



**Investigating Internal Service Quality at Durban
University of Technology Writing Centres**

by

Sibongile Ruth Nhari

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Abstract

This research investigated internal service quality perceptions held by DUT Writing Centre tutors. This research is important because literature is indicative of the fact that internal service quality is a precursor to external service quality. The study employs a mixed method approach. An adapted SERVQUAL Battery termed by Frost and Kumar (2000) as INTSERVQUAL was used to gather the quantitative data. The qualitative data was from a secondary source which was focus group discussions and was analysed using thematic analysis. This study utilised the survey method and a census was conducted to investigate the service quality dimensions.

The quantitative results were analysed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics by SPSS 24 program. Five dimensions being reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles were measured by the instrument and a GAP analysis of the expectation and perception scores was done. It was found that the highest gap was in the tangibles dimension and the lowest gap in the reliability dimension. The research objectives were as follows:

- To determine Writing Centre tutors' expectations of internal service quality at DUT writing centres;
- To evaluate Writing Centre tutors' perceptions of internal service quality at DUT writing centres;
- To identify gaps between expectations and perceptions of internal service quality at DUT writing centres; and
- To identify customer service expectations and perceptual differences in relation to biographical variables in the population.

Keywords: Service Quality, Satisfaction, Internal Customer

Declaration

I, Sibongile Ruth Nhari, declare that the work presented in this thesis represents my own work and findings except where this has been indicated. Furthermore, all references, to the best of my ability and knowledge have been accurately reported.

.....

Sibongile Ruth Nhari

.....

Date

Dedication

This is for Sinethemba Lydia Nhari

May God lead you all the way to excellence!

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This thesis would not have been possible without the guidance, patience and unwavering support of my supervisor, Dr. Thokozani Ian Nzimakwe. I would like to thank him for the time spent and dedication shown over the years.

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I cannot forget to mention my mum, Patricia and dad, Dumisani John, Hlatywayo who have been a pillar of strength throughout this journey. I love you dearly

Lastly but not least, I would like to offer my gratitude to my husband Simbarashe Nhari, without whose love and unfailing support, this thesis would not have been possible.

God bless you all,

Sibongile R. Nhari

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List Of Acronyms

SQ	Service Quality
DUT	Durban University of Technology
WrC	Writing Centre
WrCs	Writing Centres
ISQ	Internal service quality
SD	Service Delivery
IM	Internal Marketing
SERVQUAL	Service Quality
INTSERVQUAL	Internal Service Quality (instrument)
ESQ	External Service Quality
ESD	External Service Delivery
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
PMB	Pietermaritzburg

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study and provides the rationale behind the research. An overview of the research problem is given in the background section and its objectives and specific questions, as well as the methodology employed are discussed. The delimitations, limitations and assumptions are also provided. Finally, some key terms utilised in the study are defined.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Writing Centres (WrCs) are a fairly novel concept in South African tertiary education. According to Archer and Richards (2011), Writing Centres in South African tertiary institutions were pioneered in the early 1990's by the University of Witwatersrand (Wits), The University of Cape Town (UCT) and the University of the Western Cape (UWC). North (1984) describes a Writing Centre (WrC) as a centre offering assistance in writing across disciplines in tertiary institutions. It is further described as a resource centre for writers, learners, instructors/teachers, and a tutorial facility for individuals with problems in composition. At the core of this service delivery (SD) is the tutor, who in services marketing is the customer contact employee or front-line employee.

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) WrC was launched in September 2013. It heralded the genesis of writing development at DUT. The model presented an avenue for writing support and landmark improvements with regard to academic writing at the institution. Its overall approach is informed by the SD Systems Theory by Ponsignon, Smart and Maull (2007) who posit and recognise the diverse SD systems and focus on customer centrality. This study employs the argument levelled by Frost and Kumar (2000) that identifies the employee as the internal customer and the job as the product. Research into the way that WrCs operate in the South African context is still in its infancy, which motivates for more research to be conducted in

this area. Furthermore, the majority of the research has centred on their effectiveness as perceived by the students (Hutchings 2006).

Challenges faced by the WrCs at DUT include but are not limited to a growing prevalence of absenteeism amongst tutors and truancy, as well as arriving late for duty and an increase in requests for time off. These, amongst other things, have motivated the researcher to investigate internal service quality (ISQ) perceptions and expectations and determine a difference between the two as a possible cause for such behaviour.

