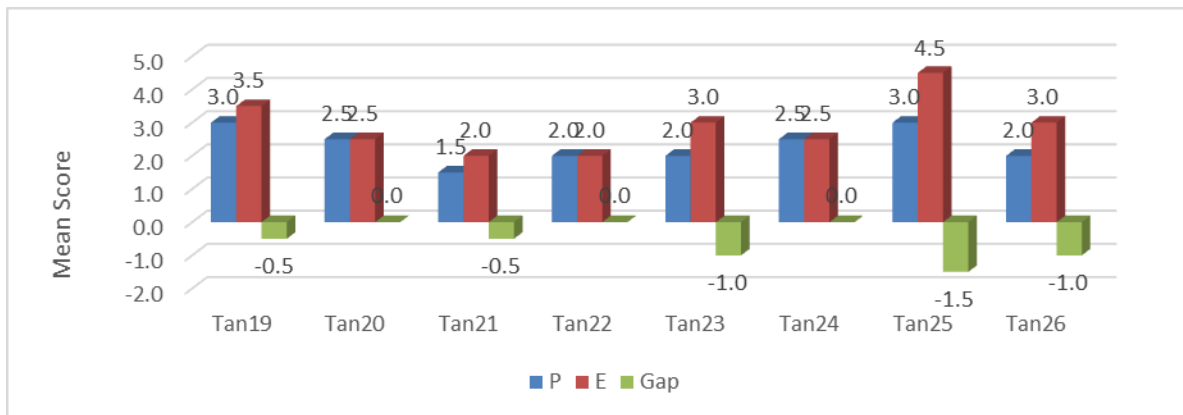
Again the expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.0$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The average expectation is 2.0 while the

average perception is 3.0. In this dimension residence administrators perceived that the administrative services are offered in a manner which is caring and reasonable and that the services they provided were satisfactory over most dimensions.

The highest gap score of  $-1.0$  resulted to statements as to whether residence administrators know students' needs in detail (stat 15). The responses to whether residence administrators have students' best interest at heart (stat 17) and whether residence administrators ensure that safety is guaranteed at the residences (stat 18) resulted in  $0.0$  scores, while the statement as to whether residence administrators collect information regularly from students to improve their service (stat 16) resulted in a positive score of  $1.0$ . The residence administrators therefore perceived themselves as performing below the expected level with regards to knowing students' needs in detail; although in other areas they show positive results in dealing with students' matters. The information which is regularly gathered from students could be of great assistance in understanding their needs and demands. However, once the information has been gathered, it needs to be interpreted and a plan should be formulated and developed to oversee how the challenges can be overcome (Ngibe, 2015).

5.6.1.5 Tangibles: this section investigates the facilities, equipment and personal appearance of the residence administrators at the institution.

### Tangibles



**Figure 5.11: Tangible dimension score**

The average gap score in this dimension is -1.0. As usual the expectation scores are high ( $\geq 3.0$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The average expectation is 3.0 while the average perception is 2.0. This indicates that the respondents felt that the facilities, equipment and their own personal appearance were not always up to standard.

The largest gap score is -1.5 based on the statement whether Wifi/internet is easily accessible at the residence (stat 25). The responses to whether the residence department has sufficient accommodation for students who qualify (stat 23) and whether proper facilities are in place to cater for disabled students (stat 26) resulted in a gap score of -1.0. The lowest gap score is -0.5 based on the statement whether residence administrators have a professional appearance with name tag and neat uniform for easy identification (stat 19) and whether residence administrators ensure that cleaning of residences is done daily (stat 21).

Residence administrators are concerned about the constant loss of Wi-Fi/internet which leads students to attempt to access it away from their residence. This appears to have contributed to the administrators' high stress levels which compromised their productivity and ability to deliver quality services to students. Furthermore, residence administrators indicated that the university does not have enough space to cater for all the students, even for those who qualify, and they also felt that the facilities for disabled students are not provided in a manner that meets their needs. On whether residence administrators had a professional appearance, including a name tag, the administrators indicated that there were no dress code and staff members therefore dressed in their own preferred outfits. For easy identification and professionalism, Dhurup, Singh and Surujlal (2006:42) advise that administrators should have uniforms in order to present a professional appearance.

## **5.7 SECTION C: OPEN ENDED QUESTION**

An open-ended question was designed for the residence administrators to express their opinions about how their administration could be improved. These are their responses:

- Since there is inconsistency in the allocation of student residence places, an online application system should be designed and be implemented to manage student residence allocation. This system should be specifically designed to only accept students who meet the requirements of the Department of Student Housing.
- In-house workshops on the Student Housing rules and procedures should be offered.
- More staff members should be employed and capacity development workshops should be made available.

## **5.8 COMPARISON OF EXPECTATION VS PERCEPTION**

While the gap scores are small and the p-values show that none of the differences are statistically significant, as the p-values are all  $> 0.05$ , the willingness of staff to indicate that they feel their service is somewhat lacking over most dimensions is interesting for this analysis. The comparison of expectations vs. perceptions of residence administrators graph is attached as *appendix N*.

The next section deals with **library administrators**.

## **5.9 SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR LIBRARY ADMINISTRATORS**

This questionnaire was given to six library administrators in order for them to evaluate the administrative services they provide to students. The following table provides biographical information pertaining to the library administrators.

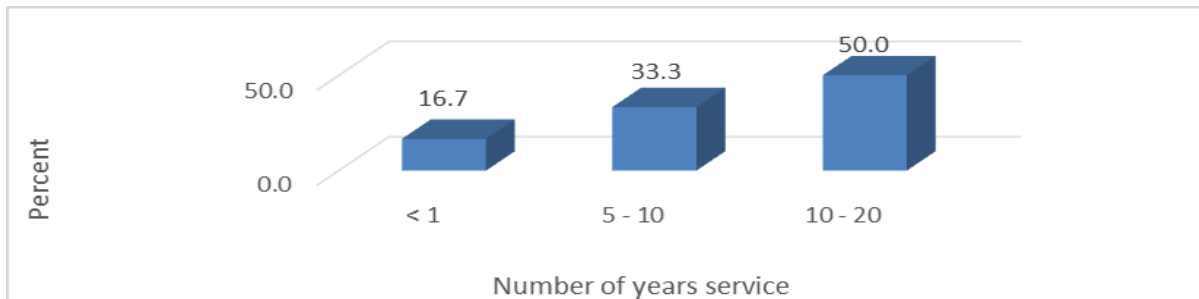
5.9.1 Cross tabulation \*Please indicate your gender and age

	Please indicate your age		Total	
	32-38 years	39-45 years		
Please indicate your gender	Male	0	2	2
	female	3	1	4
Total		3	3	6

**Table 5.5:** Cross tabulation \*Please indicate your gender and age

**Table 5.5** above shows that there were six respondents, four females (67 percent) and two males (33 percent). The three females were between the ages of 32-38 years and one female and two males were between the ages of 39-45 years. All the respondents were black with isiXhosa as their home language.

5.9.2 Number of years' service



**Figure 5.12:** Number of years' service

**Figure 5.12** above shows that the majority of the respondents 3 (50 percent) had 10-20 years of experience, while 2 (33 percent) had 5-10 years of experience and only one (17 percent) respondent had less than a year working within the library department. This shows that most of the staff members within the library administration had adequate experience. Also the majority of the respondents 4 (67 percent) had full time, permanent, employment, while 2 (33 percent) were employed on a contract basis.

5.9.3 Cross tabulation \*Please indicate your current position and highest qualification

	Please indicate your highest qualification			Total
	Diploma	BTech/ Honours	Other, please specify	
Please indicate your position	2	1	0	3
Library Assistant	0	0	2	2
current Librarian	0	1	0	1
Other, please specify	2	2	2	6
Total				

**Table 5.6:** Cross tabulation \* Current position and Highest qualification

**Table 5.6** above indicates that half of the respondents were Library Assistant 3 (50 percent), while 2 (33 percent) respondents were Librarians and only 1 (17 percent) respondent had another qualification. Of the respondents, 2 (33.3 percent) had a Diploma, while 2 (33.3 percent) had a Btech/Honours and 2 (33.3 percent) had other qualifications. This shows that staff occupying these positions had sufficient academic qualifications.

## **5.10 SECTION B: EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS (SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS ANALYSIS)**

This section discusses information about the services delivered by the library administrators. The intention was to find out whether the administrative staff had adequate skills or abilities to provide quality services. The Servqual instrument was also used in this section to discover the levels of expectation and perception library administrators felt towards the services they provide to students. In-depth interpretation and discussions are addressed below.

### **5.10.1 Reliability test**

The reliability test proved that the questionnaires were reliable and significant in collecting this data as the overall reliability scores for this department are high (0.991 for



Expectations and 0.975 for Perceptions). This signifies a high degree of acceptable, consistent scoring for the different categories. Reliability values all exceed the standard required value of 0.700.

Expectations (E )		Perceptions (P)	
N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
5	0.991	5	0.975
5	0.991	5	0.966
6	0.983	6	0.966
3	0.983	3	0.908
7	0.978	7	0.938

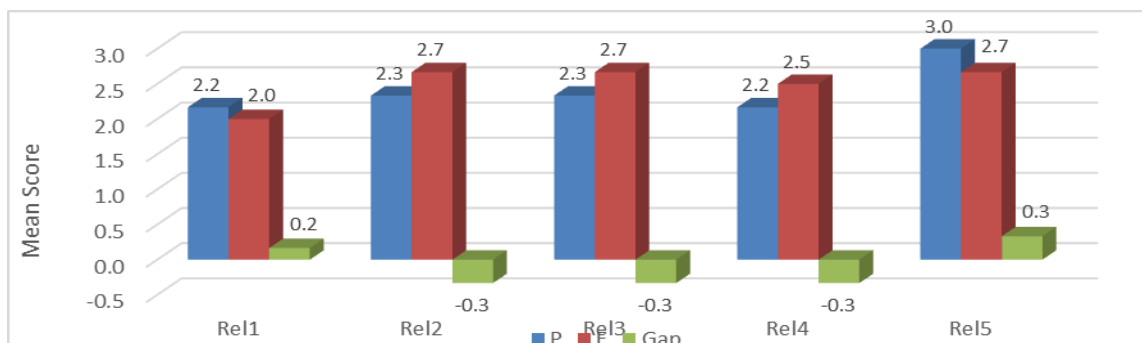
**Table 5.7: Reliability test table**

**Table 5.7** above reflects the Cronbach’s alpha score for all the items that constituted the questionnaire.

### 5.10.2 Section analysis for Library Administrators

5.10.2.1 Reliability: this section deals with the ability of the library administrators to perform the promised services dependently and accurately

#### Reliability



**Figure 5.13: Reliability dimension score**

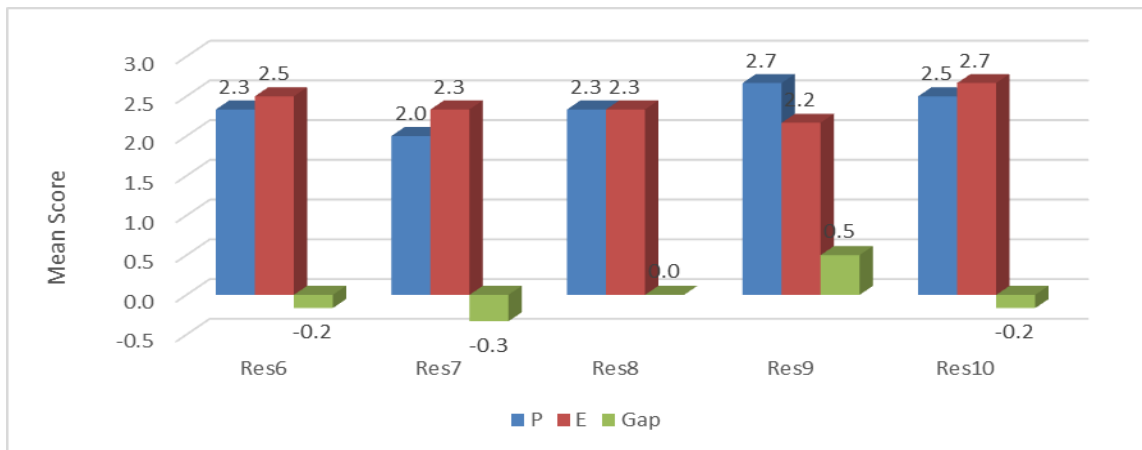
The overall gap score is -0.3. The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.5$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perceptions score average between the levels of agreement and neutral (2.2 to 2.5). This indicates that the respondents felt that the services they were providing to students were not always as dependable and accurate as they would have liked in order to meet their needs.

The responses as to whether the library administrators keep accurate and retrievable records (stat 2); are willing to meet student needs (stat 3); and provide services as promised (stat 14) resulted in gap score of -0.3. This dimension appears to indicate that the ability of the library administrators to perform the promised service dependably and accurately needed some improvement and support from management. Although library administrators are well qualified, they felt that they had challenges in keeping accurate and retrievable records, in being able to meet students' needs, and in providing a dependable and reliable service as promised. Responses as to whether librarians are well qualified to provide services (stat 1) and also on whether students have a good approach to librarians (stat 5) indicated positive scores of 0.2 and 0.3 respectively.

The next dimension focuses on responsiveness.

5.10.2.2 Responsiveness: this section investigates the willingness of library administrators to help students and provide a prompt service

### Responsiveness



**Figure 5.14:** Responsiveness dimension score

The overall gap score of -0.2 is similar to the individual gaps for each statement. The expectation scores are, as usual, high ( $\geq 2.5$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perception scores again average between the levels of agreement and neutral (2.3 to 2.5). This indicates that the respondents felt

that their relationship with students was not bad on the whole but it could still see some improvement. The significance of this difference is tested below.

