The Congruence of Quality Values in Higher Education

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis was solely carried out by myself at Napier University, Edinburgh, except where due acknowledgement is made, and it has not been submitted for any other degree.

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02/12/02

Date

Abstract

Higher education and more specifically University education is being called to account more and more. It follows therefore that the Universities must present information on the quality of service which they provide as perceived by their customers and their supporters who supply their funding.

In this thesis research is reported on the measurement of the quality values which Students, Lecturing Staff, and Senior Management display within the period of a learning programme. The principal aim was to ascertain through hypothesis testing if the level of congruence of the value systems of these three main contributors to the learning experience influenced the degree of satisfaction of the Students as the customers and to develope a framework for measuring contributor's quality values.

These objectives were researched in stages as follows;

The first stage was an extensive literature review which was used to underpin the aims and objectives of the research by establishing an understanding of the relationships between Culture and Values, Quality, and Service. The Service review focused upon Higher Education in the University environment including such aspects quality and culture, values and the determinants of service quality, customer focus and society's role within the education experience, stakeholder positioning within the education process, financial considerations, measurement of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and student transformation in terms of their education experience. The review revealed a number of weaknesses in existing knowledge primarily that there has been little research undertaken into the measurement of more than two parties within an education transaction and how the involvement of more than two parties within such is perceived in relation to customer satisfaction.

The second stage of the research was a Case Study using a mixed method approach which comprised interview techniques from which a framework for measuring quality in higher education was developed, and a questionnaire survey undertaken which was used to test the framework from which a number of conclusions were drawn.

The Case Study was conducted within the Business School of the Napier University of Edinburgh. Using qualitative and quantitative methodologies the study examined the expectations as prescribed by the Importance which Senior Management, Lecturing Staff, and Students placed upon aspects of their learning programme. Additionally Students were asked their perceived levels of Satisfaction with their programmes. The outcomes of the Case Study were analysed using triangulated methods and used to highlight any problem aspects within programmes. These aspects were then subjected to value analysis to test the effects of congruity of stakeholder values on the levels of customer satisfaction.

The findings of the case study were that, during the period of the research, the degree of congruence of the three main stakeholders had no impact upon the levels of satisfaction of the Students as customers of the learning programme as offered by the Business School. Further analysis of the Case Study findings indicated the following :

1) That significant core value Gaps between the levels of Student Importance and Satisfaction exist within certain aspects of their learning experience more particularly during the later period of their learning programme.

2) That the role of Senior Management within the learning programme seems to have little influence upon the Student level of satisfaction.

3) That communication channels between Lecturers and Senior Management on policies within the learning programme appear to need reappraisal.

4) That significant differences in core values of Importance exist between Lecturers and Students

5) That Student importance levels and by definition their value systems changed over the period of their learning programme.

6) That there were non-core value significant differences in the importance which Full-time and Part-time Students placed upon certain aspects of their programme of learning

7) That there were non-core value significant differences in the importance which Undergraduate and Graduate Students placed upon certain aspects of their programme of learning

8) That there were non-core value significant differences in the importance which Undergraduate and Lecturers placed upon a programme of learning year on year.

The size and distribution of the populations sampled has enabled conclusions to be drawn on the validity and generalisability of the framework for measuring quality values in the field of higher education throughout the Napier University and to some extent when factors such as cross cultural values, demographic considerations, questionnaire's wording, etc., are taken into account as the basis for the further examination of stakeholder value systems within the education experience in the U K and internationally.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Higher Education can be seen as an area in which large amounts of government spending can be, and is, incurred. It follows that questions have been raised by those financing this expenditure into the quality of the educational experience being provided. As a response to this situation Government has demanded improvements in education by the introduction of a raft of measures by which the quality of the education service can be made accountable and these are now in place.

The drive for improved quality of service and customer satisfaction has been shown to be continuous since both are seen as a dynamic entities. It follows therefore, as has been shown within other service industries, that education, and more particularly higher education, must acquire the knowledge of what "our customer's and staff's expectations are of the education service and what their current levels of satisfaction are with it". Without such knowledge it is argued that any programme of change introduced to bring about improved service, despite having innumerable quality assurance (QA) measures, may not succeed.

The approach of customer satisfaction forms the basis of the Total Quality approach to service provision which would seem to satisfy the need of the educationalists for a tool (model). Whilst Total Quality does not claim to be the panacea for all of the ills of the education service it does offer an opportunity for the evaluation of current and future practices by its philosophy of involving all of the stakeholders within a process in any programme to bring about necessary change to that process.

The research undertaken and reported in this thesis is based upon the philosophies of the Total Quality approach and focuses upon the need to establish customer satisfaction through the knowledge of a higher education faculty's main stakeholders' quality value systems.

Much has been researched and written about the interface between the customer and customer facing staff and their expectations and levels of satisfaction within a service transaction. Little has been written however on the subject of congruence of values of more than two stakeholders within these transactions, e.g. the management of the customer facing staff, the staff themselves, and the customers. The somewhat tenuous assumption usually being that the values of the staff and the management are shared and are therefore those of the organisation.

Whilst a certain amount of research has been undertaken into the sharing of values in relation to customer satisfaction within the field of higher education little, if any, research has been done into the complex issue of congruence of the quality values of the main stakeholders within a learning programme. The main stakeholders being defined for the purposes of this thesis as the Students, the Teaching Staff, and the Higher Education Establishment's Senior Management.

Whilst the QA measures currently in place may satisfy the requirements of those who finance the sector the need for further research into values and their congruence effects has been highlighted by the statement that, "Organisations having a high degree of congruity of values among its members have been shown to have a greater degree of effectiveness", (Denison 1984, 1990; Calori and Sarnin 1991). This effect is illustrated in Figure 1.1 in which the degree of congruence is shown as the convergence of the three circles which represent the values as held by the main stakeholders within an education experience.

The Effects of the Congruence of Stakeholder Values in Higher Education

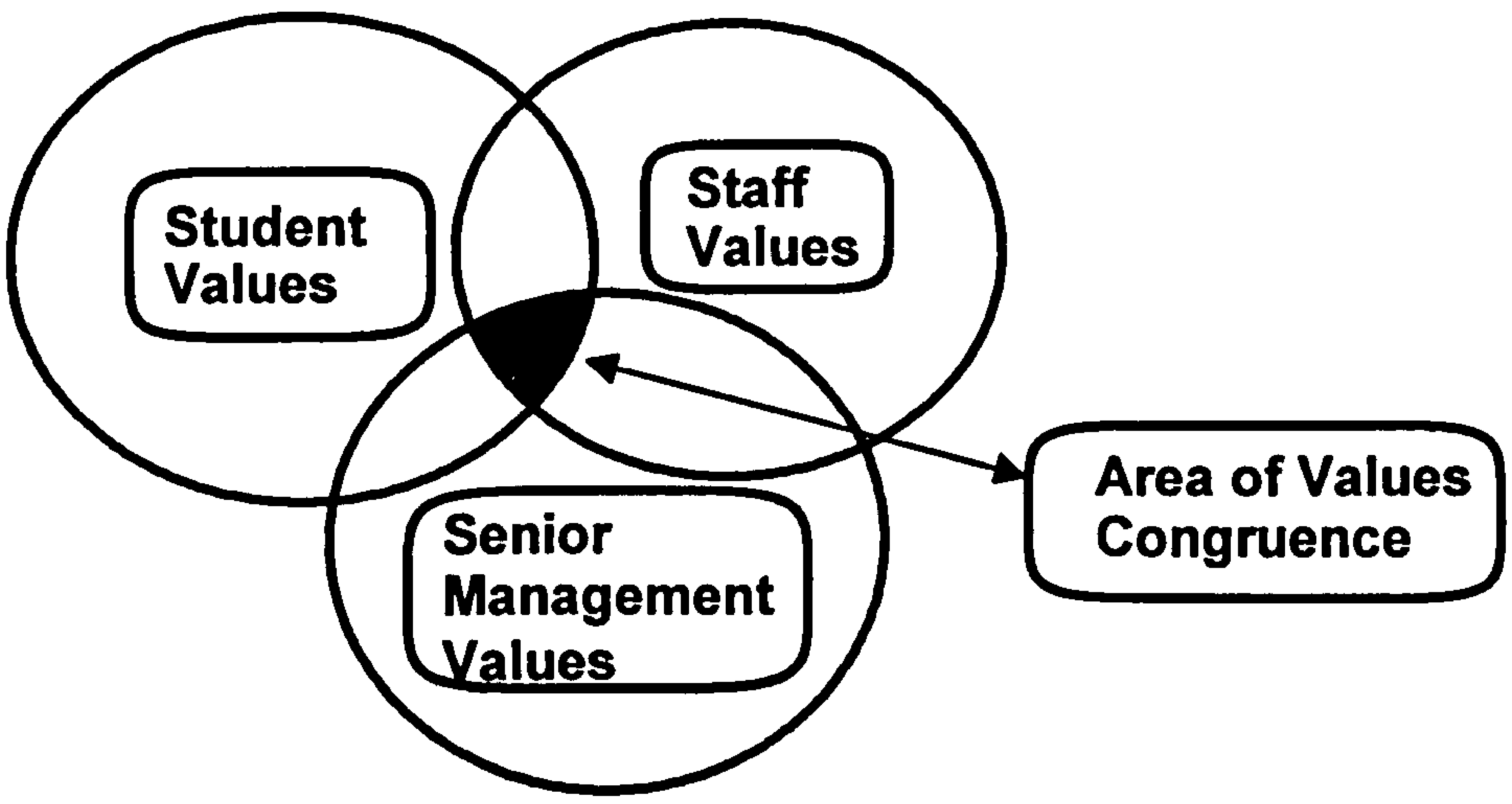

Figure 1.1

To identifying the need for greater effectiveness by testing the current situation and highlighting any changes which could improve the Napier University of Edinburgh Business School's effectiveness, a case study research programme within the field of the congruence of quality values in higher education was undertaken whose outcomes are reported in this thesis.

Within the scope of the research a Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education was developed using mixed methodologies and used to test the following hypothesis that, 'Levels of customer (All Students) satisfaction are directly related to the congruence of the value systems of the major stakeholders (All Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers) within a service consumption', i.e. the larger the area of congruence of stakeholder values as illustrated in figure 1.1 the greater the level of customer satisfaction.

For the purposes of this research the word congruence can be defined as the degree to which an organisation's stakeholders share the same values.

The outcome of the testing of the hypothesis proved the validity of the framework as a measurement tool and given certain constraints of its generalisability within other faculties within the field of higher education. The framework's development and the outcomes from the hypothesis tested thus adds to the depth of knowledge of the effects of congruence of stakeholder value systems within a higher education environment.

1.1 The Research Aims

The objectives of this study were to identify those quality values which were held by the stakeholders of an organisation operating within the higher education sector of a service industry and to establish the degree of commonalty, and therefore congruity, of these values. The degree of congruity being hypothesised as a test of the quality of service provided.

The objectives of the research can thus be stated as :-

1) To understand the diversity of values systems within the realms of education practices.
2) To investigate the values possessed by each of the stakeholders involved within a programme of education.
3) To establish which values are important in ensuring a successful education programme.
4) To determine the levels of congruence between the values as demonstrated by each of the stakeholders within the education experience.
5) To identify value aspects as either "core" or "peripheral" since this will determine the degree of congruence within the existing education programmes and facilitate any change

management programmes deemed necessary to ensure customer, i.e. stakeholder, satisfaction.

1.2 Research Methodology

In achieving the aims of this research a mixed methodology has been employed involving both interviews and a larger scale questionnaire survey in the form of a case study research within one of the faculties within a University. This research has thus yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. The interviews provided a picture of the service expectations and value systems of University Students, Staff, and Senior Management and how these influence their judgment of the quality of the service being provided by the University. The data collected by the questionnaire survey has been analysed using computer based statistical techniques to measure the quality values adopted by the main stakeholders in a higher educational learning programme. Both qualitative and quantitative data being used to develop a framework for the measurement of stakeholder quality values. The research design and methodology have been informed throughout by an extensive critical review of current literature in the field.

1.3 The Thesis Structure

This thesis has been structured to accommodate the aims of the research. It charts a course from the examination of a world view of culture and values, via an overview of the present thinking on quality, to the values found within the service aspects of higher education.

A review of the literature has been carried out on the subjects of culture, values, quality, service and higher education and is discussed in chapters 2, 3, and 4. Each chapter defines the current status of the area being researched which acts as a preliminary step in defining the focus of the research.

The thesis then reports on the findings of a case study from which conclusions are drawn of the effects of congruence of the main stakeholders' quality values upon the quality of service provided by a faculty of a UK University.

The literary review was conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the period of the research.

Chapter 1 - Introduces the subject matter of the research thesis and gives the aims and objectives of the research.

Chapter 2 - Presents a critical evaluation of the extensive literature within the known world area of culture and values. The chapter is split into the main sections of culture and values and their roles within an organisation focusing upon how this impinges on people's lives by moulding their thought processes and therefore their value systems. The role of an individual's value system, their attitudes, expectations, and perceptions within and outwith an organisation and how these are measured forms the focus of this chapter's content.

Chapter 3 - Examines and discusses the background and current literature on the role of a Quality Culture within an organisation. The validity of Total Quality Management (TQM) and quality systems as current management tools in any implementation quality programme is discussed. The role of quality values within the various management models, practices, professional ethics is highlighted throughout the content of the chapter.

Chapter 4 - Looks at the literature which claims to define Service and the difficulties in adopting any one of these to meet the expectations of the various stakeholders in a service transaction. The measurement of stakeholder expectations and satisfaction outcomes of a service transaction by the use of the satisfaction / dissatisfaction paradigm is examined along with the various critiques and aspects of the Parasuraman, Berry, and Zeithaml (1988) SERVQUAL model for measuring Service Quality. The chapter finally examines the literature on the role of Quality in Higher Education and how its quality values relate to the introduction of Best Value practices within the domain of Public Services.

Chapter 5 - Reports on the mixed methodologies used to test the main and subsequent hypotheses of this research thesis. The use of triangular validation within the analysis of a case study and the development of a Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education are explained.

The outcome of the study concluded that the main hypothesis under test should be rejected. As a result of these findings further hypotheses were tested using the case study data set to try to determine possible causes for this rejection and these are reported within this chapter.

Chapter 6 - Validation and analysis of the research data findings forms the basis of the conclusions and recommendations within the field of Higher Education and of issues specific to the Napier University and its Business School in the chapter.

Chapter 2

Culture and Values

2.0 Introduction

"Shall I wash out these moldy dishes Mr. Fleming" ?
"What ! No! No! Those are my new cultures".
"Away with you you'd never see such rubbish in an art gallery. I don't know though " ?

A somewhat frivolous approach to the introduction to the serious subject of culture. However it does serve to illustrate two major factors within the study of the subject. Firstly that the word culture has various connotations dependent upon the user and recipient and secondly that there is really nothing new under the sun since the healing powers of mold (penicillin) were known to Indian medicine men throughout the world centuries before Sir Iain Fleming's "discovery".

Within the study of culture each "new" thinking can be reflected back to some period within mankind's history and may be seen as simply a progression taking thinking a little stage further in its evolution.

2.1 Culture

The term culture was probably coined by E.B.Tylor (1871) who stated that, "Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society", and by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), Laraia (1986), and Hofstede et al. (1990) to explain the concept of human beings having the capacity to learn and transfer their knowledge from one member of a society to another. The ideas of community, creation, accumulation, and transmission were the main issues for Tylor (ibid), and of Kroeber and Parsons (1958). Unlike the biological attributes of mankind culture is seen as the result of a learning process which enhances genetic characteristics and instincts.

Whilst on the surface cultures seem to differ from group to group or society to society, in essence all cultures contain the same essential characteristics such as,

a) *Invention*

People invent their culture in order to survive within the environments in which they find themselves grouped together. R.T. LaPiere, (1946), categorised this invention under three headings;

1) ideology - consisting of ideas, beliefs, values, and ways of reasoning resulting in an action compelling quality, i.e. the ability to link attitude with action.

2) technology - consisting of the skills and crafts which enable goods and artefacts.

3) organisational systems - these make it possible for groups and individuals within a group to co-ordinate their behaviour effectively with the actions of others.

b) *Learning*

Culture is not instinctive, it is learned from an early age, being passed from one generation to the next.

c) *Sharing*

Culture is a group phenomenon in which belief, value, or practice is shared by a significant proportion of the group which may range in size from a whole society to a smaller family unit.

d) *Similarities but Differences*

The following characteristics are found in all cultural societies elements of athletic sport, bodily adornment, a calendar, cooking, courtship, dancing, education, family, gestures, government, housing, language, law, religious ritual, and numerous other items.

e) *Dynamism and Adaptability*

Culture satisfies mankind's basic biological needs whilst at the same time offering order, direction, and guidance. However in order that it satisfies these needs its beliefs, values and customs must continue to evolve at a pace consistent with the environment in which it operates.

f) *Organised and Integrative*

A culture's characteristics bond together to create a whole.

g) *Prescriptive*

Cultural norms specify what behaviours are expected in any given situation. Culture is a great source of security that tells us frequently what is right or wrong, Laraia (1986).

The foregoing elements which together comprise a culture all surround a central core which is formed by values.

The concept of culture is difficult to define since it encompasses all of the sciences involved with human behaviour such as individual's - psychology, as group - sociology, and in the physiological approach of the anthropologist to the make up of society itself. Perhaps the most widely used definition in terms of the study of organisational behaviour and quality values is that stated by Schiffman and Kanuk, (1997) of; "The sum total of learned beliefs, values, and customs that serve to direct the behaviour of members of a particular society", would be more appropriate to use as a working definition for the purposes of this research.

2.2 Organisational Culture and Values

"An organisation exists when two or more persons agree to collaborate over a period of time to achieve certain common goals". G.A. Cole (1995)

Organisational culture was first used as a casual line by Blake and Moulton (1964) to denote what others had termed 'corporate climate'. This in turn went on to become 'corporate culture' a term already used in an article by Silverzweig and Allen (1976) but which gained wider acceptance within academic sectors when used by Deal and Kennedy (1982) and in their book of the same title and from the references to organisational culture in the Peters and Waterman (1982) book titled 'In Search of Excellence'.
However as can be seen from the foregoing the use of the term culture has been around the study of organisations, their behaviour, and the values which they adopt for much longer than the statement implies. Indeed Kroeber and Kluckhohn listed 164 definitions on the subject in their text of 1952 whilst Schneider (1986), points out that prior to the concept of organisational culture the subject matter involved was referred to as the "organisational climate". However he goes on to state that organisational culture seems to refer to a "deeper" issue than climate since it refers more specifically to :
1) The values that lie beneath what the organisation rewards, supports, and expects.
2) The norms that surround and / or underpin the policies, practices, and procedures of organisations.
3) The meaning incumbents share about what the norms and values of the organisation are.
Organisational culture and organisational climate are therefore often used to denote the same phenomenon. Ogbonna and Harris (1998) have argued that there exists a clear distinction between the two phenomena using the work of Schneider and Rentsch (1987) to summarise the distinction by stating that, "Climate refers to the ways organisations operationalise the themes that that pervade everyday behaviour ... *what happens around here...* whilst culture refers to the history, norms, and values that members believe underlie climate ... *why do things happen the way they do*".

It can be seen that with such a proliferation of definitions on the subject of culture within an organisation there is no definitive definition. Hofstede (1980) points out however that, "Most people who write on the subject agree that organisational culture is;

- holistic referring to a whole which is more than the sum of the parts.
- historically determined, reflecting the history of the organisation.
- related to the things anthropologists study like rituals and symbols.
- socially constructed created and preserved by the group of people who together form the organisation.
- 'soft' (although Peters and Waterman (1982) assure their readers that 'soft' is 'hard').
- difficult to change although authors disagree on how difficult.

Handy, (1993), identified four main types of culture to be found in organisations of Power, Role, Task, and Person cultures. . He himself admits that his typology is impressionistic and imprecise commenting that, "A culture cannot be precisely defined for it is something that is perceived, something felt".

To get to this unconscious natural element of the structure of an organisational culture Schein (1992) states that there are three levels of the culture which must first be overcome before arriving at the true culture and what values make it work.

Firstly there are the artefacts of the culture - the signs which are visible but often difficult to decipher. These are the explicit, often written, aspects of a culture.

Secondly there are the espoused values - which underlie these artefacts. These values represent the rallying points of the group, which are tested in experience, learned, and may or may not be implemented in practice. Like the artefacts, it is argued, that these are the organisation's designed elements of its culture.

The third and final level, and most important in Schein's view, is the basic assumptions - or taken for granted assumptions about what works and what is acceptable to the group, and thus what subconsciously guides its behaviour and outlook. It is argued that these levels within Schien's model tend to evolve over time.

The influence of these basic assumptions, and the values which underpin them, is the anchorage which allows a culture to survive and grow within the environments in which it exists. Woodcock and Francis (1989), state that, "Values are hard to detect. They underpin organisations like the foundations of a house. If the foundation is weak then the house falls down". The values represented at the basic assumption level of a culture, having been tried and tested over a period of time, are generally seen by the organisation's members as core values and as such, as will be discussed later in this thesis, are extremely difficult to alter or change. The organisation's values must be relevant to any emerging competitive environment and they must be reinforced often enough to become part of everyday language. Clearly defined organisational values must be exciting and bold enough to allow employees to identify with them and act accordingly when delivering a service.

From these definitions, it can be seen that culture is integral at every level of an organisation, from the behaviour of each individual and every social and structural unit to the underlying beliefs and values which are the basis for all actions including decision making, Williams et al (1989). Cultural assumptions will influence how an organisation forms its strategy, develops goals and chooses means of reaching these goals, Schein (1985). It is reasonable to suggest that the type of culture which an organisation has is likely to influence the workings of the business and so have an influence on organisation's performance.

Contained within any organisation's culture there exists an ideology which has been defined as, "The major beliefs and values expressed by top management, or dominant cultural coalition within the organisation, that provide organisational members with a frame of reference for action", (Hartley 1983; Starbuck 1982). Top Management being defined within ISO 9000:2000 as, "A person or group of people who direct and control an organisation at the highest level".

From the foregoing statement, beliefs can be seen as providing legitimacy for a desired course of action whilst action preferences are based upon an individual's value judgements of what is right or wrong, possible or impossible. It follows, therefore, that ideologies can be viewed as consisting of the beliefs and values which provide a frame of reference for the organisation's existence and, as such, shape strategic choices, Hambrick and Mason (1984), and determine organisational practices, Pettigrew (1979).

It is argued from all of the descriptions and boundary complexities of where organisational culture should sit within organisational structures that organisational culture based upon the dynamic of a value system requires a core of 'shared values' to continue to exist at all.

2.3 Aspects and Key Areas of Organisational Culture and Values

Just as there are many definitions of organisational culture there are many different aspects and key areas which comprise an organisation's culture. The relative significance of each aspect will vary from industry to industry. It will influence the choice of management style to be adopted to bring about change.

Pumpin (1987) listed the seven aspects of a culture within his model as;

1) The extent to which the organisation is marketing oriented, giving customers high priority.

2) The relationships between management and staff, manifest through communication and participation systems, for example.

3) The extent to which people are target oriented, and committed to achieving agreed levels of performance.

4) Attitudes towards innovation. It is particularly important that the risks associated with failure are perceived as acceptable by all levels of management if innovation and entrepreneurship are to be fostered.

5) Attitudes towards costs and cost reduction.

6) The commitment and loyalty to the organisation felt, and shown, by staff.

7) The impact of, and reaction to, technology and technological change and development.

There have been a wide variety of different methods used to categorise culture. Bettinger (1989) deals with 12 key components of corporate culture, Tucker et al. (1988) use thirteen culture scales derived from cultural issues identified by management, Hofstede et al. (1990) used 6 dimensions in their research of organisational culture. All of the models reflect the internal aspects of a culture which contains organisationally designed aspects and those which evolve, or maybe just happen, to meet the needs of its members.

The external factors pertaining to the organisational structure must however also be viewed within the overall picture. For example the culture may be influenced by the function of the organisation. The culture of the Armed Forces will differ from that say of a manufacturing company or a retail organisation.

Within each of the models described there must exist a set of values which when closely examined constitute the culture of the organisation. That is the set of beliefs that people share about what sorts of behaviour is seen as correct and incorrect in given circumstances and to which all of the members of the organisation subscribe.

The aspect of national identity and culture becomes increasingly significant as companies expand to become international in outlook. It has been argued by different theorists, Adler and Jelinek (1986), Hofstede (1980), that the impact of national culture on the behaviour of people within an organisation is very significant.

The foregoing statement generalises the problems and benefits which manifest themselves within a global organisation's culture. The research into this aspect of cultures and the values which underpin them is not within the scope of this research.

2.4 The Development of an Organisation's Culture and Value Systems

Luthans (1995), identified the initial process of organisational cultural development as normally taking some version of the following four steps:-

1) A single person (founder) has an idea for a new enterprise.

2) The founder brings together a group of people who share a common vision with him / her and who share the belief that it is worth the investment of time, capital, and energy to achieve that vision.

3) The group create an organisation and with it a set of values by which the organisation will carryout the task of achieving the vision.

4) Once the organisation is created others are brought in and a common history begins to be built which develops into the accepted culture.

Once established the organisation is maintained by adopting the following steps :-

a) the careful selection of recruits whose personal values "best fit" or can be adapted to the organisation's established value system.

b) on the job experiences to familiarise new staff with the organisation's culture.

c) mastery of one's own job.

d) meticulous attention to measuring operational results and to the reward and recognition of individual performance.

e) careful adherence to those values within the organisation which contribute to the strategy of success indeed these values become so powerful as to influence the day-to-day behaviour of everyone within the organisation.

f) a reinforcing of organisational folklore and stories.

Whilst the foregoing considers the internal development of an organisation due cognisance must be taken of external factors. Gordon (1990), mentions a number of these in discussing the nature of the industry as a factor in the influence of organisational development as referred to in the previous section of this thesis. These include - industry type, competing organisations, the state of scientific knowledge, the nature of the product, the stage in the industry life cycle, technology and the institution structure, the existing value structure of the marketplace in which the organisation operates.

2.5 Dominant Cultures and Subcultures

Belbin (1993), has stated that the best teams or organisations consist of eight different types of people. Given that generally most organisations consist of more than eight individuals it leads to the conclusion that their will be more of one particular type of individual in each organisation. Following this logic therefore it would seem that given the gregarious nature of mankind that people having similar favoured behavioural patterns will form subgroups within the structure of an organisation. These subgroups will have within them a sense of shared values and develop into a subculture within the culture of the organisation. However for the organisation to continue to exist and flourish there will be a set of core values to which, by and large, the majority of the organisation's members will readily conform. This set of core values combine to form the dominant culture which guide the day-to-day behaviour of the organisation's membership.

Subcultures can be seen as having a subset of values which are different to those of the organisation but which in general do not conflict or be in direct opposition to those core values which make up the dominant culture of the organisation.

Munson (1984), defines a subculture as, "Any segment of the dominant culture which preserves important patterning of the dominant culture, but which also develops its own unique patterns of behaviour".

The importance of subcultures, their role within the continuing operations or otherwise of an organisation, and within the realms of customer focus is often overlooked.

Within the organisation itself subcultures can weaken and undermine the overall objectives of organisation through conflict and tension surrounding the acceptance of the dominant culture's values or any changes to the particular value set to which the subculture members relate. It is one of the roles of leadership within any group or organisation to identify and understand the roles played by subcultures not only within their own organisation but also of those with which it may come into contact, Gordon (1985). Such an understanding will lead to a synergy of effort by all organisation members which will lead to achievement of organisational goals since most subcultures play a positive role acting as catalysts to prevent the organisation becoming 'stale'.

Fred Luthans (1995), points out that most subcultures are formed to help the members of a particular group deal with the specific day-to-day problems with which they are confronted. As such in problem solving mode they can only be but good for the resolution of organisation wide goal achievement. Most organisations would in fact be better characterised as a collection of subcultures rather than unitary, dominant cultures, Van Maanen and Barley (1985).

2.6 The Strength of a Culture

There are many differing opinions on what the "strength" of a culture is and what influence this has on organisations. Peters and Waterman (1982) are of the opinion that a strong culture is one where values are shared, i.e. homogeneous, amongst the members of the organisation. Calori and Sarnin (1991), measured the strength as 2 dimensions, the homogeneity (the inverse of the average of the standard deviations) and the intensity (the average score of the 10 most characteristic values in the organisation).

Gordon and DiTomaso (1992) sum up the opinions on how the "strength" of a culture should be defined as, "As coherence (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Weick, 1985); as homogeneity (Ouchi and Price, 1978); as stability and intensity (Schein, 1985); as congruence (Schall, 1983); as thickness (Sathe, 1983); as penetration (Louis, 1985); as internalised control (DiTomaso, 1987)".

Denison (1984, 1990) attempted to determine the influence of cultural strength on organisational performance. His idea of strength is that of consistency which he defined as the inverse of the variance in questionnaire responses across work groups within companies. He found low variances on four different traits - organisation of work, emphasis on human resources, decision making processes, and co-ordination - significantly correlated with companies standardised 'Return on Investment' for the subsequent two years. This provides support for the idea that an organisation's culture strength (consistency) relates to subsequent financial performance which also gives credence to the importance of shared values as discussed by Sathe as a major factor within the survival of the organisation.

2.7 Values

The earliest recorded use of the word value or 'valeu' in the English language was in 1303 by a merchant called Brunne, (Oxford English Dictionary). His particular usage referred to the 'valeu' placed upon some commodities for which an equivalent medium of exchange would be acceptable. Values have more recently however taken on a new meaning in relation to human behaviour and motivation.

Throughout history there has been an interest in understanding human values and their role in motivating and explaining behaviour. References to values were made by philosophers such as Aristotle and Kant as they discussed aesthetics; Plato, Hobbes, and Rousseau as they deliberated over the problems of government and of citizen responsibility; and military, industrial, and political leaders such as Eisenhower, Sloan, Rockefeller, and Morgan as they considered various strategies for motivating and leading their subordinates, Postner and Munson (1979).

The view that values play an important role in human behaviour and understanding has been universally accepted as proven. Literature from psychology, sociology, organisational behaviour, consumerism, and all sciences relating to human activity has shown that personal values underlie and explain a variety of individual and group behaviours.

More commonly values are understood as something which has worth which is not necessarily objective, e.g. a possession, in nature but which may be subjective, e.g. the values of social relationships and standing or one's self worth.

In the field of psychology values have been found to be related to such traits as interpersonal conflict, and power, Rokeach and Berman (1971). Sociologists have used values to describe society's social consciousness and various aspects of social behaviour, Rokeach (1968).

Munson (1984) has shown, through research into the work of organisational behaviourists and his own evaluations that; values influence corporate decisions on strategy , Guth and Tagiuri (1965); cause many "people problems" within organisations, McMurray (1963); differentiate between organisations, Clare and Sanford (1979); and between managers and non-managers, Munson and Posner (1980); are directly related to indices of managerial success, England and Lee (1974); and influence satisfaction within a group, Drake (1973).

It follows therefore that within the concepts of a culture, as previously discussed, human values represent the building blocks of a culture which is the very basis for mankind's existence both as an individual and within an organisation. The analogy of the cultural building blocks can be carried further to describe the pattern adopted in laying the building blocks as a system. Such a system is generally referred to in terms of cultural research as a value system which has been defined as, "An organised set of preferential standards that are used in making selections of objects and actions, resolving conflicts, invoking social sanctions, and coping with needs or claims for social and psychological defences of choices made or proposed. Values are components in the guidance of anticipatory and goal directed behaviour; but they are also backward looking in their frequent service to justify or explain past conduct", Williams (1979).

The functionality of a value system has been described within the context of an organisation as legitimising behaviour by stipulating positive or negative sanctions for desired and proscribed behaviour within a given cultural setting, (Kluchhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Rokeach, 1973; Schein, 1985). From the foregoing definitions it can be seen that since values are used in judgmental and goal actioned situations they must be dynamic in nature. In contrast to all of the literature on human values the research into quality values as a construct and how they are seen in terms of the individual's values is sparse. True there is literature on organisational quality values and on how to bring quality into the strategic realm of the organisation. This will, by so doing, influence the individual but little research has been done into the impact of the quality values which an individual has as a consumer, provider (both internally and externally), or organisational strategist and on how these three groups of values are related to each other within the context of quality value. Perhaps it is felt that this information can be gleaned from the literature provided on the total quality organisation or by the humanist sciences.

2.7.1 Values Description

If we subscribe to the Maslow (1943) theory of human motivation based upon the notion of a universal hierarchy of human needs then values as a function of these needs represent the psychological processes, which a person will go through to achieve those needs. Just as needs can be divided into 2 distinct types, innate - those with which an individual is born which are primarily physiological (biogenic) in structure including all of the factors required to ensure survival, and acquired needs - those an individual develops after birth which are primarily psychological (psychogenic) and are learned in order that the individual may conform to acceptable behavioural patterns which allow them to function within the environment in which they finds themselves. Values then can be seen as being instinctive, biogenic; and learned, psychogenic; through socialisation or as Hofstede (1984) described, as a process of "mental programming".

The transfer of collective value programmes is a social phenomenon. Societies, organisations, and groups having ways of conserving and passing on value programmes from one generation to the next. Accepting that value programmes can be and are transferred within an organisation or culture it follows that within these programmes there will exist an element pertaining to the expectations which people should have of the quality of the product or service which is seen as a need in order to sustain the organisation and the individual within the environment in which they operate. Such expectations represent the benchmark by which valued judgements are made, good or bad, right or wrong based upon these learned values. These value dimensions have an important impact on an individual's level of satisfaction because of their association with expectations. Therefore, values become antecedents to expectations, i.e. expectations are consequences of values.

2.7.2 Value Definitions

Murray, as far back as 1938, defined values as being regarded as the cognitive representation of internal "needs" mediated by external "presses".

A review of the values literature discloses numerous approaches to definition and classification. For example values have been described by various scholars as being equivalent to, and / or synonymous with the following: a need, a belief, a motive, any object of interest, a conception of the desirable and not merely something to be desired, a standard in terms of which evaluation is made, and a cognised belief of what ought to be required by society.

While there has been no universally accepted definition of what a value is, a reasonably clear consensus seems to have emerged as postulated by Posner and Munson (1979) who observed that values consist of beliefs about what the individual considers fair, right, just, or desirable. As such, values are used, in comparison processes when people establish standards, judge issues, debate opinions, plan activities, reach decisions, resolve differences, change patterns, or exert influence.

Milton Rokeach (1969 & 1973), defines values as, "An enduring belief that a specific mode or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence". He further suggests that this belief transcends attitudes toward situations. The reference to "personally preferable" is indicative of an individual's values whilst the reference to "socially preferable" indicates values shared by the members of some social aggregate, e.g. an organisation. Thus values can be both an individual, a social, or an organisational phenomenon. As such, Rokeach contends that values are the standards which guide and determine actions, attitudes toward objects and situations, ideologies, presentation of self to others, evaluations, judgements, justifications, comparisons of self with others, and attempts to influence others.

Values are components in the guidance of anticipatory and goal-directed behaviour; but are also backward looking in their frequent service to justify or explain past conduct. Shils, (1961); Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, (1961); Rokeach, (1979); Schein, (1985).

Kluckholh (1951) defined values as a concept of desirability, "A value is a concept, explicit or implicit ... of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action".

In terms of the work environment where even if self employed the individual must rely, to some extent, on the input of others thus creating a shared element to their values have been shown to, "Serve to create the cognitive schemata through which individuals interpret their work environment", (Burke et. al. 1992, James and James 1989).

2.7.3 Measuring and Monitoring Values

To the social psychologist values portend expectations. Rokeach (1969) hypothesised that values were beliefs, in the expectancy sense of the word, that things, situations, or conditions are valued because it is believed that they will produce some desired end state. Rokeach made a distinction between two types of values groups: instrumental (modes of conduct, such as honesty or responsibility) and terminal (end states, such as happiness or wisdom). In order to create a meaningful objective research instrument Rokeach created the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) matrix consisting of these two sets of values groups. He identified eighteen instrumental values and eighteen terminal values - each of which is ranked by subjects in order of importance or is responded to on an agreed - disagree scale. Table 2.1 presents these thirty-six values:

Rokeach's Values Matrix

Terminal Values (end-states of existence)	Instrumental Values (modes of conduct)
A comfortable life (a prosperous life)	Ambitious (hardworking, aspiring)
An exciting life (a stimulating, active life)	Broadminded (open-minded)
A sense of accomplishment (lasting contribution)	Capable (competent, effective)
A world at peace (free of war and conflict)	Cheerful (light-hearted, joyful)
A world of beauty (nature and the arts)	Clean (neat, tidy)
Equality (brotherhood, equal opportunity)	Courageous (standing up for beliefs)
Family security (taking care of loved ones)	Forgiving (willing to pardon others)
Freedom (independence, free choice)	Helpful (working for others welfare)
Happiness (contentedness)	Honest (sincere and truthful)
Inner harmony (freedom from inner conflict)	Imaginative (daring, creative)
Mature love (sexual and spiritual intimacy)	Independent (self-reliant, self-sufficient)
National security (protection from attack)	Intellectual (intelligent, reflective)
Pleasure (an enjoyable, leisurely life)	Logical (consistent, rational)
Salvation (saved, eternal life)	Loving (affectionate, tender)
Self-respect (self-esteem)	Obedient (dutiful, respectful)
Social recognition (respect, admiration)	Polite (courteous, well mannered)
True friendship (close companionship)	Responsible (dependable, reliable)
Wisdom (a mature understanding of life)	Self-controlled (restrained, self-disciplined)

Table 2.1 Source Rokeach (1969)

Rokeach assumed that these value terms were universally present in everyone to a certain degree since there are only so many states of existence that people are capable of striving for and just so many modes of behaviour that can be adopted to achieve their desired end state goals. His much quoted statement of, "Work for money, live for recognition", is illustrative of a desired end state goal. He argued that such, what may seem, a small number of values can be justifiably assumed to be present on the same grounds that psychologists assume the same basic needs are universally present and on the same grounds that sociologists assume the same basic social institutions are universally present.

Accepting the basis of the Rokeach matrix leads to the concept of individuality since the progressive analysis of an 18 X 18 matrix can lead to trillions of different conclusions. Thus an individual's value status will be determined by the values matrix position being seen as appropriate to the current situation in which they find themselves at one particular moment in time.

Acceptance of the individuality of a person's values leads to the conclusion that the individual must rationalise situations and make choices appropriate to the desired end state. Such a system allows a person to exhibit the use of their evaluatory senses in making judgements, preferences, and choices on the course of action to be taken in a given situation. This rationality leads to the development of the grouping of values into a system of hierarchies and priorities which the individual displays as a function of the organisation of their values into a value system as previously discussed in this Section of the thesis.

A major contribution from value monitors to organisations is an increase in its sensitivity to changes over time. The ability of an organisation to identify culturally based trends as determined by values places the organisation in the best possible position to improve its internal and external relationships. Such a monitoring system allows the organisation to understand the impact which it will have on the human values of its markets, thus facilitating the organisation's management in taking overt action which affects held values in a prescribed manner. The benefits which can be derived from the design and implementation of a values monitoring system have been shown to be ;

a) The establishment of the meaning of ethical behaviour within markets.

b) Provide a background to government regulatory thinking.

c) The identification of subcultures segments of the population.

As previously stated the concept of values as a major factor within the construct of quality is now seen as a major influence in ensuring stakeholder satisfaction. It follows therefore that part of the monitoring system should establish the quality values both current and projected which are held by these stakeholders. Most of the current literature on quality monitoring within a service industry takes cognisance of stakeholder values. However the segmentation of quality values within the educational experience as an independent issue in the areas of the Rokeach (1969) matrix of end states of existence appears to be sparse and as such is a factor in establishing the hypothesis being considered.

2.7.4 Core and Peripheral Values

As has been seen it is generally accepted that an individual's values can be presented as a matrix of 18 X 18 terminal and instrumental values. From the matrix a person's value system will evolve which will comprise elements which have been called Core and Peripheral values.

Core values have been defined by Pant and Lachman (1998), as values which when the social control that they exert supersedes that of most other values in a value system. When the social control a value exerts is itself superseded by that exerted by most other values in a system then that value becomes a peripheral value.

Shils (1961) described the differences between core and peripheral values thus, "Core values are the high priority values that are central to a social, cultural, or an individual's value system. They are important in regulating a social system, and are enduring. Peripheral values refer to the values of low priority, low consensus (high divergence and ambiguity), and less important for social control. Consequently they are susceptible to change".

Parsons (1964) suggests that values, as the evaluative aspect of culture, constitute the core of the stabilising mechanisms of the social system. However, not all values are completely stable, thus allowing for continuity and change within a cultural or value system. The core values tend to maintain continuity in the unique and distinct characteristics of such systems. They maintain continuity because they tend to be more stable and resistant to change, their social control effects are more enduring, and because consensus and acceptance of core values is higher relative to that of periphery values. Periphery values are less stable or enduring because members of society may manifest different levels of attachment to them. The divergence in acceptance of periphery values and their resulting susceptibility to change make them more accommodating to social change and innovation. These findings were further endorsed by Ogbonna (1992) who in his study into cultures within the UK supermarket industry found that, "Change in core values is difficult to achieve: change in behaviour is easier; the change that may be managed is the manifestly observable behaviours not the unobservable deep-seated value attitudes held by individuals".

This perspective suggests that culture is a relatively adaptive system that can change mostly through peripheral values. Whilst core values can change, or their relative priority in the hierarchy can shift, changes impinging on periphery values are more likely to occur.

The control exerted by different values in any given social context varies, and the control exerted by the same value varies across different contexts, (Allport, 1961; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Rokeach, 1973; Shils, 1961). The control exerted by a value depends substantially upon the consensus it receives. The greater the consensus held by an organisation or group within the organisation for a particular value the greater the resistance to any change to it is displayed. The social control exerted by high consensus values with greater resistance to change will be greater than those with lower consensus and lower resistance to change, (Shils, 1961; Rokeach, 1973; Schein 1985). From the preceding definitions and findings it can be seen that all values, value systems, and their resultant cultures are in fact dynamic even within those values with which we appear to be born. Perhaps this is most startlingly seen when the value of survival is sacrificed for the sake of another high consensus value "learned" as being acceptable to a particular society. . Examples of this can be seen in the sacrifices made by the Christian martyrs, Kamikaze pilots, and others.

It is to the identity of the quality core values contained within the value systems of the consumer (student), staff, and organisation within service industries and to what degree consensus and congruity exists between all three of these constituents that the case study element of this research will be addressed.