Furthermore, as much as the tutor-tutee relationship has been widely researched, there exists a gap in literature when it comes to ISQ perceptions held by the customer-contact employees, in this case the tutors at such WrCs. These perceptions of ISQ are important because the employees are the ones who provide services to the external customer. This study will focus on ISQ perceptions held by the tutors at DUT writing centres.

The highly interactive nature and dynamism of the act of SD, as well as its heterogeneity, has led to the growing interest in ISQ. Service marketing literature has suggested that the way *to* satisfied customers is *through* satisfied employees. Hence, WrC tutors as customer-contact employees need to be “satisfied” in order for them to deliver satisfactory service to the tutees. Therefore, this study investigates the ISQ perceptions and expectations of WrC tutors at the DUT WrCs.

1.3 JUSTIFICATION FOR FOCUSING ON RESEARCH AREA

Internal service quality indicators such as absenteeism, high turnover, lateness, and sick leave have served as the motivation for this study. Before internal customer service efforts are made and resources deployed in an attempt to address the problem, employee research is necessary. O’Neil (2005) postulates that for internal customer service efforts to achieve anything meaningful, the WrC needs to “reinvent and rejuvenate its human resource ethos”. This can be achieved by improving the level of communication with employees by selling the job to them with the intention of

developing internal partnerships (O'Neil 2005). Employee research then provides a launching pad for such developments to be made. Employee satisfaction will enable tutors to perform at their optimum and even above expected standards. An unsatisfied employee will perform below their potential and in some cases not perform at all, in effect compromising and miscommunicating the WrCs aims, values, goals and objectives. A satisfied customer can be realised through the efforts of satisfied employees (Al-Hawary, Al-Qudah, Abutayeh, Abutayeh and Al-Zyadat 2013).

1.4 SERVICE QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Higher Education Institutions (HEI) are not exempt from the quest for improved service quality. Narang (2012) utilises the SERVQUAL battery modified to EduQUAL to measure the quality perceptions of management students at public institutions in India. This study will also utilise the modified SERVQUAL battery to investigate ISQ. Service quality has also been explored by Duzevic and Casni (2015) when they explored the key attributes of SQ in the Croatian higher education system, highlighting once again the growing interest in the construct. Quality has also been explored in the area of evaluating quality audits as a tool for quality improvement by Balague, Duren, Juntunen and Saarti (2014). This was done at three university libraries in Finland, Spain and Germany.

More importantly for this study, Cardoso, Tavares and Siri (2015) carried out a case study in Portugal. This study looked into the quality of teaching staff and, in particular, at compliance concerns of higher education institutions with the European standards and guidelines for quality assurance. They examined whether or not Portuguese higher education institutions are taking measures to improve and assure the quality of teaching staff in compliance with the recommended standards. Due to the fact that WrCs are still a novel concept within South African Higher Education Institutions and that Kinkead and Harris (1993) have stated that WrCs are defined by the place and institution in which they are housed, it has not been possible to regulate tutors at WrCs. The non-existence of any known standards for compliance or guidelines governing tutors within a WrC could be argued as a mitigating factor in

the negative ISQ indicators seen at the DUT WrCs. This study will therefore investigate ISQ through a measurement of perceptions and expectations and a gap analysis to determine where the gaps lie, in an effort to address the current challenges.

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The above background has informed the question: Are the tutors at DUT WrCs receiving expected SQ? It is against this background that ISQ is investigated at the WrC. Customer expectations translate into customer requirements. Hence, an organisation's failure to investigate this can lead to its ultimate demise. Internal service quality has been noted as being a precursor to external service quality (EISamen and Alshurideh 2012). Therefore, it is strategic on the part of management to investigate ISQ (INTSERVQUAL) perceptions and expectations held by tutors in order to positively influence the "moments of truth" with external customers. This study is conducted in order to determine the gap that exists between tutors' expectations of ISQ and the actual service delivered within DUT WrCs.

1.6 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.6.1 Aim

The aim of the study is to research internal service quality (INTSERVQUAL) dimensions in a local context.

1.6.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To determine Writing Centre tutors' expectations of internal service quality at DUT writing centres;
- To evaluate Writing Centre tutors' perceptions of internal service quality at DUT writing centres;

- To identify gaps between expectations and perceptions of internal service quality at DUT writing centres; and
- To identify customer service expectations and perceptual differences in relation to biographical variables in the population.