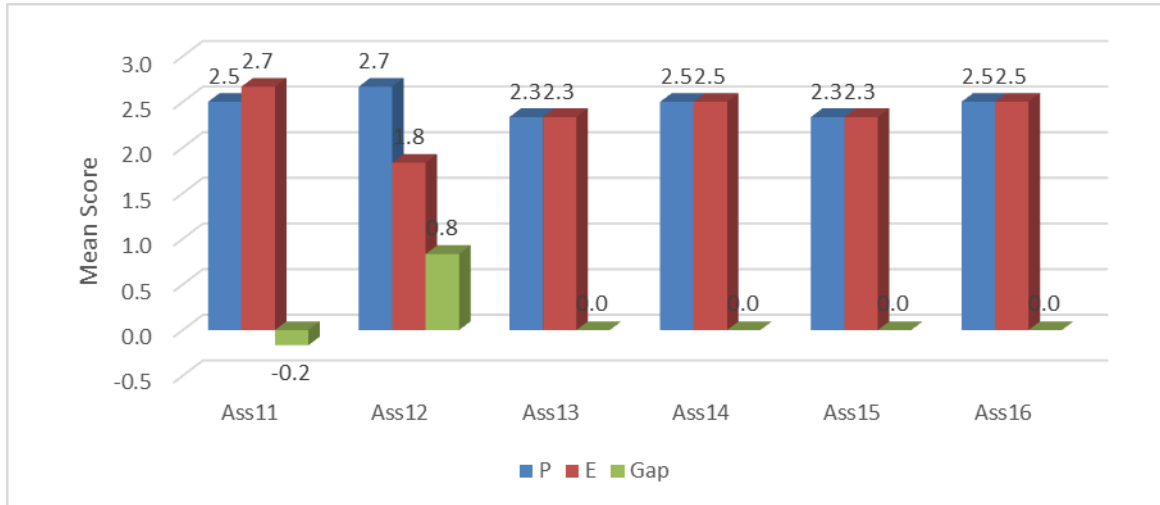
The responses as to whether library administrators respond to students appropriately even when working under pressure resulted in the highest gap score of -0.3. The responses as to whether library administrators respond to student complaints and grievances promptly (stat 6), and whether library administrators are well trained by their line managers to help or provide necessary support to the students (stat 10) resulted in the average gap score of -0.2. On a statement that library administrators are interested in meeting students' needs (stat 9) a positive finding of 0.5 was achieved. This means that the administrators were eager to understand and willing to ensure that students are well served by the library staff. However, although library administrators were interested in meeting students' needs, they felt that they could not always respond to students' complaints and grievances promptly, and that they needed more assistance from managers to help provide adequate support to students. This might be due to understaffing.

According to Partridge, Menzies and Lee (2010) library administrators need to find a variety of approaches in building a trustworthy and reliable service. This approach appears to be reflected in the positive score of 0.0, which indicates that administrators felt that they had a good administrator/student working relationship, and that they are eager to meet students' needs.

The next dimension focuses on assurance.

5.10.2.3 Assurance: this section considered the knowledge and courtesy of the library administrators and their ability to convey trust and confidence

**Assurance**



**Figure 5.15:** Assurance dimension score

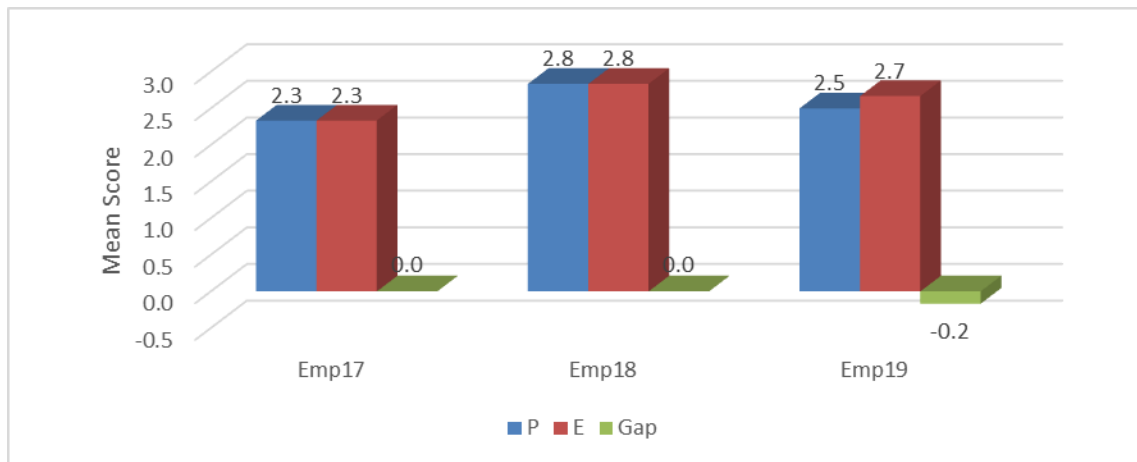
The only negative gap registered here is -0.2 on stat 11, which measures whether library administrators were constantly courteous to students. Here, therefore, administrators perceived themselves to be less than perfect. As in the other dimensions expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.5$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The perception scores average between the levels of agreement and neutral (2.5 to 2.5). Library administrators scored a positive score on having enough knowledge of the service they provide (stat 12) which appears somewhat contradictory given their earlier indication that they were unable to provide an adequate level of service. This might be explained by their feeling that other challenges, apart from their knowledge base, were the cause of their inability to provide an adequate service. In this assurance dimension they also felt that they do show willingness to assist students (stat 13) and that students have trust in them (stat 14).

Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler (2006:120) support the premise that trust and confidence can be supplemented by the person who links the students to the institution. Hence, library administrators should play an integral role in ensuring that students go forward in

their academic endeavors by, for instance, providing up-to-date periodicals, newspapers, books, journals, and online data bases.

5.10.2.4 Empathy: this section considered the individualized attention the library administrators provide to students as ‘customers’.

### Empathy

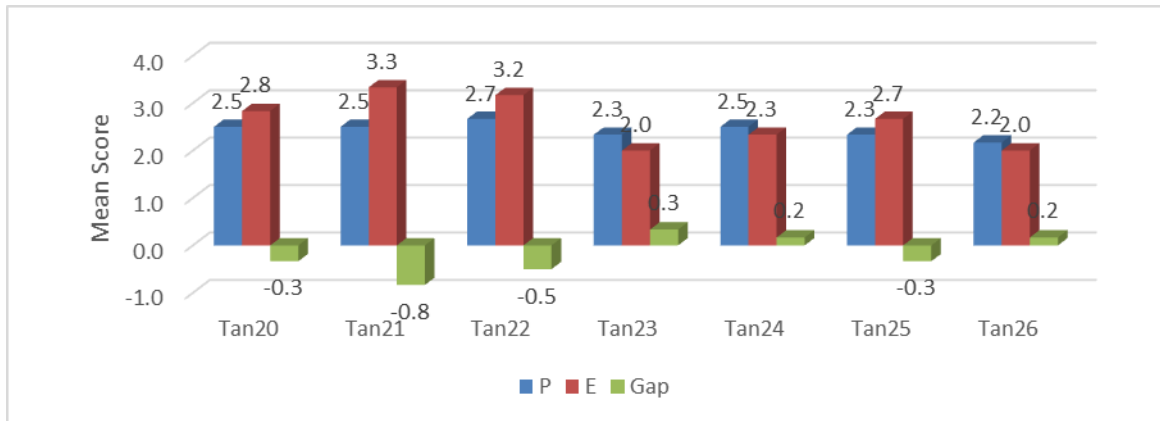


**Figure 5.16:** Empathy dimension score

As before the expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.7$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The average Expectation is 2.7 while the average Perception is 2.5. The gap score of  $-0.2$  resulted from the statement whether library administrators are helpful and caring for disabled students with special needs (stat 19). Library administrators perceived themselves as trained and able to care for students (stat 17) including students from disadvantaged backgrounds with little exposure to computer usage by assisting them and providing them with appropriate preferential treatment (stat 18). However, they also perceived themselves as not having sufficient personnel to cater for disabled students with special needs. This dimension indicates that more needs to be done by the university, especially to cater for students with disabilities. This finding supports the view of Yeo (2008:275), who maintains that there is an important need for library administrators to show a humane dimension in their interaction with students.

5.10.2.5 Tangibles: this section investigates the facilities, equipment and personal appearance of the library administrators at the institution

### Tangibles



**Figure 5.17:** Tangibles dimension score

The average gap score in this dimension is -0.5. The expectation scores are high ( $\geq 2.7$ ) and correspond to strong levels of agreement with each of the statements. The average Expectation is 2.7 while the average Perception is 2.3. This indicates that the respondents felt that the facilities, equipment and personal appearance of staff at the institution were not entirely satisfactory. The significance of this difference is tested below.

The largest gap score is -0.8 is based on the statement as to whether the library had technologically advanced computers and printers (stat 21). The statement as to whether the library had adequate computers to accommodate all students resulted in a -0.5 score. The lowest gap score is -0.3 based on the statements whether training workshops are provided to students to be able to search useful information on Online Public Access Catalogue (stat 20) and whether proper facilities are in place to cater for disabled students (stat 25).

The statement about whether lights are in a good condition for studying and reading purposes (stat 23); whether the latest textbooks, journals, periodicals and other scholarly publications are available for staff and students (stat 24) and whether

computer programs such as Endnote, SPSS and Nvivo are provided by the library (stat 26) resulted in positive scores of 0.2, 0.2 and 0.3 respectively. Library administrators perceived that the library lights are in a good condition for studying and reading purposes; that the library provides the latest prescribed textbooks, journals, periodicals and other scholarly publications for staff and students, and also provides computer programs for statistical analysis. Significantly this contradicts students' responses, as the majority (gap score) indicated that the library had outdated periodical, prescribed textbooks, journals, and other scholarly publications.

Although they perceived the facilities to be in good condition, library administrators indicated that they were not providing enough training workshops to educate students on searching for useful information on the Online Public Access Catalogue, or on how to conduct online searches nor were reference workshops held. The library administrators also indicated that the library was using out-dated slow computers which affected students adversely when searching and accessing information from journal data bases and other university repositories. The issue of inadequate facilities to cater for disabled students was also perceived as one of the major issues that management should address to ensure that the library continues to be the promoter of a long life-learning for all students.

### **5.11 SECTION C: OPEN ENDED QUESTION**

An open ended question was designed for the library administrators to express their opinions about how their administration could be improved. Library administrators felt that the following should be done:

- Provision should be made for more technological advanced computers and printers.
- Budget must be increased to employ more qualified staff to manage the ever-increasing number of students.
- Staff should be equipped with more recent information about needs of students to meet student-staff relations.

- Improvement can be made if both senior and junior staff can work together as a team
- More training should be provided to students on Endnote as a referencing technique and online searches.

## **5.12 COMPARISON OF EXPECTATIONS VS. PERCEPTIONS**

The p-values show that none of the differences are statistically significant as the p-values are all  $> 0.05$ . The graph on comparison of expectations vs. perceptions of library administrators is attached as *appendix O*.

## **5.13 SUMMARY**

Overall the findings from the administrators revealed that the university needed to uplift the expected service quality. The five SERVQUAL dimensions which are reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles, indicated some positive and also negative scores or quality gaps for the academic department, as for residence and library departments, suggesting that the university needs to be made aware of the existing gaps. It is therefore evident from the findings that the administrators often lacked the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately. Administrators felt they were not always able to provide prompt services, or to convey trust and confidence in the information provided as would be expected by students. On the other hand, the administrators saw themselves as willing to assist, to care and to 'go the extra mile' for students.

With regard to facilities, equipment and the personal appearance of staff members within the three departments, it is clear that most of the administrators viewed their departments as lacking in some of the necessary facilities and equipment.

The next chapter will present the conclusion, the recommendations and scope for further research.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.0 INTRODUCTION**

Chapters Four and Five presented the results and discussed the findings obtained from the students, and from the academic, residence and library administrators respectively. The Gap Model of service quality was employed as the theoretical framework of the study. This chapter will make recommendations as to what should be done as a result of the findings. The chapter begins by outlining the achievement of the objectives of the study; it makes recommendations; the limitations of the research are presented; and the chapter concludes by suggesting potential future directions for research.

#### **6.1 ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES**

The key findings of the study are presented below in accordance with its aims and objectives. The presentation of the discussions will be divided according to each section on the student questionnaire, but it should be noted that the literature on SERVQUAL explains that service quality is entangled and if one dimension is lacking then the other remaining dimensions will also be affected. Thus no neat division between the quality dimensions identified can be drawn.

##### **6.1.1 Objective 1: To determine students' experience of service quality**

The findings from the students revealed that, to a greater or lesser extent, all administrative departments had a negative service perception gap within each of the five SERVQUAL dimensions. This indicates that to some extent students believed that all the administrative staff lacked:

- the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately,
- a willingness to help students and to provide a prompt service,
- the knowledge and courtesy required to convey trust and confidence to students,
- the ability to provide caring, individualized attention to students, and

- the facilities and equipment required, along with the staffs' presentation of a good personal appearance

#### **6.1.1.1 The ability of *academic administrators* to perform the promised administrative services dependently and accurately.**

The predominant weakness experienced (reflected by gap scores of -2.0, -1.9, and -1.8) related to the inability of the administrators to provide services within the time one might reasonably expect; tackle complaints and solve problems with concern and sympathy; provide dependable and reliable services; and keep accurate and retrievable student records.

Students must be the top priority for the Department and their academic enquiries need to be promptly attended to with accurate information. To facilitate this, appropriate feedback mechanisms should be in place in order to assess whether student queries were met. A record-management system should also be implemented to improve the efficiency and accuracy of retrieving students' records. Ideally additional personnel should be employed. This, however, can only be accomplished if management fully assesses its services and if they have adequate funding to accommodate these changes.