2.7.5 Values within the Concept of Self

The very concept of "self" within the "end states of existence" plays a major role when analysing the values adopted by an individual with particular reference to the choice of actions they adopt either as a consumer or as a supplier in both internal and external mode. The "feel good factor" of the ego state, self-esteem, or self-worth cannot be ignored when examining the values adopted by an individual, Woods (1981).

It is generally agreed that the value of self develops throughout ones life's experiences and as such is part of the overall dynamism of one's value system. The concept of self esteem is one of change to adapt to the environment in which one finds oneself. It is however a core value which is learned as soon as a baby "constructs a self differentiated from the outer world," Piaget, (1969); Loevinger, (1976).

The result of these learned core values is that each individual has a perceived self image (or multiple self images) as a certain kind of person with traits, habits, relationships, and modes of behaviour. Thus image, of self as an individual, or within groups, plays an important role in the development and changing modes of the individual's value system.

2.8 Attitudes

Since, as previously stated, the hypothesis being examined within this thesis is looking at the core values of the individual and how they influence their perception of service quality it is important to establish the differences between values and attitudes.

Whilst attitudes and values may appear to be similar, in fact values are the antecedents of attitudes and should be considered as preceding and colouring them. Rokeach (1970) best summarised the differences as, "Attitudes can be viewed as the individual's positive or negative evaluations of objects, situations, or behaviours, which predispose the individual to respond in some manner. Values, on the other hand, transcend specific objects and situations. They deal with modes of conduct and end states of existence. That is, an individual who has a "value" has an enduring belief that a particular mode of conduct or end state existence is preferable to some other mode of conduct or end state existence. Values serve as standards or criteria that tell us how to act, what to want, and what attitudes to hold, and they allow us to judge and compare ourselves with others. Compared to attitudes which focus directly on specific objects, situations, or actions, values transcend specific circumstances. Whereas individuals may possess thousands of attitudes, they are likely to possess less than a hundred values".

Attitudes have been described as consisting of three basic components ; emotional, informational, and behavioural. Since only the behavioural aspect of an attitude, and therefore the core values which colour it, are observable, one cannot observe another person's feelings or beliefs. It follows therefore that careful consideration regarding the unobservable elements has been taken into account during the focus group stages of the case study.

2.9 Expectations

The expectations construct has been viewed as playing a key role in customer evaluation of service quality, (Gronroos 1983, Lehtinen and Lehtinen 1982, Parasuraman et al. 1985, 1988; Brown and Swartz 1989). Expectations are viewed as the desires or wants of consumers, i.e. what they feel a service provider should offer rather than would offer, Parasuraman et al. (1988).

From the literature on consumer satisfaction it is evident that there exists three major types of expectations;

a) Predictive expectations - are expectations which deal with the likelihood of the performance level of a service.

b) Normative expectations - which concern ideal standards about how the service should perform.

c) Comparative expectations - which deal with the performance of the service in comparison with similar services.

The literature further shows that normative expectations are the most appropriate determinants of satisfaction, Woodruff et al., (1981). As satisfaction plays a major role within the hypothesis being tested normative expectations are considered as the level of expectation under discussion.

As the focus of the instrument used during the case study element of this hypothesis is the examination of the gap between consumer, staff, and organisation's expectations and the level of service provided, i.e. their normative expectations, or the confirmation / disconfirmation of expectations and the resultant gap paradigm, Oliver (1977; 1980b), it is important to establish the definition of expectation within the context of the hypothesis.

Personal values represent enduring needs, beliefs, hopes, and fears and as such are the antecedents to expectations, i.e. expectations are the consequences of values and their value systems. This leads to confirmation or disconfirmation of these expectations, which, in turn, leads to satisfaction or dissatisfaction. It is important however to distinguish overall needs from expectations in terms of service transaction, given the generally short time span in which a service transaction occurs. Needs differ from expectations in that expectations are conscious, specific, short-term, and at a surface level whilst needs are unconscious until activated, more holistic in approach and longer term. Schneider and Chung, (1996), point out that, "We may react to violations of expectations with disappointment or dissatisfaction; we react to violations of basic needs with anger even outrage". How consumers gauge the level of quality provided by a service requires deeper investigation therefore than simply measuring their level of expectation. It also requires a determination of the levels of consumer needs satisfied and the gap between expectation and overall outcome.

Consumer research has confirmed that expectations, and confirmation of expectations, are important determinants of satisfaction. Indeed many researchers into the subject agree that the consumer's expectations, based upon their value systems and priorities in a given situation, impact upon the consumer's evaluation of the service or article being purchased and therefore their satisfaction level on the completion of a transaction, (Bitner, 1990; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Oliver, 1980a; Oliver and DeSabro, 1988; Parasuraman, 1988; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Stayman et al., 1992; Tse and Wilson, 1988).

Conflicting evidence from other research, (Churchill and Surprenant 1982 [one experiment]; Oliver 1980b [one experiment]; Spreng, Dixon, and Olshavsky 1993), supports the theory that no significant relationship exists between pre-purchase expectations and post-purchase satisfaction. Closer examination of the findings of these researchers however raises questions regarding the number of experiments carried out and the size and mix of the population used for them to make a controlled evaluation and reach their conclusions. Under these circumstances the element of expectation having an influence on the desired end state is used throughout the examination of the research hypothesis.

Victor Vroom, (1964) first formulated an expectancy theory directly aimed at work motivation but which holds up under scrutiny to human motivation in any of its guises. He defined expectancy as, "A (momentary) subjective belief of an individual to accomplish a given task successfully (when investing an appropriate effort)".

Vroom took the psychological content theories of human motivation proposed by Alderfer's - ERG Needs :- Growth, Relatedness, and Existence, (1972), Maslow's - Hierarchy of Needs :- Self-actualisation, Esteem, Love, Safety, and Physiology (1943), and Herzberg's - Two Factors :- Motivators, and Hygiene Factors (1966), a further step in our knowledge of behaviour by showing that behaviour was influenced by the cognitive antecedents which go into motivating man to satisfy his needs.

Essentially Vroom's theory states that the strength of a person's motivation to carry out a series of actions depends upon the satisfaction of the first action's outcome creating an expectation of a second state, and so on, in order that the person can achieve his / her desired end state.

The importance of the Vroom theory to the proof, or otherwise, of this hypothesis is the further use of a major variable, i.e. instrumentality, in the motivational and therefore peripheral value element of a value system of expectancy. This affects the subsequent degree of satisfaction / dissatisfaction of university students since their programme of studies may have only provided general ideas of what lies ahead and they may not be fully aware of the content, value, or relevance of a course in relation to their expectations until the later years of study. "Undergraduates' expectations regarding the quality of higher education services have no comparative base or frame of reference from which to make evaluations", McElwee and Redman (1993). Their expectations therefore become based only upon their prior experiences at school. Any change to these expectations it is argued requires the student to adopt an instrumentality approach to making decisions regarding the value or otherwise of the programme of study and the quality of management of it being offered.

Whilst psychological theorists all agree that expectancies are mental, or cognitive states, there is little agreement about the nature of these states. Rokeach (1977), first suggested that there might exist different types of expectations, ideal, expected, deserved, and minimally tolerable, stressing the importance of knowing against what type of expectations the consumer compares the performance of the product or service. Gilly, Cron and Barry (1983) studied these concepts and found moderate support for them as independent constructs. Research has also shown that some types of expectations or standards seem to be better at explaining satisfaction (Bolfing and Woodruff 1988, Cadotte, Woodruff, and Jenkins 1983) and that relationships between disconfirmation, performance, and satisfaction change depending upon the benchmark standard used, Bolfing and Woodruff (1988). A further complication arises when the consumer also uses several standards simultaneously, Tse and Wilton (1988).

The most common definition based upon Tolman's expectancy theory is that customer expectations are predictions made by customers concerning what they believe will be the outcome of a service transaction or exchange, (Leichty and Churchill, 1979; Miller, 1977; Oliver, 1980a, 1980b; Day, 1983; Swan 1988, 1992). In addition predictive expectations have been found to have a direct positive influence on satisfaction , (Bolfing and Woodruff 1988; Churchill and Serpenant 1982; Prakash and Lounsbury 1984; Tse and Wilton 1988). Three types of norms have been suggested in the satisfaction literature: A best brand norm, a product or service norm and a brand norm, (Cadotte et al. 1983; Woodruff et al., 1983). Cadotte et al. (1983) found that these norms served as valid and useful concepts when attempting to define the overall concept of expectation.

The most appropriate working definition which accommodates the instrument used during the case study is however that provided by Zeithaml and Bitner (1996), "Customer expectations are beliefs about a service delivery that function as standards or reference points against which performance is judged."

As customers and staff compare their expectations against the quality of service delivered and received in any transaction to judge "good' and "bad" the concept of expectation is critical to the quality of service levels offered by an organisation. Indeed knowing what the customer expects is the first, and possibly most critical, step in delivering a quality service.

2.10 Perception

Value systems dictate how people perceive an object, service, or situation. Individual values and attitudes cause people to see things differently, e.g. assumptions, stereotypes, and "halo effects" spring all too readily from our personal positions on people and events, Cole (1995). It is therefore important within the terms of the hypothesis to establish a working definition of perception since this will present itself in the gathering and analysis of data.

A working definition as provided by Fred Luthans (1995) of, "Perception is a very complex cognitive process that yields a unique picture that may or may not be quite different from reality".

Throughout this research, both the literature and the case study, due cognisance is taken that in dealing with people issues it is people's own picture of the world, perception, that is being examined however divorced it may seem to the researcher from the real world.

2.11 Image

The image presented by a consumer or a supplier in any transaction has an immediate influence on the judgmental elements of an individual's value system. It therefore also has an influence upon the perceptions, expectations, and attitudes which each party adopts.

Regardless of the identity of the industry, company image is an important antecedent of consumer expectation and should be included as both an antecedent and a mediating variable of consumers' expectations and therefore their value systems. Within the whole range of service industries it has been shown that company image is the strongest antecedent of consumer expectation, Clow et al., (1997).

Just as in the case of the individual who manages his or her image to ensure its acceptability in the environment in which they wishes to act so company image must be managed to ensure the appropriate image which will ensure the hoped for favourable customer expectation and satisfaction. This is achieved, as with the individual, by ensuring the appropriate level of control on each channel of customer contact, e.g. two-way communication channels, etc., in the hope that this will impact positively in the consumer's memories of the company. Company image has been defined as perceptions of an organisation reflected in the associations held in a customer's memory by Gronroos (1984 & 1990) as, "How customers see and perceive a company". Gronroos (1983, 1984, 1990) has also shown that company image serves an antecedent of consumer expectation and also acts as a meditating variable. This it is argued can be portrayed as a factor dependent upon the level of shared values.

Given all of the foregoing it is argued that any model or instrument within a model which would seek to establish the levels of quality expected and received, and therefore the levels of consumer satisfaction in order to establish the value systems of the individual or organisations should take due cognisance of the image factor.

2.12 Personal Values

One's personal or life's values can almost be seen as analogous to one's genetic fingerprint or DNA. Just as our DNA governs our physical entity then the make-up of our values and value system governs our actions and reactions within given situations.

Personal values have been categorised into a number of types. Allport et al. (1951), distinguished between the following six types of values:

1) Theoretical, i.e. placing considerable emphasis on the use of reason to arrive at the truth of things.
2) Economic, i.e. emphasising the useful and the practical aspects of life.
3) Aesthetic, i.e. placing high value on beauty and form.
4) Social, i.e. emphasising the importance of people over other aspects of life.
5) Political, i.e. concerned with exercising power and influence.
6) Religious, i.e. a concern for spiritual values in life.

The priority given to each type of value reflects the individual's dominant concerns. The above list identifies where people's priorities may lie but does not tell much about the rights and wrongs of their behaviour. The morality issue is a crucial dimension of personal values, which are not just about what is important in life but what is thought to be either right or wrong.

Reference to Table 2.1 and the work of Milton Rokeach, (1969 & 1973), shows that his work is a further expansion of the Allport studies and in fact bears out their findings.

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), more philosophically contend that an individual's values can be indexed by five separate dimensions which reflect his or her value orientations : human nature is good or evil ; past, present, or future time perspective ; being, being-in-becoming, or doing ; subjugation to, in harmony with, or mastery over nature; linearity, collaterality, or individualism.

The cultural background of the individual influences the personal values of the individual. Whilst the foundations of a personal value system are the core and peripheral values which are either biogenic or psychogenic in character. From these basic values spring personal attitudes and one's own moral code (moral principles). Personal values also contribute to, and are influenced by, those values held as being acceptable or the norms within the society

Therefore it may be hypothesised that because of personal values consumers form different levels of service expectations. Vinson, Scott, and Lamont (1977) theorised that personal values impact on domain specific values; these domain specific values are conceptualised to be expectations from service providers and from the services that they provide.

However perhaps the following definition proposed by Cole, (1995), best condenses all of the varying attempts by others to clarify and operationalise the term personal values into a few sentences:-

" A personal value is an underlining acceptance of a general way of behaving that is seen as preferable to alternative ways, and usually carries notions of right and wrong within it. The development of personal values is influenced by such factors as personal characteristics, e.g. conscientiousness, etc., the level of intelligence, childhood , and subsequent learning, and the influence of others, e.g. parents, teachers, and peer groups, as well as by life's experiences. Personal values tend to be more deep-rooted than attitudes and opinions."

This means that a value system remains in a constant state of flux being changed by the individual's evaluatory processes which continue throughout one's lifetime.

2.13 Customer / Consumer Values

Examination of the Rokeach Table of Values, Table 2.1, shows that it contains, in one guise or another, all of the values that an individual carries with them. How individuals prioritise these values in making the purchase of a product or service in terms of sacrifices and benefits and how they evaluate satisfaction in relation to these values, "Customer value equals benefits minus sacrifices", Bounds ey al. (1994), is the focus of this element of the thesis.

It is extremely important in discussing customer values to distinguish between monetary value and customer's perceived value as continuous improvement activities should be driven toward the purpose of providing the customer with the best perceived quality value and not just as a monetary consideration. The concept of customer value converts the notion that value is something inherent within a service and the notion that value is determined in the context of customer benefit and derived satisfaction.

Accepting that sacrifices are made the following value elements can be seen as within a transaction;

a) Price

The relevance of price as a major factor in the "decision to buy" and satisfaction levels can be seen in the work of Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991), Grewal (1995), and Rao and Monroe (1988, 1989) who have shown that when faced with performance uncertainty use price as a cue in forming performance expectations.

Examination of the Rokeach Table of Values, Table 2.1, shows that whilst not directly indicating price as a core or peripheral value the sacrifice, trade-off, price to be paid in order that the end state satisfaction is achieved can be seen to encompass all of the values within an individual's value system.

b) Reliability

Lewis, (1991), has shown that the four elements of reliability, accuracy, the ability to keep promises, and competence within back-up facilities, are all seen by the customer as a value priority when involved with a service transaction. Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry, (1990), have, using their measuring construct SERVQUAL examined the importance of reliability in conjunction with the five value dimensions of their construct of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. They have concluded that customers regard reliability as the number one value when dealing with a service provider.

c) Trust

Trust in terms of a value judgement is difficult to define. Particularly in relation to service interactions since the service being purchased usually is an intangible and is instantaneous in time span. As such it can be seen to be involved at varying levels within a person's value system. When a customer initiates a transaction they examine their own value system and that of the service provider. Such examinations will prioritise the customer's core and peripheral values and examine just how far the customer feels that he or she can trust the provider by relating to his or her espoused values.

d) Self-esteem

Feelings are more transient in content than actual values and as such can be influenced by such dimensions as politeness, friendliness, etc., and the tangible items which surround the service being offered. Since service transactions can be momentary occurrences feelings do play a part in determining the level of satisfaction a customer experiences especially the feeling of self-esteem linked to the value of self-respect. Unlike the purchase of an object the purchase of a service requires both purchaser and vendor to have a degree of involvement. As a result both parties will evoke the "me" factor, i.e. what's in it for me as a customer - (needs satisfaction relative to the customer's standards, norm., and expectations at the time of the perceived need) and as a supplier - (profitability plus a sense of accomplishment or job satisfaction).

2.14 Organisational Values

The role of organisational values can be seen as an expansion of the "Development of an Organisation's Culture and Value Systems" section of this thesis.

"Organisations are usually formed by a founder who gathers a group of people in order to achieve certain purposes or goals. This group led by the founder develops the mission statement, what we are here to do, and vision, what we wish to achieve at some time hence, and values, what do we believe and how will we act to achieve our vision and goals, for the organisation. When this founding group begins to bring in others a common history begins and so does the development of the organisation's culture", Schein (1985).

Lachman et al., (1994), have stated that, "Values legitimise the organisation's existence - its modes of organisation and functioning, including patterns of business conduct and practices - within the larger social context". Whilst the statement is true it is argued that it is the strength of the sharing of values which legitimises an organisation not just the content within the statement.

Deal and Kennedy (1982) have shown that in an organisation which has strong shared values there are three common characteristics often present:

1) The shared values are a clear guideline to task performance.

2) The managers devote much of their time to developing and reinforcing the shared values.

3) The shared values are deeply anchored among employees.

Organisations adopting such an approach to their value system have been shown to have consistently improving performance. Such a culture provides the lens for perceiving and giving meaning to events however it can prevent organisation members from recognising competitive and operational opportunities and threats, (Deal and Kennedy 1982; Barney, 1986; Crozier 1964; Porter 1980; Riley 1983; Schein 1985; Tichy 1983). This does not mean that strong cultures cannot be changed. Chief executives who have "rescued their organisation" attribute successful turnarounds to their organisation's willingness to adopt and espouse commonly held values, Tichy (1983).

It is argued therefore that the most important element of any organisation's value system is the shared element both internally and externally which ensures commitment and maximum effort by all of its stakeholders in achieving all of the organisation's goals. Evidence for this argument has been postulated by Peters and Waterman (1982) who, "Insist that shared values represent the core of a corporate culture", and by Kalliath, Bluedorn, and Strube (1999) in their research into the congruence of values in effecting the commitment and job satisfaction of staff in hospitals.

2.14.1 The Role of the Senior Management, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in Determining Organisational Values

Whilst most organisational members have some input to decision-making it is clear that in nearly all organisations a dominant coalition develops consisting of an inner circle of members, (Cyert and March 1963; Thompson 1980). Their position of authority allows them sufficient latitude to filter issues and impose their value system upon the organisation with particular reference to selecting the problems to be addressed and the solutions which the organisation will perceive, (Dutton 1986, Dutton et al. 1983). Selznick (1957) argues that, "Organisations have values (the substance of any corporate culture) and that the role of the organisation's leaders is to fashion, represent, and sustain these values". The strategic management process therefore largely reflects their beliefs, (Davis 1984; Lorsch 1986), and values (Bamberger 1986; Strudivant et al. 1985) in the selection of organisational goals and objectives.

Schein (1990) adds to the strength of the leadership role which CEO's have within an organisation's culture by stating that, "Values of founders shape organisational cultures, affecting ordinary members through shared practices". In other words, leader = corporate culture creator or maintainer.

Whilst the values held by top management influence the strategies adopted by an organisation it is imperative that organisations take due cognisance of the fact that values being dynamic in nature require organisations to continue to scrutinise both their own and their markets' value systems. This is seen in most quarters as the function of the management, "The role of the C.E.O. is to manage the values of the organisation", Peters and Waterman (1982).

Organisational values will only be adopted by all of the members of an organisation when they see that they are being "lived" as part of the management style of their leaders. It is therefore important for leaders, i.e. managers, to act as role models for the organisation's values in order that they become shared and a "way of life" for all of the stakeholders.

"A fish rots from the head down", old Hebrew saying.

The danger of non-correlation between organisational values and manager's personal values was highlighted in a study of US insurance companies by Gordon and DiTomaso

(1992) who showed that companies whose managers did not agree on their perceptions of company values in relation to their own performed less well than those where perceptions were more consistent. It therefore follows that it is the role of all stakeholders within the organisation to question the core values used in strategic decisions made by those "in authority" thus ensuring all round commitment to these values.

2.14.2 Employee Values

Jobs and occupations play an important role within an individual's value system. To have any job, a particular type of job, or a particular job, e.g. the prime minister of the U.K., may rank at the top of one's ambition or be totally abhorrent in terms of the hierarchy of personal values of an individual. The value of a job can lie in any one or more of its features; the income which it provides, the status of the work, the physical character of the work interest in the job activity as such, or the proficiency one has in the job, Woods (1981), or work goals which represent "values as the desired", Hofstede (1980).

Job satisfaction, and therefore personal values congruity, is conceptualised as both influence and cognition-based with definitions ranging from, "A positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience", to "All characteristics of the job itself and the work environment which employees find rewarding, fulfilling, and satisfying, or frustrating and unsatisfactory", Brown M.A. (1976).

For the purposes of the research being undertaken job satisfaction is defined as an overall holistic state pertaining to the employee's view of having produced a service of superior quality.

Using the work of others Kalliath et al. (1999) have postulated that two mechanisms produce individual job satisfaction through the congruence of shared values;

1) Individuals who hold similar values should share common aspects of cognitive processing that should lead to common methods of interpreting events. Common interpretations reduce uncertainty and stimulus overload and improve interpersonal relationships in part by reducing conflict and misunderstandings, which improve satisfaction and commitment, Meglino et al. (1989); Schein (1992).

2) In a similar fashion congruence among members' values generates clearer role expectations arising from greater ability to predict each other's behaviour leading to less role ambiguity and conflict hence higher satisfaction and commitment, Fisher and Gitelson (1983); Kluckholm (1951); Meglino et al (1989).

Together these two theoretical rationales suggest a positive relationship between value congruence and both job satisfaction and organisational commitment, Kalliath, et al. (1999).

2.15 Summary of Chapter

A review of the literature regarding aspects of Culture and Values underpins an understanding of their roles in terms of the aims and objectives of this thesis as stated on page 3. Culture is shown as being difficult to define being seen as meaning different things to different people. The role which culture plays within organisations and how it molds people's lives is reviewed. Organisations are seen as providing stability in people's lives by providing standards to which people (stakeholders) can relate and to which they are willing to compromise their individuality to be a member. In order that the organisation survives people in sacrificing their individuality must share a common purpose. They must therefore share the same believes, customs, and standards which over a period of time become the basic assumptions or values of the organisation. The influence of these basic assumptions, and the values which underpin them, is the anchorage which allows a culture to survive.
In terms of the aims and objectives the review of Culture can be seen as the foundation upon which the examination of other aspects of this research is based. It does so by introducing the concepts of Organisations, Stakeholders, and Values all of which can be seen in items 1 - 5 of the research objectives.
Values have been described by various scholars as being equivalent to, and / or synonymous with the following: a need, a belief, a motive, any object of interest, a conception of the desirable and not merely something to be desired, a standard in terms of which evaluation is made, and a cognised belief of what ought to be required by society. As with the rationale for the review of Culture a review of the definitions of Values was necessary in order that there was a clear understanding of what is meant by Values in terms of the objectives of the research as can be seen in items 1 - 5 of the research objectives.
Society's, or organisation's, values are seen as a Value System which are made-up by the shared values of the members of that organisation. As the environment in which the organisation exists changes so must the value system change and is therefore a dynamic entity. Within this dynamic certain values will be core or important to the organisation's survival whilst others will be less so being peripheral and on occasion discarded thus adding to the dynamism. It follows that since both core and peripheral values can be discarded these must comprise certain values which are inherent and some which are learned. Adherence to these

learned values allow the individual to remain within the organisation. However the individuality of a person means that he or she may hold certain values out with those of the organisation but which are not in conflict with them. Others holding similar values may join together to form subcultures of the main organisation. It follows that a culture may be seen as a combination of subcultures having a core of values which allows individuals to achieve shared objectives within the constraints of the organisations espoused values. It has been shown that an individual's important core values are difficult to change whilst the peripheral values are more flexible in nature. It is argued from the descriptions of culture within an organisation that being based upon the dynamic of a value system requires the organisation to have a core of 'shared values' to allow it to exist.

As stated in the research objectives an understanding of the diversity of stakeholder value systems and their role in organisations is a requirement. A review of the literature on this aspect of Values was therefore deemed necessary in order that there was a clear understanding of their roles within the thesis. The outcomes of this review can be seen in items 1 - 5 of the objectives.

Attitudes, Perception, Image, and Expectation are all antecedents of Values and as such are defined for the purposes of the research. Aspects of expectations and their role in the importance placed by the customer of a service is discussed it being a prime factor in the research undertaken for this thesis and its objectives. Within the context of the research and its objectives the most appropriate working definition of expectations being that by Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) of, "Customer expectations are beliefs about a service delivery that functions as standards or reference points against which performance is judged."

As customers and staff compare their expectations against the quality of service delivered and received in any transaction to judge satisfied or dissatisfied the concept of expectation is critical to the quality of service levels offered by an organisation. The concept of expectation therefore plays a major role in identifying and measuring stakeholder core and peripheral Values. A review and definition of expectation was therefore necessary to comply with the objectives of stakeholder value identity, and congruence as seen in objectives 1 - 5 of the research aims.

Personal values have been shown to be based upon one's core and peripheral values from which springs ones own moral code. These are also influenced by the society of which the individual is a member. It follows that individuals will have different prospective of what a service should provide making evaluatory judgements which means that personal values are in a constant state of flux.

Customer values, as part of the personal value system, require the customer to evaluate the level of sacrifice needed to derive satisfaction. Price, reliability, trust, and self-esteem within a transaction are discussed each of which being seen within the construct of the measuring instrument used within the research reported in this thesis.

The review of both personal and customer values forms the basis of the examination of the diversity of value systems as stated in Objective 1 of the thesis.

Peters and Waterman (1982) and, Bluedorn, and Strube (1999) in their research into the congruence of values in organisations, "Insist that shared values represent the core of a corporate culture". It is argued therefore that the most important element of any organisation's value system is the shared element both internally and externally which ensures commitment by all of its stakeholders to the organisation's goals. All of the stakeholders implies that the role of the CEO is to ensure that the shared values are part of the management style of the organisation. Such an approach being consistent with the employee values in ensuring job satisfaction elements which align with the testing of congruence of stakeholder values objective 4 of the aims of this thesis.

Chapter 3

Quality

3.0 Introduction

The role of quality values within the implementation and maintenance elements of a quality culture is discussed throughout this section of the research thesis. The role which values and value systems play within a culture will, on occasion be self evident. Where this is not the case it is intended that the review of the literature and arguments will show how the values influence organisational and individualistic behaviour towards a quality culture.

3.1 Definition

"If beauty is in the eye of the beholder then quality is in the feeling the viewer experiences when confronted by such beauty". Anon

The above statement may seem at first reading to be somewhat over simplistic. If so then the challenge must surely be to define quality. Is it something that we can grab hold of, or touch, or taste or smell ? Or is it something, as referred to in the above statement, which confronts our emotions and makes us feel good for merely a moment or throughout our lives ?

Webster's Dictionary definition defines quality as simply "the degree of excellence", excellence being defined as being "the best of its kind". Whilst the Oxford English Dictionary defines the term as being the "faculty, skill, accomplishment, characteristic trait, mental or moral attribute which one displays". The more we try to tie down the definition of quality the more we seem to expand the definition to include all of those emotions which we experience when confronted by what we perceive as quality. Any definition is therefore subjective rather than objective. A visionary conceptual linkage can be further seen in most peoples' perceptions of a work of art, "We don't know much about it but we do know what we like when we see it". We can't define it but we know it when we, in its widest sense, "feel it", somehow or other it is simply intuitive and this in itself makes it difficult to conceptualise, operationalise, and subsequently manage.

Some like Vroeijenstijn (1991) however go so far as to state that due to the very complexity of the subject that, "It's a waste of time trying to define quality".

Despite all of the complexities of the concept of quality it is necessary, for the purposes of this dissertation, to adopt a working definition of quality in relation to service industries. Others have attempted this by defining it as "conformance to specification or standard", and "degree to which customers' specifications are satisfied", "a fair exchange of price and value", "fitness for use", "doing it right the first time", "delighting the customer". Feigenbaum (1983) used the statement of, "The total composite product and service characteristics of marketing, engineering, manufacture, and maintenance through which the product and service in use will meet the expectation of the customer" as his somewhat comprehensive definition of quality. However the by now much used definition of quality by Juran (1980) of, "fitness for use as perceived by the customer" or "fit for purpose" would seem to fit the requirement adequately. Perhaps he would not object if his definition was rephrased simply to read "fit for *customer* purpose" and was used as a working definition throughout this thesis. Such a definition implies that quality is an achievable and measurable entity which can be implemented and managed within an organisation. However the difficulties in dealing with the measurement of a "feeling", as will be discussed later, should not be underestimated. Certainly the measurement of a quality standard is achievable but who sets the standard and whether or not this standard is acceptable to all parties forms part of the research upon which the hypothesis is based.

In order that the best results are achieved from any quality initiative it is essential, it is argued, for there to be a complete understanding of the quality values, or principles, which drive the three major stakeholders within an organisation, the management as representatives of the owners / shareholders, the staff, and the customer / supplier. The research undertaken within the context of the hypothesis aims to establish the quality values of these three stakeholders and the roles that each of their values play either individually or in concert in establishing the perception quality within a service environment.

3.2 Quality Chains

"Failure to achieve customer satisfaction in any part of a process chain has a way of multiplying, and failure in one part of the system creates problems elsewhere, leading to yet more failure, more problems and so on. The benefits of making sure that requirements are met at every stage, every time, are truly enormous in terms of increased competitiveness and market share, reduced costs, improved productivity and delivery performance, and the elimination of waste", Oakland (1994).

The concept of a quality chain involves the unification of people each of whom, based upon a certain portfolio of personal expectations, will have their own expected input and outcome from their involvement in a transaction. It is important that there is an understanding of the role of management in meeting these exceptions. As Gremler et al. (1993), state, "The general consensus is that the satisfaction of these internal customers (in a similar way to external customers) is also important to the success of an organisation". This has been further borne out by Mathews and Clark (1997) in their research into the relationship between internal and external services within the National Health Service (NHS) in which they argue that, "The same dimensions and factors that have a strong influence in determining external customer's perceptions of service quality (and satisfaction and dissatisfaction with service encounters) are pertinent to internal service relationships".

3.3 Quality Background - The Quality Gurus

A brief synopsis of the approaches 7 of the most famous Quality Gurus and their influence upon the Quality Movement follows.

3.3.1 Dr. W. Edwards Deming

Dr. W. Edwards Deming is probably the father of the quality revolution. Prior to Deming the belief in Western industries was that improving quality added to cost and that no one would risk adding to costs when, with the great expansion of mass produced goods, the customer expected nothing better.

The main contribution of Deming to quality thinking;

- he advocated the bringing of the customer into the organisation's processes and by creating a close link between worker and supplier to work for continuous improvement.
- he introduced the use of statistical process control (SPC) charting to overcome the problems of manufacturing variability.

The introduction of these initiatives Deming stated would lead to the benefits of reduced costs and increased market share.

3.3.2 Joseph M. Juran

The breakthrough to quality can only be achieved, Juran argues, when management focuses on planning, "quality does not happen by accident it must be planned", organisational issues, accepts management's responsibility for quality, "at least 85% of failures in any organisation are the fault of the system controlled by management", and the need to set goals and targets for improvement. He maintains that the key elements in implementing company-wide strategic quality programmes are seen as identifying customers and their needs; establishing optimal quality goals; and creating measurements of quality.

3.3.3 Armand V. Feigenbaum

Feigenbaum is the originator of Total Quality Control (TQC). In his book Total Quality Control : Principles, Practices, and Administration, (1983), Feigenbaum strove to move away from the then primary concern with technical methods of quality control to quality business methods. Thus he emphasised the administrative viewpoint and considered human relations along with their value systems as a basic issue in quality control activities. Because TQC emphasises the exchange of information throughout the whole organisation from top to bottom and vice versa it depends heavily on informed thinking and involved workers.

3.3.4 Philip B. Crosby

Phil Crosby introduced the concepts of "Zero Defects" and "doing it right first time" to quality thinking.

Crosby defines quality as "conformance to requirements which the company has itself established for its products based directly on its customers' needs". Therefore the requirements of a product need to be specified clearly so that quality becomes tangible, measurable and measured. He believes, based on cost of quality exercises, that since most companies allow for a certain deviation from specification it is necessary for manufacturing companies to spend around 20% of revenues doing things wrong and doing them over again. Crosby maintains that by doing it right first time every time the continued savings and the improvements in quality will result in increased market share.

3.3.5 Ishikawa, and Taguchi, Shingo

The importance in the realms of quality with particular reference to production methods of these three Japanese Quality Gurus cannot be ignored.

Shigeo Shingo created the poka-yoke system to ensure zero-defects in production by preventive methods and is held in the highest of esteem throughout the business world.

Dr. Kaoru Ishikawa's three main contributions to quality are the simplification and spread of technical statistical tools (the 7 tools of Quality Control) as a unified system throughout all levels of Japanese companies, his input to the company-wide Quality Movement, and his input to the Quality Circlė Movement.

Dr. Genichi Taguchi developed a methodology for the minimum of prototyping in product design and troubleshooting in production.

All of the writings of the quality Gurus' discussed so far in this research have been primarily concerned with the manufacturing side of industry wherein quality is achieved by measuring and controlling tangible objects. However most if not all of the techniques advocated by the Gurus are transferable to service industries with their intangible control of people issues.

From the foregoing it can be seen that in order to bring about a culture of quality within their structures, organisations have to "adopt, adapt, and improve" a vehicle or raft of techniques. Such a vehicle is termed "Total Quality Management" and is the subject of the next sections of this thesis' chapter.

3.4 Total Quality Culture

Marvin Bower, former managing director of McKinsey and Company, aptly described culture "as the way we do things around here". More formally, culture is the values and beliefs that most members of an organisation share. Beliefs are assumptions about what is true, while values are assumptions about what is worthwhile or desirable.

An organisation with a total quality culture has clear values and beliefs that foster total quality behaviour. It must however relentlessly manage every aspect of its business by living and constantly reassessing the shared values and beliefs of all of the elements which go to make up its business.

Peter Linkow (1989) suggests that there are seven core values and basic beliefs which comprise a quality culture. These he lists as :-

1) Customer focus. Quality is in the eyes of each individual customer. The requirements of the final external customer can only be met when the requirements of all internal customers are met.

2) Employee focus. An organisation can serve its customers only as well as it serves its own employees. The organisation is committed to recruiting, developing, and supporting a highly motivated, world class work force.

3) Teamwork. Collective wisdom is virtually always superior to individual wisdom. The team and the individual are recognised and rewarded equally.
4) Safety. The organisation focuses on safety in everything it does, for all its employees, the communities in which it is located, and the people who use its products and services.
5) Candour. Each employee should speak the truth. Quality cannot be achieved when employees fear retribution for their candour.
6) Total involvement. Quality is not merely the responsibility of the quality assurance organisation but everyone. All employees at every level of the organisation must take personal responsibility for quality. Each employee is empowered to take a strong role in identifying and solving problems. The employees closest to the problem or process are best suited to improve it.
7) Process focus. The organisation emphasises the continuous improvement of all its work processes. The focus is on prevention rather than fire fighting, fixing, and damage control.

The distinction between quality and total quality has been made by Ron Collard (1993) when he defines quality as, "The quality of a product or service when measured by the extent to which it satisfies the customer", and total quality which he defines as, "The culture of an organisation where continuous improvement is integrated into all activities". He further states that, "A total quality culture is to do with changing attitudes, values, beliefs and ways of doing things, and with prevailing employer / employee relationships within an organisation".

As can be seen from the foregoing a quality culture requires an emphasis on beliefs and values by all parties within any organisation. A company can, within its quality policy, espouse that, "Quality is the watchword in everything that we do", or as in BT's case, "Meeting the customer's (agreed) requirements at lowest cost first time every time". However if within the existing culture and subcultures of the organisation there are core values which contradict the espoused values then it would be wrong, it is argued, to say that that organisation had a quality culture since such a culture can only be sustained with the cognisance of the members and that cognisance can only come from a feeling of shared core values.

3.5 Total Quality Management (TQM) and its Implementation, Integration, & Maintenance

TELL me and I will forget;
SHOW me and I will remember;
INVOLVE me and I will understand.
Ancient Chinese Proverb

Total Quality Management (TQM) has been described by Bounds, et al. (1994) as, "A people-focused management system that aims at continual increase in customer satisfaction at continual lower real cost. Total Quality (TQ) is a total system approach (not a separate area or programme) and an integral part of high level strategy. It works horizontally across functions and departments, involving all employees, top to bottom, and extends backward and forward to include the supply chain and the customer chain".

Thus one of the primary rules of TQM evolved rather than being prescribed - TQM must be company wide in order to succeed and must involve everybody within the organisation being not just the specific responsibility of any individual or group of individuals. The understanding of the quality values, the basis of any culture, which each of the constituents of a TQM culture, i.e. management / organisation / stakeholders, staff, and customers / suppliers, have takes on added importance.

It is generally agreed that the TQM implementation programmes which have been shown to be the most successful are those which have a "best fit" strategies which take cognisance of the environment in which the organisation implementing the process operates. It follows therefore that there is no one model which can be used to bring about a TQM culture but rather a combination of aspects drawn from models which have been proven to be workable and to achieve the desired improvement in terms of the organisation's present status.

A study of the current literature and models has shown that there are 6 of the basic principles of TQM which must be included when planning the implementation of TQM of, top management commitment, attitude change by all organisational stakeholders, continuous improvement, empowered supervision both of the individual and of the team, extensive and continuous training, recognition of performance.

In addition to the basic implementation requirements listed above Holmes, (1992), has identified another 4 elements within models which are considered by most academics as essential to the process of:

1) Top management drive - requiring ownership of the implementation programme not just commitment to the principles of total quality.

2) Teamwork - using multifunctional teams.

3) Techniques - SPC, QA, Total Quality Control, Quality Measurement Systems, etc.

4) Systems - BSI, BPM, etc.

These he states interact with every process within an organisation each of which has inputs and outputs, suppliers and customers. The interaction is aimed at continually improving the potential and the actual level of performance in meeting or exceeding customer's requirements.

Oakland (1994) sees the conjunction of TQM implementation and integration as requiring management to concentrate on "process alignment" for by so doing they will overcome any resistance to change by recognising that, "People's roles and responsibilities must be related to the processes in which they work". Oakland's implementation and integration model, and those of others who have used it as a basis for their "own" models to bring about "process alignment" within the principles of TQM, consists of a series of 7 distinct and overlapping steps. The order of the steps is important because some of the activities will be inappropriate if started too early.

Naveh et al. (1998) in their paper on developing a TQM implementation model point out that to successfully implement a quality improvement programme organisations need more knowledge than academia has to offer at the present time. They highlight two major regions to back up their reasoning for this failure. Firstly that action plans are mostly proposed for the team level with individual and organisational efforts treated only as partially necessary and complementary. Secondly that there are too few suggestions on how to quantify the cultural characteristics of an organisation.

Within the context of the hypothesis being tested the second of Naveh et als'. (1998) conclusions will be addressed by examining the values underpinning the culture of the service being examined. The answer to their first rationale lies as stated with the academia who should, it is argued, lay more emphasis upon implementation across the whole organisation and upon management to stop taking the soft option of addressing problem solving only through teams. These, it is argued, are more easily controlled and measured and management should be encouraged to take a more holistic view which, by implication, requires them to take a more hands on approach. Such a strategic decision require managers to fully understand the implications of a TQM culture and its requirement to constantly re-appraise the organisation's mission, vision, and value system in terms of the changes going on both within and out with the organisation.

In order to overcome what they saw as a lack of workable models Naveh et al. (1998) produced their own model designed for implementation at the three levels of organisation, teams, and individuals. This they claim produced a quality culture within an Israeli armaments organisation within a time span of 16 months as measured by improvements of a 20% decrease in non-quality costs, inventory costs decreased by 11%, and an accident rate decrease of 62%. There was also an increase in the measures of cultural satisfaction showing as a direct correlation between performance measures and values and attitudes measures.

The process of implementation should never be understated nor underestimated indeed it has been shown that it effects the likelihood of long-term success, Port and Smith (1992); Reger et al. (1994). A major difficulty for those involved in planning the implementation programme arises when they grasp the full implications of the undertaking in moving from the conventional management models to TQM.

3.5.1 Performance Measurement

It is generally recognised that a well balanced measurement system is in place before starting out on any implementation programme. This should take cognisance of both the hard "s" elements of strategy, structure, and systems which are often seen as the core components to "running a business" and the more difficult to manage due to their more non-tangible influence soft "s" elements of symbols, staff (people), skills, style (management and leadership), and encompassing all of the soft "s" elements shared values.

Luther (1992-93) argues that as quality becomes integrated with the ongoing day-to-day business operations, a well designed and well-run assessment effort becomes a key part of achieving world-class quality. He further states that the lack of attention to the development and deployment of an appropriate measurement system, in a significant number of cases, has hampered the successful implementation of TQM. The salient point from this argument is the appropriateness of the measurement system.

The importance of relevant measurement within the context of quality initiatives cannot be overemphasised for without it strategic issues concerning the organisation's mission, vision, and values cannot be taken. However within these measurement systems it is imperative that the importance of non-financial aspects of performance (people, processes, customers, and suppliers) and their impact upon progressing improvement, are understood and exploited, Ghobadian et al. (1998). Performance measures which include "soft" elements and therefore the appraisal of value systems are a key enabler or disabler in the implementation and maintenance of a quality culture.

3.5.2 The Vital Few and the Useful Many (the 80 : 20 Rule)

This distinction between likely projects to be examined to improve an organisation's quality was introduced by Juran (1951) as a way of differentiating the most serious and significant problems which would provide considerable breakthroughs to new higher levels of performance from those less significant everyday opportunities for improvement. More commonly the vital few and the useful many concept is described as the 80 : 20 rule, e.g. 80% of production failures are caused by 20% of production process'.
The "vital few" he identified as:

1) Those which were based on their significant failure costs.
2) Those which had a high impact upon customer's satisfaction which by implication impacted upon their value system.
3) Those which inhibit other significant plans or projects.
4) Those which contribute to the organisation achieving its vision for the future and therefore the organisation's and all of its stakeholder's value systems.

The "vital few" are likely to need sustained focus on the part of management but they will bring about the biggest gains. The "useful many" on the other hand will bring about significant improvements due to their sheer number particularly in the initial stages of a programme. They are however more difficult to sustain and for this reason also require management's focus and careful implementation as any dilution of these projects will result in disillusionment of those involved leading to a reduction in commitment to the overall programme.