1.6.3 Research Questions

The study attempted to answer the following questions:

- What are the internal service quality expectations of tutors at DUT writing centres?
- What are the internal service quality perceptions of tutors at DUT writing centres?
- What are the gaps revealed by the SERVQUAL dimensions at DUT writing centres?
- What is the relationship of these expectations and perceptions to the biographical data?

1.7 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This study investigated the current ISQ perceptions held by tutors at DUT WrCs. The findings indicate the direction for improving ISQ at the WrCs, invariably improving external SQ. The research could potentially provide means by which the image of the WrCs at DUT can be enhanced. This in turn improves the effectiveness of its external operations.

1.8 DIMENSIONS TO BE ASSESSED IN THE STUDY

Five dimensions were in the study by means of a modified version of the SERVQUAL instrument, namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles commonly known as RATER dimensions.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study cannot be generalised because it is specific to a particular environment and to DUT WrCs. Therefore, any findings and conclusions may not be applicable in other settings.

Financial limitations; the R10 000 budget, though well appreciated is hardly enough to adequately cover all the resource related expenses.

1.11 ASSUMPTIONS

This study is grounded on certain assumptions with regard to ISQ. These assumptions relate to the sample population as well as the research participants as follows:

- The main assumption of this study is that there is a direct link between ISQ and external service quality.
- The next assumption is that ISQ concerns are present at DUT WrCs, even if a formalised ISQ programme has not been defined. It is also assumed that the presence of these elements (ISQ) will render the participants fit to share their experiences and opinions on the subject, despite an apparent lack of a defined ISQ programme.
- The next assumption is that the employees will be able to understand and complete the questionnaire without the help of the researcher.
- It is also assumed that the participating respondents have no bias in terms of the study.
- The final assumption is that prevailing socio-economic factors will not influence the interests of respondents in terms of their perceptions of the SQ elements measured.

1.9 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The research was carried out at all the WrCs in the DUT community. These include the following:

- Steve Biko campus writing centre;
- City campus writing centre;
- ML Sultan campus writing centre;
- iNdumiso campus writing centre; and
- Riverside campus writing centre.

The main administration office can be found at the following physical address: Durban University of Technology, Steve Biko Campus, Allan Pittendrigh Library; The WrC is located in seminar room 2.

The study is restricted to the tutors who are employed at DUT WrCs. These comprise the total population of respondents expected to participate in the study. It is imperative to note that the study is conducted as a survey, which means that every member of the population is given an opportunity to participate in the study. Finally, the researcher notes other factors that influence the SQ perceptions and expectations as data was collected. However, there is no departure from the main objectives and questions guiding the research.

1.12 ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Anonymity is important to protect respondents from discrimination and victimisation. It also adds to the integrity of the research (Wiles, Crow, Heath and Charles 2008). Anonymity will be ensured by the use of codes instead of the respondents' actual names. Confidentiality is important to protect respondents and it respects the research ethics.

For the assurance of confidentiality, see Appendix "A" for the consent form.

1.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

DUTs ethical requirements have been addressed by using the Durban University of Technology's Research Ethics policy and Guidelines and by filling out the Ethical issues checklist for research approval (see Appendix "B" for ethics approval).

The respondents filled in a consent form (See Appendix "A") to ensure voluntary participation.

Respondents were furnished with an information letter assuring them of anonymity and confidentiality (see Appendix "C").

Ethical clearance was acquired from the Durban University of Technology (see Appendix "B").

1.14 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Table 1.1

Chapter	Content	Details
1	Introduction and Overview of the Study	The chapter defines the general field of research, which is Internal service quality perceptions held by employees at DUT Writing Centres. It provides a background on the area of research, stating the problem that has necessitated this research. The aims, objectives and research questions are also highlighted. In addition, the scope and limitations of the study are discussed. The chapter concludes by outlining how the thesis is organised.
2	Literature review	This chapter reviews the literature in service marketing. It also reviews literature in Internal marketing theory which forms the theoretical framework of the study. It further reviews service quality literature in Higher Education Institutions while justifying the

		current study by highlighting the gap in this area. The importance of the tutor-tutee relationship is also highlighted.
3	Research Methodology	The third chapter reviews the theoretical framework of the thesis. The research approach and strategy is provided and details of how the research was conducted, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen methodology.
4	Findings	Findings are presented in this chapter and an analysis of such is also presented
5	Discussion of findings	The findings of the study are discussed in this chapter.
6	Conclusions and recommendations	Conclusions and recommendations to this study are presented.