#### **6.1.1.2 The willingness of *academic administrators* to help students and provide prompt service**

Challenges here are reflected by gap scores of -2.0, -1.9, and -1.8. Providing prompt and accurate quality services can be facilitated by conducting departmental orientations at the beginning of each year to educate students about the services that the Department offers. A student manual could also be developed to outline the services that are offered to students. A standard response-turn-around time policy should also be incorporated. For instance in a study conducted by Vanderkam (2016) more than 70% of the respondents expected a response within four hours.

### **6.1.1.3 Knowledge and courtesy of *academic administrators* to convey trust and confidence to students**

The administrative staff need to be sure about the services they provide in order to enable students to rely on the information they give. In order to gain this confidence, a well-structured training programme on the services provided by the Department should be facilitated by their line managers at least on a yearly basis and whenever there are new developments or changes in the services they provide. Ferreira, Erasmus and Groenewald (2015) have highlighted the importance of administrative managers fully understanding their tasks or activities. In order to improve administrators' communication skills, external experts could be invited to facilitate workshops on communication. This need is reflected by gap scores of -1.8, -1.7 and -1.6 on each of the above statements.

The Department could also be more innovative in its presentation of its functions by using the University's webpage to advertise its services and their staff members' profiles. This would assist students in accessing the Department's latest announcements and notices.

### **6.1.1.4 The ability of *academic administrators* to give caring individualized attention to students.**

Students need to feel welcomed and to feel comfortable with the administrative staff when discussing their individual queries. A gap score of -1.9 clearly indicated that students lacked confidence in administrators providing this caring and individualized attention. Also the gap score of -1.8 shows that the administrators didn't always appear to have students' best interests at heart. Administrators, therefore, need to be more approachable and to associate themselves with students more professionally. Consultation hours should be set. Additionally, the Department could consider having monthly meetings with the students' class representatives in order to gather information about students' needs and challenges, and to provide suggestions about how to improve their administrative services.

#### **6.1.1.5 The facilities, equipment and personal appearance of the administrators at the institution.**

The respondents indicated that the Academic Department did not have sufficient, up-to-date technical equipment including computers and printing/photocopying machines, nor were there sufficient personnel to assist students. The appearance of offices was poor with paint peeling off some of the walls. There were also constant power cuts due to poor maintenance of the university power station. This is reflected by the gap scores of -1.8 to -1.6 on each of the relevant statements.

In order for any administrator to perform his/her duties well, the necessary office equipment including telephones, printing/copying machines and up-to-date desks, chairs and computers should be provided by the Department, and these should be maintained in good working order. Moore (2014) argues that the office environment has a significant impact on staff productivity. Therefore, making sure that good quality furniture is provided, and that equipment is well maintained and upgraded, does not only make the employees happy, but it improves their productivity and the quality of the services they provide.

In addition, for the easy identification of the Department, signage should be placed on campus, giving clear directions to the academic and other departments to assist new students and parents who are unfamiliar with the Campus. Directions can also be posted/linked to Google apps on the departments' websites. The issue of power-cuts should be better managed by the University as it impacts on staff productivity. For example, in order for administrators to send emails and to use other electronic communication platforms, they need electricity. If this is not attended to the proposed response-turn-around policy will be negatively affected.

According to **recommendation 17** of the HEQC, the University must establish a collective understanding of quality and its monitoring across the institution; review systems to link academic and financial planning and quality management in a

transparent manner; and should review the administrative support required to manage these processes and systems.

**6.2.1.1 The ability of the *residence administrators* to perform the promised administrative services dependably and accurately.**

The findings of the study clearly indicate that students were not satisfied with the Residence Department's level of service. The predominant weakness experienced (reflected by gap scores of -2.0, -1.9, 1.8 and -1.6) related to the inability of the administrators to: provide the services it promises; provide services correctly the first time, provide assurance of confidentiality, provide and keep error-free student records, and provide dependable and reliable services.

It is recommended therefore that a record management system should be implemented to improve the efficiency and accuracy of retrieving students' records. Importantly, additional personnel should be employed. In order to close the existing gap, residence administrators need to be briefed by the Head of their Department on the best means of providing the specific services that the Department offers. More especially it appears that transformation requires changes with regards to student intake; students' residence allocation; and to residence fees, procedures for payment, student residence life, student residence rules and policy, and administrators' responsibilities. This will improve the level of understanding of these administrators and will enable them to be more efficient and effective in performing their responsibilities.

In addition, the Department needs to institute an orientation process with students at the beginning of the year to inform them about the rules, regulations and services provided by the Student Resident Department. Details of these services should also be made available on the Department's website for easy access. This, however, will only be successfully accomplished if management carefully evaluates its staff competency and the services they provide.

### **6.2.1.2 The willingness of *residence administrators* to help students and provide prompt service**

The respondents were not entirely satisfied with the services provided by the residence administrators. This is reflected by gap scores of -2.0, -1.9, -1.8, and -1.7 generated from this dimension. This clearly indicates that students felt the administrators lacked the willingness to help students and to provide a prompt service. The registration dates, residence payments, and student allocation procedures need to be communicated fully and consistently.

### **6.2.1.3 Knowledge and courtesy of *residence administrators* to convey trust and confidence to students**

That there are problems with this is reflected by gap score of -2.0. The ability of administrators to speak fluently and provide dependable information instills trust and confidence in students and increases productivity, decreases errors, and enables operations to run more smoothly (Doe, 2014: 03).

In order for them to gain confidence therefore, well-structured training programmes, specifically on man management and communication skills, should be organized by management to assist residence administrators to be equipped with sufficient skills to support the needs and demands of the students.

The Department also needs to be more innovative in its presentation of itself by creating a webpage to advertise its services, as well as publicizing student residence social events. The webpage should be user friendly and be designed as a chat site where students can interact with administrators, thus making communication more convenient for students. Migrating to a more technologically advanced system is also a way of minimizing queues outside the Department. Ideally universities should aim to adopt the new, advanced technology trends used by successful service organizations such as banking, and by the motor and other manufacturing industries.

#### **6.2.1.4 The ability of *residence administrators* to give caring individualized attention to students.**

That the respondents were not entirely satisfied with the services provided by the residence administrators is again reflected by gap score of -2.0, -1.9, -1.8, and -1.7 generated from this dimension.

Administrators, it seems, need to be more approachable and to associate with students more professionally in order for students to feel welcomed and be comfortable in asking them to address their individual queries. Specific consultation hours should be made available by the staff in the Department to ensure that students are given individual attention. Management could also better serve residential students by focusing on the improvement of amenities in the rooms and by improving their interaction with students. This does not imply that general amenities have no role to play in overall service quality.

#### **6.2.1.5 The facilities, equipment and personal appearance of the administrators at the institution.**

The respondents indicated that the appearance and design of the university residence was not appropriate for learning, that rooms were not comfortable, allocation was not fair, insufficient facilities and equipment were provided, and that residential accommodation was limited. Nor was accommodation safe and clean, while power cuts were a problem, there was limited parking for students, and not enough personnel were available to assist them. This is reflected by the gap score of between -1.7 to -2.1 on each of the above statements.

It is evident therefore that the University needs to make major changes in terms of renovation of residences, maintenance of the facilities and upgrading of equipment. It is worth noting that students felt that the two residence administrators were not coping with their workload and that this really affected the manner in which services were delivered. The issue of unfair allocation of residence places to students needed especially to be addressed. To promote and sustain transparency in allocation of residence places, the Department could use an automated system which will be

responsible for residence applications and allocations. This system should be programmed to categorize students based on their academic achievements thus enabling staff to allocate appropriate residences and rooms. Students who are not performing well academically would also be motivated to do better in order to be placed in good residence accommodation.

Students also raised concerns regarding the cleanliness and maintenance of the residences. In this regard the Student Residence Department needs to follow up regularly with the Cleaning and Maintenance Department to improve this situation.

Additionally, the issue of power-cuts should be better managed by the University as it impacts very negatively on staff and student productivity. Investment should be made in backup generators in case of emergencies. Overall the Student Residence Department should strive to provide a residential experience in which all students can live, socialize and learn in appropriate conditions. This is in accordance to Recommendation 9 on HEQC document which recommended that the University should urgently develop a plan for making student residences safe and should fast track the maintenance schedule of existing student residences. Communal and study space should be made available and residence rules be enforced.

#### **6.3.1.1 The ability of the *library administrators* to perform the promised administrative services dependently and accurately.**

The findings indicate that students were also not satisfied with the quality of service they received from the Library Department. The inability of the administrators to meet student expectations is reflected by gap scores of 1.8, -1.7 and -1.6.

Academic libraries occupy a unique position in institutions of higher learning and, as a result, it is expected that they provide the services required to promote student learning and academic excellence. However, the findings show that library staff failed to provide the promised quality of service, and that they lacked consistency in the manner in which services were provided. This gap could be minimized by their Line Manager assessing



staff competencies and organizing workshops based on individual needs. This should enhance the library staff's level of confidence and knowledge of the services they are expected to provide. The library also needs to be part of every academic department's student orientation. This is a great platform to inform students of the importance of the library and the quality services it provides. These services should also be made available on the Library website.

#### **6.3.1.2 The willingness of *library administrators* to help students and provide prompt service**

The unsatisfactory level of respondents' perception of the services provided by the library staff is reflected by gap scores of -1.9 and -1.8 generated from this dimension. This could be improved by training sessions for students in the use of different data bases, online searches, and other library systems. After the sessions, an evaluation form should be completed by students to assess to what extent the training provided was beneficial. The responses generated should assist in improving the quality of the training and, more importantly, allow staff to meet the needs of the students.

#### **6.3.1.3 Knowledge and courtesy of *library administrators* to convey trust and confidence to students**

That the respondents were not entirely satisfied with the services provided by the library administrators is reflected by gap scores of -1.9, -1.8 and -1.7 generated from this dimension. In order to gain skills and confidence in this regard also, well-structured training programmes specifically on man management and communication skills could be organized by management to assist them.

The Department also needs to be more innovative in its presentation of itself by creating a webpage to advertise library services. The webpage should be user-friendly and should be designed as an information-sharing mechanism where students can interact with administrators.

#### **6.3.1.4 The ability of *library administrators* to give caring individualized attention to students.**

The findings indicate that administrators need to interact more closely with students in order for them to feel welcomed and for staff to be comfortable in addressing their individual queries. A gap score of -1.9 indicated that students had little confidence in the provision of this caring and individualized attention at present. A gap score of -1.8 also shows that the administrators did not appear to give personal attention to each student, nor always understand the needs of students and also a gap score of -1.7 shows that library operating hours are often inconvenient, staff members not welcoming, and that students feel that there are poor student-staff relations. It is further indicated that students did not feel that staff have the students' best interests at heart.

Consultation times should be made available by the library staff to ensure that students can be given individual attention. Management should also consider adjusting opening hours to allow students to learn throughout the day and evenings especially during examinations. Writing competitions and debates are among the ways that the library might improve its engagement with students.

#### **6.3.1.5 The facilities, equipment and personal appearance of the administrators at the institution.**

As noted in the previous chapters, the respondents indicated that the library department has insufficient computers for the student population, inadequate printer facilities, inadequate communal areas, and insufficient facilities and equipment overall. Also study areas are not safe and clean; there is an insufficiently wide range of books and periodical in all areas of study; there are few upgraded computers, and there are constant power cuts due to poor maintenance of the university power station. This is reflected by the gap scores of -2.1, -2.0, -1.9, -1.8 and -1.6 on each of the above statements.

By making sure that power utility is maintained, computers are upgraded and that the latest prescribed books are easily available students' service quality experience in this

vital area of the University's service provision would be improved. It must be remembered however that library subscriptions to different data bases and journals is expensive and most universities have to pay for these resources. It can therefore be assumed that the library is working on a tight budget and as a result of the heavy cost of the journal subscriptions and maintenance of data bases, library software, maintenance of computers and printers, etc., and very few personnel can be employed. This is a major drawback. This concern is in line with **Recommendation 23** of the HEQC report recommends that the University should ensure that adequate computers are provided for both students and staff; and should also address the maintenance and implementation of existing software to manage administrative and educational processes. Furthermore, **Recommendation 22** of the HEQC report recommends that the University urgently address the resource needs of its libraries which will require realistic and phased funding arrangements – to augment its book and journal resources, provide internet access, increase the number of professional staff and improve the physical facilities.

### **6.1.2 Objective 2: To measure the gaps between the expectations and perceptions in service quality using the SERQUAL score.**

As discussed in Chapter 2, SERVQUAL is an instrument for measuring service quality which was originally developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry in 1985 (Palmer, 2001: 210). Foster (2010) states that Service Quality (SERVQUAL) identifies five discrepancies or "gaps" that may cause problems in service delivery and therefore influence students' evaluations of service quality, while Shahin (2007:2), further explains the possible causes of each of these gaps. This formula is applied below to the findings of the data in order to make recommendations towards minimizing the gaps identified in the services provided by administrators.

Gap 1: Understanding

*'The gap between customer expectations and management's perception of these expectations' (Foster (2010)) 'is as a result of the lack of a marketing research orientation, inadequate upward communication and too many layers of management' (Shahin (2007:2)).*

Communicating the services offered by administrative staff, students need to be orientated and be trained on how to use online service like OPAC, ENCORE and others. Furthermore, administrative staff members need to be trained in order to be effective in working with implemented systems.

#### Gap 2: Service standards

*'The gap between management's perception of what students want and the specifications that management develops to provide the service' (Foster (2010)) 'occurs as a result of inadequate commitment to service quality, a perception of unfeasibility, inadequate task standardization and an absence of goal setting' (Shahin (2007:2)).*

Administrative staff members need to distinguish what their obligations and purposes are within their departments and to outline their responsibilities as a service provider. Employing more skilled administrative staff to handle different portfolios will help in reducing this gap. Discovering information from administrative staff and from students as to what services are preferred will assist in ensuring that administrative services are delivered in line with what service beneficiaries expect from the relevant administrative offices. This may also contribute in reducing the difference between the service quality specifications and management perceptions of student specifications. This gap was identified in an open-ended question with academic, residence and library administrators whose perceptions of services they delivered were more positive than were their students' perceptions.