Whilst the "vital few and useful many" may appear to refer only to improvement projects there is an argument that the "vital few and useful many " findings can also be applied to the cultural values of an organisation. The "vital few" referring to the core values within a culture and the "useful many" to the peripheral values. Sustained focus by management upon the "vital few" organisational core values will ensure the shared value element of TQM and its subsequent benefits. Changes in the "useful many" peripheral values within a system will, as with the project implementation programmes, bring about early changes to behavioural patterns and working practices. However such changes have been shown to fail to bring about any longer term changes to cultural beliefs and practices without substantial continuous management involvement until such beliefs become the taken for granted shared values of everyone within the organisation.

3.5.3 Integration

The evidence suggests that TQM's implementation processes influence the likelihood of its ultimate success, Port and Smith (1992); Reger et al. (1994). A number of studies have highlighted the danger of treating quality and TQM as an additional rather than a core activity, Van Donk and Sanders (1995); Walsh (1995); Butz (1995). The importance of integration is also recognised by business excellence models across the world. For example, the extent to which an organisation has integrated quality into its business thinking, its business plan and business strategy is among the elements examined by EQA and Baldridge Award assessors, Ghobadian and Woo (1996). The desired influence is one of the evolutionary cascading of the long term strategic plan from corporate level through the shorter term divisional and business units to eventually involve the individual having personal performance plans, targets, and goals which align to the organisation's overall objectives. Thus the TQM objective of involvement at every level of the organisation can be seen.
From the foregoing it can be seen that TQM integration across all of the company becomes the rule for TQM implementation and that it will make a lasting change only if it is ingrained in the culture and therefore the values of the everyday activities of the company.
Garvin (1991) defines integration in terms of TQM as "the degree of alignment or harmony in an organisation - whether different departments and levels speak the same language and are tuned to the same wavelength". Whilst the British Quality Foundation (BQF) state that integration is concerned with how far an approach forms part of the normal operations of the business, as distinct from being part of an initiative or source activity managed by functional departments such as Quality, Human Resources, Marketing, or Operations. A fuller definition of integration in overall quality terms has been given by Ghobadian et al. (1998) as;
"The degree of horizontal and vertical alignment and linkages between quality and normal business processes that bear on an organisation's ability to deliver customer satisfaction and longevity of strong business performance".

3.5.4 Maintenance

The experiences of those who have successfully implemented and maintained a quality culture are summarised as containing;

a) Continue to live and re-examine the organisation's values. As Atkinson (1997) points out, "People are Boss Watchers. They recognise that deeds and actions of their managers reflect their degree of commitment to change".

b) Continue to communicate, using the right medium and the right level of awareness, the need for continuous improvement.

c) Do not become complacent. Quality is a dynamic which requires 100% awareness of stakeholder's value systems.

d) Cost of quality targets and other quality improvement goals should be incorporated in the objectives of all of the management team. Such an action will ensure the correct level of management commitment.

e) Seek improvements from all quarters by taking a holistic approach to the organisation's processes. Use the paradigm advocated by Berry (1981), of internal customer satisfaction influencing external results when he stated that, "If the organisation wishes fully to meet the expectations of external customers, this can only be achieved by designing internal products which satisfy the needs of the internal customers".

3.5.5 TQM - What on Earth is "it"?

Ghobadian et al., (1998), analysed the TQM literature classifying the main ideas gleaned from all of the available literature into three broad headings;

1) Underlying values.

2) Organisation orientation. which they further divided into three categories of ;

a) Management style and behaviour.

b) Organisation structure.

c) Working methods.

3) Tools and techniques.

Based upon their analysis Ghobadian et al., (1998), have defined TQM thus;

"TQM is a structured attempt to refocus the organisation's behaviour, planning and work practices toward a culture which is employee driven, problem solving, customer oriented, open and fear-free. Furthermore, the organisation's business practices are based on seeking continuous improvement, devolution of decision making, removal of functional barriers, eradication of sources of error, and fact based decision making".

Atkinson (1997) is among the first of the authors to address TQM in terms of the service which organisations provide when he states, "Total culture is a strategic approach to producing the best service we can - through constant innovation. It is a recognition of the importance of concentrating on the service you provide as a business. Total Quality Management is a refocusing upon service to the customer being tantamount to success and improvement as a business. If you don't like pleasing the customer with right first time business, get out and do something else". This approach may seem only as having its roots in service industries however as Atkinson points out a manufacturing company may produce zero defects products but may be let down by other internal factors, e.g. poor customer communications, late delivery, poor accounting procedures, etc. Quality must be company wide and the use of customer focus as a "shared value" issue can be the driving force to bring this about.

3.5.6 How does TQM relate other Management Practices

Koontz (1961) classified various management models which were currently in vogue at that time into two different schools of managerial thought as;

a) the scientific / system-oriented school of management

b) the human behaviour / social school of management

In the era, i.e. during the past century, when technology and systems were seen as the answer to all management problems on how to get the best productivity from the areas which they managed the scientific school dominated. The main proponents of the scientific school were Taylor, Fayol, Urwick and Gulick. Broadly the characteristics of the scientific school of thought are;

a) The main managerial tasks are considered to be the design of working methods and systems, control of a workforce, design and implementation of work measurement systems, and the design of financial incentives to motivate the workforce. The emphasis is on the systems rather than on people. It is assumed that people will fit into the system. Workers are considered to be inherently lazy with money being the primary motivator, McGregor Theory X (1960). No recognition is given to the basic human needs as theorised by Maslow (1943), of recognition, self-fulfilment, etc.

b) The guiding principle of organisation design is specialisation. Tasks are standardised and people are fitted onto tasks. This results in tall organisations with many layers of management and operatives. Such a Bureaucratic system was first advocated by Max. Weber (1900's or 1947 translation).

c) Activities are organised around sales or tasks. Job description is used to define the content of the job, rules, and procedures by which it should be carried out. The focus is on input rather than on the desired output. Job responsibilities are left undefined.

d) Actions and decisions are based on a predetermined set of rules. Deviations from these rules result in sanctions against the individual. There is little scope for individual initiative.

e) The organisational structure necessary to support the principles of scientific management is inevitably highly systematised and hierarchical. The organisation is run by systems rules and numbers. Such organisations are often inflexible and do not have the capacity to improve continuously.

f) Management is perceived as a unitary process irrespective of the nature of the organisation or the level of management.

Such a school of management thought, often termed the hard system of management, with its reliance upon statistics, measurement, and management control can be seen to fit with the traditional efficient inputs model. This leads to comfort zone management being reliant upon "them up there" to fix problems and having little or no cognisance of the expectations or values held by their staff or customers.

Prior to the 1980's in Western industrialised nations the only other model which could be seen as acting upon management thinking was the behaviour / social system. The social system being concerned with social relations and human relations being concerned with the individual. Since both models deal with the human aspect the differences between them are outweighed by their similarities and are therefore generally treated as one model. The main proponents of the human behaviour / social system approach to management were Barnard, Mayo, Follett, Hawthorne, Burns and Stalker, and Woodward. Broadly the characteristics of the behaviour / social school of thought are;

a) Within the management task it is considered essential to involve a process of personal persuasive leadership. Coercion in this method is replaced by co-operation.

b) The organisation is viewed as a system of cultural interrelationships. The organisation is run by people and not by systems for people, McGregor Theory Y (1960).

c) It is considered essential that in designing the structure of the organisation, its operations and systems, human emotions are taken into account.

d) Management is deemed to be responsible for the convergence of the goals and aspirations of the organisation with those of the individual. The goals of the organisation should be clearly defined to all of the staff. Management is responsible for creating processes which facilitate the establishment of common purpose within the organisation and then use persuasive means to achieve their attainment.

From the foregoing it can be seen that values play a very important role in what has been deemed by some as a soft system approach to management.

Drucker (1974) stated that, "Business management must always, in every decision and action, put economic performance first. It can justify its existence and its authority only by the economic results it produces. A business or a management has failed if it fails to produce economic results".

Drucker's statement with its emphasis on the financial necessities of business is completely in line with the desired outcomes of the TQM model and theories. However in the TQM model the ways of achieving these desires is the convergence between all of the stakeholders within the company of their aspirations and expectations and not as is the case of the bureaucratic model where the company thinks it knows what is best for all of the stakeholders concerned. The argument in favour of the importance of the need to understand and continue to monitor the values appertaining to the company's interests can be seen when implementing or re-engineering any TQM programme since, as previously stated, the foundation of any TQM programme is the congruence of stakeholder's aspirations and expectations. As has been shown elsewhere in this thesis in a break-back of aspirations and expectations values act as the antecedents to both of these elements of such a programme. Whilst there are implied references to the congruence of values within the current literature on values within TQM particularly with reference to "customer focus" and "staff commitment" little research would appear to have been carried out in the field of congruence of the values of all three elements of management / organisation, staff, and customers within service industries which is the subject of this research.

3.5.7 The Benefits of TQM

Before an organisation embarks on the road to quality through TQM it must carefully consider the benefits which it expects to gain from the subsequent changes to its culture. The driving force which necessitates such a shift in thinking is almost always brought about by external forces which can be categorised as;

a) the defence of the company's existing position within the markets in which it operates.

b) the need for change to enable the company to diversify into new markets.

c) the need to improve the company's competitive ability to facilitate a gain in competitive advantage.

To accommodate these requirements TQM is seen by many companies as a defensive, offensive, and change strategy, Schonberger (1992). Belohlav (1993) argues that quality directly influences a company's competitive position, thereby constraining the set of strategies available to the company and thus its competitive viability. Given the benefits identified and generally agreed as those which can be expected to accrue from the introduction of a TQM programme it is not difficult to see why the TQM philosophy is considered the correct approach in addressing such diverse objectives as the foregoing. The benefits identified in terms of the company have been shown to be:

a) Improved efficiency by driving out waste from the system. Improving the operating procedures in line with values expounded by TQM and using its suggested tools not only to drive out unnecessary costs, but also to reduce time to market and delivery reliability.

b) Increased revenue through the provision of more effective products and services. A focus on customer needs improves customer satisfaction, while focus on organisational effectiveness and culture improves the image of the organisation. These two combined help the organisation to increase its revenue.

c) Increased overall competitiveness through improved process efficiency and organisational effectiveness.

d) Provides focus for the introduction of wide-ranging cultural, organisational, and procedural change.

There have also been identifiable benefits to the staff in terms of:

a) A narrowing of the gap between the individual's and organisational goals largely driven by the perception of a better understanding and thus a respect for the values which both have.

b) Boosted employees' confidence by making them feel valued by the organisation thus enhancing their self-esteem, self-worth values described by Rokeach (1969), Table 2.1.

c) Making employees more customer focused thus enhancing the gregarious nature of their value systems.

d) Making employees more involved in the affairs of the organisation enhancing the family security values described by Rokeach (1969), Table 2.1 refers.

Ghobadian et al (1998) further classified the perceived benefits of TQM into internal benefits in terms of improved finance, operations, and management, and external benefits in terms of economics, customers, and suppliers.

Buzzell and Gale (1987) have also shown that companies with superior market perceived quality achieve: price premiums; increased market share; higher cash flows; and greater shareholder value, while direct costs were, on average, no higher than those of their lower quality competitors.

3.5.8 The Professional's Experience of the TQM Philosophy

Research into the barriers to TQM has been undertaken by a variety of quality academics which whilst complementing the research carried out by psychologists, behaviourists, and human resource experts into change and how it effects people has found particular facets of quality change management which requires attention on the part of any organisation undertaking the implementation of TQM. Their research findings provide additional information to assist in overcoming what may seem on the face of it to be local difficulties but which have in fact been dealt with by other organisations.

The Americans Tamini and Sebastianelli (1998) have found, using empirical measurement and interview techniques carried out on a sample of 188 quality professionals, that their number one barrier was related to the "ME or SELF" values of the individual. The resultant responses bear out the research findings of psychologists and human behaviourists such as Maslow (1943), Rokeach (1973), and O'Reilly et al. (1991).

3.5.9 Management Practices

This section of the thesis highlights most of the common management failings found in the implementation and maintenance of a TQM programme.

3.5.9.1 Over Enthusiasm

"When you are eating the elephant take one bite at a time", General Creighton W Abrams.

One of the major stumbling blocks of TQM being for everyone within the organisation and should involve everyone is that organisations do not take sufficient cognisance of the above sentiment when first adopting TQM principles. Whilst it is true that all members of the organisation should be involved in the drive for quality it does not mean that they all have to be involved simultaneously from the outset. Getting everyone involved in TQM projects at the same time is often seen as the way to win people over to the ideas and as a means of gaining their commitment. Unfortunately such an approach often leads to disillusionment due to the lack of planning, co-ordination, infrastructure to support the projects, and the need to demonstrate results from the abundance of smaller projects too much attention having been focused upon the "useful many" as opposed to the "vital few".

3.5.9.2 Lack of Commitment

Research has shown that lack of commitment on the part of senior managers manifests itself in the following ways:

1) Senior managers do not commit enough time to learn and understand the full implications of the TQM philosophies for their organisation and the benefits to be gained thereof.

2) Senior managers commit the organisation to the TQM process but neglect to include themselves in the process.

3) Senior managers isolate themselves in their offices and by so doing fail to appreciate the efforts and integration problems being experienced by the others within the organisation. A failure described by Peters and Waterman (1982) as "failing to walk the job".

4) Having acquired a knowledge of TQM principles senior managers often expect their staff to be similarly conversant with implementing processes which to the staff seem to have no bearing on the organisation's value system and leading to confusion and fear of the way the organisation is going in relation to their own value system.

In addition to the foregoing Whitely (1991) stressed the point that senior managers need to have values which engender both patients and persistence stating that, "There is a dogged persistence about quality leaders. What is important is when discouragement starts to set in, as it tends to do, then the leader must keep things moving in a positive direction. In the absence of results this means sticking to the process, keeping quality improvement high on the agenda, and sparing no energy to hammer it through. Complementing persistence is patience. Leaders are able to create an environment where people can try and fail; attempts as well as failures are celebrated because both represent a tremendous opportunity to improve".

3.5.9.3 Inappropriate Measurement of Quality Performance

Management in the past have used control systems which include measures as efficiencies and financially based measures to evaluate the standards which their organisation was achieving and upon which to base strategic decisions. Whilst these measures are in themselves essential to good management they tend to be time constrained often only producing data on a weekly, quarterly, or annual basis. Such a measurement system of control is always based in the past and attempting a cure scenario rather than a prevention approach. By the very nature of their inflexibility these measurement systems cannot easily be linked to value-added activities and are therefore not much use as tools which enable complete process control.

Such measures are seen to be "owned" at a management level restricting the TQM requirement of empowerment and involvement of staff in decision making within the realms of their own competencies. Nor do they include improvement measures which provide feedback to all areas of business operations which will allow people to monitor how well they are doing. This leads to disillusionment with quality initiatives and the subsequent reduction in the levels of trust between staff and management. As previously stated TQM and all other quality initiatives then become seen as being the province of management.

Whilst market share and the number of customer complaints are measures indicative of an organisation's standing customer involvement by measuring their expectations and their degree of satisfaction are largely ignored when making strategic decisions. Since the TQM requirement is one of setting standards, customer focus, and working to improve upon these there follows an argument that only by involving customers in jointly setting these standards and measuring how they perceive any improvement in them can the organisation be seen as driving quality. Such an approach requires an understanding by all parties of the core values which drive the organisation.

It follows from all of the foregoing that there exists the risk of a major pitfall within any organisation when evaluating the content of its control systems if it chooses to use only financially based measures. Knowing what to measure, (a combination of both "hard" and "soft" measures), where to measure, (within the values system of all of the stakeholders), how to measure, (using SPC and other quality techniques), and what evaluation to place upon these measured outcomes becomes the driving force necessary to achieve the desired levels of quality and results.

3.5.9.4 Ignoring the Subcultures and their Value Systems

As has been referred to elsewhere within this thesis within any organisation's culture there will exist subcultures with their own value systems whose core values should align with those of the organisation but whose peripheral values may at first examination be somewhat removed from those of the majority of the organisations'. Such subcultures can seem to management as an obstruction to progress whose presence within the organisation should not be tolerated. Such intolerance by managers ignoring the value system which sustains the subculture can be, and often is, detrimental to the organisation providing that the subculture's core values do not run counter to those of the organisation. The strength of subcultures is that they make managers reassess the organisation's values, often subconsciously, thus ensuring that the organisation does not collapse inwardly by becoming over complacent to the need to examine its principles, structure, and its modus operandi.

Those who ignore the presence of subcultures and the roles which they play in the overall culture of the organisation risk alienating the members of the subculture and creating an atmosphere in which the requirement for shared values can prove to be difficult.

3.6 Summary of Chapter

As stated in the aims and objectives of page 3 of this thesis an understanding of the Quality Values, quality being seen as a factor within a value system, is a research requirement. A review of the literature on this aspect of Quality was therefore carried out and is reported in this chapter.

The challenge of defining quality in terms of people's understanding of the concept in terms of the concept of Quality and Quality Management within an organisation and the value systems which sustain it is discussed in line with the overall aim of identifying the quality values which are held by the organisation's stakeholders. The concept of Quality Chains highlighting further the needs for a shared value system and internal and external customer satisfaction is discussed within an organisation in line with the congruence of Values issues in objectives 1, 4, and 5 of the thesis.

The role of Quality as part of the organisation's Culture has led to researchers to list the core values deemed necessary within a Total Quality Culture. A review of this culture has shown the need for the management of these core values. This has led to the management system of Total Quality Management (TQM). Elements of the system and the Values which support this are discussed. Within the system performance measurement and the systems which support it highlight the need to include the soft measures of shared values within the concept of continuous improvement, as desired within the Best Value concept discussed later in the thesis, one of the main elements of the TQM philosophy.

The aim of TQM is as a normalised management system integrated and maintained within best business practice. This is discussed in terms of the role of shared values not only up and down the organisation but also across structural boundaries aligning with an understanding of the need for the identification of value systems in objectives 1 - 5 of the thesis aims.

The role of management statistical systems which take no cognisance of the expectations or the values held by staff or customers is highlighted. The aim of achieving the benefits of a TQM culture through the change in management style to one of social and human relations is discussed to align with the importance values issues of objective 3 of the aims of the thesis. Whilst adopting the TQM approach to management and the use of its principles to achieve its benefits may seem to be the panacea for all management's ills various failures in bringing about the expected benefits of TQM adoption are discussed. These can largely be seen as a lack of understanding on everyone's part within the organisation of the need to understand and agree with the value system adopted by the organisation.

From the foregoing it can be seen that the concept of Quality plays a major role in identifying stakeholder Values. A review and definition of Quality was therefore justified to comply with the overall objectives the research aims.

Chapter 4

Service

4.0 Introduction

The role of the service sector within industry and the values, values systems, and expectations which support and maintain the elements of a quality culture within this sector are discussed in this section of the thesis.

As has been discussed within the previous chapters of this thesis the role which values and value systems play within a quality environment will, on occasion be self evident. Where this is not the case it is intended that the review of the literature and arguments will show how the values influence organisations' and individuals' behaviour towards a service environment in which both the customer and quality are the main cultural focus.

4.1 Service & Services Definition

The act of providing a service does, by dictionary definition, divide the parties involved within a service transaction into two states, that of being master or mistress and that of servant. However such a definition would not, in today's social climate, be acceptable to those employed within the service sector of industry. They more probably see themselves as providing customer and job satisfaction through an equal partnership of supplier and client.

A better understanding of service can perhaps be more readily achieved using the definition of service as being, "A change process which changes a person to some degree no matter how small", e.g. the transfer of knowledge from one person to another thus increasing the knowledge of one and enhancing the satisfaction values of the other. Successive attempts to define service in terms of an all embracing coverage by using lists of different services and service industries have proved to be flawed since society changes and the lists become outdated due to these changes. Within any definition of a service there also tends to be an tangible element which precludes the definition from being described as "pure" service as services are distinguished from products by their attribution of intangibility.

There is however general agreement within the UK that for the purposes of national statistical analysis service industries are those industries included in sections 6 to 9 of the

Standard Industries Classification (SIC). Contained within this classification are such diverse industries as tourism, financial services, retail business, healthcare, education, catering and communications; a common feature being that they treat people or provide goods and services for them.

Gronroos (1983) has, it could be argued, overcome the known problems of defining service by recognising that any definition will be flawed but stating that for the purposes of his researches in the field of service marketing the following be taken as a working definition, "Services are the objects of transaction offered by firms and institutions that generally offer services or that consider themselves service organisations". Such a definition he points out allows any organisation that classifies its operations as service operations or its transactions as service transactions to analyse and develop its management skills within a service orientated framework with all of the customer / supplier implications that such an organisational ethos entails.

The research being undertaken within the terms of the hypothesis is focused upon the service industries and in particular within the university education sector which by the Standard Industries Classification (SIC) resides within the service sector of industry. That being the case the definition as stated by Gronroos would seem to adequately describe services in terms of university education and will be adopted by the author as a working definition for the purposes of this research.

4.2 Service Attributes

"The main reason to devote specific attention to quality of services is the acceptance that services are, as to intrinsic elements, different from goods", (Tettro and Viehoff, 1987; Lovelock, 1988).

Academia has debated the differing ways in which distinctions can be drawn between "products" and "services". There are however four recognisable distinctions which have been universally agreed as those which can be condensed from all of the numerous lists of service attributes to distinguish "services" from "products" namely:

1) Intangibility - is the prime defining characteristic of services.

2) Simultaneous production and consumption or perishability - refers to the idea that services are typically produced and consumed in a single moment or "real time".

3) Customer participation - often during service transactions are present and play a major role in completing the process.

4) The heterogeneity or diversity - of the attributes of any service are the antecedents of both the explicit and the implicit elements of the service which are reliant upon the individual's preferences and perceptions.

In agreeing these distinctions recognition has been given to the fact that most services have an accompanying product and most products have an element of service attached to them. However for the purposes of research the four distinguishing criteria as stated serve as the attribute definitions of "services".

4.3 Service Design

"Designing quality into service requires melding the precision of the engineer, the holistic view of the architect, and the customer mindedness of the marketeer. We need to be more rigorous, more detail-orientated, and more comprehensive in the design of services". Indeed, to truly design quality into a service, one needs not only to understand the customer, both internal and external, but one needs also to understand the service". Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1990).

Despite the work of academics such as Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1990) the observations by Gummesson (1989b) that, "We have yet to hear of service designers", can still be seen in part as indicative of the present service design situation. There appear to be "grey areas" with regard to the design elements of planning, introduction, and the questioning of the relevance and flexibility of a service, all of which require, it is argued, an examination of the values being brought to bear within new and existing services. As Gronroos, (1990), points out, "If a service is not well designed, quality problems follow".

To accommodate what he sees as a well designed service Gronroos (ibid.) has identified the following six determinants of; 1) Professionalism and Skills, 2) Attitudes and Behaviour, 3) Accessibility and Flexibility, 4) Reliability and Trustworthiness, 5) Recovery, 6) Reputation and Credibility.

Perhaps it is the sheer complexity of the construct of service and its design which precludes there being to date no definitive widely accepted definition of the function. Mahesh and Stanworth (2000) have stated after reviewing the literature in the field of service design that they have found that the following list of nine recurring themes appear to form important aspects of the design process;

1) Adoption of a loose-tight approach - being sufficiently prescriptive and yet flexible at the same time.

2) Creating and making explicit the potential for win-win events.

3) Design from the perspective of customers - both at the technical and functional quality levels, Gronroos (1990).

4) Managing the service evidence, Shostack (1984).

5) Using customers as a product resource.

6) Developing a solution system - not focusing on isolated events, Vandermerwe (1990).

7) Managing the internal customer.

8) Maintain a focus on efficiency and enabling control of the elements that ensure reliability.

9) Creating a feedback and correction loop - staying close to the customer and facilitating appropriate recovery.

Gummesson (1994) has stated that, "One of the most challenging aspects of design is that of adopting a loose-tight approach.", thus the flexibility of the loose-tight approach would seem to be the number one priority within service design.

All of the foregoing themes requires the designer to account for all of the individual attribute distinctions of the required design. This entails the recognition of three elements and four basic characteristics common to the provision of all services. These are described as;

Elements

a) the physical elements or facilitating goods - the tangibles.

b) the explicit service or sensual values - the agreed levels of service.

c) the implicit service or psychological benefits - the self esteem and "me" factors.

Characteristics

a) It must be objective not subjective.

b) It must be precise not vague.

c) It must be fact driven not opinion driven.

d) It must be methodical not philosophical.

To accommodate the elements, characteristics, and recurring themes within a design Oakland (1997), has produced the following list of 6 attributes which he states must be considered when designing a service;

1) Labour intensity - the ratio of labour costs incurred to the value of plant and equipment used (people versus equipment-based services).

2) Contact - the proportion of time required to provide the service for which the consumer is present in the system.

3) Interaction - the extent to which the consumer actively intervenes in the service process to change the content of the service; this includes customer participation to provide

information from which needs can be assessed, and customer feedback from which satisfaction levels can be inferred.

4) Customisation - which includes choice (providing one or more selections from a range of options, which can be single or fixed) and adaptation (the interaction process in which the requirement is decided, designed and delivered to match the need).

5) Nature of the service act - either tangible, i.e. perceptible to the touch and can be owned, or intangible, i.e. insubstantial. .

6) Recipient of service - either people or things.

The accommodation of all of the foregoing recurring themes has been proven to be fraught with difficulties. The most recent tool to be added to the battery of service design is that of computer-based dynamic simulation using packages which include visual interaction components (VIS). These programmes have been shown to be extremely effective in approaching the mechanistic step by step aspects of service provision such as back office support functions, customer queuing functions, and scheduling of opening times and staffing levels, (Van Ackere and Ninios 1993; Livny et al. 1993; Proctor 1994; Martin et al. 1992).

4.4 Service Culture

"Climate and culture are crucial in service organisations, since there is so much variability in jobs that require interactions with customers. If service employees are to provide a quality experience for their customers, then the organisation must first create the right climate and culture to shape employee behaviour" - Benjamin Schneider (1986).

If one accepts that the foregoing statement is a truism then there follows an argument that if an organisation wishes to shape its employee's behavioural patterns it must first fully understand the markets in which it operates. To do this it must have an understanding of the expectations of its customers and adapt the organisation's structure and values to meet these expectations. It must also employ staff who's behavioural patterns can be changed from a production line approach to a free thinker who has been empowered to understand, control, and improve the services within their jurisdiction in the organisation.

To attempt to meet customers' and staffs' hopes, aspirations, and expectations the organisation's management must create what Schneider calls, "a culture of service". This "culture of service" should embody a culture which has more recently been defined by Gronroos, (1993) as, "A culture where an appreciation for good service exists, and where giving good service to internal as well as ultimately external customers is considered a natural way of life and one of the most important norms by everyone".

Riddle (1986) points out, "Customer satisfaction demands that service delivery systems be modified to fit the key values of the culture". The important element of this statement and of that of the hypothesis being tested is that organisational culture, and therefore its value system, matches that of its customers both external and internal.

Unfortunately for organisations the composition of markets, and the players within them, are constantly changing in the dynamic situation which permeates today's society and organisations must therefore plan strategies which allow them to be flexible enough to rapidly adapt to changes in customer culture and values. There is therefore a need for organisations to find some magic formula which allows them to bring about changes quickly and to have strategies in place which will ensure the long term consolidation of these changes as a survival issue. As the basis for such a formula it is argued that organisations must acquire an understanding of the core values within the systems of each of its stakeholders and should equate these to the organisation's own systems. Since the core values held within a culture, as previously discussed in this research, are the most difficult components to change, it follows that by having such an understanding and aligning the organisation's systems to these that the organisation should be able to readily adapt to changing markets and therefore have a greater chance of survival. There is evidence to show that organisations which retain a strong culture of flexibility within their value systems do survive longer than those which display an intransigence to change.

4.5 Service Quality

> "Service quality is a measure of how well the service level delivered matches customer expectations on a consistent basis". Lewis and Booms, 1983.

Within society as a whole and within segmented groups of society there are norms or values which define what is good or superior quality. As there are so many services on offer which are in essence the same, it is the perceived level of quality as a measure of customer satisfaction which differentiates one service provider from another.

Brogowicz et al. (1990), Lapierre (1993), and Fisk et al. (1993), have analysed the literary content and theoretical studies supported by empirical research of recent developments within the field of service quality and concluded that these fall within two schools of thought namely the Nordic and the North American schools of service quality research.

Whilst both schools of thought approach quality from a different angle they both are formulated on the common operational definition of service quality as being the difference between the expectations that consumers had prior to a service encounter and the perceptions of the service received, (Gronroos 1983, Lewis and Booms 1983, Parasuraman et al. 1985, and Smith and Houston 1982).

Lehtinen and Lehtinen, (1982), of the Nordic school defined service quality in terms of a three dimensional model of; (a) physical quality originating in the physical elements of service, (b) interactive quality originating between customer and a service organisation, (c) corporate quality or image. These three generic elements of quality were further transposed by Gronroos (1984, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1992a, 1992b, 1993) , into technical, functional, and reputation and are currently used by exponents of the Nordic school as the basis for research into quality approaches and developments into buyer-seller interactions

The technical elements refer to "what" the customer receives whilst functional elements refer to "how" the service is performed to the customer.

The concept of user based quality or customer focused promoted by the North American school also permeates the service product Nordic approach as present and future client needs are considered in planning, implementing and evaluating service provision, Gronroos (1990).

The North American school as lead by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985,1986, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1994), distinguishes between subjective and objective quality. Within this context Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry identified two interrelated service quality dimensions, outcome quality and process quality. Using these two dimensions Zeithaml et al. (1988), focused the thinking of the North American school upon the customer conceptualising the act of service as the customer's opinion of the overall superiority or excellence of a service. In terms of a customer focus approach this has been defined by proponents of the North American School as, "An attitude developed over all previous encounters with a service organisation", (Holbrook and Corfman 1985, Olshavsky 1985, Bitner 1990, Bolton and Drew 1991a, Parasuraman 1988, Parasuraman et al. 1985). The use of such language in distinguishing service quality from customer satisfaction highlights the usage of core values as opposed to peripheral values within an individual's system in determining the factors in play when evaluating the overall quality of a service being provided.

The action of core values can also be seen when examining the literature which distinguishes between expectations which are related to customer satisfaction and those of expectations relating to service quality. Oliver, (1981), highlights the aspects of an individual's value system when he views satisfaction as an emotional reaction which influences attitude and is consumption specific.

Most quality researchers accept the approach to satisfaction and service quality as being a function of numerous transactions between customer and supplier arguing that satisfaction is therefore an antecedent to service quality, Bolton and Drew (1991). Other researchers do not share this view and propose that customer satisfaction and service quality can be examined at both the transactional-specific and global perspectives, (Teas 1993, Dabholkar 1993).

Perceived service quality has been accepted by both the Nordic and North American schools for operalisation purposes as a function of the difference between expectations and the perception of the performance of a service.

It is argued that the customer focus approach to service quality requires a greater understanding by all of those concerned within an organisation of the value systems to which all of its stakeholders subscribe. These by their very nature require a greater reliance upon the use of "soft" measurement data and controls to assist in strategic decision making.

4.6 The Determinants of Service Quality

It is generally accepted that service consists of an input and a process element from which an outcome is the achievement (or not) of some end by the interaction of the customer and the service provider. The presence of the customer within the service equation adds a dimension which makes it difficult to define the boundaries between the two, whilst the influence of intuitive logic in the concept of consumers making evaluations based upon some form of value perceptions further complicates matters, Lyth and Johnston (1988).

Berry, Zeithaml, and Parasuraman (1985), have stated that, "Improving service quality begins with a company using research to identify the quality determinants most important to market segments of interest..... Isolating quality determinants important to the customer and in need of improvement by the company provides a focus for a quality improvement programme. Because market priorities may change they need to be tracked over time".

Accepting the foregoing statement then the importance of the role which determinants play within the service quality context cannot be over emphasised since they form the basis of the judgments which consumers, service providers, and their staff use to evaluate service quality. In so doing, it is argued, each displays the content and shared elements of their value systems and therefore are of prime importance to the hypothesis under consideration.

4.6.1 Who Determines Service Quality ?

The hypothesis under test examined whether if there is a congruence of quality values between the customer, thė staff, and the organisation then that organisation will be successful. If the hypothesis is valid then it follows that all stakeholders determine the quality of service which operates within the organisation's markets. However given the preponderance of the human factors prevalent within service industries then the quality of service of an organisation can described as an amalgamated compromise of individual value systems. Examples of compromise can be seen in the everyday workings of organisations, e.g. customers, both internal and external, accept a lesser degree of service than that expected by sacrificing one value, e.g. time to complete transaction, in favour of another, the degree of knowledge of the person handling the transaction, etc.

Within the field of education it could be argued that the government as industry regulator determines the quality of service which the industry offers since it exists primarily to protect the people's interests. However since the populus "own" the government it could be argued that the populus in choosing the government determine the quality of education offered.

The examples used in the foregoing employ value judgments requiring compromise. It is argued that whilst the customer may seem to be the one who defines quality the degree of compromise which each stakeholder is prepared to make is a measure of the quality of service which the organisation offers. The answer to the question of "who determines the quality of service ? " is in fact that each stakeholder within the organisation to a lesser or greater degree determines the quality of service.

4.6.2 The Quality Professionals View of the Determinants of Service Quality

Academics researching the determinants of service quality have produced models which have lists of varying length containing what they have concluded are the determinants of service quality. Examples of these can be seen in the models as proposed by Sasser et al (1978) which identify three different dimensions of service performance, i.e. performance of material, facilities, and personnel; Gronroos (1984,1988), initially two in 1984 expanded to six in 1988; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, (1985,1988) in their gap model research in 1985 stated that there were ten determinants which in 1988 were concatenated to five; Lehtinen and Lehtinen, (1991), who produced their three dimensional phenomenon relating to process quality and output quality; Fitzgerald and Moon, (1996) who stated that there were twelve determinants when researching financial service quality; whilst Johnston, (1995) concluded that there were eighteen whilst researching personal banking in the UK. Each of the researchers within their models of service determinants found that not all service dimensions had the same impact on service quality. This, it is argued, is due to the dynamic nature of the value systems of all of the participants being researched.

It is widely accepted that heterogeneity is a major factor within the characteristics which constitute service provision. It is argued that any model which claims to supply the answers to the question of the determinants and therefore the dimensions of service quality as a generalisation should be regarded with suspicion given the complex nature of any service. Models of service quality, it is argued, should be specific to the dimensions of the service due to the heterogeneity of that service. On the basis of empirical research Lehtinen et al. (1997) state that, "Certain dimensions used in models seem to be more important than others. The manifestation and therefore usefulness of quality dimensions differ between services. There is no self-evident justification to develop or at least generalise multidimensional models for a heterogeneous and abstract area such as service quality. Such models are probably difficult to apply to all service contexts".

In support of these conclusions it is argued that if we accept the heterogeneity of service characteristics then each individual involved within a service transaction will determine the determinants of that transaction given that they must make rational judgments which will invoke a combination of values, as claimed by Milton Rokeach (1969) in his Value Survey (RVS) matrix. It follows therefore that the determinants based upon that individual's value judgments will vary from situation to situation. Rokeach has shown that dependent upon the situation certain values become core or terminal end states of existence values whilst others become peripheral or instrumental modes of conduct. It is therefore argued that each individual has his or her own ideals, made up of distinctive core and peripheral values, which determine their levels of the quality of service expected and satisfaction achieved, i.e. their determinants, within a particular service situation or transaction.

4.7 Measuring Quality Dimensions

The argument in favour service industries understanding the quality determinants of the service which they provide is obvious. Having researched the particular determinants of their own service, providers can focus on dimensioning and improving these dimensions thus increasing customer satisfaction levels.

With the globalisation of service markets there is an increasing recognition that the measurement of service dimensions as an aspect of an organisation's strategic management system can no longer be confined to a narrow band of financial indicators. The use of such indicators can lead to the misinterpretation of market trends and the need for customer satisfaction appraisement and employee relations issues. Having recognised the need to include such issues within an organisation's management system the challenge is to somehow measure these using non-financial measures.

Examination by Fitzgerald and Moon (1996) of three performance measurement frameworks has revealed certain common threads. The measurement strategies examined from the work of Fitzgerald et al (1991), the determinants and results matrix of Kaplan and Norton (1992), and the balanced scorecard approach of Lynch and Cross (1991) indicate that any strategic dimensional measurement system of organisations within the service sector should contain; a) linkage to corporate strategy, b) include external (customer service type) as well as internal measures, c) include non-financial as well as financial measures, d) make explicit the tradeoffs between the various measures of performance.

It is argued that within the commonalty of the performance systems should include the review of the status of the organisation's values which should underpin all of the items as discussed.

Within the realms of quality management it is generally accepted that the dimension of quality is relative to "consistent conformance to customer's expectations", Crosby (1979), and "fitness for purpose", Juran (1988) quality being seen as a multidimensional construct. In terms of management for example the concept of service quality, "Must be meaningful, able to be operationalised, and measurable", Garvin (1988).

4.8 Measuring the Quality of Service

Wyckoff (1984) points out that "Measuring the service customer's satisfaction levels is still one of the most subjective and difficult parts of quality management in service industries". Whilst it may seem that this statement is today somewhat outdated there is a continuous debate among students and academia of quality within service industries as to how best to gather and validate data and how to determine satisfaction levels.

The gathering of data on service specifics such as; mean time between failures, number of customer complaints, etc., the "hard numbers" of service measurement, are all relatively easy to gather and analyse and indeed in some quarters are seen as the only true reflection of service quality.

From the foregoing and from the work of Johnston (1995) it can be seen that there continues to be ongoing academic debate among quality professionals regarding the relative merits, similarities and differences between 5 constructs of service quality and satisfaction. These constructs have been used as the basis for the measurement of quality standards and strategic goal setting. The constructs, not in any order of preference are outlined as follows;

1) As the basis for follow-up research as there would seem to be agreement that customer satisfaction refers to the outcome of individual transactions whilst service quality is the customer's opinion of the global superiority or excellence of an organisation and the service provided, Bitner and Hubbert, (1994).

2) The efficacy of the expectation-perception gap view of service quality which is similar to the disconfirmation theory found in consumer behaviour literature. This construct places a heavy emphasis upon the softer measures when evaluating service quality, (Berry et al., 1985, Gronroos 1984, 1990, Haywood-Farmer and Nollet 1991, Parasuraman et al. 1994). There is a school of thought among quality academics that service quality should only be judged when using performance based or hard measures and that strategic decisions should only be based on these findings, (Babakus and Boller 1992, Cronin and Taylor 1994).

3) The perception gap between expectations and actual quality delivered and how managers can minimise and manage this forms the basis of this construct, (Brogowicz et al. 1990, Gronroos 1990, Gummesson and Gronroos 1987, Parasuraman et al. 1985).

4) This construct concerns the definition and use of the zone of tolerance acceptable level of service. Berry and Parasuraman (1991) state that, "The zone of tolerance is a range of service performance that a customer considers satisfactory". Liljander and Strandvik (1993), and Johnston (1995), emphasise the importance of the zone in stating that, "Only when performance moves outside the range of the zone will it have any real influence on perceived service quality".

5) The final construct concerns the identification of the determinants of service quality. This should, as Johnston (1995) points out, "Be a central concern for service management academics and practitioners since the identification of the determinants of service quality is necessary in order to be able to specify, measure, control, and improve customer perceived service quality".

All of the constructs as outlined have an impact upon the terms of hypothesis as tested. However whilst the "hard" outcome objective aspects of the service are addressed particular emphasis has been place within the case study elements of this research on the "soft" number customer perception of service quality which as previously stated elsewhere within this thesis are the more difficult to determine, "The soft side is harder" Vandermerwe (1993). It is these perceptions of service quality that are addressed in the following sections of the thesis as the measurement of such issues are indicative of the congruence of quality values as prescribed by the service determinants which form the basis of the hypothesis.

4.8.1 Satisfiers and Dissatisfiers

In terms of manufactured products Swan and Combs (1976) hypothesised that there were two different types of determinants which had to be in place to achieve customer satisfaction; instrumental - the actual performance of the physical product, and expressive - the psychological performance of the product. They suggested that dissatisfaction may occur from either type of performance. Research into their hypothesis showed that both instrumental and expressive factors led to both satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Support for these findings has come from Maddox (1981) who found during product research that, "Low values on an expressive attribute will reduce satisfaction, but will not lead to dissatisfaction".

Within the service sector of the hotel and restaurant industry Cadotte and Turgeon (1988) analysed the content of complaints and compliments as reported by customers. They found that some variables were dissatisfiers when performance or absence of the desired feature led to dissatisfaction, which then resulted in complaining behaviour. Conversely when there was an over provision of the desired features this did not lead to complimentary behaviour. They therefore concluded that, "Dissatisfiers represent the necessary but not sufficient conditions of product performance". There were some satisfiers where unusual performance elicited strong feelings of satisfaction leading to complimentary behaviour but typical performance or the absence of performance did not necessarily cause negative feelings.

They further suggested that there were "criticals" which were the variables that could elicit both positive and negative feelings, quality of service was one of the factors which ranked high as both a satisfier and dissatisfier. They also identified "neutrals" as those areas which receive neither compliment nor complaint.

In terms of the research undertaken within this thesis the evidence from Cadotte and Turgeon is further evidence of the priorities and tolerances which individuals place upon service needs as dictated by their own value system and of the dynamic nature of customer satisfaction within service industries. Their core values it is argued influencing the "critical" variables and the "neutrals" being influenced by the peripheral values. Berry et al. (1985) implied that the determinants that tend to satisfy are the obverse of those that dissatisfy however the evidence of Swan and Combs (1976), Maddox (1981), Cadotte and Turgeon (1988), Johnston and Silvestro (1990), and Johnston (1995), would suggest that the causes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction may in fact be different.

From the foregoing it is argued that the states of satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not the converse of each other but are separate entities since each state manifests itself as a different matrix combination of an individual's value system.

4.8.2 The Confirmation / Disconfirmation Paradigm

Customer satisfaction has been defined by Day (1977) as, "The extent to which an actual experience confirms or disconfirms the consumer's prior expectations". Such a definition epitomises the approach of the confirmation / disconfirmation paradigm.

Satisfaction forms the central core to the confirmation / disconfirmation of expectations paradigm. The disconfirmation of expectations paradigm distinguishes the gap between expectation and delivery of service in the statement that the consumer will feel unsatisfied if the performance of a service or object falls below that expectations (negative disconfirmation) and satisfied when expectations are confirmed or exceeded (positive disconfirmation). Satisfaction is therefore expected to increase as positive disconfirmation increases.

Whilst the disconfirmation gap paradigm is used as the basis for measuring satisfaction, Oliver (1980), it is quite distinct from that use in measuring service quality considering, as it does, differing aspects of individual and organisational value systems.