1.15 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the general overview of the study. It identified the research area as Internal Service Quality, which in this case is the study of perceptions and expectations of service delivery in an internal environment. This chapter has noted that internal marketing forms the theoretical framework of the study. It is also noted that internal service quality serves as a precursor to external service quality, which forms the justification for the value of this research. Furthermore, it has been highlighted that the difference score between perceptions and expectations will form the basis for evaluation through a Gap analysis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a review of literature by both seminal and contemporary writers, providing a brief synopsis of Service Marketing literature. The importance of conducting employee research will be discussed. Key to this research is the definition of a customer, which will be provided in the context of this study. Additionally, this definition strengthens the discussion of ISQ as it relates to the Wrc environment. The differences between an internal and external customer will also be discussed. A service will also be defined and its characteristics presented. Customers' assessment of service quality is also be explored, as this influences customer satisfaction. Employee satisfaction is discussed as a precursor to external customer satisfaction. This will demonstrate the pivotal role played by employees. The link between ISQ and employee satisfaction is also be presented in order to pave the way for the discussion on the importance of employee satisfaction in SD and SQ.

Furthermore, the research instrument employed in the study is discussed. The review shows how the SERVQUAL instrument has been adapted for use in different settings and industries. The SERVQUAL battery has been popularly used in SQ research and often for external SQ. The review highlights that Frost and Kumar (2000) proved that it can also be applied in an internal environment in order to research SQ perceptions and expectations internally. The GAP analysis approach employed in this research will also be presented.

2.1.1 The importance of conducting employee research

The DUT fulfils a social responsibility by providing employment in the communities in which it is located. As the university operations and enrolment expand, so does its population of employees. Oftentimes, this expansion leads to the neglect of

employee matters, risking a disconnection between individual employees and the employer. Growth, profit and other organisational objectives can only be achieved when employee interests are researched and entertained (Frost and Kumar 2000).

There are three reasons postulated by Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1994) why a service organisation in particular needs to conduct employee research. These are discussed below.

- Firstly, Berry *et al.* (1994) noted that employees are actually customers of internal services. This becomes the basis for the measurement of ISQ for the simple reason that ISQ affects external service quality (ESQ). Furthermore, not much research has been done in the area of SQ measurement within a service organisation. Furthermore, for this study, the perceptions of ISQ held by the customer-contact employees/ tutors at the DUT Wrc' will be researched.
- Secondly, Berry *et al.* (1994) suggest that employee research appears to provide a gateway for employees to table insights into factors that affect SQ in an organisation. Employees have the advantage of experience with the systems employed by the organisation on a daily basis. Therefore, causes of problems in the service cycle are revealed and possible solutions are put forward during research.
- Thirdly, Berry *et al.* also purport that employee research provides an early warning mechanism to stakeholders, as employees are able to identify and often predict when a system is going to collapse/breakdown.

The following section presents the theoretical framework that has informed this research. It will introduce and discuss the concept of internal marketing (IM) and its role in an organisation.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: INTERNAL MARKETING

The idea of an internal market had its debut in the 1970s (ElSamen and Alshurideh 2012). The authors also propose that a company should market its brand to its internal customers, who are its employees, and get them to appreciate the brand. This will ensure that the external customer will love it as well (Berry *et al.* 1994). Research has propagated a change in the way organisations and employers regard their employees. The novel approach is to regard employees as customers that require service. Hence, the quality of the service provided to employees is essential to ensure the overall performance of the entity (ElSamen and Alshurideh 2012). In this research, the tutors' perceptions and expectations of ISQ are investigated. These are compared using a GAP analysis to determine the SQ gaps that exist. However, the implications of IM on ISQ cannot be overlooked (ElSamen and Alshurideh 2012). Later in this chapter, ISQ will be presented as a precursor to external SQ, thereby, strengthening the argument for IM. This is particularly true for organisations in the service industry, such as the DUT WrC.