#### Gap 3: Service performance

*'The gap between the service quality specifications (delivery systems) and the service that is actually provided' (Foster 2010) 'occurs as a result of role ambiguity and conflict, poor employee-job fit and poor technology-job fit, inappropriate supervisory control systems, lack of perceived control and lack of teamwork' (Shahin (2007:2)).*

Communicating their services will not alone improve administrative performance unless different measures are taken to ensure that the services are put into practice. Academic, residence and library administrators need to clearly understand their role as a service provider. Once that has been achieved the Heads of Departments (HODs) should then manage and mentor the administrative staff to prepare them with administrative skills to better oversee administrative services. In order for administrative staff to achieve better service performance it is essential for them to work together as a team.

#### Gap 4: Communication

*'The gap between what the service system actually provided, and what the customer is told it provides (a communication gap)' (Foster (2010)) 'occurs as a result of inadequate horizontal communications and propensity to over-promise' (Shahin (2007:2)).*

Communicating administrative services via notice boards, Facebook, emails, telephone, and meetings will play an important role in enabling students to become well informed about new developments and about support offered by the administrative staff of the selected departments. However, their administrative services should not be over promised as this will create a negative image of the academic, residence and library administrative office if it should fail to deliver as promised. Better monitoring mechanisms can be employed to ensure that services provided to students are documented, and are consistent and aligned to the practices of the department and the university.

#### Gap 5: Service quality

*'The gap between students' perceptions of service performance and their expectations' (Foster (2010)) 'occurs as a result of the influences exerted from the customer side and the shortfalls (gaps) on the part of the service provider. In this case, customer expectations are influenced by the extent of personal needs, word of mouth recommendation and past service experiences (Shahin (2007:2)).*

This gap can be reduced by having well-developed documented administrative practices in each of the selected departments and also by having well-informed trained administrators with skills, knowledge and abilities to deliver quality services. This, in turn, will lead to good word-of-mouth and past experience recommendations from students.

The following section provides recommendations on academic administration.

#### **6.1.2.1 Academic administration**

In contrast to the students' responses it will be noted here that the gap level between administrators' expectations and their perceptions for was a lot lower in nearly all cases.

##### *Reliability*

The academic administrators indicated that they were not entirely satisfied with the level of service they were providing to students. This is shown by the gap scores of -1.0, -0.8, -0.5 and -0.3. The administrators need to be knowledgeable, considerate and consistent in handling student queries and to provide good service but this was not always the case.

##### *Responsiveness*

The administrators were not entirely satisfied with the services they provided to students. This is shown by gap scores of -1.0, -0.8, and -0.5. In order for academic administrators to improve their level of responsiveness to student enquiries, they need to have a better understanding of the services they are providing. They also need to have an automated filing system that will be able to efficiently and promptly retrieve students' records. Each department should have at least two administrators to improve the effectiveness and continuation of work in case one of the administrators falls ill or has family responsibilities.

Furthermore, to improve the level of responsiveness, the department needs to start engaging with students using different platforms. Having discussion meetings or focus

groups with students is one of the best ways the department to assess and pinpoint where the challenges are in terms of meeting students' expectations.

### *Assurance*

The administrators were also not entirely satisfied with the services they were providing to students in this dimension. This is shown by gap scores of -1.0, -0.8, -0.5 and -0.3. Improvement can only be achieved if administrators understand their roles, responsibilities and, most importantly, the academic administrative processes. Therefore, it would be beneficial for this Department also to organize in-house workshops specifically on academic administrative processes in order to improve their level of understanding, which will in turn instill confidence amongst students that the administrators have the ability to convey trustworthy and dependably information.

### *Empathy*

The administrators were also not entirely satisfied with the services they provide in this respect. This is shown by gap scores of 0.8, -0.5 and -0.3. Due to a lack of personnel and the large number of registered students, it is evident that time and workload did not permit academic administrators to provide individualized attention to students. The need to have meetings with students on a monthly or termly basis is indicated here as this could alleviate the sense of not belonging and improve student engagement with the Department.

### *Tangibles*

The administrators were dissatisfied with their working conditions, more especially as to the condition of the offices, limited resources, shortage of staff and out-dated equipment. This is shown by gap scores of -1.5, 1.3, -1.0, and -0.8. Office comfort, availability of resources, and having better operating machines (computers, printing/copying machines) plays a critical role in supporting the delivery of services to students. Without these basic requirements, the office is likely to be inactive, resulting in poor administrative assistance. Therefore, it is important that the Department attends to these critical issues with urgency to minimize this gap.

The need for adequate staffing with qualified personnel has been emphasised in this dissertation and it is evident that administrators strongly agree with this. As recommended by Ngibe (2015) the following steps should therefore be followed when an appointment of academic administrator is made:

- Orientation – this is to assist the newly appointed administrator to understand departmental policies, administrative processes, facilities, equipment, and his/her colleagues.
- Mentoring – an experienced staff member should be assigned to monitor and assist the newly appointed administrator in order to bring him/her up-to-speed with functions of the office/department.
- Training – should be organised on different themes, such as writing, communications, conflict management, project management, and time management workshops. This should be provided on a yearly basis in order to improve staff capabilities.

Lastly, the respondents recommended that administrators should be treated with greater respect by students and line managers, and that they should be regarded as one of the integral role players within the university.

The following section provides recommendations concerning the Student Residence Department.

#### **6.1.2.2 Student Residence Department**

##### *Reliability*

Most of the administrators indicated that they were not satisfied with the level of services they were providing to students. This is indicated by the gap score -1.0 and -0.5. It is likely that one of the contributory factors to the identified quality gaps is that of understaffing. Additional personnel are needed to alleviate the pressure that is felt by



the two administrators who are currently in this position. As this is perceived as one of the most important departments in the university, transparency and consistency in the handling of student residence allocation in particular needs to be attended to urgently and student enquiries need to be answered accurately. A record management system should be implemented to improve the efficiency and accuracy of retrieving students' records.

### *Responsiveness*

The administrators were also not entirely satisfied with the services they provided to students in this dimension. This is indicated by the gap score of -0.5. As mentioned above, and based on the large number of students occupying student accommodation, more personnel should be appointed, more especially at the beginning of the year due to the high number of student being placed in different residences. The appointment of more personnel will improve the response rate to queries and the ability of students to rely on the department. A standard response-turn-around time policy should also be implemented so that administrators are bound to respond to students' inquiries urgently.

However, the administrators gave a positive score of 0.0 on their ability to respond to student complaints and grievances appropriately and also on having knowledge and suggestions needed to answer students' queries despite having heavy work pressure.

### *Assurance*

The administrators were again not fully satisfied with the services they provide to students. This is reflected by the gap scores of -0.5. This is an indication that the administrators lacked knowledge and failed in some cases to convey courtesy, or to gain the trust and confidence of the students. This can only be rectified if administrators understand their roles, responsibilities and, most importantly, the residence administrative processes. Therefore, it would be beneficial for the Department to organize in-house workshops specifically on residence administrative processes in order to improve administrators' level of understanding which will in turn instill confidence amongst the students in the administrators' ability to convey trustworthy and

dependable information to students. However, it must be noted that residence administrators believe that they do show a willingness to assist students. This is reflected by a positive score of 0.0.

### *Empathy*

Most of the administrators indicated that they were not entirely satisfied with the level of empathy they were providing to students. This was shown by gap score of -1.0. Individual attention therefore needs to be improved. However, due to understaffing and large number of registered students, as mentioned above, it is evident that time constraints and a heavy workload make giving this individualized attention to students difficult. It is suggested therefore that there is a need to have meetings with students on a monthly or termly basis and that it could alleviate the sense of not belonging and improve students' engagement with the Department. Although a negative quality gap score was reflected as regards empathy, positive scores of 1.0 and 0.0 were generated where administrators indicated that they believed they can provide up-to-date information to students and that they have their best interests at heart. They also believe that they do make students' safety a priority.

### *Tangibles*

The administrators were also to some extent dissatisfied with the quality of residence facilities, equipment, and with their own personal appearance. This is shown by gap scores of -0.1 and -1.5. They indicated that the University doesn't have enough space to cater for all the students, even for those students who qualify, and they also felt that the facilities for disabled students were not catered for in an appropriate manner. On the issue of professional appearance, including the provision of name tags, the administrators indicated that there were no dress code and staff members dressed as they preferred. However, administrators maintained that students' residences are nicely painted, furnished and ventilated and that they do have strict security personnel for students' safety. It was however acknowledged that the constant loss of Wi-Fi/internet in residences make it difficult for students to work and study there, and forces them to stay late at the university in order to complete their assignments.

The following section provides recommendations on the Library administration department.

### **6.1.2.3 Library administration**

#### *Reliability*

Most of the administrators indicated that they were not entirely satisfied with the level of service they were providing for students. This is indicated by the gap score of -0.3. It is of pivotal importance that the library services claimed to be offered to students, be provided and be of good quality. These services should be offered with understanding and patience and be conveyed in an easy to understand and clear way in order to avoid confusing students. This means that the administrators need to be well-informed, understanding and consistent in handling student queries and in providing other services.

#### *Responsiveness*

Again the administrators were not entirely satisfied with the service they provide to students in this regard. This is indicated by gap scores of -0.3, and -0.2. A hands-on approach needs to be applied by library administrators in dealing with student queries. This will promote, develop and sustain a good student/ staff relationship in the library. A positive score of 0.5 however indicated that the administrators were confident that they had a good working relationship with students and also that they were determined to meet students' needs.

#### *Assurance*

The administrators were fairly confident and satisfied that they had sufficient knowledge and ability to convey trust and confidence in the information provided to students. This is reflected by the positive scores of 0.8. The Department therefore needs to continue motivating their staff members and provide necessary support where this is still needed. Certificates for best administrators could be one of the ways in which the Department promotes staff dedication and ensures good service provision.

### *Empathy*

Administrators were also fairly confident and satisfied with the individual attention they are able to give to students as they indicated that they were willing to 'go the extra mile' for students. This was shown by a positive score of 0.0.

Although the respondents were fairly satisfied with most of the services they were providing to students, the finding (-0.2) indicates that there is an urgent need for additional staff members to cater for disabled students and for students with special needs. Walk-in runways should be built for disabled students.

The library management can therefore improve the services overall by ensuring that there is sufficient support given to staff members and by ensuring that the working conditions are more conducive to their needs.

### *Tangibles*

The administrators were not entirely satisfied with library facilities and equipment, nor were they happy with their own personal appearance. This is shown by the gap scores of -0.8, -0.5., -and 0.3. The library could provide an ongoing series of workshops to students on library skills including the use of different scholarly data bases, online searches, OPAC and referencing tools.

Study cubicles, printing/copying machines, up-to-date journals, periodicals and other scholarly publications should be made more easily accessible for students on and off campus, while students with special needs should be treated equally in order to feel welcome and appreciated in this diverse Comprehensive University.

**6.1.3 Objective 3: To explore and describe factors that negatively or positively influences the experience of students towards the quality of service delivered by administrative staff of selected site**

Based on the findings, it is clear that students were not entirely happy with the administration in the three afore mentioned departments.

In terms of the **reliability** of the academic department, the students experience, according to their responses, was negatively affected by the 1) academic administration who fail to provide services in the time one might reasonably expect, 2) residence administrators who fail to provide dependable and reliable services, 3) library administrators who fail to provide information that is readily available to students. In support of the above, administrators themselves also indicated that they were unable to perform the promised services entirely dependable and accurately. This may be due to limited resources and understaffing. To sustain life-long learning the university needs to employ qualified administrators to assist students. As suggested above, an improved record management system should be implemented to improve the efficiency and accuracy of retrieving students' records.

In terms of **responsiveness** of administrators, the students' experiences were negatively affected by 1) academic administrators' inability to deal with queries within the institution efficiently and promptly; 2) residence administrators failing to speed up processes when allocating rooms and 3) library administrators who fail to provide an efficient service in regard to the retrieval of books, journals and other scholarly publications. Correlating with the students' responses, administrators agreed that they did lack the ability always to help students and provide services promptly. As mentioned above, the introduction of an automated system responsible for room allocation, rather than manual allocation of residence places, will expedite the application processes. In addition, converting contract employment to permanent employment, and thereby providing better job security, might encourage administrators who are now on contract to be more productive.

In terms of the **assurance** provided by administrators, the students' experience was negatively affected by 1) academic administration which had too few staff members to carry out their duties and services adequately, 2) residence administrators who fail to

speed up processes when allocating rooms, and 3) library administrators who fail to be friendly and polite to students. Correlating with the above, the administrators agreed that they were sometimes lacking in terms of knowledge and courtesy and the ability to convey trust and confidence. Therefore it is suggested that management consider training administrators in communication and interpersonal skills in an online environment, so that they can clearly and efficiently communicate with students. It is essential that recent, clear and precise information is communicated to students so that they can be better informed of the administrative and academic processes necessary and available for mapping their school activities and their academic life appropriately.

In terms of **empathy** demonstrated by administrators, the students' experiences were negatively affected by 1) academic administrators who fail to provide caring attention, 2) residence administrators who failed to understand the needs of students, and 3) library administrators who fail to give individual attention to each student. Based on the responses of administrators, they also saw themselves as failing to provide individualized attention to students. Well-structured training programmes specifically on man management and communication skills should be organized by management to assist administrators develop further skills in this regard.