The confirmation / disconfirmation paradigm has been most widely used to measure the levels of customer satisfaction as represented in the positive or negative discrepancies between the consumers' expectations and actual service performance. The detailed validity of the gap paradigm has been challenged by empirical researchers, (Boulding et al. 1993; Cronin and Taylor 1992,1994; Teas 1993,1994) and the shortcomings of the linear approach to evaluation by Iacobucci et al. (1994). Despite the consumer intuitive logic factor in decision making however the concept of attempting to measure the gap between that received and that expected is still accepted as the only viable measurement model available to date.

Research into the satisfaction/dissatisfaction (CS/D) levels which customers have of a service has shown that these levels are a function of their expectations prior to receiving a service and of their evaluation of the service received in hindsight. The CS/D levels are therefore, as argued elsewhere within this thesis, a function of their value system. The expectation concept within the CS/D paradigm has been defined by a variety of marketing and quality theorists. Leichty and Churchill 1979, Miller 1977, Oliver 1980a all defined the concept as based upon the Tolman's (1932) expectancy theory of, "Predictions made by customers concerning what they believe will be the likely outcome of a service or transaction".

As a sub-construct of the expectancy element of the disconfirmation paradigm theory the role which the customer expects to play within the transaction (behavioural intentions), the degree of involvement, and what actually takes place and how this influences the global evaluation of satisfaction is the subject of ongoing research by academics, Taylor and Baker (1994), Zeithaml et al (1996), Aldlaian and Buttle (1997), Webb (2000), Tan (2001). It is argued that highly involved customers are likely to have similar or identical beliefs or values to those of their chosen service provider and that these customers will be more sensitive to the level of performance than those who are less involved. It follows therefore that the role which customers expect to play is a function of their value system and as such acts as a mediator in the expectation formation process.

As has been discussed within the Service Quality section of this thesis researchers have shown the distinction between customer satisfaction with respect to service transactions and their global evaluation of a service, (Holbrook and Corfman 1985, Olshavsky 1985, Bitner 1990, Bolton and Drew 1991a, Parasuraman 1988, Parasuraman et al. 1985, Cronin and Taylor, 1992, Oliver, 1993, Halstead et al. 1994). Satisfaction can therefore be considered as influencing the customer's evaluation of service quality, purchase intentions, and behaviour, LaBarbera and Mazursky (1983). It is further argued that customers', both internal and external in terms of the total quality paradigm, (CS/D) is a function of the disconfirmation arising from discrepancies between prior expectations and actual performance, (Cardozo 1965, Oliver 1977, & 1980b, Olshavsky and Miller 1972, Oloson and Dover 1976).

Churchill and Surprenant (1982), have found that the CS/D of an intangible service is a function of the three constructs of expectation, performance evaluations, and disconfirmation which do not necessarily have independent additive effects for every product or service. It follows that expectations, performance evaluations, and disconfirmation are each potential antecedents of CS/D for any service provided. These findings further the argument that an individual's value system is a dynamic which changes when practices become accepted as the norm. Oliver (1989) has shown that customer responses to continuously provided services are characterised by passive expectations and therefore that disconfirmation will not operate unless performance is outside the range of experience-based norms for such services as provided by public utilities or long established service providers.

As can be seen from the foregoing within the CS/D literature the expectations component of the disconfirmation paradigm has been portrayed in a variety of ways with expectations as predictions of the quality expected being dominant. For a further in depth review of the literature on consumer satisfaction see Yi Youjae (1990).

Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1991) have claimed, on the basis of their empirical research, that within the field of customer satisfaction a variety of expectation standards exist and that disconfirmation of expectations rather than the expectations themselves influences the levels of satisfaction processes. They have further hypothesised that, "Customers have a desired level of service which is defined as the level of service which they hope to achieve. This is a blend of what customers believe can be performed and what should be performed".

Using the Oliver (1980a, 1989) findings and their own research, Zeithaml et al. (1988,1985) plus their research into "experienced based norms" Zeithaml et al. (1991), & Zeithaml et al. (1993), have developed and enhanced a theoretical model of the nature and determinants of customer expectations of service. The model recognises that services are heterogeneous in nature since performance may vary across providers, across employees from the same provider, and even within the same service employee, Zeithaml et al. (1985).

The extent to which customers recognise and are willing to accept this heterogeneity Zeithaml et al. (1991), have termed the "zone of tolerance",(previously referred to as item (4) of the 5 constructs of service quality and satisfaction in this section of the thesis). The zone is conceptualised as the difference between desired service and the level of service considered adequate who's fluidity is influenced by the dynamism of a customer's value system making it expand and contract dependent upon the value judgments which are made by the customer.

The model as illustrated in Figure 4.1 consists of four basic elements;

1) Expected service based upon pretrial beliefs of a service which act as a benchmark when judging service performance.

2) Desired service which is defined as being based upon the expectation of the level of service the customer hopes to receive.
3) Adequate service which is defined as being based upon the level of service which the customer will accept.
4) Predicted service is defined as the degree of expected overall standard with the service received.

Antecedents of both desired and predicted service comprise four variables within the model; explicit service promises, implicit service promises, word-of-mouth communications, and past experience

Nature and Determinants of Customer Expectations of Service

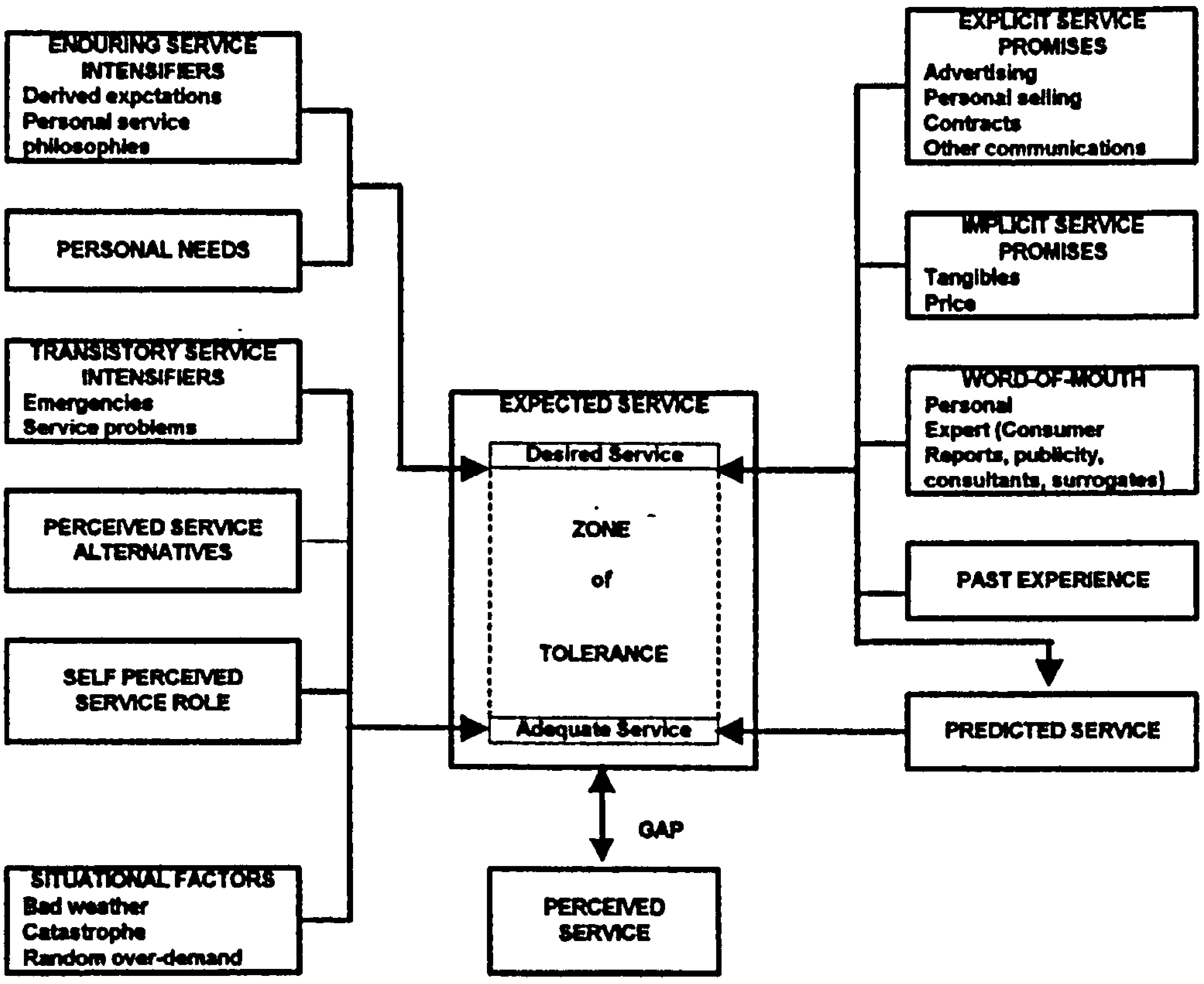

Figure 4.1 Source Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1991)

The importance of the zones of tolerance cannot be overemphasised when discussing grades or levels of service with particular reference to the disconfirmation paradigm since it is these zones which determine the levels of customer satisfaction. Since these zones belong to the individual, and are therefore a function of his or her value system, the measurement of the breadth of the zones in terms of customer satisfaction presents the service provider with particular difficulties in terms of what and how to measure what is acceptable. It is argued that by focusing upon the values held by each of the stakeholders within an organisation service providers would have the basis from which to evolve a viable management system having measures compatible with the zones of tolerance of each party.

The basic premise therefore of the disconfirmation paradigm used within this thesis is the difference or gap, either positive or negative, between what the customer expects and the performance receives from a service in terms of, "Wished for or desired levels of performance which customers want from a service", the Miller (1977), and Swan and Tarwick (1980).

4.8.3 SERVQUAL

Garvin (1988) developed the concept of quality by describing it as having 5 components or definitions;

1) *Transcendental Quality* as a subjective assessment made by the provider of service.
2) *Product-based Quality* which focuses on the ingredients of the product's components.
3) *Valued-based Quality* is a relativistic or benchmark view of quality.
4) *Manufacturing-based Quality* is related to the production process.
5) *User-based Quality* is seen as a global assessment by the customer. This definition would incorporate Oliver's (1977,1980) "disconfirmation paradigm", previously discussed in this thesis, as a measure of customer focus and satisfaction and the Gronroos (1984) concept within his "service product" approach of perceived quality as being a judgment of the difference between the customer's expectation of a product or service versus the actual experiencing of the product or service.

Whilst all 5 elements as prescribed by Garvin as being the foundation of the quality concept make use of individual and organisational value systems that of number 5, *User-based Quality,* requires a greater understanding by all stakeholders within the organisation of each other's values and of "soft" systems. Such a requirement presents quality academics and practitioners alike with the major problem of "how do you measure thoughts and feelings". This tends to be more problematic in service industries where the control of people, both consumer and provider and consequently their value systems, is a major factor. Indeed the determinants of service quality and how they should be operationalised into working models has been the subject of heated debates within the service quality area since the distinction between manufacturing and service industries was first mooted as a subject for research by Lynn Shostack in 1977 in her article titled "Breaking Free from Product Marketing".

As an approach to this problem Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985, 1988), developed their by now much used and abused service model for measuring quality which they titled SERVQUAL, (SERVice QUALity), as illustrated in Figure 4.2. This model has formed the basis for modern service quality theory despite, as discussed later, widespread criticism.

The model is based upon the concept of disconfirmation, of customers' beliefs of service quality arising from the comparison of what they expect from a service provider, with their perception of the provider's performance at one particular point in time. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry not only proposed a service 'gap' model which assists managers in assessing mismatches in their provision of service but they also identified 5 determinants, as previously referred to within this thesis, of service quality which they used when formulating 'gap' scores.

SERVQUAL - The Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry Service Quality Model

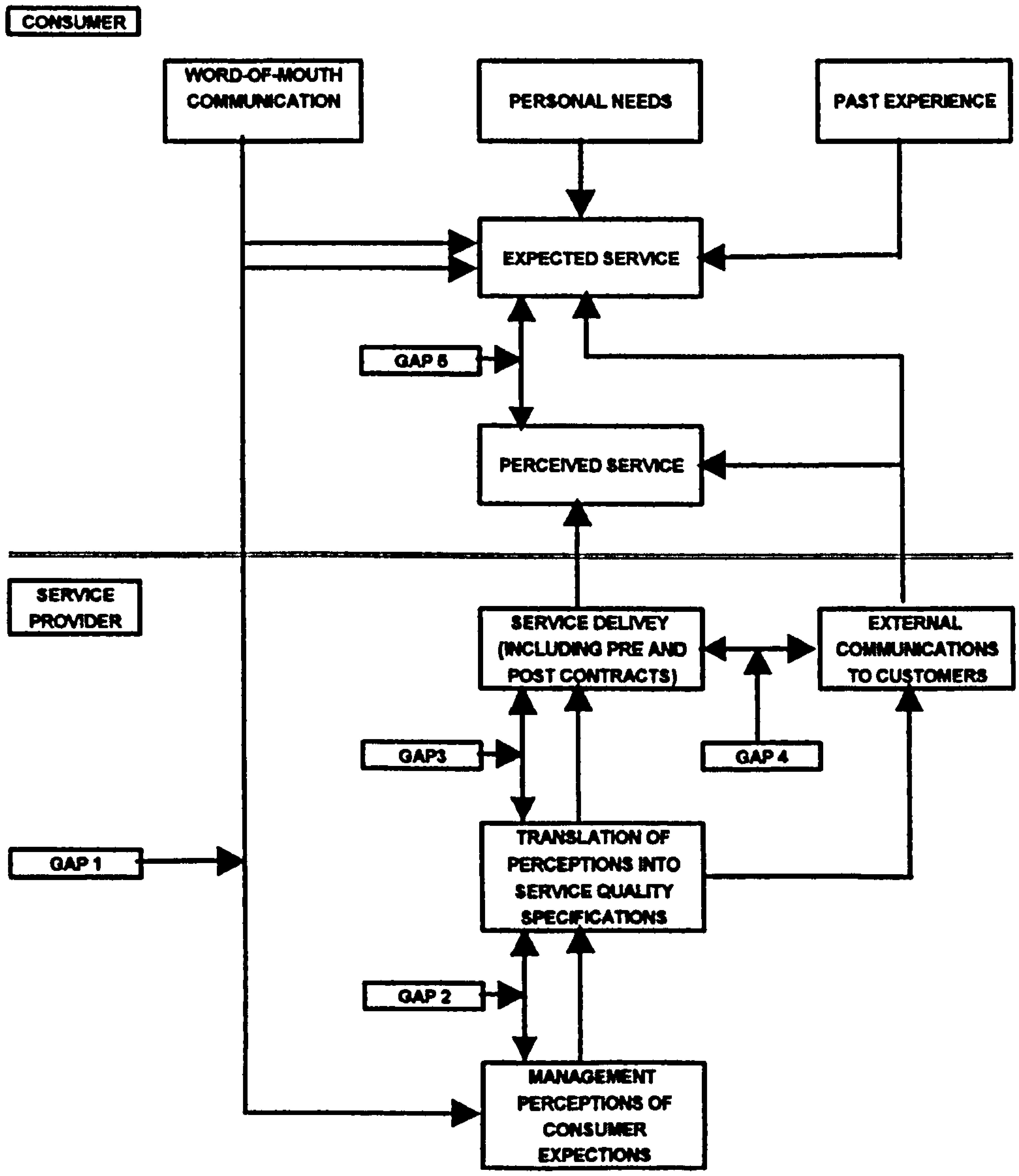

Figure 4.2 Source Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988)

Figure 4.2 highlights the main requirements for delivering expected and perceived service quality. The first four gaps, organisational failures (gaps), are identified as being within the realms of the service provider. These contribute to the fifth gap, the perceived service gap, which is an overall measurement of service quality from the service recipient's point of view.

The 5 gaps are described as follows;

Gap 1) Between the consumer's requirements and management's perception of it.

Gap 2) Between management's perception of what the customer requires and the service quality which is eventually specified.

Gap 3) Between the specified service quality and the actual standard of service which is delivered.

Gap 4) Between the standard of service delivered and that promised in external communications to customers.

Gap 5) Between the consumer's perception of the service quality received and the standard expected.

Using the construct design recommendations of Churchill (1979); Carman (1990); Babakus and Mangold (1992); and Babakus and Boller (1992) Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry have produced and developed a questionnaire instrument which consists of two sets of 22 statements or items, refined from an initial 97, in the form of a self-administered questionnaire which customers in the first instance and staff at all levels latterly are invited to complete.

The 5 determinants as prescribed by the SERVQUAL instrument are listed as follows:

1) ***Tangibles*** **-Tangibles** - the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials. 4 items in questionnaire instrument scale.

2) ***Reliability*** - **Reliability** - the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. 5 items in questionnaire instrument scale.

3) ***Responsiveness*** - **Responsiveness** - the willingness to help customers and to provide prompt service. 4 items in instrument questionnaire scale.

4) ***Competence, Courtesy, Credibility, Security,*** - **Assurance** - the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence. 5 items in instrument questionnaire scale.

5) ***Access, Communication Understanding*** - **Empathy** - the provision of caring individualised attention to customers. 4 items in instrument scale.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry claimed that the evidence gathered by using their instrument indicated that reliability was the primary customer determinant of the 5 determinants tested. Researchers have found that there is a marked variation in the relationship of the determinants found within the services being researched and those of the scale items of the model, Carman (1990), Finn and Lamb (1991), Brown et al. (1993), and Buttle (1995) who has identified a number of operational issues including process orientation and dimensionality as construct validity issues.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1990) have defined expectations as, "Desires or wants of consumers". Further stating that the expectations component was designed to measure, "Customer's normative expectations". Teas (1993b) has questioned this definition since he believes respondents make reference to any one of six interpretations when determining their expectations as, Forecast Performance, Deserved Performance, Equitable Performance, Minimum Tolerable Performance, Ideal Performance, and Service Attribute Performance. As can be seen each of these interpretations of expectancy factors is different leading Teas to contend, "That a considerable percentage of the variance of the SERVQUAL expectations measure can be explained by the respondent's interpretations of the battery within the instrument, and that the expectations component of the model lacks discriminant validity".

The soft numbers feelings elements of SERVQUAL versus the hard numbers SERPERF, (SERVice PERFormance), Cronin, and Taylor (1994), with its regression analysis of historic data having, it is claimed, a greater predictive power of future service trends continues to provide academia with ammunition for debate. However among quality professionals there is growing awareness of the necessity for the use of both schools of thought to assist and monitor strategic quality initiatives and changes since actual quality, SERPERF, is a leading indicator of perceived quality, SERVQUAL. Consequently a key requirement for statistical quality control, it is argued, in a service environment is identification of the correlation between elements of actual quality and perceived quality.

Despite all of the criticisms since its concept was first published in by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry in 1985, SERVQUAL continues to be used as an instrument, all be it adapted to suit researcher's and organisation's individual needs, from which valid data has been used as the basis for strategic decisions which have subsequently been proved to be correct. The use of the model's concept has been found to be of particular use when determining an organisation's strengths and weakness through its customer's value chain by answering the question, "What is value to the customer" ?

For an in depth critique of the literature regarding the pros. and cons. of the application of the SERVQUAL model see Llosa et al. (1994), Buttle (1994,1995), Smith (1995), and Robinson (1996).

4.9 Service Quality in Higher Education

"Quality is an important issue in higher education in the United Kingdom. For the participants in the education process it always has been important although frequently taken for granted. Changed circumstances, increased levels of participation, widening access, pressure on human and physical resources, appraisal, audit and assessment have raised the profile of "quality" within higher education", (Sallis, 1990; Hurley, 1992; Harvey and Green, 1993).

Higher education, that is to say universities as teaching establishments is a major activity in the developed world. The sector is a source of continuous development for those already working in professional and technological roles. The importance of higher education in terms of the wealth of that nation can be seen for example in the amount of government funding, e.g. 6 billion pounds per year in the UK or 100 pounds for every man, woman, and child, employing more than 75,000 teachers and thousands and thousands of other people in ancillary support functions and as suppliers, (The Scotsman Education Supplement, August, 2002). It follows that such an investment is designed to have a major impact on national economic development.

There has always been a presupposition that British higher education is "good quality" (Harrison, 1991; Elton, 1992). The white paper H M Government 1991 refers to teaching and scholarship in higher education as being, "Held in high regard both at home and internationally", and states that the, "Quality of research in the United Kingdom has achieved worldwide recognition".

"The linking of quality with cost effectiveness has given new urgency to the analysis of quality in higher education. So, for a variety of reasons, quality matters" Harvey and Green, (1993).

From all of the foregoing it can be seen that the quality element of the education product and its importance is constantly under review.

4.9.1 Defining Service Quality in Higher Education

Most definitions of quality used in the industrial and commercial world have at their core the simple notion that quality is achieved when customers receive products and services that meet their requirements. Quality is therefore in the mind (eye) of the recipient (beholder).

Education joins a small group of services in their uniqueness in doing something to the customer as opposed to the majority of services in which something is done for the customer. It is argued that by doing something to the individual who has their own expectation and therefore value judgment of the outcome that no single definition can accommodate all aspects of quality in education.

Quality in higher education has been identified by Harvey, Burrows and Green (1992) as having 5 approaches:

1) Quality as Exceptional (apoditic) - one instinctively knows quality.

2) Quality as Perfection - as consistent, i.e. as having zero defects - sees quality in terms of 'high' standards (Reynolds 1986, Moodie 1986a).

3) Quality as Meeting a Standard of Perfection - as fit for purpose as set by the provider or monitoring body or customer requirement.

4) Quality as Value for Money - as having budgetary control. - "At the heart of the value for money approach is accountability", Kogan (1986a).

5) Quality as a Transformation Process - as having quality built into a change process.

As can be seen from the foregoing within the education experience there are elements which encompass each of the 5 definitions. However it is argued that for the purposes of this research that the 'soft' measures of expectation and satisfaction best fit with the definition of Quality, within education, as a Transformation Process.

4.9.2 Educational Transformation and its Relevance to Value Systems

The 'doing something to' element of the education experience transformation process becomes a unique interaction involving both parties' value systems in making evaluative judgments of ongoing transactions. This in itself presents an unusual set of circumstances for as Dickson et al. (1995) point out, "Education may be unique in the sense that it is difficult for the customer to assess the quality and relevance of the service. A university course is unusual in that the buyer, i.e. the student, may have only general ideas of what lies ahead and may not fully comprehend the content or relevance of a course until the later years of study or potentially long after graduation".

Such an observation adds to the argument that the Higher Education experience represents a transformation process of a individual's expectations and their "learned" quality values. Thus the individual becomes an malleable participant within the transformation process and not merely, "Products, customers, service users, or clients. Education is not a service for customers (much less a product to be consumed) but an ongoing transformation of the participant", Harvey and Knight (1996).

Accepting that the student is a participant within the transformation process leads to the notions of the enhancement or added value to the student's knowledge as a gauge of the quality of the education experience and of the empowerment of the student to influence their own transformation.

The term added value or value added would at first reading seem to mean that transformation quality can only be brought about by measuring the accountability of the education experience's fitness for purpose however as Harvey and Green (1993) point out, "The measurement of value added, for example in terms of input and output qualifications provides a quantifiable indicator of 'added value' but conceals the nature of qualitative transformation". Muller and Funnell (1992) further argue that the quality of the transformation process can only be assessed when, "Learners are at the center of the learning process. Feedback from learners is a crucial aspect of evaluation. Placing learners at the center shifts the emphasis from the value-added measures of enhancement to empowerment". It follows, it is argued, that enhancement of the customer within the educational transformation process takes on a much wider, and therefore a greater element of judgmental value on the part of the student, than that equated to the value-added definition of quality as previously stated.

The empowerment of the student alluded to by Muller and Funnell (1992) involves giving power to the student to influence their own transformation by taking ownership of the learning process and the responsibility for determining the style and mode of delivery of that process.

Four ways of empowering students have been identified by academics, (Ramsden, 1986; Wiggins, 1990; Roper, 1992; Harvey and Green, 1993) as being;

1) Students can be empowered via student evaluation.

2) Students can be guaranteed minimum standards of provision and given responsibility for monitoring their delivery.

3) Students can be given control of their own learning.- That is students control how they learn and how and when they are assessed by "constructing their own degree scheme", School of Independent Studies (1985).

4) Students critical ability can be developed.- This approach attempts to empower students not just as customers in the education process but for life.

It follows, it is argued, that in accepting the transformation theory as the driver which controls the way study programmes are designed involves Universities in the reassessment of their current thinking and programme drivers, the availability of their support mechanisms, and probably most importantly their understanding of the value systems of all of their stakeholders.

The evaluation of the transformation process of the student and the extent to which it is currently practiced within a University in terms of the empowerment and enhancement notions are seen through the judgmental usage of stakeholder value systems as an integral part of the Case Study element of methodologies as used within the hypothesis under test.

4.9.3 Measuring Quality in Higher Education

Historically higher education has tried to ensure quality within its educational provision by following the practice adopted within so many service industries of quality by ensuring Quality Assurance (QA) by the mechanistic policing of quality standards. More commonly known as the "hard" measures approach. Quality is thus seen to be brought about and maintained as the result of scientific Quality Control (QC) using key performance indicators (KPI's) to monitor efficiency.

The use of such an approach, as has been argued elsewhere within this thesis, can only bring about improvements to the levels of quality to the providers' standards which may not necessarily be in line with those of the customer.

Examples of KPI measures found within higher education are such measures as retention and pass rates, average admission qualifications, the number of 'good' degrees awarded, staff-student ratios, indexes of revenue and capital resources, market share, and the ratios of public to private funding are principally those being used as measures of institutional efficiency. The danger therein lies in that KPI's are better at measuring efficiency rather than effectiveness and that quality is only related to value for money, Sensicle (1991). The approach, it is further argued, precludes the customer satisfaction factor as being irrelevant to the continuous improvement of the 'product'. Indeed despite having been the co-authors of a Quality in Higher Education (1992) government sponsored report which recommended the inclusion of customers within its criteria for quality in education its partial exclusion within the universities' QC remit has led Harvey and Green (1993) to ask "But where are the values".

Harvey and Green (1993) conceptualise that, "Higher education is not about delivering specifications in as near a perfect way as possible. It is arguably more about encouraging, *inter alia*, the analytic and critical development of the student". To bring about such a state, it is argued, involves the constant reworking and re-conceptualisation of the 'product' with the customer's needs, expectations, and a re-evaluation of the provider and customer value system. In other words a Total Quality approach which requires an ongoing assessment of the degree of interested party value system congruence to bring about an acceptable degree of satisfaction.

What then of internal customers at all levels, what of their expectations, and how do these 'fit' with both their internal, and external customers ? The answers to some of the questions raised represents the basis of the hypothesis under test for as Brown (1998) points out, "The more the lecturer and student are aware of each other's expectations, the more likely it is that the course will be a quality course".

4.9.4 Who is the Customer in Higher Education ?

In terms of customer requirement this raises much debated issue within education of who is the 'customer'. Crawford (1991) has stated that, "In British higher education students must now be considered as *primary customers*". If one then makes the assumption that the 'students are the customers' then they are not generally in a position to specify their requirements. As such they represent the ideal customer in terms of the marketing portfolio their requirements being determined by the provider which in the past have been seen in terms of what the customer is assumed to need.

The foregoing approach to 'customer' whilst satisfying the Crawford statement presumes that the student is the end product as in a manufacturing type of environment. Such an approach assumes an operationalised step by step process to an end product during which each step is the customer of the previous step. This approach precludes the role of Society as, '*specifier*' of the standards of the end product, the '*purchaser*' in terms of funding the product, and the '*user*' of the end product. Clearly Society's role in terms of the educational process requires a re-evaluation of the perception of the 'customer' since the objective concept of *specifier, purchaser,* and *user* as the 'customer' does not fit the subjective description of the major role which Society plays in the educational process.

Perhaps the role of Society as the '*user*' of the product is obvious in as much as the continuous improvement to its educated workforce should improve, in holistic terms, the standard of living of all of the members of the Society. This is the role assumed for the purposes of this discussion.

The role of *'specifier'* is less obvious however for like any specification which is 'fit for customer purpose' a value for money *'purchaser'* element is normally included. The role of *'specifier'* and *'purchaser'* is therefore combined under the banner of *'purchaser'* for the purposes of this discussion.

4.9.4.1 Higher Education Funding in Scotland

Society's representatives in the form of government which in Scotland is the devolved Scottish Executive has been charged by the UK government with the role of 'purchaser' of education for Scotland. This to include Higher Education. However in line with the rest of the UK as part of a new local government policy, as dictated by the present Labour controlled National government since 1997, these must be made using the principles of 'Best Value' in terms of the Value Management concept of the customer value proposition. The Best Value framework will replace the existing cost - focused culture of compulsory competitive tendering with its exclusion of quality measures, Donnelly et al. (1995), with a more flexible system that has quality as a key element and effective management to the fore. Such a policy it is argued requires local government and Public Service providers to examine its current value system and those required to comply with the new dictate from central government.

Best Value practices adopt the principles of the Balanced Scorecard Model as introduced by Kaplan and Norton (1992). The balanced scorecard is essentially an internal organisational mechanism that can be used to stimulate change, Sheffield and Coleshill (2001). This will, as described elsewhere in this thesis, require organisations to identify those core (difficult to change) and peripheral (easier to change) values within their value system. The balanced scorecard provides for fundamental strategic control mechanism by adding several important measures to those normally found in the accounting system. Such areas include innovation, organisational learning, effectiveness in key tasks, and performance with key audiences like customers. The measures will require to be operationalised to reflect the systematic effects of how the organization's overall value and performance are improved. A balanced scorecard should not only reflect the current state of the organisation but drive the comprehensive range of activities necessary to ensure its long term viability.

The Best Value policy is designed to reconfigure service delivery by local government and devolved government agencies to produce a more efficient, citizen focused, and quality-driven organisation. Local authorities assuming the role of enablers rather than service providers in which there is accountability, and transparency during and after strategic decisions making. This policy has been adopted in local councils and public service providers such as Higher Education Institutions on a voluntary basis in Scotland since 1997 whilst in the rest of the UK it is in operation as part of government legislation. The Scottish approach has meant that it has not run into the problems experienced elsewhere in the UK of union and council opposition meaning that Scotland is ahead of other areas in delivering the policy's requirements. To formalise these arrangements The Local Government in Scotland Bill which includes Best Value provisions was laid before the Scottish Parliament in May 2002 and will receive Royal Assent early in 2003.

The policy's framework is intended to reflect a series of basic principles.

1) Best Value is about continuous improvement : achieving quality of service provision is a process rather than a goal, and therefore Best Value's challenge is ongoing.

2) Best Value is about accountability : it requires transparency through consultation and engagement to ensure effective dialogue with the all stakeholders.

3) It also requires formal scrutiny, which reflects in the provision amending and updating the powers, duties and functions of the Accounts Commission for Scotland.

The funding of Higher Education in Scotland is by the Scottish Executive. This is carried out as an executive agency by the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council whose budget for the Year 2003 - 2004 of £721, 000,000 requires that this be spent using the Best Value principles. It follows therefore that Higher Education Institutions must adopt these principles in the provision of their services one of which is to become more customer focused. This will require them to re-assess their existing measures and to adopt the key principles of the 4C's of consult, compare, challenge, and compete and to include accountability, transparency, continuous improvement and ownership.

It follows that on the principle of the *'purchaser'* being the customer that the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council on behalf of Scottish Executive, which by definition represents Scottish Society, must be seen as a 'customer' of these institutions. It would appear from the foregoing that confusion arises as to who is the 'customer' of Higher Education however in this case the servant can have two masters. Society can be seen as looking after the Students interests and therefore, it is argued, that both Student and Society having similar objectives can be seen as the 'joint customers'.

4.9.5 Education in Scotland

The beginning of effective education in Scotland can be traced back to the landing of St. Columba in 563 A.D. and the subsequent setting-up and spread of the monasteries. Formal education of non secular clergy students began in 1124 with the founding of Scotland's oldest school as a direct offshoot of the cloistral school of Holyrood Abbey in Edinburgh. The High Scuilis later the Royal High School of Edinburgh admitted the good Burgesses' sons for 'the lernin o' the reedin an' the ritin an Latin an' aw' thing'.

The coming of the Reformation or Presbyterianism in the 16th century moved the onus of teaching from the monasteries to the parish where the priest or 'domminie' taught all the local children the basics of, by now, reading and writing making Scotland one of the most literate countries in the Western World at that time.

Formal University study can be traced to the foundation of St. Andrews University in 1411 closely followed by Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Edinburgh (where a college had existed for students who had attended the High School and who wished to continue their studies since the 14th century). The four 'ancient universities' were to remain as the main seats of learning in Scotland until the 1960's.

Following The Robbins Committee Report in 1963 on the state of Higher Education in Scotland four additional universities at Dundee, Stirling, Strathclyde (Glasgow), and Heriot-Watt (Edinburgh) were provided to accommodate a projected growth among the student population. As a further step toward the perceived need for increased Higher Education facilities the then Government introduced the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992. The consequence of this act was to elevate five existing Further Education Institutions, Napier (Edinburgh), Glasgow Caledonian, Robert Gordon (Aberdeen), Abertay (Dundee), and Paisley to University status.

The new University of the Highlands was launched in 1996. Based upon a consortium of existing Further Education colleges serving the Highlands of Scotland and using information technology to link its students in remote locations. This initiative is indicative of the ongoing commitment of the Scottish Executive to improve the access to improved standards of education throughout all of the country.

The latest statistical information available from the Scottish Executive Higher Education Statistics Agency, for the year 2000 / 2001, shows that 32% of school leavers went on to higher education making Scotland second behind Northern Ireland in the UK league of the school leavers going on to higher education. This figure represents a Student population of 132,550 students enrolled in Scottish Higher Education Institutions a considerable growth rate from the enrolled student population of 49,789 in the year 1983-1984 from a similar population base.

The Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Budget for the year 2003 / 2004 of £721m. shows an increase in expenditure from the previous year by £22m. This supports the provision within the 20 Higher Education institutions and Scottish places offered by the Open University of 800 with equivalent to the equivalent of 133, 350 full-time student places. Source : Life Through Learning, Learning Through Life, The Executive's Strategy for Lifelong Learning in Scotland.

From the foregoing it can be see that education has played and continues to play an important role in the culture of Scotland. An examination of the past Scottish Executives Audit Procedures shows that it followed the 'hard' statistics approach previously discussed in this thesis little or no cognisance being taken of the 'soft' elements of the learning experience. Under the terms of the Best Value initiative however these have had to be changed to include an audit of the 'soft' elements of community and customer focus which will entail, it is argued, an examination of the Values which underpin this focus.

4.9.5.1 Napier University

Napier University was first established as a technical college in Edinburgh Scotland's capital city in 1964 as a direct result of the Education (Scotland) Act of 1946. The college took up residence in a new building which incorporated the original castle of John Napier of Merchiston the 16th century Scots philosopher and mathematician and the inventor of Logarithmic Tables from whom the College and later the University takes its name. Since its establishment the college has gone on to being granted University status in 1992 along with 4 other 'new' Scottish Universities as a consequence of the then government's approach to the upgrading of polytechnics to university status which was incorporated within the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act of 1992. Prior to the University status being granted, the college had grown to be housed in 7 locations 5 within the city with 2 in other locations in Scotland catering for some 13,100 students.

The structure of the University is divided into four faculties some of which are further sub-divided into identifiable schools as follows:

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences; which offers programmes covering Communication in its widest sense, Music, Law, and Social Sciences.

The Faculty of Engineering and Computing; which is split into three schools: the school of Computing, the school of Engineering, and the school of the Built Environment.

The Faculty of Health and Life; offering courses in healthcare education and research facilities.

Napier University Business School; which has the largest undergraduate business population in Scotland in excess of 3,100 students on Degree and Certificate or Diploma of Higher Education programmes. It is within this Business School that the Case Study part of the research reported in this thesis took place.

The University covers a wide spectrum of subjects within its programmes linked to industry's requirements leading to a high incidence of graduate employment.

4.10 Developing the Research Hypothesis

Boyle and Bowden (1997) point out that, "There is little disagreement in modern educational thinking that education is by its nature normative - it is purposeful activity based on values and goals which are shaped by the interests of a range of stakeholders. This is particularly true of higher education. As values, goals, and stakeholders' interests vary across communities, contexts, programmes, and time, there is also a need to view quality and quality improvement in dynamic rather than static or absolute terms".

The major stakeholders within the education process have been identified by Harvey et al. (1992) as including, "Students, employers, teaching and non-teaching staff, government and its funding agencies, accreditors, validators, auditors, assessors, and the community at large". Each of these will have a differing vested interest as the basis for determining quality and on how it can be brought about, maintained, and driven toward continuous improvement.

The literature survey contents and discussions in the preceding chapters of this thesis have highlighted the role of values and more particularly shared value systems within the environments of culture, quality, and service aspects of both individuals and organisations. The need for service providers to acquire knowledge of the shared value effects of customers and their organisation in terms of sustainable quality provision being well documented over a number of years.

Within the service of education and more especially Higher Education, e.g. Universities, the concept of students as customers has only recently been accepted as a practice to be adopted if Universities are to meet the requirements of those who provide the finance to improve the quality of their educational product. In an effort to accommodate the need to know their customers' requirements most Universities have embarked on a series of student feedback channels the outcomes of which being used to moderate learning programmes. Channels such as student satisfaction surveys, module and course feedback questionnaires, course representative / course leader meetings, etc. have provided the Universities with valid data on their customer requirements and satisfaction levels. Having stimulated feedback and being seen to act upon it, perhaps not always to the extent the students hoped for, the expectations of the customers having been raised after each request for feedback will consequently lead to student satisfaction levels always being in a constant state of flux.

Given this situation of fluidity it is argued that having a greater understanding of the values of its customers, probably already within the domain of the data so far collected, will allow the Universities to be more flexible and adapt to the changing requirements of these customers.

Having opened what some educationalists have described as 'a can of worms' there is a requirement to 'bring on board' the customer facing staff who will be involved in any change progammes necessary to meet changing customer expectations. It is argued that to do this that the Universities must have a greater understanding of their staffs' expectations and their role within the University. It follows therefore, from what has gone before within this thesis, that the Universities must understand the value systems of their Staff.

Having presented the case for greater understanding of the value systems of a University's customers and staff what of the decision makers, the Senior Management, in the University ? There is little point, it is argued, in knowing Customers' and Staffs' requirements / expectations without similar knowledge of the Senior Management for if these are direct conflict to the other two then, as has been discussed elsewhere in this thesis, the organisation will be less effective and in the worst case scenario collapse. Like other service providers the University organisation must understand the values which are held by its Senior Management.

The question therefore should be for Universities and other education establishments just how effective are we ? How can we measure this ?

Having argued and shown that one proven measure of the quality of service and customer satisfaction is the relationship between shared values of the customer and the organisation it is theorised that an understanding gained from a measure of the congruence of the quality values as held by the main stakeholders within a University service would aid any change programme to meet customers', both internal and external, expectations / requirements and be a barometer of the satisfaction levels of quality of service provided.

To prove this theory the following hypothesis was tested :

Levels of customer (All Students) satisfaction are directly related to the congruence of the value systems of the stakeholders (All Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers) within a service consumption.

The outcomes and conclusions of which form the basis for remainder of the content of this thesis.

4. 11 Summary of Chapter

As stated in the research aims and objectives on page 3 of this thesis an understanding of Service and more particularly Higher Education as a Service is a requirement. The classification of Higher Education within the Standard Industries Classifications as residing in the Service sector of industry is the rationale behind the literature review which was carried out and is reported in this chapter.

The definition of Service as being 'A change process which changes a person to some degree no matter how small' underlines the crucial differences between service industries which change the person and manufacturing industries which change an object.

The complexity of Service Design and its determinants are discussed reference being made to models which claim to be the basis for well designed services. Aspects of the models can be seen in the design of the Case Study interviews and questionnaire in the Research and Data Analysis Section of this thesis. Service culture and the need for organisational values which match the dynamism of its customer's requirements are highlighted as a feature of good design. This being in line with need to understand the diversity of value systems, the values which stakeholders posses, and which values are important in education practices as requirements of Objectives 1, 2, and 3 of the aims of this thesis.

The division within the field of Service Quality into two schools of thought is discussed. The Nordic school having a 'what' the customer receives and a 'how' the service is performed to the customer focus. The North American school's approach being more user based quality or customer focused. The use of the North American being argued as requiring a greater understanding of shared Value Systems within organisations. This being a requirement of Objective 4 of the aims of the thesis, an understanding of the positioning of shared values or of stakeholder congruence.

The problems associated with achieving customer satisfaction by the management of service determinants is discussed. Customer's satisfaction being seen as linked to their Value System therefore being dynamic in character. The subjectivity of customer satisfaction is seen as the most difficult aspect of the measurement of Quality of Service. The discussion within this aspect of Service being aligned to Objective 5 of the aims of the thesis, the identification of Value aspects as either core or peripheral in content.

Within various models on the subject of quality of service and the measures used to determine this five constructs are discussed highlighting the ongoing debate of 'hard' measures verses 'soft' measures as provided by the expectation / satisfaction gap or the Satisfaction / Dissatisfaction Paradigm. The use of Gap analysis within the field of subjective measurement has lead to an understanding of what is and is not acceptable to the customer in terms of service provision termed the Zone of Tolerance which is discussed. Using the Gap analysis as a basis the development of a measurement tool by Parasuraman, Berry, and Zeithaml (1988) titled SERVQUAL as a model for measuring Service Quality is discussed including the quality professionals arguments for and against its use. Gap analysis is used within the Case Study elements of this thesis as a tool to determine all of the objectives of the aims of the thesis.

The need for quality in Higher Education and its definition through the five approaches of exceptional, perfection, meeting a standard of perfection, value for money, as a transformation process is discussed. The transformation process and its relevance to Value systems and their subsequent diversity is discussed in line with Objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5 of the aims of the thesis. The effects of the content and spirit of these objectives can be seen in the testing of Hypotheses II - VIII of the Case Study Data in Chapter 5, The Research Design Data Analysis and Results, of this thesis.

The measurement of Quality in Higher Education is seen as continuing the debate between the 'hard' Key Performance Indicator and the 'soft' Development of the Student measures to the achievement of customer satisfaction and continuous improvement.

The ongoing debate as to who is Higher Education's 'customer' examines the case for the Student as 'end product' or Society as 'end user' is discussed.

The impact of the introduction of Best Value methods within the management of local government and public service provision with particular reference to the changes this will entail within Higher Education is discussed. Reference being made to how this will impinge upon a Higher Education Institution's internal and external value systems and funding principles. Reference to funding leads to the concept of purchaser as 'customer' in the ongoing debate concerning who is Higher Education's 'customer'. The conclusion argued being that in this case that a joint approach should in fact be used as a working definition of 'joint customers'. The inclusion of Best Value practices within the chapter aligns with the aims of the thesis and all of its objectives in understanding the future implications for Higher Education.