Berry (1984) in ElSamen and Alshurideh (2012) describes IM as “viewing employees as internal customers, viewing jobs as internal products and endeavouring to offer internal products that satisfy the needs and wants of these internal customers while addressing the objectives of the organisation”. For this research, this definition will be applied to the WrC environment where the tutors will be viewed as the internal customer and their perceptions and expectations of the internal service provided is evaluated. Ballantyne, Christopher and Payne (1995) posit that “IM is considered to be a process of creating market conditions within the organisation to ensure that internal customers' wants and needs are met”.

Ahmed and Rafiq (2002) have defined IM as a “tool used to create satisfied, motivated and customer-oriented employees by using marketing tools to satisfy employee needs and by treating both the organisation and the job it offers as products”. This is the understanding that has been engaged for this study, where the organisation in question is the WrC. Furthermore, Keller, Lynch, Ellinger, Osment and Calantone (2006) concur that IM is “the adoption of marketing-like tools to develop elements within” the WrC with the “aim of meeting employee needs”.

Gounaris (2006) refers to it as “the marketing actions undertaken by” a WrC “when focusing on satisfying its internal customers or employees through job products”. Internal marketing has also been argued as being “an appropriate method for the communication of” a WrCs’ “brand internally” (Gapp and Merrilees 2006).

The next section will define a WrC, the concept of academic mentorship, as well as the tutor-tutee relationship in relation to SQ. Internal SQ as a precursor to ESQ are presented (Berry *et al.* 1994) and the influence of ISQ on the “moments of truth” will also be highlighted.

2.3 THE WRITING CENTRE DEFINED

An ideal or typical WrC is difficult to describe. Kinkead and Harris (1993) postulate that a model WrC is difficult and has been impossible to describe. They further state that their definition is often in “terms of an ideal or an abstraction vision of what constitutes an effective WrC program. There is little agreement about specific political issues, administrative procedures and policies, pedagogical approaches or even practical matters”. Therefore, it (WrC) can only be identified institutionally since they vary in composition and type from one institution to another, whether internationally or locally in the South African context.

The challenge is often eradicating the idea that the WrC is an emergency clinic for writers, hence propagating the obscurity surrounding the very foundation of their existence (Hutchings 2002). The context of the WrC is also difficult to delimit because, for each and every institution, they are either housed in departments or established as a stand-alone institutional facility, -much like the under study which is a stand-alone facility (Kinkead and Harris 1993). However, one aspect resonates, that it is a space or forum for academic and social coaching and development, servicing a diverse populace of students at DUT in an effort to ensure their survival in the academic world.

The DUT WrC was launched in September 2013, which marked the birth of writing development at DUT. The service delivery theory by Ponsignon, Smart and Maull

(2007) posits and identifies the diversity of SD while emphasising customer centrality. The DUT WrC has its policy framework structured around this system. Furthermore, its emphasis and focus is on student development.

The conclusion forwarded by Chase (1977) stating that minimal contact with customers encourages productivity in the work environment, is challenged by this approach and many others in service marketing literature. An antithesis of this theory is the basis of the service marketing approach, which is the base operational framework of the DUT WrC and other WrCs the world-over.

At the core of the WrC is the customer-contact employees, who in this case are the tutors. They meet the students and deliver the service to the tutees, who are the external customers. This research is vital in that ISQ has been found by similar studies to be a determinant of external service quality. This research investigates the ISQ perceptions of the tutors at the DUT WrCs. It also elucidates the importance of the tutors in SD and SQ at the WrCs'. It discounts the customer contact theory and reinforces its antithesis, which clearly forwards the idea that in SD some organisations will require heavy and constant customer contact for SD to be effective, implying that ISQ must be optimised in order to realise effective ESQ delivery.

2.3.1 The Concept of Academic mentorship in the WrC

Mentorship implies, at a general level, various kinds of support including but not often limited to social, personal and emotional support. Intellectual support in this capacity is the main aim of the DUT WrC activities. Consequently, tutors in this context are often referred to as “mentors” as well. Most of the literature on the subject of mentorship relates to other more familiar aspects. The intellectual dimension of mentorship is hardly alluded to or acknowledged.

“There is very little literature available on research on mentoring within academic institutions in South Africa. Other than peer mentoring, the concept of academic mentorship is still a relatively new idea in other countries” (Hutchings 2002).

Therefore, it is prudent to assume that research in the area of ISQ at South African institutions and in particular within WrCs is still in its infancy. This study investigates the ISQ perceptions of tutors at DUT WrCs.