In terms of the **tangibles** provided by academic administrators, the students experiences were negatively affected by 1) failure in as far as they lacked sufficient computers and printing/photocopying machines needed to provide the services required by students, 2) residence administrators' failure to provide sufficient facilities and equipment, 3) and also the library administrators were unable to provide sufficient computers for the student population. Corresponding findings from administrators were that they also saw that they lacked sufficient facilities, equipment and also failed always to show a professional appearance. It is recommended that the issue of inadequate facilities to cater for disabled students and the addition of material resources should be provided according to the standards set for universities.

## **6.2 CONCLUSION**

It therefore appears that administrators were generally willing to assist students and to provide services promptly. However, both students and administrators did experience services gaps in the ServQual dimensions.

The following section provides a reflection on the stated objectives of the study in order to assess how far these have been met and to make recommendations related to objectives.

The limitations of the study are presented below.

## **6.3 LIMITATIONS**

This study was limited to an evaluation of perceptions of a sample of the registered undergraduate and postgraduate students as to the service quality delivered by administrative staff of a selected comprehensive university, and also to an evaluation by the administrative staff perceptions of the service quality they offer to their students in the same departments. The researcher struggled to get full support from students to participate in the study due to their busy academic schedules viz. mid-term examination and assessments. The researcher was required to personally administer the questionnaires while also undertaking full time work at the selected comprehensive university.

The data gathered for this study was limited to the selected university and therefore generalizations may not be made. Any significant results emerging from this study may not necessarily reflect the situation in other comprehensive universities in SA, but may however be used as guidelines to understand the significance of having efficient administrative staff and to understand and address similar HE students' experiences of service quality delivered by administrative staff in equivalent institutions

#### **6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The importance of students' feedback in higher education quality service delivery is demonstrated in the literature. In measuring service quality, the researcher focused on administrative staff and registered students who are closely involved in the service experience. Future research could be done on similar further education institutions for comparison purposes, specifically of the students' expectations. Future research on service quality in education institutions is recommended using an instrument with open-ended questionnaires to allow respondents to provide suggestions from their specific environments.

#### **6.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The findings presented in the study will hopefully benefit the university management regarding improvement of service quality rendered to students by administrative staff and the support needed by administrative staff to improve the quality of the services they offer to students. The University has to focus on reducing the service quality gaps that exist. The purchase of up-to-date equipment such as new computers with internet installation and prescribed textbooks will not only improve tangibility but will also aid in responsiveness as students can access the university website to get prompt assistance. The reliability dimension can also be improved by equipping administrators with adequate work tools and technology to perform their jobs more effectively and efficiently. Technological advancements such as an updated website can facilitate the development of an intranet system and interactive software that could encourage more communication between the administrators and the students. Continuous training of administrative employees is also very important as it aids the university administrators in improving on all the five service quality dimensions.

As noted in Chapter 1 (p 4) the literature indicates that no recent studies have been conducted specifically concerning students' experience of service quality delivered by administrative staff within these departments of a comprehensive university in South Africa. This study hopes to contribute to the body of literature in this regard.



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## APPENDIX A: COVERING LETTER



Dear participant

I am currently enrolled for a master's Degree in Administration and Information Management at the Durban University of Technology, Department of Information and Corporate Management. My research topic is **“An investigation of students’ experience of service quality delivered by administrative staff at one site of a South African Comprehensive University”**. The aim of the study is therefore to investigate students’ experience of service quality delivered by administrative (academic, residence and library departments) staff at the selected site.

Your participation to this study will be highly appreciated, as it will enable the researcher to make recommendations to the institution on ways to better administer quality services to students. Please make sure that you fully complete the questionnaire as incomplete questionnaires will be disregarded for analysis purposes. Please note that your identity and individual answers will be kept totally confidential. Should you wish to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor Mr M. Ngibe at [musawenkosin1@dut.ac.za](mailto:musawenkosin1@dut.ac.za) and co-supervisor Dr J.P Skinner at [janer@dut.ac.za](mailto:janer@dut.ac.za)

Your participation will be appreciated. Thank you.

---

Mr Mxolisi Walter Ntoyakhe  
Cell No.: 0789810051/0792526777  
Fax No.: 0866234468  
[mntoyakhe@wsu.ac.za](mailto:mntoyakhe@wsu.ac.za)

## APPENDIX B: LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM



### LETTER OF INFORMATION

Dear Participant

**Title of the Research Study:** An investigation of students' experience of service quality delivered by administrative staff at one site of a South African (SA) comprehensive university.

**Principal Investigator/s/researcher:** Mxolisi Walter Ntoyakhe

**Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s:** Mr M Ngibe (MTECH: CA) (supervisor); Dr J.P Skinner (PhD) (co-supervisor)

**Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:**

The study will investigate the extent and nature of any service quality gaps between the services expected and those actually provided by the administrative staff responsible for student residences, academic affairs and the library information services departments at one site of a South African comprehensive university. The research will therefore investigate students' expectations and experiences of the services delivered by these departments in order to be in a position to make detailed suggestions for improvements should these be found to be necessary.

**Outline of the Procedures:**

You are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire as honestly and fully as you are able. Incomplete forms cannot be included in the survey. Your answers will be anonymous and the findings aggregated. Permission to conduct this study will be requested from Research Committee of University.

**Risks or Discomforts to the Participant:**

There are no risks to you as a participant of this research.

**Benefits:**

Current and future students at the university should benefit from the improved service quality which may be implemented as a result of the findings and recommendations of the study.

**Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:**

At any time, you may decide to withdraw from the study without any negative results to yourself.

**Remuneration:**

No remuneration/incentives to be offered to you for your participation.

**Costs of the Study:**

You will not be liable for any of the costs of this study.

**Confidentiality:**

All information provided by you will remain confidential. The statistician, the researcher, supervisor and co-supervisor will be the only people to be given access to the information.

**Research-related Injury:**

This study will not cause any harm to you.

**Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:**

Researcher:

Mxolisi Walter Ntoyakhe ([0792526777/0789810051](tel:0792526777) or [043-7085277](tel:043-7085277) or [mntoyakhe@wsu.ac.za](mailto:mntoyakhe@wsu.ac.za))

Supervisor:

Mr M. Ngibe (031-3735599 or [musawenkosin1@dut.ac.za](mailto:musawenkosin1@dut.ac.za))

Co-supervisor:

Dr J.P Skinner (031-3732000 or [janes@dut.ac.za](mailto:janes@dut.ac.za))



## CONSENT

### Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, **MXOLISI WALTER NTOYAKHE** of about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: **IREC 017/16**,
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

I, herewith confirm that I have been informed fully about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

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**Participant signature**

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**Date**

## APPENDIX C: ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please indicate your choice with a tick [√] against the responses for the following information.

1. YOUR GENDER:

Male	
Female	

2. YOUR AGE NUMBER:

18-24	
25-31	
32-38	
39-45	
More than 45 years, please specify	

3. YOUR RACE:

Black	
White	
Indian	
Coloured	
Other, please specify.	

4. YOUR HOME LANGUAGE:

IsiXhosa	
English	
Afrikaans	
IsiZulu	
Other, please specify.	

5. NUMBER OF YEARS OF SERVICE:

3-12 months	
1-5 years	
5-10 years	
10-20 years	
More than 20 years, please specify	

6. PLEASE STATE YOUR STATUS OF EMPLOYEMENT:

Full time	
Part time	
Contract	

7. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR HIGHEST QUALIFICATION:

Matric	
Diploma	
BTECH/Honours	
MTECH/Masters	
Doctorate	
Other	

**SECTION B: SERVICE QUALITY**

This section is based on service quality. The following variables, namely: reliability; responsiveness; assurance; empathy and tangibles will be used to determine the service quality provided by the institution. Please complete the following sections. Circle 1 if you strongly agree, circle 2 if you agree, circle 3 if you are neutral or not sure, circle 4 if you disagree and circle 5 if you strongly disagree with the statement. Please take note that there is no right or wrong answer. I would also like to assure you that no criticism of individuals is intended and that your accurate and honest answers are essential for understanding the challenges which both staff and students face. The data will enable strong and useful recommendations to be made.



**1 = Strongly agree**

**2 = Agree**

**3 = Neutral**

**4 = Disagree**

**5 = Strongly disagree**

Please refer to the example below concerning how to answer the questions.

**Example:**

No.	Statement		Scores				
<b>1.</b>	<b>Administration</b>						
	<b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.</b>						
a).	The office is efficient in assisting students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

<b>1.</b>	<b>ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION</b>						
	<b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately</b>						
	<b>Staff generally:</b>						
	Statement		Scores				
1.1	are willing to meet student needs	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.2	can provide accurate information	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.3	provide service to the standard required	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.4	deliver services correctly the first time	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.5	make students feel that they can trust and have confidence in them	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Responsiveness: Willingness to help students and provide services promptly.</b>						
	<b>Academic administrators generally:</b>						
1.6	are interested in meeting students'	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5

	needs	my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.7	respond to student complaints and grievances appropriately	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.8	respond to students despite having heavy work pressure	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.9	have a good working relationship with students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.10	have the knowledge and suggestions needed to answer students' questions	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of staff members and their ability to convey trust and confidence. Academic administrators:</b>							
1.11	are constantly courteous with students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.12	have sufficient up-to-date knowledge of the services they provide	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.13	are always willing to assist students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.14	have the trust of students concerning provision of accurate information	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.15	Line managers make sure that administrators are well trained to help provide the necessary support to their students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Empathy: Caring individualized attention to students. Administrators are:</b>							
1.16	willing to help students and even 'go the extra mile' to ensure that students are assisted	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.17	knowledgeable about the details of students' needs	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.18	willing to collect information regularly from students in order to improve the services they provide	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.19	able to demonstrate that they have	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5

	students' best interests at heart	my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.20	keen to ensure the safety of students in the department	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tangibles: Facilities, equipment and personal appearance of staff at the institution</b>							
1.21	Students have a good approach to staff	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.22	Overall working equipment is technologically advanced to help do the job professionally	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.23	Offices are nicely painted, furnished and ventilated	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.24	Offices have adequate space for student consultation	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.25	Administrative staff maintain professional appearance	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION C**

26. How could the administration of academic secretaries/administrators be improved in your opinion?

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**Thank you for your participation.**

## APPENDIX D: RESIDENCE ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please indicate your choice with a tick [√] against the responses for the following information.

1. YOUR GENDER:

Male	
Female	

2. YOUR AGE NUMBER:

18-24	
25-31	
32-38	
39-45	
More than 45 years, please specify	

3. YOUR RACE:

African	
White	
Indian	
Coloured	
Other, please specify.	

4. YOUR HOME LANGUAGE:

IsiXhosa	
English	
Afrikaans	
IsiZulu	
Other, please specify.	

5. YOUR NUMBER OF YEARS OF SERVICE:

3-12 months	
-------------	--

1-5 years	
5-10 years	
10-20 years	
More than 20 years, please specify	

6 PLEASE STATE YOUR STATUS OF EMPLOYEMENT:

Full time	
Part time	
Contract	

7. PLEASE STATE YOUR CURRENT POSITION:

Administrative Assistant	
Residence Officer	
Warden	

8. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR HIGHEST QUALIFICATION:

Matric	
Diploma	
BTECH/Honours	
MTECH/Masters	
Doctorate	
Other, please specify	

**SECTION B: SERVICE QUALITY**

This section is based on service quality. The following variables, namely: reliability; responsiveness; assurance; empathy and tangibles will be used to determine the service quality provided by the institution. Please complete the following sections. Circle 1 if you strongly agree, circle 2 if you agree, circle 3 if you are neutral or not sure, circle 4 if you disagree and circle 5 if you strongly disagree with the statement. Please take note that there is no right or wrong answer. I would also like to assure you that no criticism of individuals is intended and that your accurate and honest answers are essential for understanding the challenges which

both staff and students face. The data will enable strong and useful recommendations to be made.

**1 = Strongly agree**

**2 = Agree**

**3 = Neutral**

**4 = Disagree**

**5 = Strongly disagree**

Please refer to the example below on how to answer the questions.

**Example:**

No.	Statement		Scores				
<b>1.</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>						
	<b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.</b>						
a).	Services at residence department is offered by qualified staff	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

	<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>						
	<b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.</b>						
	<b>Staff generally:</b>						
	Statement		Scores				
1.1	Are qualified to offer the services required	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.2	have a willingness to meet student needs	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.3	keep accurate information	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.4	provide service as promised	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.5	Students have good approach to residence	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

	administrators						
<b>Responsiveness: Willing to help students and provide prompt service.</b>							
<b>Residence administrators generally:</b>							
1.6	respond to student complaints and grievances promptly	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.7	respond to students appropriately even when working under pressure.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.9	have a good working relationship with students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.10	interested in meeting students' needs	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.11	always have knowledge to answer students' questions	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of staff members and their ability to convey trust and confidence. Residence Administrators:</b>							
1.12	are constantly courteous with students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.13	have enough knowledge of service they provide	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.14	Are always willing to assist students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
1.15	Are always fair in the allocation of rooms to students	my perception	1	2	3	4	5
		my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Empathy: Caring individualized attention the administrators provide to its customers. Administrators:</b>							
1.16	know students' needs in detail	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.17	collect information	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5

	regularly from students to improve their services	my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.18	have students' best interests at heart	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.19	Ensure that safety is guaranteed at the residences	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tangibles: Facilities, equipment and personal appearance of staff at the institution</b>							
1.20	Residence administrators have a professional appearance with name tags and neat uniform for easy identification	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.21	Residences are nicely painted, furnished and ventilated	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.22	Cleaning of residences is done daily	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.23	Strict security personnel are available	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.24	The residence department has sufficient accommodation for students who qualify.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.25	Each residence is well equipped	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.26	Wifi/internet is easily accessible at the residence	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.27	Proper facilities are in place to cater for disabled students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5



**SECTION C**

28. How could the administration of residences be improved in your opinion?

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**Thank you for your participation.**

## APPENDIX E: LIBRARY ADMINISTRATORS QUESTIONNAIRE

### **SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

Please indicate your choice with a tick [√] against the responses for the following information.