A short history of education, the foundations of Higher Education in Scotland, and of the Napier University of Edinburgh is included in the chapter as preliminary background information to the Case Study element of the research for this thesis.

Finally the rationale behind the development of the research is developed leading to the research's main hypothesis.

Chapter 5

The Research Design Data Analysis and Results

5.0 Introduction

Research design has been defined as, "A plan that guides the investigator in the process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting observations. It is a logical and model proof that allows the researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relations among the variables under investigation. The research design also defines the domain of generalisability, that is, whether the obtained interpretations can be generalised to a larger population or to a different situation", Nichmias and Nichmias (1992).

Perhaps more readily understood in the colloquial idiom is a working definition of a research design as an action plan, map, or a blueprint for getting from here to there where here is the initial question posed and there is some set of conclusions arrived at after an examination of those things found along the way.

5.1 The Research Design

In order to eliminate, as far as possible, any of the known disadvantages within a single methodology it was decided that a mixed construct of methodologies adopting a number of research paradigms would best achieve the aims of the research. Whilst the purist in research methodologies would argue that paradigms should not be mixed Greene et al. (1989) evaluated 57 studies between 1980 and 1987 testing each against such criteria as different paradigms, similarity of methods, different questions, and different implementation strategies. They concluded that in certain circumstances mixed methodologies were the only construct which could be used at the various phases of research to generate data and to ensure the validity of research results through triangulation. The rationale behind triangulation is expressed by Jick (1979), Kane (1985), and Easterby-Smith et al. (1991) who represent archival review, questionnaires, interviews, and participant observation methods of research as potentially overlapping in scope in the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data.

The mixed-method approach adds complexity to the design by using both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms sequentially to examine different facets of the research objectives thus adding to the breadth and scope of its outcomes.

The advantage of mixed methodologies is pointed out by Creswell (1994) in that, "The overall design perhaps best mirrors the research process of working back and forth between inductive and deductive models of thinking in a research study", a practice adopted during the research into the hypothesis being tested.

Using mixed methodologies the research design chosen consisted of four phases;

1) A literature review of quality frameworks.

2) A literature survey of the holistically known facts appertaining to quality values and expectations within the context of the hypothesis being tested.

3) Archival Desk Research of Secondary Data Sources

4) A Case Study involving all of the main stakeholders within the context of an educational experience in a university environment. This involved;

a) An in-depth interview with a member of the senior staff of the university.

b) The conducting of 5 focus group interviews; one of staff members, one of first year undergraduates, one of second and subsequent year undergraduates, one of post graduate students having no work experience, and one of post graduate students having had work experience. Followed by the development of a framework to measure quality expectations within higher education.

c) The development of a questionnaire instrument compiled from the findings of the previous 3 phases of the research and applied to a sample population of the students and staff within the Napier University of Edinburgh Business School.

d) An analysis of the questionnaire findings.

e) A report on conclusions made in relation to the hypothesis under test.

5.2 Literature Survey

The aim of this phase of the research, the outcomes of which are previously covered in Chapters 2 Culture and Values, 3 Quality, and 4 Service of this thesis, being qualitative in nature was to finalise the research objectives, ascertain the current state of knowledge with regards to this subject, and to set the area of study in context with regard to the value systems adopted by the main players within the educational experience.

Using the existing literature it would have been possible to define the relevant values within a service industry however the application of such an approach would overlook a number of contextual differences between the educational experience and other service industries witness the findings of researchers using the SERVQUAL model determinants as previously described. It was therefore necessary to adopt further research techniques to test the hypothesis as proposed.

5.3 Archival Desk Research of Secondary Data Sources

Archival desk research was carried out on data from previous Student Satisfaction Surveys as carried out by the Napier University of Edinburgh into undergraduate and postgraduate student satisfaction levels of certain aspects of university life .

Data from the research was historic in nature and therefore to a large extent out of date which raised questions of current validity with regard to changes in the environment in which Higher Education (HE) was undergoing. Furthermore the data was limited in that it only partially covered some of the information which could be aligned with student expectations and therefore the values that they adopted within the whole of their educational experience.

No historic data was available which covered the expectations nor value systems of the senior management nor of the lecturing staff within the Business School.

Whilst the data available was of general interest it was not specific enough to the Napier University since it drew upon determinants taken from an American University's questionnaire and results publication.

5.4 The Case Study

The specific objective of the Case Study was to explore any linkages between the satisfaction / dissatisfaction determinants of stakeholders within the university environment through the congruity of their quality expectations and antecedent values. Before commencing the Case Study element of the research it first had to be tested against a known model to gauge the validity of its content.

Yin (1994) has stated that there are five components within a case study research design which are especially important;

1) A study's questions.
2) Its propositions, if any.
3) Its unit(s) of analysis.
4) The logic linking the data to the propositions.
5) The criteria for interpreting the findings.

This model was used to check the content and methodologies of the hypothesis' research as follows:

1) The study's questions, i.e.;

- the who - stakeholders within the education experience.
- the what - the congruence, if any, of their quality expectations and antecedent values.
- the where - within university schools / faculties.
- the how - using a case study which include qualitative and quantitative methodologies.
- the why - to test the hypothesis with a view to facilitating the future planning of programmes of education.

2) Its propositions (proposals) - as per the aims of the research.

3) Its unit(s) of analysis - are all of the recognised stakeholder's value systems in relation to the 'education experience' and the ranking / priorities by the identification of their expectations of the experience which each places upon them.

4) The logic linking the data to the propositions or pattern matching - as described by Campbell (1975) whereby several pieces of information from the same case study may be related to some theoretical proposition, i.e. through the use of triangulation of collected data.

5) The criteria for interpreting the findings - by using statistical analysis techniques to show the degree of variance or congruence between the value systems of the recognised stakeholders.

Analysis of the foregoing responses to the Yin model and the question raised within the hypothesis being tested would indicate that a case study approach and its proposed content would be the best model to explore the linkages or otherwise of stakeholder value systems.

5.5 Focus Groups Interviews

"An interview, in the true sense of the word, gives an "inner view" of the interviewed person, allowing comprehension of the individual, his or her emotions, motivations and needs as its central task", (Chirban, 1996).

The purpose of the interviews was to determine the quality expectations and antecedent values of a cross-section of each of the groups identified as representative of the main stakeholders within the education experience, i.e. the University's Senior Management Team (the policy makers), the Lecturing Staff (the policy deliverers), and the Students (the customers of these policies). Once established their validity or otherwise would be tested on a wider population by the use of a questionnaire instrument.

Invitations to attend Focus Group interviews containing the purpose of the research being undertaken, the objectives, and the standards of the interviews in order that informed consent could be agreed before an interview commenced were extended to;
a) the Senior Management of the University in the form of the Dean of the Business School by a personal approach from a member of the research team
b) the Lecturing Staff of the Business School initially via an open ended electronic mail followed by a personal invite from a member of the research team to those selected to attend so ensuring that a representative cross-section of staff from different divisions of the school.
c) the Students via the Lecturing Staff to classes in the Business School from each of the 4 Undergraduate Years and Post Graduate Full-time Students with no work and Part-time Students with work experienced thus ensuring a representation from all of the student groupings in the Focus Groups.

To establish the quality expectations and antecedent values of the senior management of the Napier University Business School which were to be used within the construct of the questionnaire phase of the testing of the hypothesis a face to face in-depth interview lasting two hours was conducted with the Dean of the School.

To establish the quality expectations and antecedent values of the lecturing staff, first year undergraduates, subsequent years undergraduates, post graduate, and post graduate career experienced students of the Napier University Business School which were to be used within the construct of the questionnaire phase of the testing of the hypothesis a series of 5 focus groups, comprising 8-10 representatives from each of the groups as stated were conducted. The figure of 8-10 representatives being that as proposed by Belbin (1993) as providing a cross section of different types of people, i.e. leader, planner, home-builder, etc., who adopt differing attitudes to life's experiences.

The initial approach chosen to data collection from each of the interviews was with the use of Critical Incident Techniques by asking respondents to describe one good experience one bad experience which they had had when using service organisations. This methodology has been extensively used by other researchers previously referred to within this thesis such as Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, Rokeach, and Hofstede et al., Mathews and Clark, etc. and was inspired by the work of Hertzberg et al.(1959) in facilitating the concentration of both respondents' and interviewer's minds on the aims of the hypothesis under test. Respondents were asked to write in as few words as possible a description or a characteristic of one instance when they had a good experience of the education process and a second instance when they had a bad experience. This approach ensured that the respondent was not influenced by a predetermined list of factors thus facilitating the identification of new factors as described by Johnston and Silvestro (1990), whilst at the same time providing additional anecdotal qualitative information to the research team.

The use of this methodology allowed people to concentrate their attentions upon the subject to be discussed. It also aidėd the facilitator to overcome those problems associated within group dimensions of time structuring wherein participants go through a series of steps, as outlined below, and the problems as researched by Bion of group formation, before feeling comfortable within the group and ready to contribute to the discussion in an atmosphere of trust:

Group Time Structuring

Step				
1	Withdrawl	T	R	*i.e. Say nothing, Look for a seat next to someone that I think I may be able to talk to - same age, same sex, same dress sense, etc.*
2	Ritual	I	I	*i.e. Good Morning.*
3	Past	M	S	*i.e. Lovely weather, etc.*
4	Games	E	K	*i.e. What do you think about - is it safe to say what I think?*
5	Intimacy / Authentcity			*i.e. In my opinion ....*

Bion's theory of Stages of a Group's Formation

1. Confusion - *What am I doing here ?*
2. Dependency - *What's the agenda ?*
3. Flight and Fight - *There's nothing for me here and I don't agree with him / her.*
4. Pairing and Bonding - *I think that you are quite right... I like what he / she said.*
5. Maturity - *In my opinion.......... - It's now safe to say what I think.*

With the agreement of the interviewees each interview was audio-taped in order that the respondents actual words could be used in analysing the content and emphasis placed upon items within the interview. This reduced the problems identified as present within the use of interview techniques to gather data of the reliance placed upon the interviewer's memory and any bias in transcribing the content of the interview.

Each of the focus groups lasted for approximately 1 hour and was lead by a facilitator assisted by at least two other researchers.

Predetermined, i.e. semi-structured, open ended conversational type questions as described by Merton et al. (1990), and recommended by Calder (1997), were used during each of the interviews. These discussion type questions were exploratory in nature to allow the discourse to be seen as being, "Somewhere between a meeting and a conversation", Agar and MacDonald (1995), and intended as an aid in generating constructs from which a questionnaire could be developed for use with a larger population of students and staff within the Business School. The content of the predetermined questions used during the interviews was based upon the survey of literature on organisational and individual value systems, certain aspects of the SERVQUAL model, and a brain storming exercise carried out with members of staff from the Napier University. The same group of questions which were aligned to the education process to facilitate qualitative analysis, as shown in Appendix 1a, were used during each interview in order that responses could be cross-checked during the interview analysis process.

To ensure that the group discussion was in line with the aims of the testing of the hypothesis funnel thinking was adopted to illicit specific behaviours. Respondents were encouraged to participate and make their individual views known thus facilitating the identification of new quality determinants, e.g. during the Senior Manager's face to face interview and the Lecturer's Focus Group interview certain topics were raised as follow-on questions to the standard set of questions used during all interviews these are shown in Appendix 1b - c.

5.6 Developing a Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education

Analysis of the interviews content began whilst the interviews were being conducted. the researcher actively listening and thinking about the meaning of what was being said and seeking confirmation and clarification from the interviewees in so doing formulating notes on what was important to the interviewee and what was less important.

To facilitate the understanding of the qualitative data as generated by the face to face in-depth interview and the focus groups the following methods of collective summarising and analysis were adopted. From this analysis a Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education was developed.

a) Written transcripts using the audio taping of the discussions and extensive notes which were taken throughout each phase of the focus responses were produced.

b) Researcher debriefing sessions were conducted at the end of each focus group during which researchers voiced their impressions and ethnographic observations of group member's reactions and nonverbal communications which had taken place throughout the discussion process. A record of each debriefing was kept which on analysis showed that participation in group events had lead to increase trust levels and that participants 'opened-up' to reveal their truer selves and thus elements of their core value system in line with the observation practices. This procedure is similar to that described by Belk et al. (1988) which they termed as memoing stating that, "Memoing involves sporadic oral or written briefings of other team members regarding one's emerging interpretations of data or sense of project process".

A content analysis derived from the list of critical incidents, transcribed audio-taped records, researcher notes, and memoing notes from each of the focus group interviews resulted in a triangulation tested list of words, events, dates and times, or concepts describing possible educational experiences, expectations, values, and practices which could be shown to be the basis of a manifestation of core and peripheral values associated with that experience. In order to derive the quality values from the anecdotal (qualitative) data each anecdote was numbered, summarised, indexed, and then aggregated to produce a comprehensive list of values and their frequency of use. This thematic analysis methodology was based upon the Utrecht school of phenomenology (Barritt, et al, 1983; van Manen, 1984, 1994: cited in Cohen et al, 2000) which draws on both the Husserlian eidetic / descriptive and Heideggerian interpretative / hermeneutic approaches.

The results of this holistic approach suggested, as previous researchers had found whilst researching specific service sectors, e.g. Carman (1990); Finn and Lamb (1991); Brown et al. (1993); Lehtinen et al. (1996); and numerous others, that certain antecedents of the quality values identified existed outside those of the dimensions found within the SERVQUAL model of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) although it was possible to make them "fit" by widening the interpretation of the data results. This finding gives further evidence of the heterogeneity of service industries and how difficult it is to develop an all encompassing framework or model to measure the complex dimensions which determine the levels of quality satisfaction within a particular sector of that industry.

Whilst the methodology used to analyse the focused interview findings is time consuming compared to that of using some computer software package such as NUD*IST (Nonnumerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorising) it has the advantage of allowing the researcher a hands-on feel for the data and confirmation of his or her initial formulation of what was important to the interviewee and what was less important. Additionally the following disadvantages to the use of computer analysis have been identified by Kidd and Parshall (2000), "The extent to which the requirements of the software, e.g.

formatting of transcripts to exploit software capabilities, and the routinisation of certain analytical tasks might (a) distort the underlying context and meaning of remarks or (b) seduce the analysts away from a reflective engagement with the data".

Table 5.1 shows the analysed outcomes of the focused interviews developed into an initial Framework for the Measurement of Quality in Higher Education. Quality expressions were allocated in line with the those of the open focus group semi-structured questions which aligned with the education process from Course Design through to Graduation. The frequency, interviewee participation, or the amount of time spent on the issues by each of the focus groups is indicated by the crosses in the right hand margins. XXX indicating most time, etc., X indicating least time, etc. No entry indicating that that issue was not raised by that particular group. This is taken as apparent non-importance to that group.

A Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education

Education Process	**Expectations / Values**	**Students**	**Staff**	**Senior Management**
Course Design	Vocational topics	XXX		
	Contains transferable knowledge skills	XX		XX
	Teaching and self-learning balance	XX	XXX	XXX
	Team working involved	X		
Course Marketing	Improved job prospects	XX	XX	
	Programme content	XXX	XXX	
	University location	XX	XX	
Student Recruitment	Entry qualifications	XX	XX	
	Value for money	XX		
	Social aspects	X		
Induction	Relevant information	X		
	Clarity of the University's expectations	X		
	Clearing-up induction problems		XX	
Course Delivery	Students trust module content is relevant.	XXX		XXX
	Commitment to course - by all stakeholders	XX	XXX	XXX
	Communications - 2 way	XXX	XXX	XXX
	Class sizes - Too big and Too small	X		
	Length of lectures - Too long	X		

	Teaching style - knowledge transferable	XXX		
	Teaching style - credible	XXX		XXX
	Teaching style - factual	XXX		
	Teaching style - current	XXX		
	Teaching style - professional	XX	XXX	XXX
	Teaching style - approachable	XX		
Course Content	Contains transferable knowledge and skills	XXX		XX
	Takes account of student feedback	XX		
	Commitment to course - by all stakeholders	XX	XXX	XXX
	Teaching and self learning balance.	XX	XXX	XXX
	Sticks to the planned curriculum	XX	XXX	
	Guided reading included.	X	XX	
	Flexible to individual requirements	X		
	Defined course and module structure	X		
	Case studies included.	X		
Assessment	Value for money	XX		
	Value of the qualification gained	XX	XX	
Monitoring	2 way communication	XXX	XXX	XXX
	Modular feedback gathered	XX	XXX	
Unallocated	Treated like an adult	XXX		
	Students should value education		XX	XX
	Mutual respect	XXX	XXX	XXX
	Identity with University	XX	XXX	XXX
	Lack of social content	X		
Management Style	Status of staff		XX	
	Research bias		XX	
	Sexist or other bias		XX	
	Lack of direction and involvement		XXX	
	No accountability - Blame culture		XXX	
	1 way communication		XXX	
	Commitment		XXX	
Tangibles	Availability of computer labs.	XX		
	Library location	XX		
	Canteen pricing and quality.	XX		
	Recreation facilities.	X		
	Car parking facilities.	X		
	Toilet and washroom facilities.	X		

Table 5.1

Validation of focus group findings has been defined by Nyamathi and Shuler (1990) as, "Having high face validity due to the credibility of comments from participants" validity being defined by them as, "The degree to which a procedure really measures what it is supposed to measure". Reed and Payton (1997) however contend that this definition of validity with regard to qualitative data requires more careful thought and that a more appropriate definition of such data may be had by changing the word measure to reflect the focus group "Reflecting some broadly defined reality of perceptions or practices".

The validation of the qualitative data as collated from the various interviews by further triangulation of the data by quantitative means therefore forms the basis of the next stage of the testing of the hypothesis being researched.

5.7 The Questionnaire

The objective of this stage of the Case Study was to test the outcomes of the focus groups upon a larger population and to correlate the outcomes of the findings in order that the degree of congruence or non-congruence of stakeholder value systems could be established.

The validation of the outcomes of the qualitative data which was used to build the Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education was empirically tested using a questionnaire instrument developed from the Framework's findings. The questionnaire being designed to overcome the known disadvantages of the uses of this method to collect quantitative data as described previously in this thesis.

The final questionnaire, Appendix 2 a - d, contains a battery of 70 highly structured questions pertaining to the design of the service offered and to the perceived values associated with the whole educational experience. The 4 main elements of customer values i.e. price, trust, self esteem, reliability as discussed in Values section of this thesis can be seen within the questionnaire's content.

The 70 questions were grouped in sections which aligned with the Education Process, i.e. from study programme design to graduation, as shown in the Framework, Table 5.1 A small number of the questions directly mapped onto the archival questionnaire as used by the Napier University in its Student Satisfaction Survey. This allowed certain aspects of the findings of the research questionnaire to be validated by comparison with archival information.

To eliminate the possibility of any ambiguities regarding the wording and / or the content of the questions within the questionnaire it was first piloted both on a number of students and staff members prior to being released for general distribution. The piloting of questionnaires lead to changes within the layout and the wording of certain questions. Unfortunately the pilot did not highlight a subsequent problem in the wording of certain questions, i.e. questions 25 and 26, where the use of 'and' in the question could have been interpreted as requiring separate questions or duplicated answers. It was decided that since the questionnaire had been distributed to 99% of the sample population by the time that this problem was pointed out to the research team it was too late for it to be withdrawn and since the wording did not detract from the sentiments of the question posed the data gathered would be reliable for the purposes of ascertaining the importance / satisfaction levels of the respondent.

A census of all Lecturing and Senior Management Staff was carried out by distributing questionnaires using the University's internal electronic mail system. Initial responses were poor, a 10% return, requiring a follow-up reminder as previously discussed, reference Wallace and Mellor (1988). This too did not elicit enough responses to make any data gathered reliable, producing an increase to 21% of the population. It was decided that a face to face, researcher to lecturing staff, distribution may improve the response rate. This was carried out and proved to be the case increasing the final response rate to 56% of the Lecturing, and 88% of the Senior Management Staff within the Business School.

During the face to face lecturing staff distribution phase the question of reasons for non-completion was gently raised. Typical reasons given for non-responses were; "I get so many electronic mails each day which have to be read straight away in case they require an immediate response to be bothered with a survey questionnaire", "Have you any idea of the amount of work I have to do ? I haven't time to complete a survey", "There are too many surveys being carried out by students within the university for me to be bothered with another one. We are all, students and staff, getting *surveyitis* and we never seem to see anything changing as a result of these surveys despite the results being published. I just don't see the point".

It should however be noted that when the purpose of the questionnaire was explained during a face to face request for completion that these recipients were more willing to comply with the request, witness the increase in responses.

To overcome the known weaknesses of response rates by students questionnaires were distributed, with the good grace of Lecturing Staff, within the classroom (working) environment with recipients being given time to complete their questionnaires. A member of the research team was in attendance throughout the process to answer any problems encountered with the wording or sentiment of the content of the questionnaire.

Distribution of the questionnaires took place during the months of November 2001 and January 2002 both months being out with any holiday or examination periods.
The selection of the student sample being made by requesting Lecturers to set aside a proportion of their lecturing time to allow their Students to complete a questionnaire instrument. Classes were selected on the basis that they represented a cross-section of all of the years of study and types of programme, i.e. Undergraduate Students in Years 1,2,3,and 4, and Full-time, and Part-time Postgraduate Students, within the Business School.
Students from the sample groups were asked to indicate their perceptions of the importance or unimportance of the content of the questionnaire to them and also to indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied they had been with the aspects of the education experience as outlined within the questionnaire by placing a tick in the appropriate box of a one to five point Likert-type scale which ranged from 1 = Totally Unimportant or Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Important or Very Satisfied.
The importance element of the questionnaire being used to established, within the analysis of the data gathered, if there were certain values which were primarily the source of importance and others which were unimportant or irrelevant. These outcomes, it is argued, leading to an understanding of the role of different aspects of the educational experience and the generalised evaluation of which values are seen as core and which peripheral within the student value system.
The satisfaction / dissatisfaction element of the questionnaire being used as a measure of the perceived levels of customer service being currently given by the Business School to its customers, i.e. its student population.
Staff and Managers were asked to complete a similarly worded questionnaire but only indicating the importance to them of the aspects of the questionnaire's content, Appendix 2 c - d, i.e. from 1 = Totally Unimportant to 5 = Very Important. The results of this data being used to test the congruence, or otherwise, of their value systems with those of the student population.

5.7.1 Questionnaire Responses

It is recognised that in any research involving recipients being asked to complete a questionnaire the size of the return in comparison to the population sample is indicative of the populations feelings on the subject being researched, e.g. low polls during elections may indicate apathy with the democratic process. Consideration must therefore be given to introducing weighting factors during analysis of results in such situations. Fortunately on this occasion, largely due to the method of distribution as previously described, such a consideration did not arise since of the classes made available only two student questionnaires were totally spoiled leading. It is accepted that the overall percentage sample size of 14% of the student population may not be representative in numerical terms of the total population. However the distribution does represent a cross-section of all facets of that population and given this caveat the data collected can be used to make valid assumptions for a larger population. Only 2 Lecturer's refusals to complete the questionnaire were encountered Staff unavailability again being the reason for non-responses during the distribution phases. However a final response rate of 56 % is seen as providing valid data. Only one Senior Manager was unavailable during the period of the research giving an 88% response rate.

A summary of the questionnaire responses from the Napier University Business School by Student Year, Lecturers, and Senior Management is shown in Table 5.2.

Questionnaire Responses

Year	Actual	Sample	% Sample
1	675	74	11%
2	556	126	23%
3	791	56	7%
4	469	101	22%
Post Graduate	694	84	12%
Student Totals	3,185	441	14%
Lecturers	114	64	56%
Senior Managers	8	7	88%

Table 5.2

5.8 The Questionnaire Data Set

The Student Data Set of Importance, Satisfaction, and the resultant Gaps and for the Importance for the Lecturer, Senior Managers and Administration Staff sample populations were calculated by aggregating the means of questionnaire answers using a Windows 98 computer package. The results of these calculations can be seen in Appendix 3a.

To facillitate the easier understanding of certain of the Tables in this section of the thesis in which reference is made to the questionnaire's question numbers Table 5.3 shows the question numbers and their content areas.

Questionnaire Reference

Question	Content / Area	Question	Content / Area
1	Course Design - Improve	40	Award - Qualification of Value
2	Course Design - Trsfrable skills	41	Award - Value for money.
3	Course Design - Balance	42	Course Content - Compatibility
4	Course design - Team working	43	Course Content - Flexibility
5	Course Design - Lifelong skills	44	Programme -Academic
6	Improved Job Prospects	45	Monitoring - Two way comms.
7	Student Recruitment - Entry	46	Monitoring - Modular feedback
8	Student Recruitment -	47	Monitoring - Course feedback
9	Student Recruitment - Social	48	Tangibles - Audiovisual equip
10	Marketing - Programme value	49	Tangibles - Laboratory equip..
11	Induction - Into relevant to	50	Tangibles - Classrooms Stndrd
12	Induction - personal study time	51	Computers -Availability
13	Induction - Course assessment.	52	Computers - Quality
14	Induction - Into notice-boards.	53	Library- Content
15	Induction - Into fees paid.	54	Library - Space
16	Induction - Into programme.	55	Library - Opening Hours
17	Induction - Into in class.	56	Library - Location
18a	Commitment -University	57	Tangibles - Toilets facilities.
18b	Commitment - Lecturers	58	Tangibles - Car parking.
18c	Commitment - Students	59	Tangibles- Recreation facilities.
19	Module Content-Relevant	60	Tangibles - Sports facilities.
20	Module Content -Current	61	Tangibles - Sports faciltis times
21	Lectures - Too Long	62	Tangibles - Refectories costs..
22	Course Delivery - Class sizes	63	Tangibles - Refectories foods.
23	Teaching Style-Tfrs	64	Misc. - Identity with
24	Teaching style - Personal skills.	65	Misc. - Identity with Bus
25	Teaching style - Credible	66	Misc. - Treated as Adults
26	Teaching Style - Professional	67	Misc. - Treated as Individual
27	Teaching Style - Approachable	68	Misc-Mutual respect
28	Teaching Style - Self Learning.		
29	Guided Reading		
30	Case Studies in Programme		
31	Course Delivery- Comms.		
32	Module Delivery - On		
33	Tutorials - Relevant		
34	Tutorials - Levels of support.		
35	Tutorials - Levels of material.		
36	Tutorials - Assessment		
37	Tutorials - Subject knowledge.		
38	Tutorials - Assessment		
39	Tutorials - Feedback timing.		

Table 5.3

5.8.1 The Distribution of Questionnaire Responses

The distribution of all of the Importance and Satisfaction responses to the questionnaire instrument can be seen in the Bar Charts and Box Plots in Figures 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3.

Importance Distribution of Responses

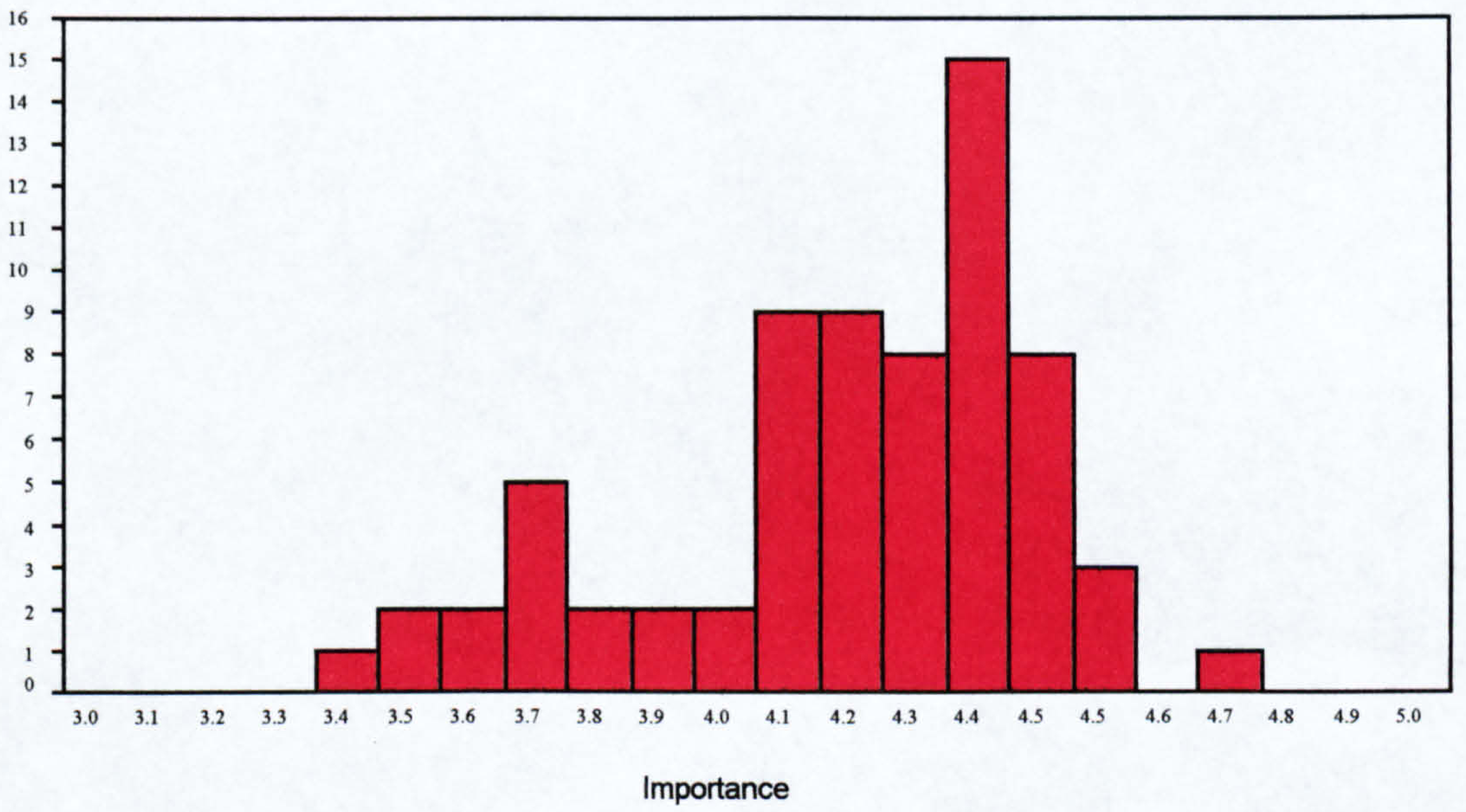

Figure 5.1

Satisfaction Distribution of Responses

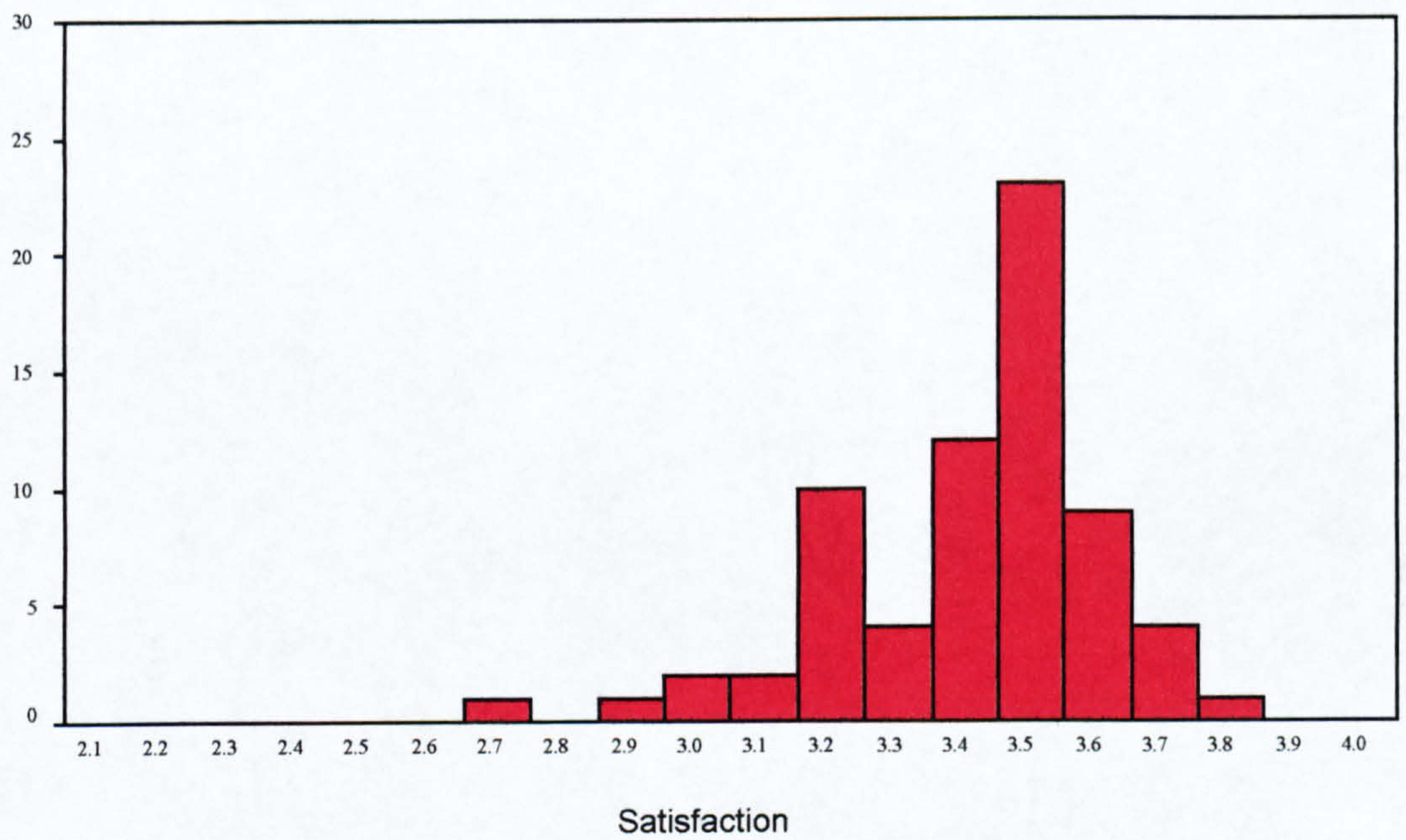

Figure 5.2

Combined Importance Satisfaction Distribution of Responses

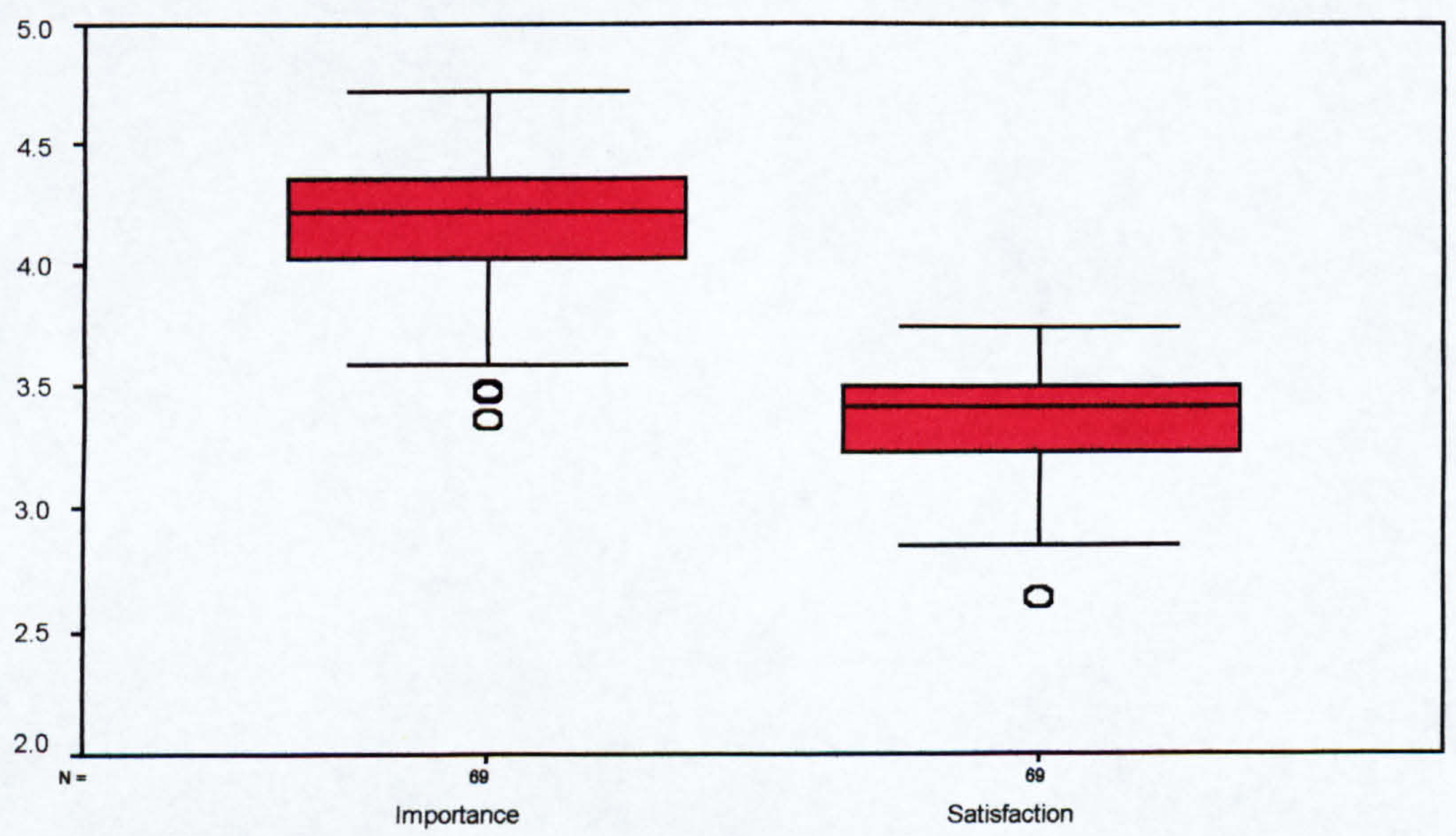

Figure 5.3

As can be seen from an examination of the Figures 5.1 and 5.2 confirmed by median responses within figure 5.3 both the Importance and the Satisfaction distributions are generally normal.

Throughout this thesis it is recognised that the Case Study Data Set represents a snapshot in time of the feelings taken from a sample of the overall population of only the Napier University Business School in response to a questionnaire instruments. All analysis and subsequent findings are made in relation to this situation unless otherwise stated for generalisability.

The concept of measuring the Gap between Importance or expectation of a service and the Satisfaction gained or the Satisfaction / Dissatisfaction paradigm, as discussed in the Service Section of this thesis, has raised considerable controversy among academics and quality professionals such as Teas (1993b), Cronin and Taylor (1994), etc. It is recognised that the validity in using such a method raises the question of measurement compatibility. This is especially difficult when dealing with the soft measures of people's feelings in the Service environment. Recognising these failings and since to date no other model has provided working data the Gap paradigm is used in calculations used to highlight areas of concern within the learning experience as discussed throughout this thesis.

It is accepted that throughout the analysis of the Case Study Data Set that this represents a snapshot of the respondents feelings at one particular moment in time which is standard practice in using a questionnaire instrument to examine a particular issue within a sample population.

Student Importance / Satisfaction ratings for each question were plotted, as shown in scatter plot diagram Figure 5.4, to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses through high Importance and low Satisfaction. Desirable strengths being located in the top right quadrant of the figure and identified weaknesses located in the bottom right quadrant.

Student Importance / Satisfaction Ratings

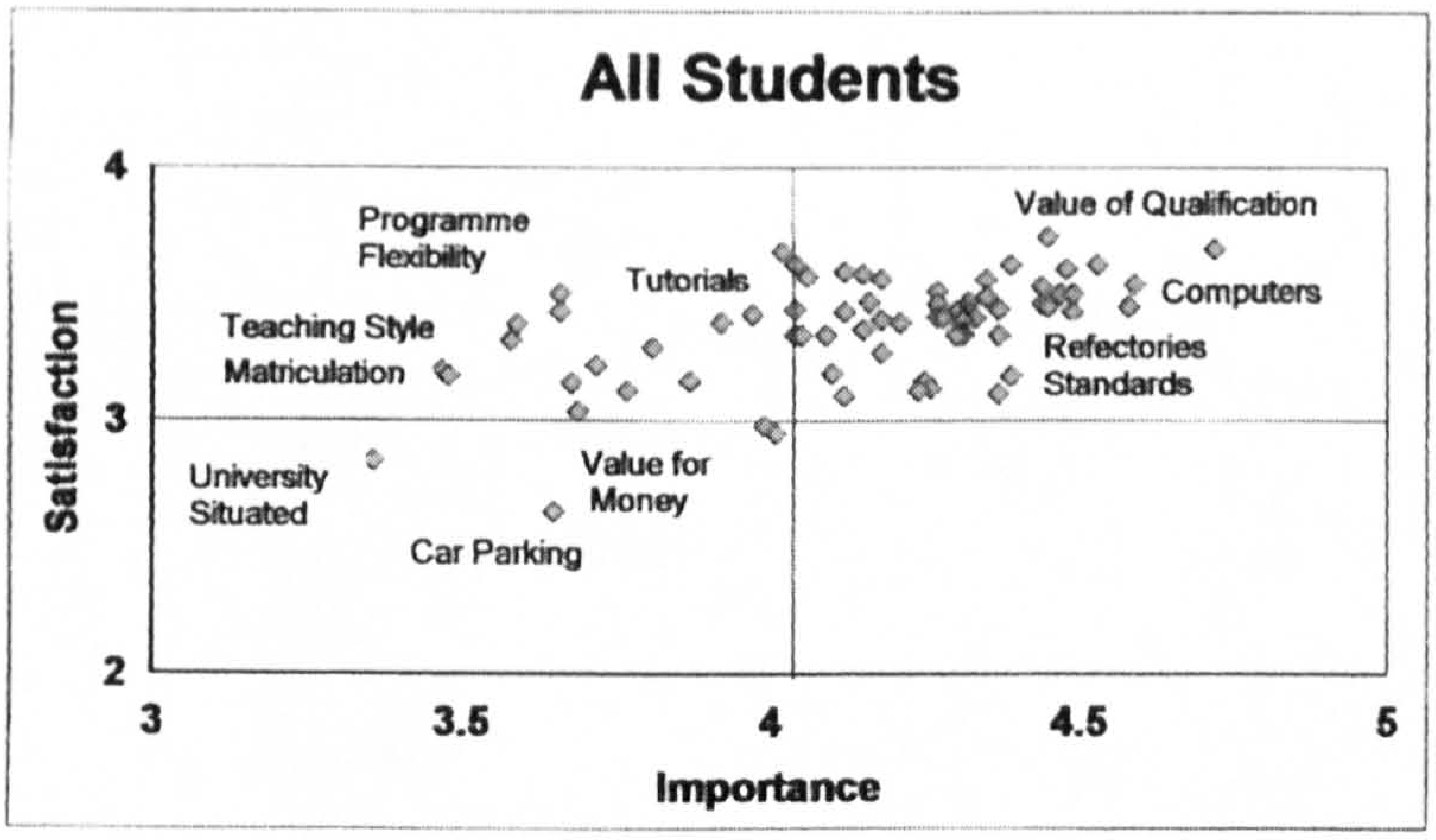

Figure 5.4

The overall results indicated that there was a range Gap between the Importance mean score which ranges from 3.65 to 4.45 and the Satisfaction mean score which ranges from 2.64 to 3.73.