2.3.2 The WrC tutor-tutee relationship

The tutor and tutee relationship is a one-on-one relationship which involves teaching and learning. The tutor bears the brunt and responsibility of supporting and empowering the tutee (student) by encouraging them and providing guidance and counseling. The tutor is usually older and more experienced (Hutchings 2002).

Hutchings (2002) postulates a myriad of descriptions of the role of a tutor. Tutors have been described as advocates, sponsors, role models, counselors, challengers, developers of skills and intellect, hosts, listeners and balancers. Hutchings (2002) states that the tutee role “has changed from passive receiver to active learner”. The tutor role has changed from authority to facilitator. This contributes to the heterogeneity of the service product where each encounter is different, even with the same tutor and tutee (Ihlen 2010) . Therefore, there is a need to constantly monitor SQ standards internally as they have an impact on external SQ standards.

2.3.3 WrC consultations as “moments of truth”

WrC consultations often appear to be simple and straight forward. For example, a student brings in a written assignment, report or project for a critique by an experienced tutor. Its’ strengths and weaknesses are discussed. The tutor then makes suggestions to the student on how it may be improved, upon which the student is advised to change for example, the approach, to re-draft and return for another consultation. This interaction can be defined as being the “moment of truth”. This moment is what ISQ attempts to influence positively. Nestled in this interaction is “a rich body of competing motives, philosophies and ethical constraints that intermix in ways that both inform and impinge upon the writing tutors’ methods” (Hutchings 2002).

Hutchings (2002) reinforces the idea of heterogeneity of the service product. SQ differs at each delivery/consultation even if it is delivered by the same tutor over a period of time. Heskett *et al.* (1994) in Frost and Kumar (2000) have theoretically demonstrated, through the service profit chain, that by being sympathetic to and responding appropriately to the needs and concerns of employees, ESQ will be enhanced. Consequently, it becomes important for management to monitor these trends.

As a result, the management team deliberately attempts to positively influence what Frost and Kumar (2000) refer to as the “moment of truth”, a phrase coined by the president of the Scandinavian Airline System, Jan Carlzon. He believed in empowering his customer-contact employees to take the necessary action to ensure external customer satisfaction. For this study, the “moment of truth” is the time at which the tutor meets with the tutee. Optimising ISQ is an approach to be employed by management to ensure that tutors are satisfied, thereby positively influencing the “moment of truth”.

Systems also need to be functional for the internal customer to be satisfied. In addition, the WRCs strategy has to be communicated clearly and effectively by management in order to ensure the necessary buy-in from the tutors. This alludes to the idea that ISQ is a precursor to external SQ (Berry *et al.* 1994). Figure 2.1 below depicts how internal customer satisfaction positively influences the moments of truth with tutees. It clearly shows that there should be a deliberate effort by the people, the strategy and systems in place to ensure internal customer satisfaction.

Figure 2.1: Moments of truth



Source: Advanced Systems (2005).

The following section is a brief discussion on DUT WRCs. The aim, vision, mission, value and objectives are presented as they appear in the Durban University of Technology Writing Centre Annual Report (2015). Its main activities are also discussed in order to provide a clearer picture of its operations.

2.4 DUT WRC IN BRIEF

This section provides a brief overview of the Aim, Vision and Mission of the DUT WRC. Its values, objectives and a brief summary of its activities are also highlighted.

- **Aim**

The Writing Centre seeks to provide support around reading and writing to students and staff at the DUT as a means of redressing the inequalities of South African education. The Centre aims to build the understanding that at a University, discipline specific reading and writing are essential for achieving success and developing employable graduates.

- **Vision**

The writing Centre seeks to facilitate collaborative learning which serves all users by providing a responsive student-centred environment.

- **Mission**

To enhance learning through writing by offering support and companionship in different disciplines.

- **Values**

In the pursuit of knowledge and productive citizenry, the WrCs values are:

- ✓ Enquiry and critical thinking
- ✓ Integrity and professionalism
- ✓ Diligence and accountability
- ✓ Commitment to equality of opportunity

- **Objectives**

- ✓ To provide individualised writing consultations for students and members of staff (face-to-face and online consultations);
- ✓ To provide workshops responsive to discipline-specific writing needs;
- ✓ To create a friendly academic environment where both students and members of staff feel comfortable to discuss and develop their reading and writing; and
- ✓ To enhance learning, improve and understand the reading and writing processes in different disciplines by offering writing companionship to both students and staff.