1. YOUR GENDER:

Male	
Female	

2. YOUR AGE NUMBER:

18-24	
25-31	
32-38	
39-45	
More than 45 years, please specify	

3. YOUR RACE:

African	
White	
Indian	
Coloured	
Other, please specify.	

4. YOUR HOME LANGUAGE:

IsiXhosa	
English	
Afrikaans	
IsiZulu	
Other, please specify.	

5. NUMBER OF YEARS OF SERVICE:

3-12 months	
1-5 years	

5-10 years	
10-20 years	
More than 20 years, please specify	

6. PLEASE STATE YOUR STATUS OF EMPLOYMENT:

Full time	
Part time	
Contract	

7. PLEASE STATE YOUR CURRENT POSITION

Library Assistant	
Librarian	
Other, please specify	

8. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR HIGHEST QUALIFICATION:

Matric	
Diploma	
BTECH/Honours	
MTECH/Masters	
Doctorate	
Other, please specify	

**SECTION B: SERVICE QUALITY QUESTIONS**

This section is based on service quality. The following variables, namely: reliability; responsiveness; assurance; empathy and tangibles will be used to determine the service quality provided by the institution. Please complete the following sections. Circle 1 if you strongly agree, circle 2 if you agree, circle 3 if you are neutral or not sure, circle 4 if you disagree and circle 5 if you strongly disagree with the statement. Please take note that there is no right or wrong answer. I would also like to assure you that no criticism of individuals is intended and that your accurate and honest answers are essential for understanding the challenges which both staff and students face. The data will enable strong and useful recommendations to be made.

**1 = Strongly agree**

**2 = Agree**

**3 = Neutral**

**4 = Disagree**

**5 = Strongly disagree**

Please refer to the example below on how to answer the questions.

**Example:**

No.	Statement		Scores				
	<b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.</b> <b>Administration</b>						
a).	The office is efficient in assisting students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

1.	<b>LIBRARY SERVICE</b> <b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.</b> <b>Staff generally:</b>						
	Statement		Scores				
1.1	Are well qualified to provide library services	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.2	keep accurate and retrievable records	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.3	Are willing to meet students' needs	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.4	provide service as promised	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.5	Students have good approach to librarians	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Responsiveness: Willing to help students and provide services promptly.</b> <b>Librarians generally:</b>						

1.6	respond to student complaints and grievances promptly	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.7	respond to students appropriately even when working under pressure	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.8	have a good working relationship with students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.9	are interested in meeting students' needs	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.10	well trained by their line managers to help provide necessary support to the students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of staff members and their ability to convey trust and confidence. Librarians:</b>							
1.11	are constantly courteous with students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.12	have enough knowledge of the services they provide	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.13	Are always willing to assist students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.14	Are trusted by students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.15	'go the extra mile' to ensure that students queries are answered	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.16	are constantly well-mannered with students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Empathy: Caring individualized attention to students. Librarians:</b>							
1.17	are properly trained and skilled to be caring towards the needs of students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.18	Disadvantaged background students (from rural areas) with little exposure to computer usage	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

	are assisted and given preferential treatment						
1.19	are helpful and caring to disabled students with special needs	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tangibles: Facilities, equipment and personal appearance of staff at the institution</b>							
1.20	Training workshops are provided to students to be able to search useful information on Online Public Access Catalogue	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.21	The library has technologically advanced computers and printers	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.22	The library has adequate computers to accommodate all students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.23	Lights are in good condition for studying and reading purposes	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	4	4	5
1.24	The latest prescribed books, journals, periodicals and other scholarly publications are available for staff and students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.25	Proper facility are in place to cater for disabled students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.26	Computer programs such as Endnote, SPSS and Nvivo are provided by the library	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

## **SECTION C**

27. How could the administration of the library be improved in your opinion?

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**Thank you for your participation.**

## APPENDIX F: STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL

Please indicate your choice with a tick [√] against the responses for the following information.

8. GENDER:

Male	
Female	

9. AGE:

18-24	
25-31	
32-38	
39-45	
More than 45 years, please specify	

10. RACE:

Black	
White	
Indian	
Coloured	
Other, please specify.	

11. HOME LANGUAGE:

IsiXhosa	
English	
Afrikaans	
IsiZulu	
Other, please specify.	

12. YEAR OF STUDY:

1 <sup>st</sup> year	
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	
4 <sup>th</sup> year	
BTech	

13. ARE YOU CURRENTLY STAYING AT THE UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE?

Yes	
No	



## **SECTION B: SERVICE QUALITY QUESTIONS**

This section is based on service quality. The following variables: reliability; responsiveness; assurance; empathy and tangibles will be used to determine the service quality provided by the institution. Please complete the following sections. Circle 1 if you strongly agree, circle 2 if you agree, circle 3 if you are neutral or not sure, circle 4 if you disagree and circle 5 if you strongly disagree with the statement. Please take note that there is no right or wrong answer. I would also like to assure you that no criticism of individuals is intended and that your accurate and honest answers are essential for understanding the challenges which both staff and students face. The data will enable strong and useful recommendations to be made.

- 1 = Strongly agree**  
**2 = Agree**  
**3 = Neutral**  
**4 = Disagree**  
**5 = Strongly disagree**

Please refer to the example below concerning how to answer the questions.

### **Example:**

No.	Statement		Scores				
<b>2.</b>	<b>Administration</b>						
	<b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.</b>						
a).	The office is efficient in assisting students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

<b>1. ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION</b>							
<b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately</b>							
	Statement		Scores				
1.1	This institution provides services within the time one might reasonably expect	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.2	Administrative staff have the knowledge to answer my questions relating to courses offered.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.3	Administration keeps accurate and	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5

	retrievable records.	my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.4	Complaints and problems are solved with concern and sympathy	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.5	The behaviour of staff at the institution makes you feel that you can trust them and have confidence	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.6	Staff provide a dependable and reliable service	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Responsiveness: Willing to help students and provide prompt service</b> <b>Administrative staff:</b>							
1.7	deal with queries within the institution efficiently and promptly	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.8	show a willingness to help students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.9	are never too busy to respond to a request for assistance	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.10	can be contacted easily by telephone	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of staff members and their ability to convey trust and confidence.</b> <b>Administrative staff:</b>							
1.11	deal with enquiries efficiently	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.12	respect confidentiality when information is disclosed to them	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.13	make you feel safe in your transactions with employees	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.14	are friendly and polite	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.15	have the knowledge needed to answer customer enquiries	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.16	have adequate staff members to carry out the duties and services	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

	they provide						
1.17	provide helpful and easy to understand answers when handling your query	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.18	are always willing to help students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Empathy: Caring individualized attention the administrators provide to its customers</b>							
1.19	Administrative staff provide caring attention	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.20	When I have a problem, administrative staff in the institution show a sincere interest in solving it.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.21	Operating hours are convenient to students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.22	The staff appear to have students' best interest at heart	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.23	Staff understand the specific needs of students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.24	Students' safety is guaranteed	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tangibles: Facilities, equipment and personal appearance of staff at the institution</b>							
1.25	Administrative staff have sufficient computers, printing/photocopying machines, etc., needed to do their work	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.26	There are enough administrative personnel to assist students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.27	Technical equipment is up to date	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.28	Physical facilities are visually appealing	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.29	Tools and instruments used to provide service are appropriate.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

1.30	The appearance of offices is attractive	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
1.31	Power cuts due to poor maintenance of university power stations seldom occur	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>2. RESIDENCES</b>							
<b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.</b>							
2.1	The Residence Office provides the service it promises	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.2	The service is provided correctly the first time	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.3	Services provided by the Residence Office satisfies my needs	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.4	Submitted personal information is kept confidential by the Residence Office	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.5	The Residence Office keeps error free records	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.6	The Residence Office provides a dependable, reliable service	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Responsiveness: Willing to help students and provide prompt service</b>							
2.7	The information provided by my Residence Office is always correct	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.8	Residence staff always keep students updated concerning the service they provide	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.9	The Residence Office speeds up processes when allocating rooms	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.10	Residence allocation criteria is clearly explained to students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.11	The Residence Office is reliable and efficient	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

2.12	The Residence Office is easily contacted by phone	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.13	Residence Office staff have a good approach to students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of residence administrative staff members and their ability to convey trust and confidence</b>							
2.14	Staff in the institution are consistently courteous to me	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.15	Staff are willing to assist students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.16	Staff attend to student queries promptly	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.17	Staff are friendly and polite	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.18	Staff have the knowledge needed to answer students' queries.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.19	You feel safe when you deal/make arrangements with staff	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Empathy: Caring individualized attention the administrators provide to its students</b>							
2.20	Staff understand the needs of their students.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.21	Administrative staff members always present a professional appearance	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.22	Operating hours are convenient to students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.23	Administrative staff give personal attention to each student	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.24	Staff have students' best interests at heart	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.25	Security guide is easily available	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tangibles: Facilities, equipment and personal appearance of staff at the institution</b>							

2.26	The appearance and design of the university residences is appropriate for learning	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.27	The rooms in the students' residential accommodation are comfortable.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.28	The allocation of rooms is fair.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.29	Facilities and equipment are sufficient	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.30	The maintenance of residences is of a high standard.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.31	There is sufficient residential accommodation	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.32	Power cuts due to poor maintenance by the university seldom occur	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.33	Student accommodation is safe	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.34	Student accommodation is clean	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
2.35	Sufficient parking is provided for students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>3. LIBRARY SERVICES</b>							
<b>Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.</b>							
3.1	The services provided by library staff satisfy my needs	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.2	Submitted information is kept confidential by library staff	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.3	Library staff keep accurate and retrievable records	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.4	Information is always readily available for students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

3.5	Complaints and problems are solved with concern and sympathy	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.6	Promises to perform the service within a certain time are kept	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.7	The behaviour of library staff makes you feel that you can trust them and have confidence in their advice.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.8	Overall library staff provide a dependable and reliable service.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Responsiveness: Willing to help students and provide prompt service</b>							
3.9	I feel that it is acceptable that staff are sometimes too busy to help students immediately	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.10	Retrieval of books, journals and other scholarly publications is provided by the library staff efficiently	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.11	Staff respond promptly to student queries	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.12	Staff handle complaints constructively	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.13	Staff are always willing to help students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of staff members and their ability to convey trust and confidence</b>							
3.14	Staff are friendly and polite	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.15	Staff are always willing to assist students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.16	Staff members are knowledgeable about the services they provide	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.17	Staff provide helpful and easy to	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5

	understand answers when handling your query	my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.18	I feel safe when dealing with library staff	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Empathy: Caring individualized attention provided by library administrators</b>							
3.19	Staff give individual attention to each student	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	2	2	3	4	5
3.20	Library opening hours are convenient to all students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.21	Personal attention is given to each student	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.22	Staff understand the specific needs of the students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.23	The staff have students' best interests at heart	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.24	Staff members are welcoming	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.25	There are good student-staff relations	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tangibles: Facilities, equipment and personnel appearance of staff at the institution</b>							
3.26	Communal areas in all students' residences are adequate for the number of students	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.27	Library is clean	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.28	Library is quite	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.29	Adequate printer facilities are available	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.30	The library has a wide range of books and periodicals in my area of studies	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.31	The university library has modern	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5



	computers with the latest programmes installed.	my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.32	There are sufficient computers on campus for the student population	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5
3.33	Power cuts due to poor maintenance are rare.	my expectation	1	2	3	4	5
		my perception	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION C: RECOMMENDATIONS ON IMPROVEMENT OF SERVICES**

4.1 How could the administration of the library be improved in your opinion?

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4.2 How could the administration of academic secretaries/administrators be improved in your opinion?

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4.3 How could the administration of residences be improved in your opinion?

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**Thank you for your participation.**

## APPENDIX G: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Cell Number: 0789810051/0792526777

Fax Number: 0866234468/043-7085276

E-mail address: [mntoyakhe@wsu.ac.za](mailto:mntoyakhe@wsu.ac.za)

837 Gesini Section

Ndevana Location

BERLIN, 5600

Dear Dr.Cishe

Research Directorate, MTHATHA CAMPUS

### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

#### **REFERENCE NUMBER: REC 5/16**

My name is Mxolisi Walter Ntoyakhe, Masters of Management Sciences (MManSci): Administration and Information Management (previously known as MTECH: Commercial Administration) student at the Durban University of Technology in Durban. The Title for my research is **“AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE QUALITY DELIVERED BY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AT ONE SITE OF A SOUTH AFRICAN COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITY”**. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Mr Musawenkosi Ngibe (DUT, South Africa) and Dr Jane Skinner (DUT, South Africa) as my co-supervisor of my study.

I hereby request you to grant me permission to conduct my research with administrative staff (Library section, residence section and academic administrators) and registered students at Potsdam Site to enable me to gather data for my research.

The information that they will provide will be kept strictly confidential. Only supervisor, co-supervisor, statistician and the researcher will have access to the data. Participants will remain completely anonymous throughout the research process. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

---

**MW Ntoyakhe**

Student Number: 21556741

## APPENDIX H: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



### *DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND RESEARCH DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT*

*Nelson Mandela Drive  
Mthatha Campus  
Private Bag X1  
MTHATHA 5117  
Tel: +27 47 502 2947/2647  
Fax: +27 47 502 2185*

*Web Fax: 0866 541 093  
E-mail: [ecishe@wsu.ac.za](mailto:ecishe@wsu.ac.za)  
[bandlac@gmail.com](mailto:bandlac@gmail.com)*

*Buffalo City  
Potsdam Campus  
EAST LONDON  
Tel: +43 708 5444  
Fax: +43 708 5458*

04 April 2016

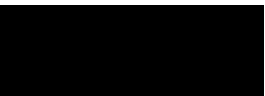
Mr. MW. Ntoyakhe  
Walter Sisulu University  
South Africa

Dear Sir

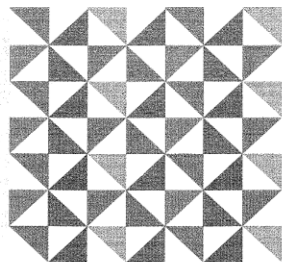
**Re: Request to conduct a Research study at Walter Sisulu University – Postdam Campus**

Permission is hereby granted for the study entitled **An investigation of student's experience of service quality delivered by administrative staff at one site of a South African comprehensive university**. After completion of your study, you are required to submit 2 copies to Walter Sisulu University, one to the Campus Rector of the campus in which the study will be conducted and the other to Research, Innovation & Development Directorate.