The calculations showed that there were 15 questions, or 21% (akin to an 80 : 20 split of the vital few values and the useful many as previously discussed within this thesis) of the total battery, where there were areas of concern due to their degree of significant dissatisfaction, i.e. where the results had a Gap of 1 or more between the Importance and Satisfaction scores. Dissatisfaction negative evaluations being shown as being, "Core parts of the service on the basis that if they are core and satisfactory they will not impact upon the overall evaluation, i.e. they will be taken for granted", Gabbott and Hogg (1997).

To test the findings of the Gap analysis in relationship to what Students see as Important within the questionnaire the following formula was used; I (I-S). These indicated that in first 4 of the 15 Gaps of >1 there was a direct correlationship in ranking whilst in 8 of the 15 >1 Gaps an indirect relationship existed giving a certain validity to the use of the Gap findings in discussion regarding the areas of concern within the Case Study Data Set. The results for each of the questions within the instrument for Gap x Importance findings are shown in Appendix 3b.

Table 5.4 shows those 15 questions having a Gap of > 1 in ranking order of Gap, and the Importance multiplied by the Gap for positions 1 to15 and their Question number and areas associated within the the questionnaire.

Student Importance to Satisfaction Gaps > 1 and Importance x Gap Positions 1 to 15

Ranking	Gap	Qst	Imp x Gap	Qst	Area having Gap >1 within the Questionnaire Findings
1st	1.26	39	5.51	39	**Tutorials** - Time scales for feedback on assessments.
2nd	1.20	51	5.27	51	**Tangibles** - Availability of computer equipment.
3rd	1.03	53	5.18	53	**Tangibles** - Library - Sufficient books and journals.
4th	1.03	45	4.91	41	**Monitoring** - Two way communications.
5th	1.12	46	4.82	18b	**Monitoring** - Modular feedback acted upon by University.
6th	1.09	47	4.82	45	**Monitoring** - Course feedback acted upon.
7th	1.06	18a	4.76	18a	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the University.
8th	1.06	62	4.75	46	**Tangibles** - Refectories providing value for money.
9th	1.05	18b	4.63	47	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Lecturers.
10th	1.04	41	4.50	41	**Assessment / Award** - Qualifications gained are of value.
11th	1.03	52	4.45	26	**Tangibles** - Quality of computer equipment.
12th	1.02	10	4.45	56	**Student Recruitment** - Programme represents value for money.
13th	1.01	58			**Tangibles** - Car parking
14th	1.01	63			**Tangibles** - Refectories provide balanced range of food.
15th	1.00	26			**Teaching style** - Effective and Professional.

Table 5.4

Using the Gap analysis figure of 15 questions as a benchmark an examination of the relationship between the Student Importance and Satisfaction results can be seen in Table 5.5. This shows the prioritised first 15, i.e. 1st to 15th positions, for the Importance and Satisfaction data set results; in a numeric format and their areas within the questionnaire.

Student's Importance and Satisfaction Hierarchies

Importance			Satisfaction		
Posn	**Qst**	**Area**	**Posn**	**Qst**	**Area**
1	41	Assessment / Award - of Value	1	19	Module Content-Relevant
2	18b	Commitment - Lecturers	2	41	Assessment / Award- of Value
3	53	Library- Content	3	21	Lectures - Too Long
4	55	Library - Opening Hours	4	54	Library - Space
5	18a	Commitment -University	5	55	Library - Opening Hours
6	56	Library - Location	6	32	Module Delivery - as per Schedule
7	20	Module Content -Current	7	20	Module Content -Current
8	6	Improved Job Prospects	8	28	Teaching Style - Independent Learning.
9	26	Teaching Style - Professional	9	44	Programme -Academic Content
10	19	Module Content-Relevant	10	30	Case Studies in Programme
11	27	Teaching Style - Approachable	11	29	Guided Reading
12	23	Teaching Style - Transfers Knowledge	12	38	Tutorials - Assessment
13	54	Library - Space	13	18b	Commitment - Lecturers.
14	51	Computers -Availability	14	27	Teaching Style - Approachable
15	33	Tutorials - Relevant	15	66	Misc.. - Treated as Adults

Table 5.5

The Table shows that approximately 50% of those questions having a high priority Importance rating also appear in the Satisfaction rating. It should be noted however that despite their congruence within the benchmarked 15 question analysis that their are considerable disparities in the Importance and Satisfaction scores that these questions have been given by the respondents. Of the 15 questions shown in Table 5.5 (Importance, Satisfaction Hierarchies), six indicated a significant difference Gap of > 1 as shown in Table 5.4. (Importance to Satisfaction Gaps > 1).

An examination of the relationship between the Student Importance results and the Importance results of the Lecturers and Senior Management using the Gap analysis figure of 15 questions as a benchmark can be seen in Table 5.5. This shows the prioritised first 15 data set results in a numeric format and their areas within the questionnaire for each of the stakeholder groups. Colour coding is used merely to assist in identifying any congruence of relationships.

The results from all 70 questions of Importance / Satisfaction / Resultant Gaps from All Students, Lecturers, Senior Managers, and Administrators are shown in Appendix 3a.

Data Set Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers Importance Hierarchies

Posn	Students Import Question Number	Area	Lecturers Import Question Number	Area	Senior Mangers Import Question	Area
1st	41	Assessment / Award	18b	Commit-ment	18b	Commit-ment
2nd	18b	Commit-ment	18c	Commit-ment	41	Assesment / Award
3rd	53	Library - Content	18a	Commit-ment	68	Misc.
4th	55	Library - Hours	41	Assessment / Award	31	Comms - 2 Way
5th	18a	Commit-ment	53	Library - Content	67	Misc.
6th	56	Library - Location	68	Misc.	66	Misc.
7th	20	Course Content	28	Course Delivery	37	Tutorials
8th	6	Job Prospects	20	Course Content	53	Library - Content
9th	26	Teaching Style	27	Teaching Style	54	Library - Space
10th	19	Course Content	26	Teaching Style	44	Academic Content
11th	27	Teaching Style	34	Tutorials - Support	28	Course Delivery
12th	23	Teaching Style	39	Tutorials - Feedback	39	Tutorials - Feedback
13th	54	Library - Space	19	Course Content	36	Tutorials - Assessmnt
14th	51	Computers	33	Tutorials -Relevant	20	Course Content
15th	33	Tutorials - Relevant	31	Comms. - 2 Way	55	Library - Hours

Table 5.6

To assist in identifying the shared values of Importance between each of the stakeholder groups Table 5.7 shows, by the use of colour coding, the relationships of the 15 benchmarked questions as set out in Table 5.5.

Stakeholder Shared Importance Values

Priority Position	All Students Question Area	Lecturers Question Area	Senior Managers Question Area
1st	41 - Assessment	18b - Commitment	18b - Commitment
2nd	18b - Commitment	18c - Commitment	41 - Assessment
3rd	53 - Library	18a - Commitment	68 - Misc. Respect
4th	55 - Library	41 - Assessment	31 - Comms.
5th	18a - Commitment	53 - Library	67 - Misc. Respect
6th	56 - Library	68 - Misc. Respect	66 - Misc. Respect
7th	20 - Course Content	28 - Course Delivery	37 - Tutorials
8th	6 - Job Prospects	20 - Course Content	53 - Library
9th	26 - Teaching Style	27 - Teaching Style	54 - Library
10th	19 - Course Content	26 - Teaching Style	44 - Course Content
11th	27 - Teaching Style	34 - Tutorials	28 - Course Delivery
12th	23 - Teaching Style	39 - Tutorials	39 - Tutorials
13th	54 - Library	19 - Course Content	36 - Tutorials
14th	51 - Computers	33 - Tutorials	20 - Course Content
15th	33 - Tutorials	31 - Communications	55 - Library

Key

Yellow	All Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers (Total of 4 Shared Values).
Green	All Students / Lecturers (Total of 5 Shared Values).
Blue	All Students / Senior Managers (Total of 2 Shared Values).
Magenta	Lecturers / Managers (Total of 4 Shared Values).
White	Non Shared Value

Table 5.7

Whilst the positioning of question results may not directly match between each of the stakeholder's the Table does indicate that an overall degree of congruence of Importance for the first 15 questionnaire results does exists between the Students and the Lecturers and to a much lesser extent between the Students and the Senior Managers. The testing of the overall degree congruence or otherwise of the three stakeholders formed the analysis of the data set and the proof of the main hypothesis under test.

5.8.1 Data Set Analysis

The data gathered from the survey was analysed using SPSS Inc. release 10. This tool was selected primarily because of the extensive range of features which it offers and also for the good reputation which it enjoys amongst its users.

The approach to this analysis was;

1) to test the reliability of the data gathered,

2) to test the reliability of the structure of the framework of measurement using commonality factor analysis,

3) to prioritise the importance and gap measures of the various groups identified within the questionnaire distribution,

4) to analyse relationships that may or may not exist between variables by identifying significant differences between stakeholder groups using SPSS ANOVA techniques.

These process outcomes being used to test the congruence or non-congruence of the main stakeholder groups.

Throughout the analysis it is assumed that the '1' to '5' Likert scales, previously referred to, used are linearly spaced, that is to say the difference between '1' and '2' for example is the same as the difference between '2' and '3'. It could be argued that the first and final scores may only give disproportionately extreme cases hence should be weighted more heavily. However neither the responses obtained nor the triangulation of the results with those of the focus group interviews suggest that making this assumption has significantly affected the results. Where questionnaire respondents have answered most but not all of the questions analysis has been conducted on those questions completed.

5.8.2 Data Set Reliability

The internal reliability of the questionnaire results found was examined using an extension of the split-half internal consistency of reliability test devised Cronbach (1951). His alpha test calculates the average of all possible split-half reliability coefficients from quantitative data collated from psychological measurements. The test generates a coefficient which varies between 0 and 1 the nearer the result is to 1, and preferably at over 0.8, the more internally reliable is the scale.

Internal reliability is particularly important when using multi-item scales since it raises the question of whether each scale is measuring a single idea and hence whether the items that make up the scale are internally consistent.

The difference in the number of items as shown in the Table between Items Student and Items Lecturers and Managers was brought about during the distribution of the questionnaire one question being omitted from the electronic distribution to Lecturers and Managers resulting in there being 69 number of Items asked of these recipients. Due cognisance of this situation was taken throughout the calculation of any data with the content of this research.

The results of the Cronbach alpha test are show in Table 5.8.

Cronbach's Alpha

Respondents	Number of Cases	Number of Items	Alpha
All	473	69	0.94
Students	431	70	0.95
Lecturers	38	69	0.94
Managers	4	69	0.88

Table 5.8

As all alpha coefficients lie within the scale of 0.95 to 0.88, as shown, the data is internally reliable. The Number of Cases shown refers to the total number of questionnaires having all of the questions within the battery completed from each of the respondent groups. All partially completed questionnaires were also included within any analysis of the data set.

5.8.3 Questionnaire and Framework Validity

Buttle (1995) has identified a number of operational issues within the usage of the SERVQUAL model which are also of concern within the context of the validity of the framework used to test the hypothesis being researched namely "Face and Construct Validity".

Face validity is concerned with the extent to which a scale appears to measure what it purports to measure.

Construct validity generally, "Is used to refer to the vertical correspondence between the construct which is at an unobservable, conceptual level and a purported measure assessing the magnitude and direction of; (a) all of the characteristics, (b) only the characteristics of the construct it is purported to assess", Peter (1981).

The validity of the battery of questions used within the questionnaire was tested by mapping the outcomes of those questions contained within the Case Study questionnaire with those with similar wording within the Napier Universities Business School Student Satisfactory Survey of March 2002.

The outcomes of directly mapped questions means of Importance and Satisfaction are shown in Table 5.9.

Importance and Satisfaction Mapped Questions Results of the Case Study Questionnaire to Napier Universities Business School Student Satisfactory Survey of March 2002.

Correlated Question Numbers	Importance Case Study Result	Importance University Result	Satisfaction Case Study Result	Satisfaction University Result
3	3.97	4.06	3.42	3.48
16	4.10	4.12	3.19	3.22
17	4.05	4.08	3.34	3.37
22	4.16	4.07	3.47	3.62
31	4.30	4.28	3.43	3.28
32	4.04	4.22	3.62	3.27
39	4.37	4.18	3.11	3.07
46	4.24	4.05	3.12	3.11
49	3.58	3.99	3.32	3.23
50	4.04	3.94	3.32	3.20
51	4.39	4.40	3.18	3.59
52	4.37	4.42	3.34	3.49
53	4.58	4.47	3.45	3.29
55	4.39	4.44	3.62	3.69

Table 5.9

As can be seen in the Table in all but one mapping outcome, (question 49) in the Importance, and one mapping outcome, (question 51) in the Satisfaction, the outcomes of the 14 questions, i.e. 28 answers, are within plus or minus 5 % of each other. It is therefore argued that there is evidence of the validity of the questionnaire framework and of it's face validity as defined by Buttle (1995).

In addition to the foregoing the structure and factorial validity of the questionnaire instrument and by implication of the Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education was tested using factor analysis on the questionnaire data set outcomes. The type of factor analysis used was Orthogonal Rotation which has the advantage of producing factors which are unrelated to or independent of one another each question's score then being seen as stand alone and not influencing others within any grouping.

The method used was a Rotated Component Matrix with a suppressed absolute value of 0.5 . The groupings of the results from this factor analysis align with the proposed Framework in all but a very few cases. These cases can be explained by the use of the 0.5 absolute value. If a lower figure had been used then the analysis would align even further however this would have introduce too many variants which would have made the resultant data set less understandable and the figure of 0.5 was adopted as being the most suitable.

Further examination of the sequence of question numbers and their results showed that only three questions, questions 4 (class team working), 7 (entry qualifications), and 10 (value for money), could not be identified readily within a grouping, other non-scoring questions following-on directly within a grouping's sequence indicative of alignment within that group. Consideration would therefore be given to the inclusion these three questions or repositioning them within the structure of the questionnaire in any future usage of the framework methodology.

Due cognisance being taken of this issue, whilst still within the definition of construct validity by Peter (1981), the overall reliability of the proposed Framework and Questionnaire structure can be accepted as valid.

5.8.4 Test of Hypothesis I (the Main Hypothesis Under Test)

Hypothesis 1 : Levels of customer (All Students) satisfaction are directly related to the congruence of the value systems of the stakeholders (All Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers) within a service consumption.

The results from the Case Study questionnaire survey were analysed using the One-Way ANOVA facility of the SPSS computer package. This tested for the significant differences between the mean importance results of the three main stakeholder groups' data set for each question within the questionnaire battery. A result of < 0.05 , i.e. 5%, was seen as being a significant difference.

The test outcomes indicated that 14 of the 69 questions of the battery had a significant difference between the groups, i.e. All of the Students, the Lecturers, and the Senior Management. Uncannily this represents a split in the numbers of answered questions of 79.9% insignificant differences and 20.1% significant differences, i.e. an 80 : 20 split as discussed elsewhere within this thesis.

The ANOVA test result indicating the fourteen questions having a significant differences of means is shown in Table 5.10.

One-Way ANOVA Test Outcomes

Question		Sig. Difference
3	**Course Design** - A balance between teaching and self learning.	**0.00**
6	**Course Marketing** - General enhancement of student's job prospects.	**0.00**
7	**Student Recruitment** - Entry qualifications adequate to underpin the course undertaken.	**0.02**
8	**Student Recruitment** - The University situated in a cosmopolitan area.	**0.00**
18a	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the University.	**0.02**
18b	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Lecturers.	**0.00**
18c	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by Students.	**0.00**
28	**Course Delivery** - Teaching staff encourage independent learning.	**0.00**
30	**Course Delivery** - Case studies are built into the programme of learning.	**0.00**
36	**Tutorials** - A process for the assessment of studies built into work	**0.03**
42	**Course Content** - Compatibility with any part-time work undertaken by students.	**0.00**
43	**Course Content** - Flexibility to meet individual requirements..	**0.00**
59	**Tangibles** - Recreation facilities.	**0.00**
68	**Miscellaneous** -An atmosphere of mutual respect between Students and all University Staff.	**0.02**

Table 5.10

Given the statistics analysed from the data set produced by the questionnaire it is argued that proof of the hypothesis under test can be validated by examining the relationship between the results obtained from those questions having the highest level of Student (customer) dissatisfaction, i.e. those questions with a satisfaction / dissatisfaction gap of 1 or more, and those questions which indicate a significant difference in their congruence of means of the three groups tested, i.e. those having a significant difference of 0.05, i.e. 5%, or less.

It is argued that for the hypothesis to be valid there should be a degree of direct correlation between the two sets of results.

The relationship of those questions where the degree of non-congruence was significant, i.e. the fourteen questions as found with the ANOVA test, with those of the equivalent first fourteen in hierarchical Student Satisfaction / Dissatisfaction Gap was examined using the Pattern Matching methodology, whereby several pieces of information from the same Case Study may be related to some theoretical proposition sources as described previously in this thesis, Campbell (1975), are shown in Table 5.11.

Pattern Matching of Student Satisfaction / Dissatisfaction Gap and ANOVA Test Results

ANOVA FINDINGS Having Significant Differences	ANOVA RESULTS Question Areas Explored	Student Satisfaction / Dissatisfact Gap > 1	Student Satisfaction / Dissatisfaction Gap 1 Question Areas Explored
Q 3	**Course Design** - A balance between teaching and learning.		
Q 6	**Course Marketing** - Enhancement of job prospects.		
Q 7	**Student Recruitment** - Entry qualifications.		
Q 8	**Student Recruitment** - University location		
		Q 10	**Student Recruitment** - Progamme represents value for money.
Q 18a	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the University.	**Q 18a**	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the University.

Q 18b	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Lecturers.	Q 18b	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Lecturers.
Q 18c	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by Students.		
Q 28	**Course Delivery** - Encourage independent learning.		
Q 30	**Course Delivery** - Case studies in programme.		
Q 36	**Tutorials** - Assessment of studies built into work		
		Q 39	**Tutorials** - time scales for feedback on assessments.
		Q 41	**Assessment / Award** Qualifications gained are of value.
Q 42	**Course Content** - Compatibility with part-time work.		
Q 43	**Course Content** - Flexibility to meet individual needs.		
		Q 45	**Monitoring** - Two way communications.
		Q 46	**Monitoring** - Modular feedback acted upon by University.
		Q 47	**Monitoring** - Course feedback acted upon by University.
		Q 51	**Tangibles** - Availability of computer equipment.
		Q 52	**Tangibles** - Quality of computer equipment.
		Q 53	**Tangibles** - Sufficient books and journals.
		Q 58	**Tangibles** - Car parking.
Q 59	**Tangibles** - Recreation.		
		Q 62	**Tangibles** - Refectories provide value for money
		Q 63	**Tangibles** - Refectories provide balanced range of food.
Q 68	**Miscellaneous** -Mutual respect between Students and Staff.		

Table 5.11

As can be seen from the matching outcomes in Table 5.11 a certain degree of congruence of the two results being examined exists within the areas of the questionnaire, i.e. Course Delivery, Tangibles, etc. However closer examination of the question content identifies only one area of values congruence that being the question of commitment of the University and the Lecturing Staff to the programme of learning.

As a result of these empirical findings and theoretical reasoning it is argued that within the research undertaken in the Business School of the Napier University Edinburgh on this occasion that the hypothesis under test, i.e. Levels of customer (All Students) satisfaction are directly related to the congruence of value systems as shown by the importance that they place upon certain values within their system by the stakeholders (All Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers) in a service consumption is rejected.

5.8.5 Further Analysis of Data Set Findings

To investigate the possible reasons for the outcomes of the hypothesis under test and to examine certain themes thrown up by the questionnaire findings a series of hypothesis were tested using the data set as produced from the Case Study questionnaire.

5.8.5.1 Hypothesis II

Hypothesis II : Within an educational experience one group of stakeholders will display fewer shared values with other stakeholders.

To identify the congruence of importance which each group placed upon aspects of the educational experience, as outlined within the questionnaire, to the other groups a series of Analysis of Compared Means - Independent T-Tests were carried out using the Case Study data set.

Table 5.12 shows, by number, those questions where significant differences between the means of the selected T-Test results and those of the overall ANOVA test were found.

Specific Independent T-Test and All Stakeholder ANOVA Comparisons

T-Test	T-Test	T-Test	One-Way
Lecturers / Students Importance Significant Differences	**. Managers / Students Importance Significant Differences**	**Lecturers / Managers Importance Significant Differences**	**All ANOVA Importance Significant Differences**
Question Number - Area	**Question Number - Area**	**Question Number - Area**	**Question Number - Area**
3 -Course Design			3 -Course Design
6 - Job Prospects.	6 - Job Prospects		6 - Job Prospects
7 - Entry Qualifications.			7 - Entry Qualifications.
8 - University Location			8 - University Location
18a - Commitment		18a - Commitment	18a - Commitment
18b - Commitment			18b - Commitment
18c - Commitment		18c - Commitment	18c - Commitment
22 - Class sizes			
		27 - Teaching Style	
28 - Independent Learning.			28 - Independent Learning.
30 - Case studies in programme.	30 - Case studies in programme.		30 - Case studies in programme.
34 - Tutorials			
36 - Tutorials			36 - Tutorials
		40 - Qualification of Value	
42 - Compatibility	42 - Compatibility		42 - Compatibility
43 - Flexibility	43 - Flexibility		43 - Flexibility
49 - Laboratory equip..			
	58 - Car parking.		
	59 - Recreation	59 - Recreation	59 - Recreation
	60 - Sports facilities.	60 - Sports facilities.	
	61 - Sports opening times.	61 - Sports opening times.	
		63 - Refectories	
68 - Mutual Respect			68 - Mutual Respect

Table 5.12

The Table shows that the Lecturer / Student relationship is largely congruent to the total ANOVA findings the T-Test significant differences figures agreeing with 13 of the 14

ANOVA significant differences. There are also three additional questions where there are differences specific to the Lecturer / Student relationship. The three additional questions indicating differences being, 22 (class sizes), 34 (tutorial academic support), 49 (standard of laboratory equipment available). Two of the additional findings questions 22 (class sizes), and 49 (standard of laboratory equipment available) show significant differences in the Importance hierarchies of aggregated means between the Lecturers and the Students however the likelihood of this finding is that the Lecturers feel that the issue is out with their province in regard to changing the current situation and consequently they have given both of these question areas low priority in their level of Importance. The other question, question 34 (tutorial academic support), is interesting in that the Lecturers have given this area a higher position and score within their Importance hierarchy than the Students whose level of Importance to Satisfaction Gap whilst approaching the significance Gap of > 1 does not cause alarm bells to ring but does indicate the further investigation may indicate items within the questions area which need addressing.

Examination of the Management / Student relationship shows that of the 8 areas of non-congruence found from the T-Test results 3 additional questions are particular to that relationship, 58 (car parking), 60 (sports facilities), and 61 (sports facilities availability), the other 5 appearing in the ANOVA findings. None of the additional questions found by the T-Test feature within the first 60 positions in the Importance hierarchies of aggregated means of either the Students nor the Managers and are therefore likely to be discounted in any change progamme to the overall learning programme.

Finally the examination of the Lecturer / Managers relationship shows that there are 8 areas of non-congruence 4 of which are additional to the overall ANOVA findings those being 27 (approachability of lecturing staff), 40 (qualification is value for money), 60 (sports facilities), and 61 (sports facilities availability). Two of the additional findings questions 27 (approachability of lecturing staff), 40 (qualification is value for money) show significant differences in the Importance hierarchies of aggregated means between the Lecturers and the Senior Management which should require further investigation and perhaps reappraisal of the Importance which both parties place upon the subject matter. The other two questions do not feature highly in the Importance hierarchies of aggregated means as found in the Management / Student relationship with a likely similar result.

The appearance of questions 60 (sports facilities), and 61 (sports facilities availability). in both the Management / Student and Management / Lecturer non-congruence of means within the T-Test results could be explained by carrying out a further study of the use to which the three main stakeholder groups make of these facilities.

From the foregoing examination of relationships and the Table display it can be seen that the common factor in the T-Test to ANOVA study is the student body as a whole, i.e. the customers, and that that body has a greater influence than any of the other main stakeholders on the levels of the ANOVA findings of non-congruence of quality values within the educational experience.

On the basis of this evidence it is argued that the hypothesis that, 'Within an educational experience one group of stakeholders will display fewer shared values with other stakeholders', can be accepted.

5.8.5.2 Hypothesis III

Hypothesis III : Within an educational experience two groups of stakeholders will display fewer shared values with other stakeholders.

Accepting the previous hypothesis as true an examination of the T-Test results as shown in Table 5.12 indicated that the greatest difference in congruence of values existed between the Lecturing Staff and the Students as a group.

Table 5.13 shows the question number of those questions and their areas within the questionnaire whose T-Test outcomes had a comparison difference of < 0.05.

Lecturer / Students Independent T-Test Findings

T-Test Lecturers / All Students Importance < 0.05	T-TEST RESULTS Question Areas Explored
Q3	**Course Design** - A balance between teaching and learning.
Q6	**Course Marketing** - General enhancement of students job prospects.
Q7	**Student Recruitment** - Entry qualifications for the course undertaken.
Q8	**Course Marketing** - University situated in a cosmopolitan area.
Q18a	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the University.
Q18b	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Lecturers.
Q18c	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Students.
Q22	**Course Delivery** - Class sizes too big.
Q28	**Course Delivery** - Encourage independent learning.
Q30	**Course Delivery** - Case studies in programme.
Q34	**Tutorials** - level of academic support.
Q36	**Tutorials** - Assessment of studies built into work
Q42	**Course Content** - Compatibility with part-time work.
Q43	**Course Content** - Flexibility to meet individual needs.
Q49	**Tangibles** - Standard of laboratory equipment.
Q68	**Miscellaneous** -Mutual respect between Students and Staff.

Table 5.13

The result of the T-Test produced a figure of 16 questions with a significant differences of means representing 23 % of all of the questions asked.

In addition to the information in Table 5.13 a Pattern Matching examination of the Lecturer's and Student's Importance of the aggregated means of questionnaire answers, using the T-Test findings of 16 differences as a benchmark figure of questions to be examined indicated 7 questions where the groups differ in what they deem as most important but whose differences of means did not fall within the criteria, i.e. < 0.05, to warrant them as being significant.

The Importance hierarchical question differences found, their areas within the questionnaire, and their priority positions can be seen in Table 5.14.

Lecturer's and All Student's Hierarchy of Importance

Lecturers			Students		
Qust	**Posn**	**Most Important Area**	**Qust**	**Posn**	**Most Important Area**
			23	**12th**	**Teaching style** - Tfrs knldg
31	**15th**	**Course Delivery**- Effective communication between staff and students.			
			51	**14th**	**Tangibles** - Availability of computer equipment.
			54	**13th**	**Tangibles** - Acceptable level of library space.
			55	**4th**	**Tangibles** - Library opening times.
			56	**6th**	**Tangibles** - Library location and content.
67	**16th**	**Miscellaneous** - An emphasis on treating students as an individual.			

Table 5.14

The evidence from the testing of this hypothesis would appear to be in line with the findings of the main research hypothesis that, Levels of customer (All Students) satisfaction are directly related to the congruence of the value systems of the stakeholders (All Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers) within a service consumption, or in this case between two of the stakeholder parties.

Examination of the relationship between the T-Test and the Student's Importance / Satisfaction Gap of > 1 showed only 2 questions where there was a matching pair, questions 18a and 18b, both of which lying within the same Framework Area of Commitment to the learning programme.

However on the basis of this evidence of the T-Test of means of Importance and the relatively low positions of the majority of the mismatches within the Pattern Matching examination of Importance Hierarchies the hypothesis that, 'Within an educational experience two groups of stakeholders will display fewer shared values with other stakeholders', can be accepted.

Such findings are in line with the findings as discussed within this thesis, reference Service 4.9.1, with regard to the customer service provider interface. Front line staff whilst bearing the brunt of customer expectations and dissatisfaction but not necessarily influencing customer core values.

5.8.5.3 Hypothesis IV

Hypothesis IV : Students' education quality values systems remain unchanged over the period of their learning experience.

For the purposes of testing this hypothesis the assumption was made that Students in their second and subsequent years had similar values to those in their current first year at that stage of their learning programme. It was also assumed, within the context of the hypothesis being tested, that any value changes between a Student's second and subsequent years of their learning programme took place as a result of that programme.

T-Tests of significant differences of means of the Case Study data set Importance results were carried out between years of Full-time Undergraduate Students to determine if their quality value system changed over a period of time, i.e. year on year - 1st year as compared to 2nd year, 1st year as compared to 3rd year, 1st year as compared to 4th year, and so on. Table 5.15 shows a columnised numeric list of those question whose results indicate significant differences, i.e. having a 2-tailed difference of 0.05 or less, between the Years tested. The aggregated mean values within the Student's hierarchy of Importance for those questions identifies the Years during which a significant change occurs.

T-Tests of Significant Differences of Means of Importance Results Year on Year

T-Test	Years 1 - 2 Difference		Years 1 - 3 Difference		Years 1 - 4 Difference		Years 2 - 3 Difference		Years 2 - 4 Difference		Years 3 - 4 Difference	
Qst	1	2	1	3	1	4	2	3	2	4	3	4
1											4.16	4.43
2									4.29	4.49	4.11	4.49
4			3.86	3.43	3.86	3.42						
6									4.54	4.62	4.3	4.62
7							3.87	3.52	3.87	3.56		
8			3.72	2.96			3.77	2.96			2.96	3.43
9			3.96	3.52			3.91	3.52	3.91	3.71		
21			4.2	4.09								
24							4.4	4.11				
25											4.02	4.41
30			4.14	4.09								
35							4.41	4.18				
40							4.4	4.04				
42							3.85	3.41				
46			4.38	4.11			4.38	4.11				
47			4.39	3.45			4.38	3.45				
48			4.09	4.11								
49			4.08	3.11	4.08	3.5	3.96	3.11	3.96	3.5		
56			4.36	4.71								
57											4.18	4.13
58											3.59	3.76
60											3.25	3.79
61											3.29	3.84
63											4.02	4.36

Table 5.15

An examination of the Student's values of Importance aggregated means for each of the questions as found was used to indicate how these values changed Year on Year. Table 5.16 shows the positions within each Student Year's Importance hierarchy for each of these questions. Colour backgrounds are used only as an aid in identifying those Questions and Years in which the largest Importance changes in position occur.

T-Test Significant Differences Questions Positions within Importance Hierarchies Years 1 to 4

	Year	1	2	3	4
Quest	**Area**	**Posn**	**Posn**	**Posn**	**Posn**
1	**Course design** -Vocational topics which improve career	19	32	31	16
2	**Course design** - Transferable knowledge skills.	29	36	34	8
4	**Course design** - Class team working.	62	68	64	70
6	**Course Marketing** - Enhancement of students job prospects.	4	7	18	3
7	**Student Recruitment** - Entry qualifications for the course undertaken.	65	64	61	67
8	**Course Marketing** - University situated in a cosmopolitan area.	67	66	70	69
9	**Student Recruitment** - University offers opportunity for social contact.	59	62	62	65
21	**Course Delivery** - Lectures are too long.	39	52	21	54
24	**Teaching style** - Develops students personal skills.	24	21	35	29
25	**Teaching style** - Credible and persuasive.	36	33	44	18
30	**Course Delivery** - Case studies in programme.	30	55	22	52
35	**Tutorials** - Levels of learning support material.	26	19	29	23
40	**Assessment / Award** - Qualification is value for money.	24	22	42	20
42	**Course Content** - Compatible with part-time work.	70	63	65	66
46	**Monitoring** - Modular feedback acted upon.	17	27	36	21
47	**Monitoring** - Course feedback acted upon.	16	28	63	36
48	**Tangibles** - Standard of audiovisual equipment.	54	29	36	62
49	**Tangibles** - Standard of laboratory equipment.	49	60	69	68
56	**Tangibles** - library location and content.	20	2	1	13
57	**Tangibles** - Level of toilets facilities.	48	51	29	43
58	**Tangibles** - Car parking facilities.	67	66	59	63
60	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities.	66	60	68	61
61	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities opening times.	69	68	67	60
63	**Tangibles** - Refectories provide a balanced range of food..	47	44	44	20

Table 5.16

The fluctuations, both positive and negative, in positions between years are in certain cases more pronounced than in others, e.g. Questions 4, 7, 8, 9 & 60 have only small changes between years whilst others like Questions 1, 2, & 6 have larger changes. This can be explained by the mean differences results of the T-Test equations. The rationale behind why certain questions have quite so dramatic changes in priority of Importance, e.g. Question 2

(Transferable knowledge skills) where Years 1, 2, and 3 all seem to have roughly the same level of Importance placed upon the area of the question to Year 4 where there is a large change in emphasis would require further investigation into the root cause of this phenomenon by possibly conducting face to face interviews or some other means if it was seen that these findings represented a problem within the learning programme.

Some obvious observations on the changes in priorities can however be made. Students in their early years within the University environment tend to focus upon the Tangible aspects of their learning programme being unsure of just what to expect from their learning programmes therefore focus upon the 'harder' elements which are easier to evaluate. Students in Year 3, the Year with the highest number of identifiable changes in the Table, are more interested in achieving the best degree possible in order to enhance their prospects in the job market on leaving the University focus more upon the 'Teaching' and 'Award / Assessment' 'softer' aspects of their programme.

As can be seen from Tables 5.11 and 5.12 there is evidence of significant changes between the Years of a Student's learning programme within those elements of the programme as tested by the questionnaire. On the basis of this evidence, the hypothesis that, 'Students' education quality values systems remain unchanged over the period of their learning experience', can be rejected.

This evidence confirms the findings of Hill (1995), and Oldfield and Baron (2000), and of Cottam (1998) who used a different approach to this hypothesis methodology in that she measured the same student population over a particular period of time within their programme of education to test for changes in their satisfaction and expectation levels with the service provided. The data produced allowed her to conclude that the hypotheses that,

"Levels of satisfaction remain unchanged during the course of service consumption".

"Expectations remain unchanged during the course of service consumption".

could be rejected.

5.8.5.4 Hypothesis V

Hypothesis V : Student's perception of education quality value systems are influenced by the type of learning programme which they undertake.

To test the validity of the hypothesis T-Tests of means of Importance between Part-time and Full-time Students were carried out using the Case Study data set to determine if Student's value systems changed dependent upon the type of learning programme being undertaken. The differences between Full-time and Part-time Student attendance patterns were used as the criteria for testing this hypothesis. No cognisance was taken of the age, sex, or graduate status of the population examined during the testing.

Table 5.17 shows those questions and their areas within the questionnaire which had significant difference of means of < 0.05.

Part-time / Full-time Students Independent T-Test Findings of Significant Differences

T-Test Full-time / Part-time Differences < 0.05	T-TEST RESULTS Question Areas Explored
Q5	**Course Design** - Skills for lifelong learning.
Q6	**Course Marketing** - General enhancement of students job prospects.
Q7	**Student Recruitment** - Entry qualifications for the course undertaken.
Q 8	**Course Marketing** - University situated in a cosmopolitan area.
Q 9	**Student Recruitment** - University offers opportunity for social contact.
Q 10	**Course Marketing** - Programme value for money.
Q 14	**Induction** - Information available on notice-boards.
Q 15	**Induction** - Information on how fees would be paid.
Q 16	**Induction** - Information regarding programme of study prior to joining University.
Q 17	**Induction** - Information regarding programme of study during induction sessions.
Q 21	**Course Delivery** - Lectures are too long.
Q 37	**Tutorials** - A process which confirms student's understanding of the subject studied.
Q 46	**Monitoring** - Modular feedback acted upon by the University.
Q 49	**Tangibles** - Standard of laboratory equipment.
Q 50	**Tangibles** - Standard of classrooms.
Q 51	**Tangibles** - Availability of computer equipment.
Q 52	**Tangibles** - Quality of computer equipment.
Q 54	**Tangibles** - Level of space in libraries.
Q 55	**Tangibles** - Library opening times.
Q 57	**Tangibles** - Level of toilets facilities.
Q 59	**Tangibles** - Recreation facilities.
Q 60	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities.
Q 61	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities opening times.
Q 62	**Tangibles** - Refectories provide food which is value for money.
Q 63	**Tangibles** - Refectories provide a balanced range of food..

Table 5.17

The result of the T-Test produced a figure of 25 questions where there were significant differences of means representing 36 % of all of the questions asked.

In addition to the information in Table 5.17 a Pattern Matching examination of the Full-time and Part-time Importance of the aggregated means of questionnaire answers, using the T-Test outcome figure of 25 as a benchmark of questions to be examined, i.e. 1st to 25th within the hierarchy, indicated 10 questions out with the T-Test findings where Full-time and Part-time students differ in what they deem as most important.

The 10 questions, questionnaire areas, and their positions within the Importance of means hierarchy are shown in Table 5.18.

Full-time / Part-time Studènts Differences of Hierarchical Importance

Full-time Students			Part-time Students		
Qust	**Posn**	**Most Important Area**	**Qust**	**Posn**	**Most Important Area**
			1	**14**	**Course design** -Vocational topics which improve career.
			12	**23**	**Induction information -** personal study time requirement.
			25	**15**	**Teaching style** - credible and persuasive.
			29	**16**	**Teaching style** - guided reading within programme.
			31	**22**	**Teaching style** - effective communication between staff and students.
34	**24**	**Tutorials** - level of academic support.			
35	**22**	**Tutorials** - levels of learning support material.			
			43	**24**	**Course content -** flexible to meet individual needs.
56	**5**	**Tangibles** - library location and content.			
			66	**20**	**Miscellaneous** - emphasis on treating students as adults

Table 5.18

On the basis of the evidence of the T-Test of means of Importance between the Part-time and Full-time Students, the relatively low positions in all but one of the mismatches within the Pattern Matching examination of Importance hierarchies, the diversity within these hierarchies with regard to the areas of differences in relation to the questionnaire answers, Full-time Students being interested in harder tangibles of their programme whilst Part-time Students place more emphasis upon the softer elements of the programme content and teaching style, the irregularity in the ratio of hierarchical differences within the benchmarked 10 of 25 questions, (3 Full-time : 7 Part-time), there is evidence that the importance which

Part-time and Full-time Students place upon aspects of their learning programme is influenced by the type of study undertaken.

The hypothesis that, 'Student's perception of education quality value systems are influenced by the type of learning programme which they undertake', can be accepted.

A likely cause of the high incidence of disparity between the two groups of students tested within the hypothesis is probably brought about by their life experience as most Full-time Students come straight from school into the University environment whilst most Part-time Students are already in the work environment, and are generally that bit more mature in terms of the focus of their Importance issues.

The next hypothesis forms the basis of the proof or otherwise of this suggestion.

5.8.5.5 Hypothesis VI

Hypothesis VI : Student's value systems are influenced by their experiences within the working environment.

It was assumed that for the purposes of testing the above hypothesis that Full-time Students studying for their first degree were not currently employed within their chosen career path and that most Part-time students studying for their Masters or Doctorate degrees were currently employed in their chosen career and were studying in order to improve their prospects therein.

T-Tests of means of Importance between Undergraduate and Graduate Students were carried out using the Case Study data set to determine if student's value systems were influenced by their work experience.

Table 5.19 shows those questions and their areas within the questionnaire which had significant difference of means of < 0.05.

Undergraduate / Graduate Students Independent T-Test Findings

T-Test RESULTS Undergraduate / Graduate Differences < 0.05	T-TEST RESULTS Question Areas Explored
Q 6	**Course Marketing** - General enhancement of students job prospects.
Q 7	**Student Recruitment** - Entry qualifications for the course undertaken.
Q 8	**Course Marketing** - University situated in a cosmopolitan area.
Q 9	**Student Recruitment** - University offers opportunity for social contact.
Q 14	**Induction** - Information available on notice-boards.
Q 15	**Induction** - Information on how fees would be paid.
Q 21	**Course Delivery** - Lectures are too long.
Q 46	**Monitoring** - Modular feedback acted upon by the University.
Q 47	**Monitoring** - Course feedback acted upon by University.
Q 49	**Tangibles** - Standard of laboratory equipment.
Q 50	**Tangibles** - Standard of classrooms.
Q 51	**Tangibles** - Availability of computer equipment.
Q 52	**Tangibles** - Quality of computer equipment.
Q 57	**Tangibles** - Level of toilets facilities.
Q 58	**Tangibles** - Car parking facilities.
Q 59	**Tangibles** - Recreation facilities.
Q 60	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities.
Q 61	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities opening times.
Q 62	**Tangibles** - Refectories provide food which is value for money.
Q 63	**Tangibles** - Refectories provide a balanced range of food..
Q 64	**Miscellaneous** - Identity with University.
Q 65	**Miscellaneous** - Identity with Business School.

Table 5.19

The results of the T-Test indicated 22 questions where there were significant differences of means this representing 32 % of the battery of questions asked.

In addition to the information in Table 5.19 a Pattern Matching examination of the Undergraduate and Graduate Student's Importance of the aggregated means of questionnaire answers, using the T-Test outcome figure of 22 as a benchmark of questions to be examined, i.e. 1st. to 22nd. in the hierarchy of Importance of means, indicated 14 questions out with the T-Test findings where Undergraduate and Graduate Students differed in what they deem as most Important. The 14 questions, questionnaire areas, and positions within the Importance of means hierarchy are shown in Table 5.20.