2.4.1 A brief summary of activities

- Tutor training and induction
- Consultations
- Writing Centre competitions
- Road-shows
- Writers in residence

- Research and publications
- Year-end review luncheon

2.4.2 Tutor training and induction

A two-day Tutor Training and Induction Workshop is held before every academic year begins. In 2014, it was held on the 31st of January and the 3rd of February at the Emakhosini Hotel. In 2015, it was held on the 29th and 30th of January at the Hotel School on Ritson campus at DUT.

2.4.3 DUT Writing Centre locations

The University has five WrCs, one located at each campus with the exception of the Ritson campus. Plans are underway to open a centre at that campus. The locations are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| • <i>Steve Biko</i> | <i>Allan Pittendrigh Library, Ground Floor</i> |
| • <i>ML Sultan</i> | <i>BM Patel Library, Second Floor</i> |
| • <i>City Campus</i> | <i>Room 124, First Floor</i> |
| • <i>Indumiso</i> | <i>Block 7</i> |
| • <i>Riverside</i> | <i>Library Training E-Zone</i> |

2.4.4 The pivotal role of tutors

Tutors assist with:

- Reading and research, as well as referencing skills;
- Reading and writing of proposals both academic and business;
- Writing and proofreading assignments and theses;
- Articles, chapters in books intended for publication;
- Curricula vitae, constructing emails, letters and memos;
- Creative writing;
- Course syllabi; and
- Workshops to support writing.

For the purpose of this study, the term “customer” as applied in this research will be discussed next. The characteristics of a customer are also presented. Furthermore, the differences between internal customers and external customers are provided. This research focuses on the expectations and perceptions of the internal customers, who are the tutors at DUT WrCs.

2.5 CUSTOMER: DEFINITION

Forde (2002) defines a customer as an individual or legal person purchasing goods and/services from another individual or legal person. In this study, the customer under investigation is customer-contact employees (tutors) at DUT WrCs at the time of the study. In this case, the product is the job (Frost and Kumar 2000). The approach to this study is informed by SQ literature and IM literature, which are discussed in this literature review.

2.5.1 Customer characteristics

Customers can easily be differentiated by their varying attributes. These attributes include demographic, psychographic and firmographic information. Identifying these attributes and understanding them can assist an organisation, or in this case the WrC, to understand its internal customers better. This will enable better planning for improved performance (Harris 2010). The differentiation methods are highlighted below.

- *Demographic information* is the most popular method for differentiating units in a population group. It includes things like age, sex, income, marital status, occupation, ethnicity and religion. This study has considered the demographics of age, sex, nationality, tenure and level of study.
- *Psychographic information* is more lifestyle oriented, focusing on attributes, political views, hobbies, culture, social class and motives. It therefore provides an

in-depth picture of the customer/individual (Harte 2010). This study has not explored this aspect.

- *Firmographic information* relates to the characteristics of a company and the industry in which it operates. It also relates to the number of employees it has, its organogram and its hours of operation (Harris 2010). This study focuses on employee, as opposed to the organisational characteristics.

2.5.2 Differences between internal and external customers

Brandon-Jones (2010) documents some very significant differences between internal and external customers. He states that the main differences are with regard to customer choice and expertise. These differences are detailed below and are important to note as they help characterise the population under study in this research.

- External customers can choose where to make a purchase as they have an option at each purchase encounter to choose where to take their business. These free market forces encourage organisations, businesses, departments and in this case the Wrc to provide excellent SQ with the aim of customer retention (Brandon-Jones 2010). Internal suppliers are characteristically monopolistic in that the internal customer has little and frequently no room to choose their service provider “regardless of quality or cost” (Brandon-Jones 2010). In the context of this research, an employee or tutor will not have the liberty to choose their internal service provider regardless of the quality of the service provided. Once the contract of employment is signed, the internal customer is obliged to honour the terms of the contract, regardless of the quality of service provided.
- Another significant difference is that repeat purchase is a sure sign of customer satisfaction and excellent service in external settings. However, the internal customer may exhibit similar behavioural trends such as repeat purchase, simply because “they have no other alternative” (Brandon-Jones 2010). An employee will continue to come to the place of employment due to the fact that they have

no other choice with socio-economic pressure being one of the fundamental influences.