Regards

  
Dr. E.N. Cishe  
Acting Director: Research Development

## APPENDIX I: PROVISIONAL APPROVAL ETHICS CLEARANCE



Institutional Research Ethics Committee  
Faculty of Health Sciences  
Room MS 49, Mansfield School Site  
Gate 8, Ritson Campus  
Durban University of Technology

P O Box 1334, Durban, South Africa, 4001

Tel: 031 373 2900  
Fax: 031 373 2407  
Email: [lavishad@dut.ac.za](mailto:lavishad@dut.ac.za)  
[http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional\\_research\\_ethics](http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics)

[www.dut.ac.za](http://www.dut.ac.za)

18 March 2016

IREC Reference Number: **REC 5/16**

Mr M W Ntoyakhe  
P O Box 1421  
East London  
5200

Dear Mr Ntoyakhe

### **AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE QUALITY DELIVERED BY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AT ONE SITE OF A SOUTH AFRICAN COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITY**

I am pleased to inform you that Provisional Approval has been granted to your proposal REC 5/16 subject to:

- Piloting of the data collection tools and
- Obtaining and submitting the necessary gatekeeper permission/s to the IREC.

Full approval is subject to meeting the above conditions.

The Proposal has been allocated the following Ethical Clearance number **IREC 017/16**. Please use this number in all communication with this office.

Approval has been granted for a period of two years, before the expiry of which you are required to apply for safety monitoring and annual recertification. Please use the Safety Monitoring and Annual Recertification Report form which can be found in the Standard Operating Procedures [SOP's] of the IREC. This form must be submitted to the IREC at least 3 months before the ethics approval for the study expires.

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

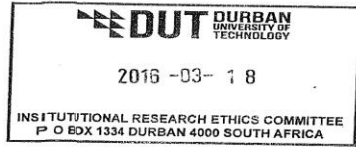
Please note that any deviations from the approved proposal require the approval of the IREC as outlined in the IREC SOP's.

**Please note that you may continue with validity testing and piloting of the data collection tools. Research on the proposed project may not proceed until IREC reviews and approves the final documents. If there are no changes to the data collection tools, kindly notify the IREC in writing.**

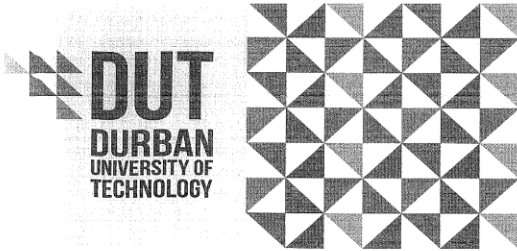
Yours Sincerely



Professor J K Adam  
Chairperson: IREC



## APPENDIX J: ETHICAL APPROVAL



Institutional Research Ethics Committee  
Faculty of Health Sciences  
Room MS 49, Mansfield School Site  
Gate 8, Ritson Campus  
Durban University of Technology

P O Box 1334, Durban, South Africa, 4001

Tel: 031 373 2900

Fax: 031 373 2407

Email: lavishad@dut.ac.za

[http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional\\_research\\_ethics](http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics)

[www.dut.ac.za](http://www.dut.ac.za)

31 May 2016

IREC Reference Number: **REC 5/16**

Mr M W Ntoyakhe  
P O Box 1421  
East London  
5200

Dear Mr Ntoyakhe

**AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE QUALITY  
DELIVERED BY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AT ONE SITE OF A SOUTH AFRICAN  
COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITY**

The Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your final data collection tools for review.

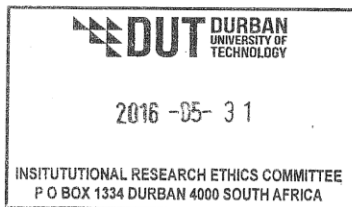
We are pleased to inform you that the questionnaires have been approved. Kindly ensure that participants used for the pilot study are not part of the main study.

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

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

Yours Sincerely,

Professor J K Adam  
Chairperson: IREC



## UNDERPINNING STATISTICS FOR THE STUDY

### APPENDIX K: KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

KMO and Bartlett's Test						
	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.965			
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6005.998			
		df	465			
		Sig.	0.000			
KMO and Bartlett's Test						
	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.935			
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3608.428			
		df	465			
		Sig.	0.000			
			Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
				Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.
	ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION	E	0.965	6005.998	465	0.000
		P	0.935	3608.428	465	0.000

Rotated Component Matrix (ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION)											
		Component (E )					Component (P)				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
This institution provides services within the time one might reasonably expect	B1RI1.1	0.136	0.027	0.410	0.458	0.362	0.220	0.632	0.014	-0.003	0.016
Administrative staff have the knowledge to answer my questions relating to courses offered.	B1RI1.2	0.164	0.278	0.090	0.710	0.013	0.114	0.558	0.343	0.344	-0.101
Administration keeps accurate and retrievable records.	B1RI1.3	0.248	0.254	0.075	0.678	0.209	0.023	0.334	0.311	0.609	-0.027
Complaints and problems are solved with concern and sympathy	B1RI1.4	0.241	0.160	0.132	0.137	0.848	0.116	0.580	-0.013	0.069	0.431
The behaviour of staff at the institution makes you feel that you can trust them and have confidence	B1RI1.5	0.080	0.372	0.211	0.379	0.560	0.388	0.582	0.070	0.021	0.226
Staff provide a dependable and reliable service	B1RI1.6	0.228	0.368	0.193	0.574	0.299	0.250	0.564	0.203	0.304	0.044
deal with queries within the institution efficiently	B1Rs1.7	0.297	0.185	0.260	0.544	0.351	0.232	0.556	0.111	0.286	0.259

and promptly											
show a willingness to help students	B1Rs1.8	0.304	0.251	0.347	0.670	0.198	0.508	0.514	0.227	0.153	-0.045
are never too busy to respond to a request for assistance	B1Rs1.9	0.279	0.084	0.611	0.393	0.266	0.493	0.420	0.101	0.014	0.252
can be contacted easily by telephone	B1Rs1.10	0.301	0.178	0.378	0.606	0.019	0.298	0.388	0.261	0.244	-0.044
deal with enquiries efficiently	B1Ass1.11	0.310	0.473	0.382	0.286	0.240	0.436	0.307	0.034	0.301	0.309
respect confidentiality when information is disclosed to them	B1Ass1.12	0.347	0.568	0.190	0.389	0.036	0.203	0.112	0.078	0.769	0.153
make you feel safe in your transactions with employees	B1Ass1.13	0.274	0.637	0.287	0.352	0.155	0.495	0.262	0.127	0.469	0.153
are friendly and polite	B1Ass1.14	0.239	0.486	0.589	0.306	0.151	0.672	0.372	0.149	0.168	0.185
have the knowledge needed to answer customer enquiries	B1Ass1.15	0.278	0.690	0.258	0.338	0.128	0.554	0.249	0.256	0.365	0.179
have adequate staff members to carry out the duties and services they provide	B1Ass1.16	0.287	0.643	0.177	0.230	0.235	0.479	0.150	0.111	0.439	0.209
provide helpful and easy to understand answers when handling your query	B1Ass1.17	0.342	0.591	0.316	0.206	0.283	0.642	0.179	0.332	0.252	-0.139
are always willing to help students	B1Ass1.18	0.379	0.450	0.576	0.169	0.044	0.705	0.277	0.319	0.116	0.007
Administrative staff provide caring attention	B1mp1.19	0.410	0.344	0.645	0.198	0.159	0.674	0.302	0.174	0.104	0.248
When I have a problem, administrative staff in the institution show a sincere interest in solving it.	B1mp1.20	0.305	0.364	0.681	0.238	0.104	0.746	0.156	0.073	0.171	0.180
Operating hours are convenient to students	B1mp1.21	0.344	0.506	0.373	0.318	0.023	0.414	-0.013	0.164	0.531	0.203
The staff appear to have students' best interest at heart	B1mp1.22	0.402	0.375	0.691	0.082	0.101	0.607	0.233	0.246	0.036	0.387
Staff understand the specific needs of students	B1mp1.23	0.532	0.445	0.403	0.085	0.149	0.426	0.054	0.148	0.264	0.491
Students' safety is guaranteed	B1mp1.24	0.605	0.387	0.219	0.174	0.155	0.304	0.014	0.225	0.028	0.610
Administrative staff have sufficient computers, printing/photocopying machines, etc., needed to do their work	B1Tan1.25	0.657	0.322	0.184	0.317	-0.033	0.220	0.068	0.700	0.043	0.004
There are enough administrative personnel to assist students	B1Tan1.26	0.639	0.427	0.250	0.217	0.096	0.262	0.115	0.720	0.107	0.127
Technical equipment is up to date	B1Tan1.27	0.743	0.163	0.260	0.243	0.191	0.078	0.199	0.567	0.085	0.407
Physical facilities are visually appealing	B1Tan1.28	0.649	0.332	0.042	0.243	0.185	0.176	0.003	0.549	0.117	0.388
Tools and instruments used to provide service are appropriate.	B1Tan1.29	0.710	0.155	0.325	0.273	0.151	0.136	0.048	0.557	0.159	0.379
The appearance of offices is attractive	B1Tan1.30	0.702	0.231	0.254	0.235	0.095	0.090	0.140	0.668	0.159	0.096
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.											
a. Rotation converged in 11 iterations.											



**APPENDIX L: COMPARISON OF EXPECTATIONS VS PERCEPTIONS ON STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE.**

	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)			
This institution provides services within the time one might reasonably expect_ P - This institution provides services within the time one might reasonably expect_ E	-5.722 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Administrative staff have the knowledge to answer my questions relating to courses offered. P - Administrative staff have the knowledge to answer my questions relating to courses offered. _E	-5.255 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Administration keeps accurate and retrievable records. _P - Administration keeps accurate and retrievable records. _E	-3.379 <sup>b</sup>	0.001			
Complaints and problems are solved with concern and sympathy_ P - Complaints and problems are solved with concern and sympathy _E	-5.460 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The behaviour of staff at the institution makes you feel that you can trust them and have confidence _P - The behaviour of staff at the institution makes you feel that you can trust them and have confidence _E	-4.858 <sup>b</sup>	0.000	a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	b. Based on negative ranks.	
Staff provide a dependable and reliable service _P - Staff provide a dependable and reliable service _E	-5.247 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
deal with queries within the institution efficiently and promptly_ P - deal with queries within the institution efficiently and promptly _E	-6.531 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
show a willingness to help students_ P - show a willingness to help students_ E	-5.656 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
are never too busy to respond to a request for assistance _P - are never too busy to respond to a request for assistance_ E	-3.809 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
can be contacted easily by telephone_ P - can be contacted easily by telephone_ E	-4.305 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			

deal with enquiries efficiently_ P - deal with enquiries efficiently_ E	-4.201 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
respect confidentiality when information is disclosed to them_ P - respect confidentiality when information is disclosed to them_ E	-4.241 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
make you feel safe in your transactions with employees_ P - make you feel safe in your transactions with employees_ E	-4.797 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
are friendly and polite_ P - are friendly and polite_ E	-4.466 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
have the knowledge needed to answer customer enquiries_ P - have the knowledge needed to answer customer enquiries_ E	-3.910 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
have adequate staff members to carry out the duties and services they provide_ P - have adequate staff members to carry out the duties and services they provide_ E	-4.165 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
provide helpful and easy to understand answers when handling your query_ P - provide helpful and easy to understand answers when handling your query_ E	-2.343 <sup>b</sup>	0.019			
are always willing to help students_ P - are always willing to help students_ E	-4.637 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Administrative staff provide caring attention_ P - Administrative staff provide caring attention_ E	-5.393 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
When I have a problem, administrative staff in the institution show a sincere interest in solving it._ P - When I have a problem, administrative staff in the institution show a sincere interest in solving it._ E	-4.985 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Operating hours are convenient to students_ P - Operating hours are convenient to students_ E	-3.771 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The staff appear to have students' best interest at heart_ P - The staff appear to have students' best interest at heart_ E	-4.493 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff understand the specific needs of students_ P - Staff understand the specific needs of students_ E	-4.574 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Students' safety is guaranteed_ P - Students' safety is guaranteed_ E	-4.434 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			

E					
Administrative staff have sufficient computers, printing/photocopying machines, etc., needed to do their work_ P - Administrative staff have sufficient computers, printing/photocopying machines, etc., needed to do their work_ E	-4.320 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
There are enough administrative personnel to assist students_ P - There are enough administrative personnel to assist students_ E	-4.632 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Technical equipment is up to date_ P - Technical equipment is up to date_ E	-4.896 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Physical facilities are visually appealing_ P - Physical facilities are visually appealing_ E	-4.312 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Tools and instruments used to provide service are appropriate._ P - Tools and instruments used to provide service are appropriate._ E	-4.537 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The appearance of offices is attractive_ P - The appearance of offices is attractive_ E	-4.247 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Power cuts due to poor maintenance of university power stations seldom occur_ P - Power cuts due to poor maintenance of university power stations seldom occur_ E	-2.634 <sup>b</sup>	0.008			
The Residence Office provides the service it promises_ P - The Residence Office provides the service it promises_ E	-4.805 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The service is provided correctly the first time_ P - The service is provided correctly the first time_ E	-5.419 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Services provided by the Residence Office satisfies my needs_ P - Services provided by the Residence Office satisfies my needs_ E	-4.046 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Submitted personal information is kept confidential by the Residence Office_ P - Submitted personal information is kept confidential by the Residence Office_ E	-3.467 <sup>b</sup>	0.001			
The Residence Office keeps error free records_ P - The Residence Office keeps error free records_ E	-4.649 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The Residence Office provides a dependable, reliable service_ P -	-5.116 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			