Undergraduate / Graduate Students Differences of Hierarchical Importance

Undergraduate Students			Graduate Students		
Qust	**Posn**	**Most Important Areas**	**Qust**	**Posn**	**Most Important Areas**
1	**22**	**Course design** -vocational topics which improve career development.			
			2	**11**	**Course design** - transferable knowledge skills.
			13	**18**	**Induction information** - amount of course assessment required to complete the course.
19	**13**	**Teaching style** - module content is relevant.			
			24	**19**	**Teaching style** - develops student's personal skills.
			25	**17**	**Teaching style** - credible and persuasive.
			29	**24**	**Teaching style** - guided reading within programme.
			31	**22**	**Teaching style** - effective communication between staff and students.
35	**21**	**Tutorials** - levels of learning support material.			
			36	**10**	**Tutorials** - assessment of student's work.
			40	**14**	**Assessment / Award** - qualification is value for money.
54	**11**	**Tangibles** - acceptable level of library space.			
55	**5**	**Tangibles** - library opening hours.			
56	**4**	**Tangibles** - library location and content.			

Table 5.20

On the basis of the evidence of the T-Test of means of Importance and the relatively low positions in all but two of the mismatches within the Pattern Matching examination of Importance hierarchies, the diversity within these hierarchies with regard to the areas of differences within the questionnaire, (Undergraduate Students being interested in harder tangibles of their programme whilst Graduate Students place more emphasis upon the softer elements of programme content and teaching style), the irregularity in the ratio of hierarchical differences within the benchmarked 14 of 22 questions, (6 undergraduate : 8 Graduate Students) there is evidence that the importance which Undergraduate and Graduate Students place upon aspects of their learning programme is influenced by their experience of the work environment.

The hypothesis that, 'Student's value systems are influenced by their experiences within the working environment', can be accepted.

As with the previous hypothesis the most likely cause of the disparity as found in the testing of this hypothesis is in the value systems which influence the Student's expectations and levels of satisfaction as a result of their life experiences and state of maturity. Maturity not necessarily referring to the Student's age in years since the definition of maturity is one of mankind's ongoing debates the testing of which is not part of the research carried out within the terms of any of the hypotheses within the thesis.

5.8.5.6 Hypothesis VII

Hypothesis VII : Undergraduate and Graduate Student Groups will demonstrate differing areas of Importance within an educational experience compared those of the Lecturing Staff.

Full-time to Undergraduate and Part-time to Graduate Students Values Relationships

A somewhat obvious conclusion could be drawn from the evidence of Hypotheses V and VI that being that a degree of congruence of value systems exists between the method of learning and the status of a Student group, i.e. between Part-time and Graduate, and Full-time and Undergraduate.

To test this observation a numeric Paired Matching of the Full-time / Part-time and Undergraduate / Graduate T-Tests results having differences of < 0.05 and of the Hierarchical Importance of Means Differences results from each of the four constituents referred to was carried out.

The outcomes of these tests can be seen by question number and their Importance hierarchical position in Table 5.21. Colour backgrounds within the Table are used for presentation purposes only highlighting those questions which appear in both the Part-time / Full-time or Undergraduate / Graduate T-Tests of significant difference of means and also those which appear only in the Part-time / Graduate or Full-time / Undergraduate Importance of means hierarchies.

Paired Matching of Full-time to Undergraduate and Part-time to Graduate Students

FT/PT Studts T-Test < 0.05	Ugrad Grad T-Test < 0.05	Full-time Student's Importance Hierarchy		Undergrad Student's Importance Hierarchy		Part-time Student's Importance Hierarchy		Graduate Student's Importance Hierarchy	
Qstn	Qstn	Qstn	Posn	Posn	Qstn	Qstn	Posn	Posn	Qstn
				22nd	1	1	14th	23rd	1
		2	21st			2	19th	11th	2
5									
6	6	6	9th	6th	6	6	18th	21st	6
7	7								
8	8								
9	9								
10									
						12	23rd		
								18th	13
14	14								
15	15								
16									
17									
		18a	8th	7th	18a	18a	6th	13th	18a
		18b	3rd	3rd	18b	18b	1st	2nd	18b
		19	14th	13th	19	19	3rd	4th	19
		20	10th	10th	20	20	8th	6th	20
21	21								
		23	15th	16th	23	23	4th	7th	23
								19th	24
						25	15th	17th	25
		26	13th	14th	26	26	7th	3rd	26
		27	11th	12th	27	27	12th	8th	27
						29	16th	24th	29
						31	22nd	22nd	31
		33	17th	16th	33	33	10th	15th	33
		34	24th	23rd	34				
		35	22nd	21st	35				
		36	25th	24th	36	36	9th	10th	36
37		37	20th	20th	37				
		38	16th	17th	38	38	25th	20th	38
		39	18th	18th	39	39	5th	12th	39
		40	23rd	25th	40	40	17th	14th	40
		41	1st	1st	41	41	2nd	1st	41
						43	24th		
								25th	45

46	46								
	47								
49	49								
50	50								
51	51	51	6th	8th	51				
52	52	52	7th	9th	52				
		53	2nd	2nd	53	53	11th	5th	53
54		54	12th	11th	54				
55		55	4th	5th	55	55	21st	9th	55
		56	5th	4th	56				
57	57								
	58								
59	59								
60	60								
61	61								
62	62								
63	63								
	64								
	65								
						66	20th		
		68	19th	19th	68	68	13th	16th	68

Table 5.21

An examination of the Table shows that an overall matching exists between 18 of the 22 T-Test results. Within the Importance of means hierarchies, using a benchmark figure of 25, there are 17 questions which match across all four constituents, 24 matching pairs between the questions answered by the Full-time / Undergraduate Students and 22 matching pairs between the questions answered by the Part-time / Graduate Students as important.

The prioritised Importance hierarchical positions of Full-time and Undergraduate Students generally match to within one or two positions even within those questions whose paired matches are specific to the Full-time / Undergraduate grouping, e.g. question 34 - Tutorials - level of academic support.

A similar examination of the Part-time and Graduate Importance prioritised positions indicated that within the 22 matching pairs there were fewer matching patterns than found in the Full-time / Undergraduate grouping.

To try to establish any causal factors for this disparity T-Tests of means of Importance were carried out between each of the groups within the Full-time / Undergraduate grouping. An analysis of the outcomes of these tests indicated that two specific years, the Third and Fourth years, whilst agreeing with the overall matching paired analysis differed greatly from the other Full-time classes in their listing of Importance priorities.

These outcomes add weight to the rejection findings of Hypothesis IV that, Quality value systems remain unchanged over the period of a Student's learning programme, by highlighting the changes which take place in the later years of a Student's learning programme.

Follow-up class interview exercises would have been carried out with the respondent students in years 3 and 4 to elaborate on why these differences occurred in relation to those of the other Full-time students. Unfortunately however the opportunity for this was missed since students in these years had completed their programme modules and had dispersed before the mismatch of priorities was discovered.

The T-Tests also indicated that the inclusion of those Graduates who were Full-time Students into the grouping of Full-time / Undergraduate pairing had very little influence on the Importance of means outcomes of the pairing.

Whilst the priority positioning of the Importance of means for the Part-time and Graduate groups is not so pronounced as in the Full-time and Undergraduate groups the pairing of the questions as answered still shows the strong relationship between the Part-time and Graduate groups.

It is concluded therefore that there is evidence to support the observation that a degree of congruence of value systems exists between the method of learning and the status of a Student group.

Lecturer / Undergraduate and Lecturer / Graduate Values Relationships

Accepting that Hypotheses V & VI are true and from the Pattern Matching as shown in Table 5.21 there is evidence of some fundamental differences in the quality value systems of Undergraduate and Graduate Students. The findings of Hypothesis III also showed evidence of the differences between quality value systems of Lecturers and All Students.

To facilitate the design of learning programmes and provide customer facing staff, i.e. the Lecturers, with the necessary means to meet their Student's (customer's) expectations it follows that there is a requirement for the differences in value systems between the Lecturing Staff, Undergraduates and Graduates to be examined.

To determined if significant differences of means of Importance exist between the Lecturers / Undergraduates and Lecturers / Graduates which may require further investigation Hypothesis VII was tested using T-Tests of means of Importance. Table 5.22 shows those questions by number and area within the questionnaire having significant differences of Importance of means between Undergraduates and Lecturers, and Graduates and Lecturers, and those questions by number only which have significant differences in the Lecturer to All Students T-Test differences of means findings as shown in Table 5.13.

Lecturer to Undergraduates, Graduates to Lecturers, & Lecturer to All Students T-Test Findings

	Lecturers Undergraduates T-Test Differences < 0.05		**Lecturers Graduates T-Test Differences < 0.05**	**Lects All Students T-Test Differences < 0.05**
Qust	**AREAS of Non-congruence**	**Qust**	**AREAS of Non-congruence**	**Question**
3	**Course Design** - A balance between teaching and learning.	**3**	**Course Design** - A balance between teaching and learning.	**3**
6	**Course Marketing** - General enhancement of students job prospects.			**6**
7	**Student Recruitment** - Entry qualifications for the course undertaken.	**7**	**Student Recruitment** - Entry qualifications for the course undertaken.	**7**
8	**Course Marketing** - University situated in a cosmopolitan area.			**8**
9	**Student Recruitment** - University offers opportunity for social contact.			
14	**Induction** - Information available on notice-boards.	**14**	**Induction** - Information available on notice-boards.	
18a	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the University.	**18a**	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the University.	**18a**
18b	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Lecturers.	**18b**	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Lecturers.	**18b**
18c	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Students.	**18c**	**Course Delivery** - Commitment to learning programme by the Students.	**18c**
22	**Class sizes** - too big.			**22**
28	**Course Delivery** - Encourage independent learning.	**28**	**Course Delivery** - Encourage independent learning.	**28**
30	**Course Delivery** - Case studies in programme.	**30**	**Course Delivery** - Case studies in programme.	**30**

		31	**Teaching style** - effective communication between staff and students.	
		34	**Tutorials** - Level of academic support.	34
36	**Tutorials** - Assessment of studies built into work	36	**Tutorials** - Assessment of studies built into work	36
42	**Course Content** - Compatibility with part-time work.	42	**Course Content** - Compatibility with part-time work.	42
43	**Course Content** - Flexibility to meet individual needs.	43	**Course Content** - Flexibility to meet individual needs.	43
		48	**Tangibles** - Standard of audiovisual equipment.	
		49	**Tangibles** - Standard of laboratory equipment.	49
		50	**Tangibles** - Standard of classrooms.	
51	**Tangibles** - Availability of computer equipment.	51	**Tangibles** - Availability of computer equipment.	
52	**Tangibles** - Quality of computer equipment.	52	**Tangibles** - Quality of computer equipment.	
		57	**Tangibles** - Standard of toilets available to everyone in the University.	
59	**Tangibles** - Recreation facilities.	59	**Tangibles** - Recreation facilities.	
		60	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities.	
		61	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities opening times.	
		62	**Tangibles** - Refectories provide food which is value for money.	
		63	**Tangibles** - Refectories provide a balanced range of food..	
		64	**Miscellaneous** - Identity with University.	
		66	**Miscellaneous** - emphasis on treating students as adults	
		67	**Miscellaneous** - An emphasis on treating students as an individual.	
68	**Miscellaneous** -Mutual respect between Students and Staff.	68	**Miscellaneous** -Mutual respect between Students and Staff.	68

Table 5.22

In summary the outcomes of the T-Tests as shown in Table 5.22 are as follows ;

a) Lecturer to Undergraduate - 19 significant differences 14 of which match those of the 16 found in the overall Lecturer to All Students T-Test, 4 are common to both the Undergraduate and Graduate groups, and 1 is specific to the Undergraduate group.

The 1 question which indicated a difference of Importance of means which is specific to the Lecturer to Undergraduate test and its area within the questionnaire being;

Question 9 - Student Recruitment - University offers opportunity for social contact.

b) Lecturer to Graduate - 28 significant differences 13 of which match those of the 16 found in the overall Lecturer to All Students T-Test, 4 are common to both the Graduate and Undergraduate groups, and 11 are specific to the Graduate group.

The 11 questions indicating a difference of Importance of means which are specific to the Lecturer to Graduate test and their areas within the questionnaire are;

Question 31 - Teaching style - effective communication between staff and students.

Questions 48, 50, 57, 60, 61, 62, & 63 - Tangibles - Various

Question 64 - Miscellaneous - Identity with University.

Questions 66, & 67 - Miscellaneous - Respect for the person.

c) Lecturer to Undergraduate & Graduate - In addition to the foregoing there were 4 questions having a combined commonality of significant difference of T-Test results between the Lecturer and both Undergraduates and Graduates which do not appear in the Lecturer to All Students T-Test findings these questions being ;

Question 14 - Induction - Information available on notice-boards.

Questions 51, 52, & 59 - Tangibles - Various

The examination of the Importance / Satisfaction / Gap differences of means however shows that for the Undergraduate Students there are 17 questions which fall within the > 1 definition of cause for concern and for the Graduates there are 11. Two of the shared and none of the individual Undergraduate nor Graduate T-Test findings fall within the their respective > 1 Gap hierarchies so probably fall within the 'nice to know but requiring no immediate action' area. However within the shared T-Test findings previously referred to there are two questions whose results within the Undergraduate and Graduate / Lecturer findings which should warrant further investigation those question being;

Questions 51 - Tangibles Computers - An acceptable level of availability of computer equipment and laboratories.

The results of the Undergraduate Importance / Satisfaction / Gap analysis shows that this is the number one cause of discontent the Gap registering a score of 1.4. but within the Graduates the question only warrants a position of 49th in its Importance / Satisfaction /

Gap hierarchy with a score of 0.34. Within the Lecturer's Importance hierarchy this question only warrants a position of number 40 of the 69 questions asked.

Question 52 - Tangibles Computers -An acceptable level of quality of computer equipment provided.

The results of the Undergraduate Importance / Satisfaction / Gap analysis shows that this is the number 5 cause of discontent the Gap registering a score of 1.2. but within the Graduates the question only warrants a position of 52nd with a score of 0.30 in its Importance / Satisfaction / Gap hierarchy. Within the Lecturer's Importance hierarchy this question only warrants a position of number 27 of the 69 questions asked.

The most likely cause of the foregoing dissatisfaction is that the majority of Undergraduates do not have access to computer equipment outside the University and are therefore in a 'sharing' situation whilst Graduates usually do have personal access either at work or in the home.

The high incidence of Lecturer to Graduate T-Test differences within the area of Tangibles as shown in Table 5.22, although not falling into the > 1 category, can be explained by the low Importance ratings given to this area by the Graduate Students resulting in the T-Test findings. To quote a Part-time Graduate Student in one focus group, "Other than the library and sometimes the computer labs. the rest of the facilities are closed by the time we wish to use them so they are really not that important to us. We just make do".

It is interesting to note that within the Graduate grouping there are certain areas in this group's requirement which the University might consider examining in the design of its services as the measured level of Student Satisfaction is greater than their expectations of Importance as can be seen from the Importance / Satisfaction / Gap calculations shown in Table 5.23. Perhaps a 'Catch 22' situation given the comments in the previous paragraph more appropriate opening hours leading to greater usage, to greater Importance, to greater Satisfaction, etc. The Table further illustrates the difficulties which a provider encounters when designing a service to meet the diverse requirements of all of its customers.

Graduate Students Importance / Satisfaction / Gap Hierarchies Resulting in Negative Gap Outcomes

Question	'Area	Import	Satis	Gap	Posn
7	**Student Recruitment** - The standard of the entry qualifications for the course.	3.42	3.46	-0.04	63
8	**Student Recruitment** - The University is situated in a cosmopolitan area.	1.6	3.44	-1.84	70
9	**Student Recruitment** - The University offers the opportunity for improved social contact.	3.14	3.20	-0.06	64
49	**Tangibles** - An acceptable standard of laboratory equipment available.	2.98	3.40	-0.42	69
59	**Tangibles** - Recreation facilities.	2.96	3.09	-0.13	66
60	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities.	2.83	2.98	-0.15	67
61	**Tangibles** - Sports facilities with opening times which are compatible with Student's needs.	2.77	2.95	-0.18	68
63	**Tangibles** - Refectories which provide a balanced range of food.	3.07	3.15	-0.08	65

Table 5.23

On the basis of the outcomes of the T-Test of means of Importance as presented in Table 5.22 there is evidence that the hypothesis that, 'Undergraduate and Graduate Student Groups will demonstrate differing areas of Importance within an educational experience compared those of the Lecturing Staff', can be accepted.

A similar exercise to that carried out with the Lecturers to Undergraduates and Graduates using the Case Study data set for Senior Managers to Undergraduates and Graduates revealed no new information to that which had not previously been found whilst testing Hypothesis II

Lecturers Values Relationships with each Year of an Undergraduate Learning Programme.

Accepting that Hypothesis VII is true then if follows that if there are differences between Lecturers and Undergraduates and Graduates there must also be differences between quality value systems of the Lecturers and Students in each year of their programme of learning.
Following the rationale which necessitated the testing of Hypothesis VII to facilitate the design of learning programmes there is a requirement for the differences in value systems between the Lecturing Staff and Students during different years of learning programmes to be examined.
Undergraduates were chosen as the test population as most Graduate programmes consist of only one or two years which would produce an imbalance of data.. The Lecture / Student relationship was used to test the hypothesis in the light of Hypothesis II findings which indicated that this relationship was mostly in line with the overall main Hypothesis I ANOVA test findings of the three main stakeholders within the learning experience namely the Students, Lecturers, and Senior Management of the University Business School.
To establish if differences exist which may require further investigation the following Hypothesis was tested using T-Tests of significant differences of means of Importance.

5.8.5.7 Hypothesis VIII

Hypothesis VIII : Students will display different levels of Importance within areas of an educational experience dependent on their year of study.

T-Tests of significant differences of means using the Case Study data set of Importance of aggregated means were carried out between Lecturers and Years 1 to 4 of the Full-time Undergraduate Students to determine if significant differences in quality values existed between the Lecturers and the Students dependent upon the Year of the learning programme currently being undertaken.
Table 5.24 shows those questions by number within the questionnaire where significant differences of Importance of means between the Lecturers and the Individual Student Years 1 to 4 of the Undergraduates' Learning Programmes were found and for comparison purposes those questions by number which have significant differences in the Lecturer to Undergraduate T-Test as shown in Table 5.22. The aggregated mean of Importance for the

Lecturers and the Undergraduate Students in each Year are shown as a gauge of the differences of Importance each places upon the sentiment within the question.

Coloured backgrounds are used only as an aid to identity those additional questions found as being significant within a Year as compared to the Lecturer / Undergraduate Students T-Tests findings of Hypothesis III.

The results of the Table 5.24's findings are summarised at the end of the Table.

T-Test Findings Lecturer to Student Years 1 to 4 of Learning Programmes , & Lecturer to All Undergraduate Students.

	Lecturers / Students Year 1		Lecturers / Students Year 2		Lecturers / Students Year 3		Lecturers / Students Year 4		Lects / All U / grads
Quest	**Lects**	**Yr 1**	**Lects**	**Yr 2**	**Lects**	**Yr 3**	**Lects**	**Yr 4**	
1							4.16	4.43	
2					4.39	4.11			
3	4.39	4.05	4.39	4.02	4.39	3.95	4.39	3.93	X
4					3.77	3.43	3.77	3.42	
6	4.14	4.55	4.14	4.54			4.14	4.62	X
7					4.03	3.52	4.03	3.56	X
8	2.48	3.72	2.48	3.77	2.48	2.96	2.48	3.43	X
9	3.48	3.96	3.48	3.91					
12					4.25	3.91			
14					3.63	4.02	3.63	3.94	X
15	3.77	4.08							
18a	4.81	4.57	4.81	4.6	4.81	4.36	4.81	4.5	X
18b	4.92	4.57	4.92	4.65	4.92	4.52	4.92	4.5	X
18c	4.88	4.27	4.88	4.25	4.88	4.13	4.88	4.04	X
22	3.9	4.24					3.9	4.22	X
24			4.09	4.4					
28	4.58	4.3	4.58	4.16	4.58	3.98	4.58	4.13	X
30	3.66	4.14	3.66	4.05	3.66	4.09	3.66	3.99	X
34							4.5	4.28	X
36			4.06	4.41			4.06	4.35	X
40					4.39	4.04			
42	2.49	3.59	2.49	3.85	2.49	3.41	2.49	3.65	X
43	3.22	4.16	3.22	4.16	3.22	4.02	3.22	4.16	X
44					4.28	4.02			
48					4.02	3.45			
49					4.05	3.11			
51	4.19	4.53	4.19	4.56	4.19	4.63			X
52					4.29	4.66			X
55					4.42	4.66			
56					4.33	4.71			
59	3.43	3.92	3.43	3.94			3.43	3.87	X
60	3.33	3.77					3.33	3.79	
61							3.41	3.84	
64					3.98	3.39	3.98	3.72	
65			3.75	4.05					
67	4.47	4.2							
68	4.61	4.36			4.61	4.36	4.61	4.31	X

Table 5.24

The respective positions within the aggregated mean of Importance hierarchies for the Lecturers and the Undergraduate Students in each Year are shown in Table 5.25 as a further indication of the differences of Importance each party places upon the content of the questions found by the T-Tests.

Questions Found by the T-Test Significant Differences Between Lecturers and Undergraduate Students Years 1 to 4 Aggregated Importance Mean Hierarchies Positions

Quest	Importance Area	Lect Posn	Yr 1 Posn	Lect Posn	Yr 2 Posn	Lect Posn	Yr 3 Posn	Lect Posn	Yr 4 Posn
1	**Course design** -Vocational topics which improve career							43	16
2	**Course design -** Transferable knowledge skills.					19	34		
4	**Course design -** Class team working.					54	64	57	70
9	**Student Recruitment -** University offers opportunity for social contact.	62	59	62	62				
12	**Induction information -** personal study time requirement.					50	56		
15	**Induction -** Information on how fees would be paid.	58	55						
24	**Teaching style -** Develops students personal skills.			46	21				
40	**Assessment / Award -** Qualification is value for money.					21	42		
44	**Course Content** - A challenging academic content.					40	44		

48	**Tangibles -** Standard of audiovisual equipment.					**17**	**36**		
49	**Tangibles -** Standard of laboratory equipment.					**51**	**69**		
55	**Tangibles -** library opening hours.					**18**	**3**		
56	**Tangibles -** library location and content.					**45**	**1**		
60	**Tangibles -** Sports facilities.	**66**	**60**					**66**	**61**
61	**Tangibles -** Sports facilities opening times.							**65**	**60**
64	**Miscellaneous -** Identity with the University.					**54**	**66**	**54**	**64**
65	**Miscellaneous -** Identity with Business School			**59**	**69**				
67	**Miscellaneous -** An emphasis on treating students as an individual.	**16**	**40**						

Table 5.25

As a result of the T-Tests between the Lecturers and the Undergraduate Students in Years 1 to 4 of each Year of their learning programme a total of 37 questions were found which had a significant difference of Importance of means. These being either specific to one particular Year or shared between certain Years of the programme.

However as can be seen from Table 5.25 the aggregated means positions of Importance for almost all of the questions under discussion were of a lowly status within each Lecturer and Student Year and as such would as previously described fall within the nice to know category but for no immediate action. Such an approach, if taken, would, as found in Hypothesis IV, miss the cumulative influence of an increase in the T-Test differences results indicative of a shift in emphasis from the hard tangible aspects of a learning programme to the softer teaching aspects in the later years of a learning programme which may require specific changes to the design of that programme to accommodate Student requirements.

The individual Year's findings were as follows;

a) Lecturer to 1st. Year Undergraduate - 18 significant differences 14 of which match those of the 19 found in the overall Lecturer to Undergraduate Students T-Test.

There were 4 questions which indicated a significant difference of Importance of means specific to the 1st Year. Undergraduate group these being ;

Question 9 - Student Recruitment - University offers opportunity for social contact.

Question 15 - Induction - Information on how fees would be paid.

Question 60 - Tangibles - Sports facilities

Question 67 - Miscellaneous - An emphasis on treating students as an individual.

Question 9 also appearing in the 2nd Year's list of significant difference of Importance of means.

None of the questions found are within the Gap of 31 which the 1st. Year Undergraduate grouping have indicated as having a significant Importance / Satisfaction Gap of > 1.

b) Lecturer to 2nd. Year Undergraduate - 16 significant differences 13 of which match those of the 19 found in the overall Lecturer to Undergraduate Students T-Test.

There were 3 questions which indicated a significant difference of Importance of means specific to the 2nd. Year Undergraduate group these being ;

Question 9 - Student Recruitment - University offers opportunity for social contact.

Question 24 - Teaching style - Develops students personal skills

Question 65 - Miscellaneous - Identity with Business School

Question 9 also appearing in the 1st Year's list of significant difference of Importance of means.

None of these are within the 26 Gaps which the 2nd. Year Undergraduate grouping have indicated as having a significant Importance / Satisfaction Gap of > 1.

c) Lecturer to 3rd. Year Undergraduate - 24 significant differences 14 of which match those of the 19 found in the overall Lecturer to Undergraduate Students T-Test

There were 10 questions which indicated a significant difference of Importance of means specific to the 3rd. Year Undergraduate group these being ;

Question 2 - Course design - Transferable knowledge skills.

Question 4 - Course design - Class team working.

Question 12 - Induction information - personal study time requirement.

Question 40 - Assessment / Award - Qualification is value for money.

Question 44 - Course Content - A challenging academic content.

Question 48 - Tangibles - Standard of audiovisual equipment.

Question 49 - Tangibles - Standard of laboratory equipment.

Question 55 - Tangibles - library opening hours.

Question 56 - Tangibles - library location and content.

Question 64 - Miscellaneous - Identity with the University.

Questions 4, and 64 also appearing in the 4th Year's list of significant difference of Importance of means.

None of these are within the 11 Gaps which the 3rd. Year Undergraduate grouping have indicated as having a significant Importance / Satisfaction Gap of > 1.

d) Lecturer to 4th. Year Undergraduate - 22 significant differences 17 of which match those of the 19 found in the overall Lecturer to Undergraduate Students T-Test

There were 5 questions which indicated a significant difference of Importance of means specific to the 4th. Year Undergraduate group these being;

Question 1 Course design -Vocational topics which improve career.

Question 4 - Course design - Class team working.

Question 60 - Tangibles - Sports facilities

Question 61 - Tangibles - Sports facilities opening times.

Question 64 - Miscellaneous - Identity with the University.

Questions 4, and 64 also appear in the 3rd Year's list of significant difference of Importance of means. Question 60 also appears in the 1st Year's list of significant difference of Importance of means.

None of these are within the 18 Gaps which the 4th. Year Undergraduate grouping have indicated as having a significant Importance / Satisfaction Gap of > 1.

The overall findings were that there were 18 questions which at some stage within the Years of the learning programme indicated a significant difference of means of Importance between the Lecturers and Undergraduate Years. However none of the questions found fell within the Student Years Importance / Satisfaction Gap significance of > 1 and accordingly would probably fall within the 'nice to know but requiring no further action' area.

On the basis of the evidence of the T-Test of means of Importance shown in Table 5.24 between the Lecturers and the Undergraduate Students in Years 1 to 4 of their learning programme that additional significant differences of Importance to those already highlighted by previous Case Study data analyses of this research's Case Study data have been found. It is argued therefore that the hypothesis that, 'Students will display different levels of Importance within areas of an educational experience dependent on their year of study', can be accepted.

5.9 Administration Staff Focus Group

On the advise of Senior Management in the Business School a focus group from the customer facing Business School Administration Staff was conducted to try to relate their quality values in terms of the learning experience to those of the three main stakeholders already interviewed. The purpose for this focus group being to get an expanded picture of the quality values within the Business School.

The group consisted of seven staff holding different administrative positions and from different divisions within the Business School.

The format of the focus group interview followed those as previously described in this thesis, i.e. facilitator lead using semi-structured, open ended conversational type questions. At the end of the interview the participants were asked to complete one of the Case Study Manager's questionnaires.

The interview was tape recorded as with previous focus group interviews and a transcript of the tape made to determine if any further quality determinants had been missed from the questionnaire's content. The analysis of the recording, using thematic analysis methodology as previously described, indicated that there were no new determinants which should have been included in the questionnaire.

From the completed questionnaires the aggregated means of Importance is shown in Appendix 3a

Analysis of the questionnaires findings indicated that within the top 18 Administration Importance values the following 7 questions indicated a level of non-congruence of values between the Administration staff and any of the other three stakeholders in the research findings. The content of the questions and their positions within the Administrator's hierarchy of means of Importance was as follows;

Question 1 :- Vocational topics which enhance your career development. Position 11

Question 2 :- Transferable knowledge skills. Position 1

Question 11 :- Induction information was relevant to you. Position 2

Question 7 :- The standard of entry qualification is adequate for the course. Position 13

Question 16 :- That there was sufficient information regarding your programme of study prior to joining the University. Position 12

Question 46 :- Modular feedback gathered by the University is acted upon. Position 17

Question 47 :- Course feedback gathered by the University is acted upon. Position 8

A correlationship between questions 11, 16, 46, and 47 and the work carried out by the Administration staff can be seen, staff preparing information for student matriculation and preparing modular and course Student feedback data. However the other three questions having a high degree of Importance appeared to be individual to the Administration Staff. To test if this had an influence on the significant differences of means on the previous research findings of the three main stakeholder groups in the learning experience an ANOVA test of significant differences of means which included all four parties, i.e. the Students, the Lecturers, the Senior Managers, and the Administration Staff, was carried out. The results from this test indicated that there were no new significant differences of means of Importance between the parties.

From all of the foregoing there is evidence that the Administration Staff share 61% of their Core Values with at least one of the three main stakeholders in the learning experience. However the fact that 39% of Administrator's Core Values are not shared leads to the conclusion that further research needs to be carried out across a wider population of the Administration Staff in order to establish the causal effects of this situation.

5.10 Summary of the Hypotheses Research Findings

The outcomes of the eight hypotheses considered in this thesis are shown in Table 5.26

Hypothesis	Findings
Hypothesis I : Levels of customer (All Students) satisfaction are directly related to the congruence of the value systems of the stakeholders (All Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers) within a service consumption.	The findings were that on this occasion that the hypothesis is rejected. Congruence of values having no influence upon levels of satisfaction.
Hypothesis II : Within an educational experience one group of stakeholders will display fewer shared values with other stakeholders.	The findings were that on this occasion that the hypothesis can be accepted. The student body having a greater influence than any of the other main stakeholders
Hypothesis III : Within an educational experience two groups of stakeholders will display fewer shared values with other stakeholders.	The findings were that on this occasion that the hypothesis can be accepted. The students and lecturers having a greater influence than any of the other main stakeholders.
Hypothesis IV: Students' education quality values systems remain unchanged over the period of their learning experience.	The findings were that on this occasion that the hypothesis is rejected. Student value systems change over the period of their education programme.
Hypothesis V : Student's perception of education quality value systems are influenced by the type of learning programme which they undertake.	The findings were that on this occasion that the hypothesis can be accepted. Part-time and Full-time students having significant differences within their value systems.
Hypothesis VI : Student's value systems are influenced by their experiences within the working environment.	The findings were that on this occasion that the hypothesis can be accepted. Graduate and Undergraduate students having significant differences within their value systems.
Hypothesis VII : Undergraduate and Graduate Student Groups will demonstrate differing areas of Importance within an educational experience compared those of the Lecturing Staff.	The findings were that on this occasion that the hypothesis can be accepted. Graduate and Undergraduate students having significant differences within their value systems in comparison to Lecturing Staff.
Hypothesis VIII: Students will display different levels of Importance within areas of an educational experience dependent on their year of study.	The findings were that on this occasion that the hypothesis can be accepted. Students having significant differences within their value systems each year of their programme in comparison to Lecturing

Table 5.26

5.10.1 Summary of the Chosen Research Methodology

The research methodology used in testing the main hypothesis of this thesis was the most effective given the constraints of time and resources in meeting the research aims as stated at the beginning of this chapter. The main strength of the methodology was that it allowed for the triangulation of results through the use of qualitative data obtained from focus group interviews of a representative sample of a University Business School population, and quantitative data obtained from a questionnaire sample of a larger population of the University Business School.

The surveying of a larger population suggests that the results are generalisable to University Business Schools out with the survey. From the research results a Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education was developed as an aid to the evaluation of programmes of learning in relation to Students, Lecturing Staff, and Senior Management which is sufficiently reliable to be of use in the theoretical understanding of the area of study.

A summary of the different aspects of the research methodology adopted and the experiences gained in their usage is as follows;

a) The Case Study

Without the full cooperation of the population of the Napier University Business School this study could not have taken place. A somewhat obvious statement however to achieve this cooperation considerable time was spent explaining the purpose of the research and in seeking the participation of as many of that population as possible. University populations tend to be asked to participate in research projects on a regular basis, witness the comments made by staff during the distribution of the Case Study questionnaires, and it was found that only by fully explaining the nature of a research project on a face to face basis was the necessary cooperation forthcoming.

b) Focus Group Interviews

The use of a large number of focus groups drawn from different Student Years, with differing learning methods, and containing Students who had a variety of qualifications prior to enrolling in the Business School and a group of Lecturing Staff from different departments within the Business School overcame any criticism levied at focus group practices as being unrepresentative and of being "no more than comfort mechanisms for decision makers", Tuck (1976).

The use of a qualified facilitator to a large extent overcame the criticism of research bias by ensuring that the outcomes of the interviews reflected the views of all of the participants as far as possible.

CIT meant that the group moved forward at an early stage with a single focus on the objective of the meeting to establish their determinants of quality within a learning experience.

The analysis of the qualitative data using the triangulation testing of words, events, dates and times, or concepts describing possible educational experiences, expectations, values, and practices using the thematic methodology of numbering, summarising, indexing, and then aggregating the data to produce a comprehensive list of values and their frequency of use although extremely time consuming proved to be invaluable in developing a Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education. The use of this methodology also provided the research team with a unique insight into the thought processes of a sample of the participants involved within a learning experience.

c) The Questionnaire

The wording and sentiment of the questionnaire used was trialled using Students and Lecturing staff prior to distribution to a wider population to eliminate any ambiguities. However even with these trials a few reported ambiguities and question format errors occurred which would indicate that no questionnaire can ever be perfect since it contains an element, no matter how small, of researcher bias.

The return of completed questionnaires was improved greatly by :

a) Allowing participants to complete the questionnaire in 'working' time.

b) Distributing the questionnaires on a face to face basis with the added bonus of being able to express thanks for participants cooperation.

d) The Data Set Analysis

a) SPSS - the computer package used was, after some initial personal hiccups, simple to use and provided the researcher with a wide number of test facilities.

b) Pattern Matching - was used successfully by using different areas within the data set information to show congruence and non-congruence of quality values between Students, Lecturers, and Senior Managers during aspects of a learning programme which would otherwise have gone undetected.

In summary the methodologies used in this research proved to be both valid and reliable involving the researcher in a hands on approach to data gathering and analysis. Such an approach leading to a greater understanding of the problems currently faced and projected into the future by the main stakeholders in a learning programme.

Chapter 6

Conclusions and Discussion

Like many research studies the investigation for this thesis has raised more questions than answers. This however should not be seen as a weakness for as Einstein remarked.

"The formulation of a problem is far more essential than the solution".

6.0 Introduction

The research set out with the specific aim of establishing the linkage, if any, between the levels of satisfaction of the customer and the degree of congruence of the quality values as held by that customer and those as held by the other main stakeholders within a service transaction. Specifically the research examined the congruity of the quality values as held by three parties within a higher education multi-party service situation. The degree of congruity being hypothesised as a measure of the degree to which the service can be seen as being, in the holistic sense, a quality service.

The research of this aim was carried out in the Business School of the Napier University Edinburgh. It was hypothesised that, 'Levels of customer (All Students) satisfaction are directly related to the congruence of the value systems of the main stakeholders (All Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers) within a service consumption'.

The objectives of the research were stated as :-

1) To understand the diversity of values systems within the realms of education practices.

2) To investigate the values adopted by each of the stakeholders involved within a programme of education.

3) To establish which values are important in ensuring a successful education programme.

4) To determine the levels of congruence between the values as demonstrated by each of the stakeholders within the education experience.

5) To identify value aspects as either "core" or "peripheral" since this will determine the degree of congruence within the existing education programmes and facilitate any change management programmes deemed necessary to ensure customer, i.e. stakeholder, satisfaction.

In the main, as will be discussed, these aims and objectives have been achieved by the use of the various methodologies as described within the body of the thesis. The outcomes from their use within the terms of the research culminating in the development of a framework for the measurement of quality in higher education.

Throughout the literature research contained within this thesis the role which quality values play within the sequence of the holistic world view of Culture, to the Values, Quality, Service, and finally as a specific to Education as a Service has been discussed. Numerous arguments have been promulgated throughout the foregoing sequence on how a greater understanding on the part of the stakeholders of the roles which values play would minimise the problems encountered with the levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the customer. From these assertions and the Case Study findings the main conclusions to be drawn on the validity and generalisability of the framework for measuring quality values in the field of higher education and on the research of multi-party service transactions are summarised below.

The summary is followed by a detailed discussion of the findings and of their reliability and validity. The thesis concludes with a discussion on how these findings influence the present state of knowledge, what has been established, and what remains unclear. Recommendations and areas for future research are suggested.

The main conclusions are that :-

- The framework developed for the measurement of quality in higher education was reliable and with local modification generalisable.

- The hypothesis proposed in this study is not supported by the empirical findings and theoretical reasoning. The results of non-congruence of quality values as held by the three main stakeholders within the educational experience, i.e. the Students, the Lecturing Staff, and the Senior Management, having no influence upon the levels of satisfaction of the Students as the customers of the education service offered.
  A test of the levels of congruence between the values as demonstrated by each of the stakeholders within the education experience being an objective of the research undertaken.

- Core and peripheral quality values have been identified for each of the main stakeholders within a University learning experience. This was an aim and objective of the research undertaken.

- Significant differences exist in the expectations of, or Importance placed upon, certain aspects of a University learning programme by the identified subculture groupings of the customers of that programme, i.e. the Student population, at varying stages or types of learning throughout their programmes indicative of the dynamic nature of an individual and groups' quality value system.

- Significant differences exist between the Lecturing Staff and the Senior Management. particularly in regard to their core value levels of commitment to a course of learning on the part of the University and of the Students.

- The role of the Senior Management within a University learning programme appears to have little influence upon the satisfaction / dissatisfaction level of a Student's learning experience.

- The Student transformation process can be seen within the Case Study data set when certain aspect of the Univesrity learning experience change over the Years and Types of Student study.

- The results of the analysis of the Case Study data set has clearly indicated the complexity and diversity of the participants' quality value systems in operation within a University learning experience. This was one of the aims and objectives of the research undertaken.

6.1 Discussion of Results

One of the main aims of this research was the development and reliability testing of a framework for the measurement of quality in higher education. The use of the framework adopted and adapted to meet the requirements of piloted questionnaire outcomes has shown, by the issues raised within the framework's structure and the quality and quantity of the respondent's answers to the questionnaire developed from the framework, to be reliable.

The make-up of the populations sampled has enabled conclusions to be drawn on the validity of the Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education throughout the Napier University and to some extent when factors such as cross cultural values, demographic considerations, questionnaire's wording, etc., are taken into account as the basis for the further examination of stakeholder value systems within the education experience in the U K and internationally. It is however accepted that the data collected and analysed was taken from one source, i.e. the Business School of the Napier University of Edinburgh, and that comparison with other Universities and their Departments outwith this sample population would have provided data having a greater degree of validity of results found.

An examination of the aggregated means of the Importance of the three parties within the scope of the Case Study gave an indication by their responses to the questionnaire content of their core and peripheral quality values in relation to a learning programme. Whilst two of the parties, the Students and the Lecturers, shared many of the values as shown by their respective hierarchies of Importance the third party's, the Senior Management, Importance hierarchy did not match that of the others to the same extent. It was felt initially that this phenomenon would have little or no influence upon the outcome of the hypothesis under test. The result from the examination of the main thesis as previously stated was rejected. This conclusion was reached by using pattern matching of those questions where the degree of non-congruence of the three stakeholder's means of Importance was significant, as found by an ANOVA test, with those of the hierarchical aggregated means of the Student Importance / Satisfaction Gap. Questions as to the validity and reliability of Case Study data set following the results of the hypothesis test proved to be unfounded.

To investigate the possible reasons for the outcome of the main hypothesis findings and to examine certain themes thrown up by the Case Study questionnaire findings a series of hypotheses were tested using the data set as produced by the questionnaire.

The analysis of these hypotheses has raised issues and focused thoughts on the possible explanation for the rejection of the main hypothesis. The results and conclusions drawn from the seven hypotheses tested as summarised in Table 5.26 were as follows;

Hypothesis II identified that one group, the Students, within the stakeholder groups had a greater number of non congruent values than either of the other two.

Having established this factor Hypothesis III tested the quality value relationships between the Students and the Lecturers, the Students the Senior Managers, and the Lecturers and Senior Managers to establish if a greater level of non-shared quality values existed between one of the groups tested. This test showed that a greater level of non-shared quality values existed between the Students and the Lecturers. The role of Senior Management within the learning programme seeming to have little influence upon levels of Importance or Satisfaction of the Students which could be liken to the experiences of other service industries where the managers are remote and therefore the customer satisfaction and interaction elements are brought about by the front facing staff.

Using the Student / Lecturer pairing Hypotheses IV, V, VI, VII, VIII tested the various sub-cultural divisions, as discussed in the Culture and Values Section 2.5 of this thesis, of the Student population, i.e. the Undergraduate Students as a whole and Year on Year 1st to 4th Years, the Graduates Students, Full-time Students, and Part-time Students either between these groupings or between each of these groupings and the Lecturing Staff to establish the levels of non-congruence of the pairings.

The following hypotheses' outcomes indicated that;

Hypothesis IV: Tested if student quality values remained unchanged over the period of their learning programme and found that this was not the case priorities changing most noticeably in the later years of their programme with the advent of the Student going out into the work environment.

Hypothesis V: Tested what influences, if any, Part-time or Full-time type of learning had upon a Student's value system. It was found that priorities, particularly in relation to the usage of tangible facilities differed between the two groups.

Hypothesis VI : Testing found that Student's value systems are influenced by their experiences within the working environment.

Hypothesis VII : Testing found that the division of the Student population into Undergraduate and Graduate populations will identify specific areas of significant differences of Importance between those populations and those of the Lecturing Staff.

Hypothesis VIII : Testing found that the division of the Student population into their Years of a learning programme will identify specific areas of significant differences of Importance dependent on their year of study.

There is evidence within the hypotheses outcomes of the 'doing something to' element of the educational experience transformation process. Student's "learned" quality values being seen to change over the period of their learning programme or by their experience of the service being provided, e.g. social contact is only a value issue in Years 1 and 2 disappearing in Years 3 and 4 when Students are approaching the work environment for a similar reason the amount of personal time needed to complete the course of learning is a value issue for Years 3 and 4 but not for Years 1 and 2, Part-time Students focus upon the values associated with the teaching processes whilst Full-time Students focus upon the support mechanisms such as the library service. Other examples of the transformation process can be seen in the test findings of Hypothesis II to VII within the Data Analysis and Results Section of this thesis.