The Residence Office provides a dependable, reliable service_ E					
The information provided by my Residence Office is always correct_ P - The information provided by my Residence Office is always correct_ E	-4.587 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Residence staff always keep students updated concerning the service they provide_ P - Residence staff always keep students updated concerning the service they provide_ E	-4.904 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The Residence Office speeds up processes when allocating rooms_ P - The Residence Office speeds up processes when allocating rooms E	-4.495 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Residence allocation criteria is clearly explained to students_ P - Residence allocation criteria is clearly explained to students_ E	-3.867 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The Residence Office is reliable and efficient_ P - The Residence Office is reliable and efficient_ E	-3.756 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The Residence Office is easily contacted by phone_ P - The Residence Office is easily contacted by phone_ E	-3.350 <sup>b</sup>	0.001			
Residence Office staff have a good approach to students_ P - Residence Office staff have a good approach to students_ E	-3.897 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff in the institution are consistently courteous to me_ P - Staff in the institution are consistently courteous to me_ E	-5.921 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff are willing to assist students_ P - Staff are willing to assist students_ E	-6.645 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff attend to student queries promptly_ P - Staff attend to student queries promptly_ E	-6.375 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff are friendly and polite_ P - Staff are friendly and polite_ E	-4.722 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff have the knowledge needed to answer students' queries. P - Staff have the knowledge needed to answer students' queries. E	-5.748 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
You feel safe when you deal/make arrangements with staff_ P - You feel safe when you deal/make arrangements with staff_ E	-6.081 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff understand the needs of	-6.247 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			

their students._ P - Staff understand the needs of their students._ E					
Administrative staff members always present a professional appearance_ P - Administrative staff members always present a professional appearance_ E	-4.586 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Operating hours are convenient to students_ P - Operating hours are convenient to students_ E	-4.990 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff have students' best interests at heart_ P - Staff have students' best interests at heart_ E	-4.778 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Security guide is easily available_ P - Security guide is easily available_ E	-4.067 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The appearance and design of the university residences is appropriate for learning_ P - The appearance and design of the university residences is appropriate for learning_ E	-3.372 <sup>b</sup>	0.001			
The rooms in the students' residential accommodation are comfortable._ P - The rooms in the students' residential accommodation are comfortable._ E	-4.696 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The allocation of rooms is fair._ P - The allocation of rooms is fair._ E	-3.811 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Facilities and equipment are sufficient _P - Facilities and equipment are sufficient _E	-5.402 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The maintenance of residences is of a high standard._ P - The maintenance of residences is of a high standard._ E	-5.467 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
There is sufficient residential accommodation _P - There is sufficient residential accommodation _E	-6.046 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Power cuts due to poor maintenance by the university seldom occur_ P - Power cuts due to poor maintenance by the university seldom occur_ E	-4.328 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Student accommodation is safe _P - Student accommodation is safe _E	-4.793 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Student accommodation is clean_ P - Student accommodation is clean_ E	-5.172 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Sufficient parking is provided for	-4.049 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			

students_ P - Sufficient parking is provided for students_ E					
The services provided by library staff satisfy my needs_ P - The services provided by library staff satisfy my needs_ E	-4.123 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Submitted information is kept confidential by library staff_ P - Submitted information is kept confidential by library staff_ E	-4.591 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Library staff keep accurate and retrievable records_ P - Library staff keep accurate and retrievable records_ E	-3.281 <sup>b</sup>	0.001			
Information is always readily available for students_ P - Information is always readily available for students_ E	-5.573 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Complaints and problems are solved with concern and sympathy_ P - Complaints and problems are solved with concern and sympathy_ E	-5.074 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Promises to perform the service within a certain time are kept_ P - Promises to perform the service within a certain time are kept_ E	-5.336 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The behaviour of library staff makes you feel that you can trust them and have confidence in their advice._ P - The behaviour of library staff makes you feel that you can trust them and have confidence in their advice. E	-5.158 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Overall library staff provide a dependable and reliable service._ P - Overall library staff provide a dependable and reliable service._ E	-5.691 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
I feel that it is acceptable that staff are sometimes too busy to help students immediately_ P - I feel that it is acceptable that staff are sometimes too busy to help students immediately_ E	-4.325 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Retrieval of books, journals and other scholarly publications is provided by the library staff efficiently_ P - Retrieval of books, journals and other scholarly publications is provided by the library staff efficiently_ E	-4.908 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff respond promptly to student queries_ P - Staff respond promptly to student queries_ E	-5.704 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			

Staff handle complaints constructively_ P - Staff handle complaints constructively_ E	-5.425 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff are always willing to help students_ P - Staff are always willing to help students_ E	-6.268 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff are friendly and polite_ P - Staff are friendly and polite_ E	-5.603 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff are always willing to assist students_	-5.265 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff members are knowledgeable about the services they provide_ P - Staff members are knowledgeable about the services they provide E	-5.106 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff provide helpful and easy to understand answers when handling your query_ P - Staff provide helpful and easy to understand answers when handling your query_ E	-3.785 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
I feel safe when dealing with library staff_ P - I feel safe when dealing with library staff_ E	-6.300 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff give individual attention to each student_ P - Staff give individual attention to each student E	-6.175 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Library opening hours are convenient to all students_ P - Library opening hours are convenient to all students_ E	-3.839 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Personal attention is given to each student_ P - Personal attention is given to each student_ E	-5.995 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Staff understand the specific needs of the students_ P - Staff understand the specific needs of the students_ E	-5.252 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The staff have students' best interests at heart_ P - The staff have students' best interests at heart_ E	-1.866 <sup>b</sup>	0.062			This is the ONLY non-significant difference
Staff members are welcoming_ P - Staff members are welcoming_ E	-3.676 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
There are good student-staff relations_ P - There are good student-staff relations_ E	-3.361 <sup>b</sup>	0.001			
Communal areas in all students' residences are adequate for the number of students_ P - Communal areas in all students' residences are adequate for the	-4.806 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			

number of students_ E					
Library is clean_ P - Library is clean_ E	-3.930 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Library is quite_ P - Library is quite_ E	-5.508 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Adequate printer facilities are available_ P - Adequate printer facilities are available_ E	-5.854 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The library has a wide range of books and periodicals in my area of studies_ P - The library has a wide range of books and periodicals in my area of studies_ E	-4.926 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
The university library has modern computers with the latest programmes installed. P - The university library has modern computers with the latest programmes installed. E	-5.276 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
There are sufficient computers on campus for the student population_ P - There are sufficient computers on campus for the student population_ E	-6.300 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			
Power cuts due to poor maintenance are rare. _P - Power cuts due to poor maintenance are rare. _E	-5.981 <sup>b</sup>	0.000			



**APPENDIX M: COMPARISON OF EXPECTATIONS VS PERCEPTIONS ON ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		
B1Rel1.1P - B1Rel1.1E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157		
B1Rel1.2P - B1Rel1.2E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157		
B1Rel1.3P - B1Rel1.3E	-.447 <sup>b</sup>	0.655		
B1Rel1.4P - B1Rel1.4E	-1.342 <sup>b</sup>	0.180		
B1Rel1.5P - B1Rel1.5E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157		
B1Res1.6P - B1Res1.6E	-1.633 <sup>b</sup>	0.102		
B1Res1.7P - B1Res1.7E	-1.732 <sup>b</sup>	0.083		
B1Res1.8P - B1Res1.8E	-1.342 <sup>b</sup>	0.180		
B1Res1.9P - B1Res1.9E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157		
B1Res1.10P - B1Res1.10E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157		
B1Ass1.11P - B1Ass1.11E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157		
B1Ass1.12P - B1Ass1.12E	-1.633 <sup>b</sup>	0.102		
B1Ass1.13P - B1Ass1.13E	-1.342 <sup>b</sup>	0.180		
B1Ass1.14P - B1Ass1.14E	-1.342 <sup>b</sup>	0.180		
B1Ass1.15P - B1Ass1.15E	-.447 <sup>b</sup>	0.655		
B1Emp1.16P - B1Emp1.116E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157		
B1Emp1.17P - B1Emp1.17E	-.577 <sup>b</sup>	0.564		
B1Emp1.18P - B1Emp1.18E	-.447 <sup>b</sup>	0.655		
B1Emp1.19P - B1Emp1.19E	-.816 <sup>b</sup>	0.414		
B1Emp1.20P - B1Emp1.20E	-1.134 <sup>b</sup>	0.257		
B1Tan1.21P - B1Tan1.21E	-1.089 <sup>b</sup>	0.276		
B1Tan1.22P - B1Tan1.22E	-1.342 <sup>b</sup>	0.180		
B1Tan1.23P - B1Tan1.23E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157		
B1Tan1.24P - B1Tan1.24E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157		
B1Tan1.25P - B1Tan1.25E	-1.890 <sup>b</sup>	0.059	a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	b. Based on negative ranks.

**APPENDIX N: COMPARISON OF EXPECTATIONS VS PERCEPTIONS ON RESIDENCE ADMINISTRATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)			
B1Rel1.1P - B1Rel1.1E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157	a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	b. Based on negative ranks.	c. The sum of negative ranks equals the sum of positive ranks.
B1Rel1.2P - B1Rel1.2E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Rel1.3P - B1Rel1.3E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Rel1.4P - B1Rel1.4E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Rel1.5P - B1Rel1.5E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Res1.6P - B1Res1.6E	.000 <sup>c</sup>	1.000			
B1Res1.7P - B1Res1.7E	.000 <sup>c</sup>	1.000			
B1Res1.8P - B1Res1.8E	-.447 <sup>b</sup>	0.655			
B1Res1.9P - B1Res1.9E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Res1.10P - B1Res1.10E	.000 <sup>c</sup>	1.000			
B1Ass1.11P - B1Ass1.11E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Ass1.12P - B1Ass1.12E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Ass1.13P - B1Ass1.13E	.000 <sup>c</sup>	1.000			
B1Ass1.14P - B1Ass1.14E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Tan1.19P - B1Tan1.19E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Tan1.20P - B1Tan1.20E	.000 <sup>c</sup>	1.000			
B1Tan1.21P - B1Tan1.21E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Tan1.22P - B1Tan1.22E	.000 <sup>c</sup>	1.000			
B1Tan1.23P - B1Tan1.23E	-1.414 <sup>b</sup>	0.157			
B1Tan1.24P - B1Tan1.24E	.000 <sup>c</sup>	1.000			
B1Tan1.25P - B1Tan1.25E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			
B1Tan1.26P - B1Tan1.26E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317			

## APPENDIX O: COMPARISON OF EXPECTATIONS VS PERCEPTIONS ON LIBRARY ADMINISTRATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE

	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	b. Based on positive ranks.	c. Based on negative ranks.	d. The sum of negative ranks equals the sum of positive ranks.
B1Rel1.1P - B1Rel1.1E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317				
B1Rel1.2P - B1Rel1.2E	-1.000 <sup>c</sup>	0.317				
B1Rel1.3P - B1Rel1.3E	-1.414 <sup>c</sup>	0.157				
B1Rel1.4P - B1Rel1.4E	-.816 <sup>c</sup>	0.414				
B1Rel1.5P - B1Rel1.5E	-1.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.317				
B1Res1.6P - B1Res1.6E	-1.000 <sup>c</sup>	0.317				
B1Res1.7P - B1Res1.7E	-1.414 <sup>c</sup>	0.157				
B1Res1.8P - B1Res1.8E	.000 <sup>d</sup>	1.000				
B1Res1.9P - B1Res1.9E	-1.342 <sup>b</sup>	0.180				
B1Res1.10P - B1Res1.10E	-1.000 <sup>c</sup>	0.317				
B1Ass1.11P - B1Ass1.11E	-.577 <sup>c</sup>	0.564				
B1Ass1.12P - B1Ass1.12E	-1.633 <sup>b</sup>	0.102				
B1Ass1.13P - B1Ass1.13E	.000 <sup>d</sup>	1.000				
B1Ass1.14P - B1Ass1.14E	.000 <sup>d</sup>	1.000				
B1Ass1.15P - B1Ass1.15E	.000 <sup>d</sup>	1.000				
B1Ass1.16P - B1Ass1.16E	.000 <sup>d</sup>	1.000				
B1Emp1.17P - B1Emp1.17E	.000 <sup>d</sup>	1.000				
B1Emp1.18P - B1Emp1.18E	.000 <sup>d</sup>	1.000				
B1Emp1.19P - B1Emp1.19E	-.577 <sup>c</sup>	0.564				
B1Tan1.20P - B1Tan1.20E	-1.414 <sup>c</sup>	0.157				
B1Tan1.21P - B1Tan1.21E	-1.890 <sup>c</sup>	0.059				
B1Tan1.22P - B1Tan1.22E	-.816 <sup>c</sup>	0.414				
B1Tan1.23P - B1Tan1.23E	-.816 <sup>b</sup>	0.414				
B1Tan1.24P - B1Tan1.24E	-.378 <sup>b</sup>	0.705				
B1Tan1.25P - B1Tan1.25E	-1.000 <sup>c</sup>	0.317				
B1Tan1.26P - B1Tan1.26E	-.577 <sup>b</sup>	0.564				