The foregoing Hypotheses findings adds to the overall conclusion that the dynamics of value systems change are ongoing making the design and management of service provision in such an environment extremely difficult. The diversification of the Student population into the various groupings, each with their own values system, as shown in the Hypotheses testing can be seen as representing subcultures, as discussed in 2.5 of the Culture and Values Section of this thesis. The action of these subculture groupings could be the reason for the outcomes as found when testing Hypothesis I, the main research Hypothesis.

Given the acceptance of ongoing change the following conclusions have been made with regard the design and management of the provision of learning programmes within the Business School of the Napier University. The conclusions have been reached as a result of the Case Study findings being tested against the Oakland (1997) and Gronroos (1990) models of six Service attributes / determinants of service design.

6.1.1 The Oakland Model

1) Labour intensity - the ratio of labour costs incurred to the value of plant and equipment used (people versus equipment-based services).

Whilst the overall ANOVA findings did not reveal a problem with the size of classes and therefore the Staff : Student ratio significant differences did exist between the requirements of the Students in relation to the Lecturer's teaching style, i.e. the customer contact point, in the first year of a learning programme. However after the initial shock of the style of learning expected of Students there would appear to be an acceptance of the Staff : Student ratio by the Students in the later more self reliant years of their programme.

As with other elements of the learning programme there is evidence within the research that the transition from School Pupil to Student is not particularly well handled in terms of the understanding of the expectations, and therefore the value systems, of both the University as provider and of the Student as customer prior to embarking on a learning programme. This issue being discussed within the Culture and Value Expectations Section of this thesis reference Vroom (1964) and McElwee and Redman (1993).

It is conclude therefore that within the current learning programme design process there is a requirement that matriculation and acceptance of places into the University environment to be reassessed. As Soutar and McNeil (1996) found, "Student's first contact with the university is at the time of enrolment, it is imperative that attention be given to improving the quality of this experience as it may colour all subsequent interactions".

2) Contact - the proportion of time required to provide the service for which the consumer is present in the system.

Whilst the proportion of time as registered by the general acceptance of the current length of lectures appears to meet customer expectations the whole area of Tutorials and Feedback of assessments appears to require reassessment to evaluate the causes of Student dissatisfaction with current practices within the programme design and management.

As with the previous attribute problems exist within the area of matriculation with regard to information on the time expected of Students to complete their programme.

3) Interaction - the extent to which the consumer actively intervenes in the service process to change the content of the service; this includes customer participation to provide information from which needs can be assessed, and customer feedback from which satisfaction levels can be inferred.

Whilst the University actively seeks feedback on course content and all other aspects of a Student's learning experience there is little evidence, in the eyes of the Students as customers of the service, that anything is changed as a result of this feedback. The Case Study data set indicating a high level of dissatisfaction with this aspect of a learning programme.

Communication, as expounded elsewhere in this thesis, is a two way process which requires constant reappraisal of its design and management for in raising customer expectation by asking the question and then being perceived, all be it wrongly, as not answering either by action or explanation the service provider runs the risk of loosing the all important consumer trust factor required by service industries to survive and to continuously improve.

It is concluded therefore that reappraisal of communication be built into the design of all programmes as a strategic issue.

4) Customisation - which includes choice (providing one or more selections from a range of options, which can be single or fixed) and adaptation (the interaction process in which the requirement is decided, designed and delivered to match the need).

The question of teaching and self learning through Student empowerment to take control of their own education as discussed within the Service Section of this thesis is currently the subject of ongoing discussion amongst educationalists, (Ramsden, 1986; Wiggins, 1990; Roper, 1992; Harvey and Green, 1993). The findings of the research within the Case Study outcomes would indicate that this is a strategy issue for the Business School the ANOVA test having indicated significant differences of means of Importance between all three parties in the learning programme. From research discussion with Senior Management the current thinking would appear to indicate that Student empowerment would become the norm within the design of learning programmes. Should this become the situation it is concluded, from the Importance placed upon self learning and teaching by the customers and customer facing staff, that they should be more involved in the design of programmes and that, as in attribute three, communication at all levels be reappraised.

On a positive note the question of flexibility to meet student needs other than to accommodate some of those with part-time work requirements would appear to meet the Student body as a whole's requirement.

There are apparent problems within the Graduate's programmes with information and the use of certain Tangibles such as the library and the refectory as shown by the negative Gaps scores between their aggregated means of Importance and Satisfaction which fall into the area within the research of 'for future research' to establish the causes, if any, to be actioned by the programme's designers.

5) Nature of the service act - either tangible, i.e. perceptible to the touch and can be owned, or intangible, i.e. insubstantial.

The nature of service provision as an intangible has been discussed at length throughout this thesis. Education can be generalised as a person to person communication exercise having no tangibles. However tangibles are important in facilitating the transference of knowledge and as such are included in the learning programme design. The Importance which Students place upon various aspects of the tangible content of their learning programme can be seen in the results from the aggregated Importance / Satisfaction Gap findings where 6 of the 15 questions found to have Gaps > 1 were in the tangible area.

The major issues found to be of Importance and Dissatisfaction within this area were the availability of computer equipment for the Students. All three parties rated the library content, space, and location highly in their hierarchies of Importance and in addition the Students indicated dissatisfaction with the current service as offered by the library in the main due to its location being scattered across various campuses.

A new Business School at the Napier University is currently under construction and these problems should therefore be overcome a new all inclusive library being include within the new building.

6) Recipient of service - either people or things.

Commitment between all parties is perceived as the major core values problem throughout all of the facets of the learning experience.

Conclusions could be drawn form attributes previously described however ascribing the root cause of this situation would, in the opinion of the researcher, require an in depth research programme out with the aims and objectives of this research programme and therefore is included as the main item within the further research recommendations.

6.1.2 The Gronroos Model

1) Professionalism and Skills - The customers realise that the service provider, its employees, operational systems, and physical resource, have the knowledge and skills required to solve their problems in a professional way (outcome-related criteria).

The area surrounding teaching style which incorporates professional knowledge and skills covers 35% of the Case Study questionnaire content. Problems in this area only arise within the questions on the teaching style being effective and professional, independent learning (previously discussed in the Oakland attribute 4 Customisation conclusion), and with tutorial assessment reports. Neither effective and professional nor tutorial assessment are indicated as having a high Importance hierarchy rating. The conclusion therefore is a positive one assuming that the Oakland attribute 4 Customisation conclusion is acted upon.

2) Attitudes and Behaviour - The customers feel that the service employees (contact persons) are concerned about them and interested in resolving their problems in a friendly and spontaneous way.

A major issue within the Student and Senior Management Focus group issues was the treatment of Students as individuals and as adults however across the wider population of recipients of the questionnaire this did not appear to be an issue. The issue of mutual respect between Staff and Students was a high priority for Lecturers and Senior Management and the question showed a significant difference of means of Importance in the ANOVA test results. As with many other questions within the study this question raises more questions than answers. What do the Lecturers and Senior Managers mean by mutual respect is it for the person or for the status ? Is the aggregated response part of the general trend in society which no longer shows respect for authority ? The list could go on and therefore no conclusion can be drawn from this question other than to include it among those for future research.

The question of approachability within the teaching style section of the questionnaire highlighted a significant difference in means of Importance between the Lecturers and the Senior Management. Lecturers positioning approachability as number 7 in their hierarchy whilst Senior Management see it only as number 39 in their hierarchy. Evidence one could conclude of Lecturers seeing approachability as part of their value system as customer facing staff. Senior Managers may well adopt an 'open door policy' feeling that this makes them approachable however there is ample evidence in the Business Management literature that this policy has the opposite influence to that desired of making the manager perceived as being remote by expecting his / her staff to come to them rather than by showing concern by 'walking the job'.

It should be pointed out that the question of approachability does not appear to be a problem for the Student population as a whole and therefore the conclusion made in the Oakland Model attribute 3) Interaction on communication may well apply to this issue.

3) Accessibility and Flexibility - The customers feel that the service provider, its location, operating hours, employees, and operating systems, are designed and operate so that it is easy to get access to the service and so that they are prepared to adjust to the demands and wishes of the customer in a flexible way.

The conclusions drawn within the responses to questions within the questionnaire on this area of the learning experience align with the conclusion as stated in the Oakland Model attributes 4) Customisation and 5) Nature of the service act.

4) Reliability and Trustworthiness - The customers know that whatever takes place or has been agreed upon, they can rely on the service provide, its employees and systems, to keep promises and perform with the best interests of the customer at heart.

The question of module and therefore programme delivery has not been highlighted as a problem at any stage throughout the analysis of the Case Study data set findings. The conclusion must therefore be a positive one that the Business School has 'got it right'.

5) Recovery -The customers realise that whenever something goes wrong or something unpredictable unexpectedly happens the service provider will immediately and actively take actions to keep them in control of the situation and find a new acceptable solution. The conclusions drawn within the responses to questions within the questionnaire on this area of the learning experience align with the conclusion as stated in the Oakland Model attributes 3) Interaction.

6) Reputation and Credibility - The customers believe that the operations of the service provider can be trusted and gives adequate value for money, and that it stands for good performance and values which can be shared by the customers and the service provider.

The questions and conclusions drawn from their findings within the questionnaire were; Question 10; that the programme of study represents value for money does not figure anywhere within the problem areas of the research nor is it given a high priority of Importance by any of the three stakeholder groups. Anecdotal evidence from the focus group findings was that since the majority of full-time students, and therefore the majority of people responding to the questionnaire, did not pay fees that the subject content of the question was an irrelevance. There was evidence however within the Full-time Part-time analysis of Student Importance ratings that the value for money aspect of a learning programme was an issue since most Part-time Students were wholly or in part self funded.

As Hill (1995) points out, "It is a salutary note that since more and more British Students are having to make greater personal financial investments in their college / university education (via part-time jobs, student loans, etc.) they are likely to become increasingly demanding customers of the higher education service".

Further evidence of the value of dividing large populations into identifiable groupings (subcultures) to ensure that their needs do not undermine the desired organisational culture as discussed elsewhere within this thesis.

Question 40; that the Student's qualification is value for money also does not figure as a problem area nor has a high priority of Importance for the same reasons one assumes as for Question 10.

Question 41; that qualifications gained are of value represents the number 1 priority for Students number 4 for Lecturers and number 2 for Senior Managers. Unfortunately the question is also seen by the Students as being a problem area the question having an Importance / Satisfaction Gap score of 1.04 placing it at number 10 of 15 questions with a score of > 1 in the hierarchy of Gap scores for the aggregated means of responses from all Students.

The conclusion drawn from the findings of this question is that the shared values demonstrated by the priority which all stakeholders have given the question's content can only be seen as a positive factor from which to build research into the reasons for the Student's perception that the area of qualifications gained is a problem.

Given all of the foregoing it is apparent that the present design and management of learning programmes does not meet all of the requirements of the Student population all of the time. The conclusion however must be that how can it when the customer's goals and objectives keep changing, (Vroom 1964; McElwee and Redman 1993), it is therefore important for the service design, i.e. the programme of learning, to focus upon the Core values of the customer which for this research are shown in Table 5.2 whilst ensuring that the peripheral values support the core values and do not become major issues of dissatisfaction.

6.2 Research Reliability, Validity, and Generalisability

With any research project certain factors dictate that data gathered must have a cautionary warning added to any discussion into the reliability and validity of the findings of the research. It is recognised that in the case of the research conducted when testing of the hypotheses contained within this thesis the following factors could have played some role during the collection of the Case Study Data;

a) the timing of the collection being carried out, as it was, prior to a holiday period influencing recipients true feelings on the content and spirit of the questionnaire.

b) as previously stated the fact that the data was collected from the limited source of one School within the University and from only one University.

c) the limited size of the population made available for the research to be carried out.

d) it is accepted that it was impossible to totally eradicate all sources of bias on the part of the research team, those involved in the interviews, nor those who completed the questionnaire-based survey during this research. However the fact that the questionnaire survey supported the findings of the interview stage of the research and therefore the framework for measuring quality in higher education indicates that bias effects were negligible within the constraints of the aims of the research.

Causal effects for any ambiguity or question structure bias have been discussed within the content of the questionnaire section of this thesis and been shown to be minimal when tested against archival Napier University Student Satisfactory questionnaires and results. The questionnaire survey supported the findings of the focus groups and therefore the framework for the measurement of quality in higher education indicates that bias effects were negligible within the constraints of the aims of the research.

To summarise the discussion on reliability and validity the main strength of the research methodology which was adopted is that the results obtained have been validated by the process of triangulation through the use of current literature surveys, Case Study interviews and questionnaire findings, and archival data. This has enabled the levels of bias and ambiguity to be assessed and found to be within acceptable limits.

Whilst, as has been discussed elsewhere in this thesis, the use of only one School within the Napier University and of only one University to test the aims of the thesis research may influence the generalisability of the Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education the Napier University represents a typical modern University which is much the same as most other Universities in structure and culture. At the time of the research no major upheavals nor changes were happening to cause the results of the Case Study findings to be other than normative. As such the results obtained from the University can be seen as being demonstrative of those likely to be obtained from other Universities. It is therefore argued that when local factors such as cross cultural values, demographic considerations, questionnaire design, University structure, research timing, etc. that the Framework's use is generalisable as an aid to the evaluation of learning programmes in Higher Education establishments.

6.3 Recommendations and Discussion

"The truth of a theory is not at issue, since truth is subjective, but each truth must be strong enough to support the next set of questions. The real progress is not to be found in the answers but in considering the right questions". Noel Spare, (2001)

This research has contributed a comprehensive picture of multi-party congruence of quality values in the service area of higher education. The research has enabled conclusions to be made regarding the effects which two and three party quality value congruence has on customer satisfaction levels. However as with most research regarding human factors there remain some questions still outstanding on both values and quality of service in the education service as reflected in the findings of the case study element of the research conducted.

The major finding of the research undertaken was that at the time when the research was conducted the lack of congruence between the three main stakeholders within an education experience had no effect upon the levels of satisfaction of the 'customer', i.e. the Student. As the main contribution to the body of knowledge on this subject researchers in this field may wish to note this finding with regard to three party sharing of Values within an educational environment.

It was however evident from further research that the levels of Student satisfaction were affected by the levels of congruence, (sharing), of Values between the Students and the Lecturing, customer facing, Staff. It is therefore recommended that due cognisance of this factor be taken when designing Staff Development Courses, Student Charters, Programme Designs, Communication Channels, Change Programmes, Total Quality Initiatives, Customer / Community Focus in line with the Best Value Initiatives, in fact almost any issue involving the Congruence of Values within the environment of a University.

In addition to the main contribution to knowledge the findings of the research resulted in :

a) The existing literature on the congruence of Quality Values in Service industries from a variety of different sources has been synthesised.

b) The Methodology adopted throughout the research was robust and could be adopted to meet individual requirements.

c) The Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education is reliable and after adaptation to meet local requirements is generalisable as an aid to the evaluation of programmes of learning in relation to Students, Lecturing Staff, and Senior Management which is sufficiently reliable to use in the theoretical understanding of areas of study across Higher Education establishments.

6.3.1 Issues Raised by the Case Study's Findings Specific to Napier University and its Business School

1) The perception of the lack of commitment by all stakeholders to the Business School's programmes of learning.

2) The role of Senior Management within the learning programme seems to have little influence upon the Student levels of satisfaction.

3) The perception of the lack of value of the qualifications gained by Students.

4) The lack of management of communication channels within the University at all levels.

5) Student dissatisfaction with specific elements of learning programmes particular to status of Student, year of study within a learning programme, or type of learning programme.

6) The reasons for the identified differences in levels of Importance of aspects of learning programmes between the Lecturing Staff and the Students.

7) The apparent lack of mutual respect between Students and Staff at all levels.

8) The apparent differences in Value systems between the Administration Staff and the University.

6.3.2 Personal Reflections

Reflecting upon the findings of all of the hypotheses tested it is not difficult to see that the main hypothesis perhaps tried to oversimplify all of the factors within the educational experience. Involving as it does the 'people factor' each having their own quality value system and stance in the provision of the service either in groups or as individuals. As Rokeach pointed out the Trillions of values which each person calls upon at different times to evaluate a service makes the measurement of a service have nightmarish proportions.

Reflecting upon the research process like so many before me I found that the time to complete the simplest task seemed to take forever.

Focus Group Interview Questions

Critical Incident Question

Can you think of one good experience and one bad experience that you have had during your education experience to date ? Will you share it with the rest of the group ?

Group and Individual Questions

1) What do you understand as Values ?
2) What did you expect to get from your time at the University ?
3) What kind of skills did you expect to get at Napier, e.g. job prospects enhanced, etc. ?
4) What's the social life like here at the University ?
5) On reflection now was there enough information available to you during matriculation about your course and the amount of work that was entailed in completing it ?
6) Do you expect that everything will be fed to you or did you think that there should be a lot of self learning ?
7) What do you think about everybody's commitment to your course of study ?
8) What about the teaching process ? Do you expect to be lectured or do you expect to participate ?
9) Do you think that working as a team should be included in your course?
10) Do you think that lecturing staff and the programmes that they teach should be right up to date ? How do you know if they are ?
11) What do you think of class sizes too big, too small, or just about right ?
12) How approachable are the lecturers ?
13) How useful are your tutorials ?
14) How flexible is your programme meeting your particular needs ?
15) Do you think that your course is value for money and does this matter ?
16) How valuable do you think that your degree is in terms of your career prospects ?
17) What do you think of Napier's facilities such as the library, parking facilities, computers, restaurants, the classrooms, the teaching aids, etc. ?
18) Do you think that an atmosphere of mutual respect between students and staff exists within the University ?
19) What communications avenues do you have upwards and downwards ?
20) What do you think of communication within the University in general ?
21) How do you relate to the University and the Business School ?

Senior Manager

1) What do you understand as Values ?

2) What do you understand as Values in terms of the education experience ?

3) How do you rate these values in terms of importance ?

4) What values do you see coming into play in the classroom environment ?

5) What expectations do you have of a) yourself, b) your staff, c) your students.

6) In terms of these where do you see trust and respect for the individual ?

7) What do you see as the staff and students' level of involvement in the education experience ?

8) How would you communicate your thoughts on their involvement ?

9) How would you handle feedback ?

10) What values do you think that your staff bring to their jobs ?

11) What do you think that lecturers' expectations are of the University ?

12) What overall values do you see coming into play in the classroom environment ?

13) How would you measure the effectiveness of your school ?

14) What values do you see coming into play in the classroom environment ?

15) What values would you like to share with your students, staff, and fellow senior managers of the University ?

Lecturing Staff

1) What do you understand as Values ?

2) You talk of goals and measures who measures you and do you have personal goals or are they a given ?

3) What communications avenues do you have upwards and downwards ?

4) How about the teaching process itself ?

a) Is it a teaching process or is it a learning process ?

b) How do you keep the interest level up ?

c) How do you keep the attendance levels up ?

d) What is it for you that lets you achieve ?

e) What is it for you that is a teaching situation, i.e. from you down to the student without their participation ?

f) What is it for you that is a learning situation ?

5) Who is responsible for motivating the students ?

6) What do you think of the support mechanisms which aid you when you are teaching ?

7) How do you keep up to date with you subject ?

8) Do you ask students about their expectations of the course which you teach and if so what have been their responses ?

9) What do you think of the student matriculation process used by the University ?

10) What are your expectations of a) Senior Management, b) your students ?

11) What do you think about the tangibles which support your efforts to make the education experience worth while ?

12) What value do you think that the students get from attending the Business School ?

13) Do you think that there is an atmosphere of mutual respect for the individual within the Business School ?

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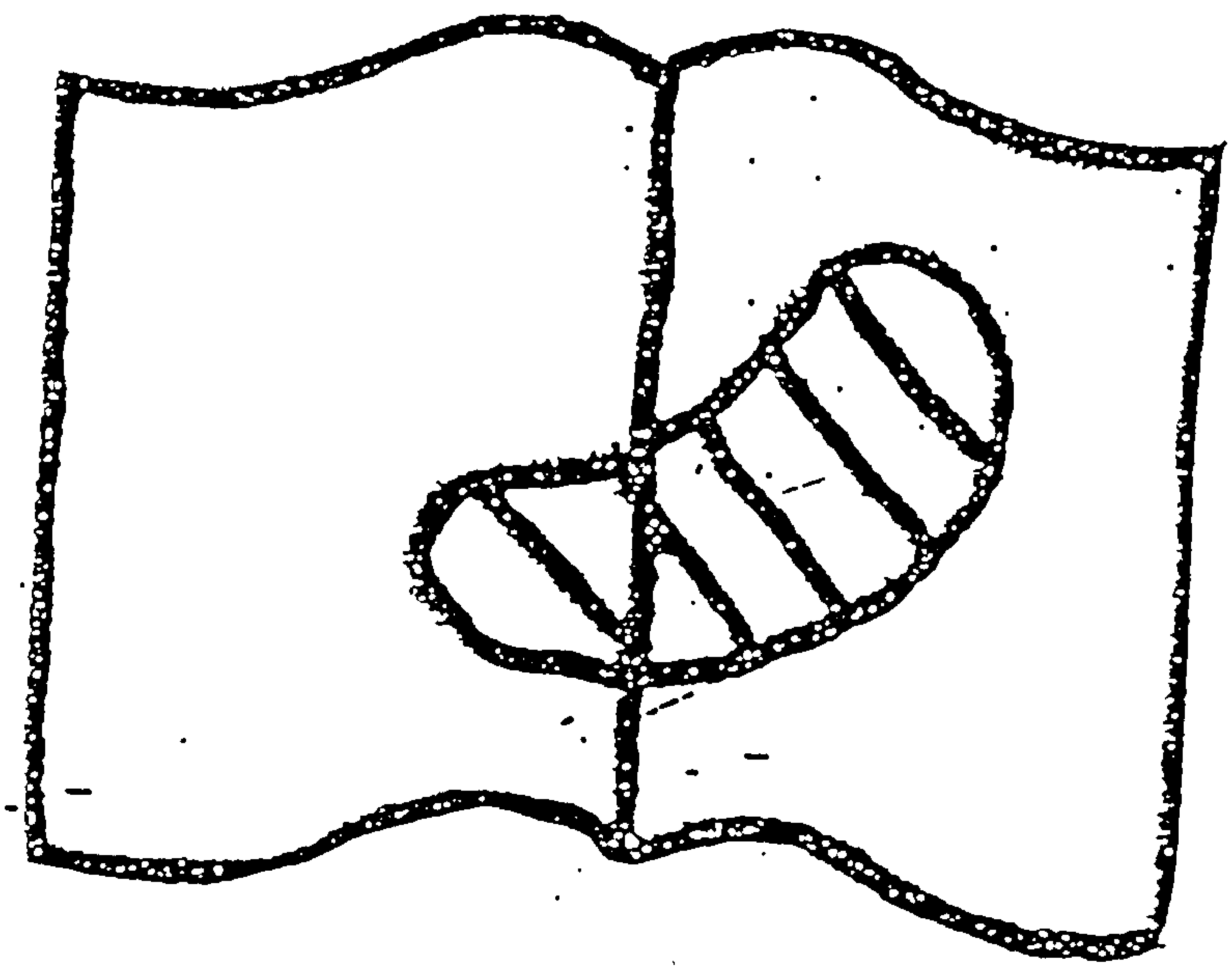

Appendix 2a

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on your expectations as a student at the University. It asks you to give an importance rating and measure of satisfaction to each of the statements. If you strongly agree with a statement or you consider it to be very important mark box 5. If you strongly disagree with a statement, or consider it to be unimportant, mark box 1. If you feel that the statement cannot be applied to your particular experience, please mark the N/A box. Please mark only one box in each case.

How important is it to you that your study programme should include:-

1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

1) Vocational topics which enhance career development ?
2) Transferable knowledge skills ?
3) A balance between teaching and self learning ?
4) Class teamworking ?
5) Skills for lifelong learning ?
6) Generally enhances your job prospects ?

very unimportant > very important | very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

How important is it to you that :-

1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

7) The standard of the entry qualification is adequate for the course ?
8) The University is situated in a cosmopolitan area ?
9) The University offers the opportunity for improved social contact ?
10) The programme of study represents value for money ?

very unimportant > very important | very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

During your induction into the University how important were the following aspects to you :-

1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

11) That all of the information provided was relevant to your needs ?
12) That there was sufficient information on what was expected of you in terms of the amont of personal study time which you would have to undertake ?
13) That there was sufficient information available on the amount of course assessment required to complete the course ?
14) That there was sufficient information available on notice-boards ?
15) That here was sufficient information available on how fees should be be paid ?
16) That there was sufficient information regarding your programme of study prior to joining the University ?
17) That there was sufficient information regarding your programme of study during Department and or programme induction sessions ? .

very unimportant > very important | very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

During the course of your programme of learning how important is it to you that :-

1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

18) There is commitment to the course by ;
a) the University ?
b) the lecturing staff ?
c) the students ?
19) That you feel that module content is relevant ?
20) That you feel that module content is up to date ?
21) Lectures are not too long ?
22) Class sizes are not too big ?
23) The teaching style effectively transfers knowledge ?
24) The teaching style effectively develops students personal skills ?
25) The teaching style is credible and persuasive ?
26) The teaching style is effective and professional ?
27) The teaching style ensures that lecturers are approachable ?
28) Teaching staff encourage independent learning ?
29) Guided reading is built into the programme of learning structure ?
30) Case studies are built into the programme of learning structure ?
31) There are arrangements in place to allow for effective communication between staff and students ?
32) Modules are generally delivered according to a pre-arranged schedule ?

very unimportant > very important | very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

How important is it to you that tutorials have :-

1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

33) Relevance to the your own learning experience ?
34) Levels of academic support ?
35) Levels of learning support material ?
36) A process for the assessment of your work ?
37) A process which allows you to confirm your subject understanding ?
38) The appropriate type of assessment e.g. exam, oral, project etc. ?
39) The appropriate timescales for feedback on assessments ?

very unimportant > very important | very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

Published Work

Telford A.R., and Masson R. (2001); Developing a Framework for Measuring Quality in Higher Education, in Integrated Management, Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on ISO 9000 and TQM, Ayr, Scotland, April 17 - 19, pp. 608 - 612.

Appendix 2b

When assessing your programme of study how important is it to you that :-

1 2 3 4 5 — very unimportant > very important

40) Your qualification is value for money ?
41) Qualifications gained are of value ?

1 2 3 4 5 N/A — very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

How important is it to you that your programme of learning has :-

1 2 3 4 5 — very unimportant > very important

42) Compatibility with any part-time work undertaken by you ?
43) Flexibility to meet an individual's requirements ?
44) A challenging academic content ?

1 2 3 4 5 N/A — very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

How important is it to you that throughout your programme of learning there is a monitoring process which uses :-

1 2 3 4 5 — very unimportant > very important

45) Two way communications between the University and the students ?
46) Modular feedback is gathered by the University and acted upon ?
47) Course feedback is gathered by the University and acted upon ?

1 2 3 4 5 N/A — very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

How important is it to you that your programme of learning has :-

1 2 3 4 5 — very unimportant > very important

48) An acceptable standard of audio-visual equipment available ?
49) An acceptable standard of laboratory equipment available ?
50) An acceptable standard of classroom ?

1 2 3 4 5 N/A — very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

How important is it to you that your programme of learning that the library has :-

1 2 3 4 5 — very unimportant > very important

51) An acceptable level of availability of computer equipment and laboratories ?
52) An acceptable level of quality of the computer equipment provided ?
53) An acceptable level of books and journals available ?
54) An acceptable level of space ?
55) Opening hours compatible with student needs ?
56) A location and content compatible with all subjects taught ?

1 2 3 4 5 N/A — very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

How important is it to you that the University provides :-

1 2 3 4 5 — very unimportant > very important

57) An acceptable level of toilets and washroom facilities available to everyone within the University ?
58) Car parking facilities ?
59) Recreation facilities ?
60) An acceptable level of sports facilities ?
61) Sports facilities with opening times which are compatible with student needs ?
62) Refectories which provide food which is value for money ?
63) Refectories which provide a balanced range of food ?

1 2 3 4 5 N/A — very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

How important is it to you that your programme of learning has :-

1 2 3 4 5 — very unimportant > very important

64) Ensured that you have an identity with the University ?
65) Ensured that you have an identity with the Business School ?
66) An emphasis on treating students as adults ?
67) An emphasis on treating students as an individual ?
68) An atmosphere of mutual respect between yourself and the University staff ?

1 2 3 4 5 N/A — very dissatisfied > > > very satisfied

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

This section has been designed to gather background on the type of teaching you do.

Subject Area :- ______________________

Type of teaching :- ______________________

Early Undergraduate	
Final Year Undergraduate	
Full Time Masters	
Part-time Masters	

When completing this questionnaire please mark only one box against each statement by inserting a dash [-] (or any other mark) in the relevant box. If you think a statement is unimportant mark box 1, if you think a statement is very important mark box 5, etc. If you think that a statement cannot be applied to your particular circumstances mark the box N/A. Thanking you in anticipation for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

How important is it to you that your study programme should include:-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
1) Vocational topics which enhance student career prospects ?						
2) Transferable skills like presentation project management, etc. ?						
3) A balance between teaching and self learning ?						
4) Class team working ?						
5) Skills for lifelong learning ?						
6) General enhancement of a student's job prospects ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

How important is it to you that :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7) The entry qualifications are adequate to underpin the course ?						
8) The University is situated in a cosmopolitan area ?						
9) The University offers the opportunity for improved social contact ?						
10) The programme of study represents value for money ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

During the induction process University how important are the following aspects :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
11) That all of the information provided is relevant to the student's needs ?						
12) There is sufficient information on what is expected of the student in terms of the amount of personal study time which will have to be undertaken ?						
13) There is sufficient information available on the amount of course assessment required to complete the course ?						
14) There is sufficient information available on notice-boards ?						
15) There is sufficient information available on how fees should be paid ?						
16) There is sufficient information regarding the content and nature of the programme of study prior to joining the University ?						
17) There is sufficient information on programmes of study during Department and or programme induction sessions ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

During the operation of a programme how important is it that :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
18) There is commitment to the course by ;						
a) the University ?						
b) the lecturing staff ?						
c) the students ?						
19) A module's content is relevant ?						
20) A module's content is up to date ?						
21) Lectures are not too long ?						
22) Class sizes are not too big ?						
23) The teaching style effectively transfers knowledge ?						
24) The teaching style effectively develops students personal skills ?						
25) The teaching style is credible and persuasive ?						
26) The teaching style is effective and professional ?						
27) The teaching style ensures that lecturers are approachable ?						
28) Teaching staff encourage independent learning ?						
29) Guided reading is built into the programme of learning structure ?						
30) Case studies are built into the programme of learning structure ?						
31) There are arrangements in place to allow for effective communication between staff and students ?						
32) Modules are generally delivered according to a prearranged schedule ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

Appendix 2d

During the course of a programme how important is it that tutorials have :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
33) Relevance to student learning experience ?						
34) Appropriate levels of academic support ?						
35) Appropriate levels of learning support material ?						
36) A process for the assessment of students' work ?						
37) A process which allows confirmation of a student's understanding of a subject ?						
38) The appropriate type of assessment e.g. exam, oral, project etc. ?						
39) Appropriate time for feedback to correct student misunderstandings ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

How important is it that :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
40) The student's qualifications are value for money ?						
41) Qualifications gained are of value ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

How important is it that a programme of learning has :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
42) Compatibility with any part-time work undertaken by students ?						
43) Flexibility to meet an individual student's requirements ?						
44) A challenging academic content ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

How important is it to you that throughout your programme of learning there is a monitoring process which uses :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
45) Two way communications between the University and the students ?						
46) Modular feedback is gathered by the University and acted upon ?						
47) Course feedback is gathered by the University and acted upon ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

How important is it that a programme of learning has :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
48) An acceptable standard of audio-visual equipment available ?						
49) An acceptable standard of laboratory equipment available ?						
50) An acceptable standard of classroom ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

How important is it that the library has :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
51) An acceptable level of availability of computer equipment and laboratories ?						
52) An acceptable level of quality of the computer equipment provided ?						
53) An acceptable level of books and journals available ?						
54) An acceptable level of space ?						
55) Opening hours compatible with student needs ?						
56) A location and content compatible with all subjects taught ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

How important is it that there is provision for :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
57) An acceptable level of toilets and washroom facilities available to everyone within the University ?						
58) Car parking facilities ?						
59) Recreation facilities ?						
60) An acceptable level of sports facilities ?						
61) Sports facilities with opening times which are compatible with student and staff needs ?						
62) Refectories which provide food which is value for money ?						
63) Refectories which provide a balanced range of food ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

How important is it that a programme of learning has :-

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
64) Ensured that students have an identity with the University ?						
65) Ensured that students have an identity with the Business School ?						
66) An emphasis on treating students as adults ?						
67) An emphasis on treating students as an individual ?						
68) An atmosphere of mutual respect between students and all of the University staff ?						

totally unimportant >>> very important

Appendix 3a

All Students / Lecturers / Senior Managers/ Administrators
Aggregated Means

Question	Important	Students Satisfaction	Gap	Lecturers Important	Managers Important	Admin Important
QU1P	4.31	3.40.	0.91	4.16	4.14	4.57
QU2P	4.32	3.47	0.85	4.39	4.14	4.86
QU3P	3.97	3.42	0.54	4.39	4.00.	4.43
QU4P	3.59	3.38	0.21	3.77	3.86	4.00.
QU5P	4.18	3.40.	0.78	4.16	4.00.	4.29
QU6P	4.47	3.50.	0.97	4.14	3.71	4.57
QU7P	3.66	3.43	0.23	4.03	3.43	4.57
QU8P	3.36	2.84	0.52	2.48	2.83	3.14
QU9P	3.68	3.15	0.53	3.48	3.57	4.14
QU10P	4.12	3.10.	1.02	4.08	3.67	4.14
QU11P	4.18	3.27	0.92	4.06	4.14	4.86
QU12P	4.09	3.34	0.75	4.25	4.00.	4.29
QU13P	4.21	3.39	0.82	4.09	4.14	4.29
QU14P	3.77	3.12	0.66	3.63	3.43	3.43
QU15P	3.87	3.16	0.71	3.77	4.14	4.00.
QU16P	4.10.	3.19	0.90.	4.23	4.29	4.86
QU17P	4.05	3.34	0.72	4.25	4.29	4.43
QU18AP	4.49	3.43	1.06	4.81	4.29	4.57
QU18BP	4.59	3.54	1.05	4.92	4.71	4.86
QU18CP	4.15	3.36	0.80.	4.88	4.29	4.14
QU19P	4.45	3.73	0.72	4.48	4.00.	4.29
QU20P	4.48	3.60.	0.88	4.56	4.29	4.71
QU21P	4.02	3.67	0.34	3.95	4.17	3.86
QU22P	4.16	3.47	0.69	3.90.	3.86	3.57
QU23P	4.44	3.46	0.97	4.25	4.14	4.43
QU24P	4.28	3.41	0.87	4.09	4.14	3.71
QU25P	4.27	3.46	0.80.	4.25	4.14	4.00.
QU26P	4.45	3.45	1.00.	4.51	4.00.	4.43
QU27P	4.44	3.53	0.91	4.53	4.00.	4.57
QU28P	4.12	3.59	0.53	4.58	4.33	4.43
QU29P	4.18	3.56	0.62	4.19	4.14	3.86
QU30P	4.06	3.57	0.48	3.66	3.43	3.29
QU31P	4.30.	3.43	0.87	4.47	4.57	4.71
QU32P	4.04	3.62	0.43	4.06	4.00.	3.71
QU33P	4.37	3.44	0.93	4.48	4.14	3.86
QU34P	4.30.	3.34	0.96	4.50.	4.29	4.14
QU35P	4.31	3.35	0.96	4.31	4.00.	4.00.
QU36P	4.33	3.41	0.92	4.06	4.33	3.57
QU37P	4.31	3.34	0.97	4.38	4.57	4.14
QU38P	4.35	3.56	0.79			
QU39P	4.37	3.11	1.26	4.50.	4.33	4.43
QU40P	4.32	3.43	0.89	4.39	3.86	4.43
QU41P	4.72	3.68	1.04	4.72	4.57	4.57
QU42P	3.66	3.50.	0.16	2.49	2.43	2.71
QU43P	4.12	3.43	0.69	3.22	3.29	3.29
QU44P	4.15	3.58	0.57	4.28	4.43	4.43
QU45P	4.26	3.13	1.13	4.31	4.29	4.71
QU46P	4.24	3.12	1.12	4.20.	4.00.	4.57
QU47P	4.25	3.16	1.09	4.27	4.14	4.71
QU48P	3.92	3.39	0.53	4.02	4.00.	3.57
QU49P	3.58	3.32	0.26	4.05	4.17	4.14
QU50P	4.04	3.34	0.70.	4.20.	4.29	4.29
QU51P	4.39	3.18	1.20.	4.19	4.14	4.43
QU52P	4.37	3.34	1.03	4.29	4.29	4.43
QU53P	4.58	3.45	1.13	4.63	4.43	4.71
QU54P	4.39	3.62	0.77	4.39	4.43	3.71
QU55P	4.53	3.62	0.91	4.42	4.29	4.57
QU56P	4.49	3.50.	0.99	4.33	4.29	4.29
QU57P	4.04	3.44	0.59	4.28	4.00.	4.00.
QU58P	3.65	2.64	1.01	3.43	2.57	3.00.
QU59P	3.69	3.04	0.65	3.43	2.29	3.29
QU60P	3.47	3.20.	0.27	3.33	2.43	3.29
QU61P	3.48	3.18	0.31	3.41	2.29	3.43
QU62P	4.01	2.95	1.06	4.20.	3.71	4.14
QU63P	3.99	2.98	1.01	4.19	3.43	4.14
QU64P	3.72	3.22	0.50.	3.98	3.71	3.57
QU65P	3.81	3.29	0.52	3.75	3.57	3.71
QU66P	4.27	3.51	0.76	4.44	4.57	4.29
QU67P	4.27	3.41	0.86	4.47	4.57	4.43
QU68P	4.35	3.49	0.86	4.61	4.57	4.71

All Students — Appendix 3b

Aggregated Means and Importance : Gap Formula Results

Question	Important	Students Satisfaction	Gap	Gap Posn.	Imp x Gap	I x G Posn
QU1P	4.31	3.40.	0.91	25	3.92	25
QU2P	4.32	3.47	0.85	35	3.67	34
QU3P	3.97	3.42	0.54	55	2.14	56
QU4P	3.59	3.38	0.21	69	0.75	69
QU5P	4.18	3.40.	0.78	40	3.26	41
QU6P	4.47	3.50.	0.97	17	4.34	13
QU7P	3.66	3.43	0.23	68	0.84	68
QU8P	3.36	2.84	0.52	59	1.75	62
QU9P	3.68	3.15	0.53	56	1.95	59
QU10P	4.12	3.10.	1.02	12	4.20.	16
QU11P	4.18	3.27	0.92	23	3.85	27
QU12P	4.09	3.34	0.75	43	3.08	44
QU13P	4.21	3.39	0.82	36	3.45	36
QU14P	3.77	3.12	0.66	50	2.49	51
QU15P	3.87	3.16	0.71	46	2.75	49
QU16P	4.10.	3.19	0.90.	28	3.69	32
QU17P	4.05	3.34	0.72	44	2.92	45
QU18AP	4.49	3.43	1.06	7	4.76	7
QU18BP	4.59	3.54	1.05	9	4.82	5
QU18CP	4.15	3.36	0.80.	37	3.32	40
QU19P	4.45	3.73	0.72	45	3.20.	43
QU20P	4.48	3.60.	0.88	30	3.92	26
QU21P	4.02	3.67	0.34	64	1.37	64
QU22P	4.16	3.47	0.69	49	2.87	46
QU23P	4.44	3.46	0.97	18	4.31	14
QU24P	4.28	3.41	0.87	31	3.72	31
QU25P	4.27	3.46	0.80.	38	3.42	38
QU26P	4.45	3.45	1.00.	15	4.45	11
QU27P	4.44	3.53	0.91	26	4.04	22
QU28P	4.12	3.59	0.53	57	2.18	55
QU29P	4.18	3.56	0.62	52	2.59	50
QU30P	4.06	3.57	0.48	62	1.95	60
QU31P	4.30.	3.43	0.87	32	3.74	29
QU32P	4.04	3.62	0.43	63	1.74	63
QU33P	4.37	3.44	0.93	22	4.06	21
QU34P	4.30.	3.34	0.96	20	4.13	19
QU35P	4.31	3.35	0.96	21	4.14	18
QU36P	4.33	3.41	0.92	24	3.98	24
QU37P	4.31	3.34	0.97	19	4.18	17
QU38P	4.35	3.56	0.79	39	3.44	37
QU39P	4.37	3.11	1.26	1	5.51	1
QU40P	4.32	3.43	0.89	29	3.84	28
QU41P	4.72	3.68	1.04	10	4.91	4
QU42P	3.66	3.50.	0.16	70	0.59	70
QU43P	4.12	3.43	0.69	48	2.84	47
QU44P	4.15	3.58	0.57	54	2.37	54
QU45P	4.26	3.13	1.13	4	4.82	6
QU46P	4.24	3.12	1.12	5	4.75	8
QU47P	4.25	3.16	1.09	6	4.63	9
QU48P	3.92	3.39	0.53	58	2.08	57
QU49P	3.58	3.32	0.26	67	0.93	67
QU50P	4.04	3.34	0.70.	47	2.83	48
QU51P	4.39	3.18	1.20.	2	5.27	2
QU52P	4.37	3.34	1.03	11	4.50.	10
QU53P	4.58	3.45	1.13	3	5.18	3
QU54P	4.39	3.62	0.77	41	3.38	39
QU55P	4.53	3.62	0.91	27	4.12	20
QU56P	4.49	3.50.	0.99	16	4.45	12
QU57P	4.04	3.44	0.59	53	2.38	53
QU58P	3.65	2.64	1.01	14	3.69	33
QU59P	3.69	3.04	0.65	51	2.40.	52
QU60P	3.47	3.20.	0.27	66	0.94	66
QU61P	3.48	3.18	0.31	65	1.08	65
QU62P	4.01	2.95	1.06	8	4.25	15
QU63P	3.99	2.98	1.01	13	4.03	23
QU64P	3.72	3.22	0.50.	61	1.86	61
QU65P	3.81	3.29	0.52	60	1.98	58
QU66P	4.27	3.51	0.76	42	3.25	42
QU67P	4.27	3.41	0.86	33	3.67	35
QU68P	4.35	3.49	0.86	34	3.74	30

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