- Furthermore, dissimilarity between internal customers and external customers also relates to the manner in which they evaluate quality. Quite a number of ESQ determinants are dependent on the experience an individual has with the SQ in question (Brandon-Jones 2010). Brandon-Jones (2010) concurs with Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) on this point by stating that “services have search properties and it is often difficult to assess credence properties”.
- The professionalism of internal customers gives them an advantage over external customers. This is the case because they are generally much more knowledgeable than external customers on matters of service provision. According to Brandon-Jones (2010) this places them in a better position to appraise credence properties.
- Furthermore, external customers are often impressed by cosmetic features whereas internal customers (employees) are ill-impressed by the same, as they may view these efforts by the organisation/employer as being excessive and uneconomical (Brandon-Jones 2010).
- Another difference to consider is that there “is often little face-to-face interaction between internal customers and internal suppliers” (Brandon-Jones 2010), suggesting that customer-contact staff often have little contact with their supervisors or management and implying very little communication between the two groups concerning employee matters. It may then be assumed that SQ expectations or perceptions are rarely investigated or communicated, at least in the manner or as often as they should.
- Finally, external SQ research is often influenced by high expectations and social norms. However, the knowledge and experience of internal customers (employees) renders them exempt from these influences (Brandon-Jones 2010).

Frost and Kumar (2000), agree with Bowen and Schneider (1988) when they reiterate the idea that when employees identify with the culture of an organisation, that is to say its norms and values, they are more committed. Employee turnover is less likely and external customers appear considerably satisfied with the service provided. They further highlighted the fact that as employees remain loyal to the organisation and turnover is low, the organisational culture, its values and norms, as well as its practices are easily passed on to new recruits and these are preserved for the life of the organisation. The same can be said with regard to tutors who identify with WrC norms and values.

The following section discusses services marketing from which the overall framework for this study is extrapolated. The focus of this study is the measurement of ISQ perceptions and expectations. This will be done for the customer-contact employees at DUT WrCs. A service will be defined; the service process will also be presented and the characteristics of a service will be described, within the context of the DUT WrCs.

2.6 SERVICE MARKETING

Zeithaml and Bitner (2009) advance the idea that due to the nature of services, one of the main determinants of a customers' perception of SQ is their interaction with service staff. This is the reason why organisations, companies, WrCs and business enterprises should regard their employees very highly, especially those in SD.

2.6.1 A service defined

Ihlen (2010) defines a service as all economic activities whose output is intangible, generally consumed at the time of production and purchase. This definition qualifies the activities at the DUT WrC as those of service provision. It is a place where students and staff members come for writing support and companionship given by more experienced and often-times older tutors. However, this study addresses ISQ delivery and as such, the service will constitute the "job product" as defined by Frost and Kumar (2000).

2.6.2 The service process

Moeller (2010) describes the service process as having three steps, namely facilities, transformation and usage. Facilities provide the foundation of the process and these are categorically the resources used in the process. For this particular study, the facilities refer to the environment in which the tutors operate. This includes the furniture, colleagues and other salient features at the WrC. The change that occurs when the producer and consumer resources are combined in the service process is referred to as “transformation”. This is the relationship forged between the tutor and the WrC and the exchange of ideas and resources in order to facilitate an effective delivery of service externally. The consumption/usage becomes the result of that transformation. The result of this relationship is seen in the output evidenced by the ESQ standards.

Active or passive support is provided by the service provider via either a full-service or a self-service offering (Gronroos 2008). With the full service provider, the WrC engages with the client during the consumption/usage. This has the advantage that it allows the WrC to guide the tutor on how to optimise the usage of the service offering. This is the approach that Internal Marketing advocates, highlighted by Javadein (2011) who posits that the most important elements of service marketing is IM.

A self-service provider, on the other hand, expects the customer/consumer to have the ability and knowledge of how to “consume the service and obtain value for themselves” (Gronroos 2008).

Drawing from the researcher’s nine years of experience while employed in the private sector, this is often the case with internal customers. Employees are required to self-serve and when goals are not met, it leads to frustration and diminished performance, which in turn affects the SD to the external customer. This inevitably negatively impacts organisational performance, in this case the performance of the WrCs’. Though this is not one of the objectives of the study, it will amongst other things, reveal whether or not the tutors at the DUT WrCs are well equipped to self-serve.

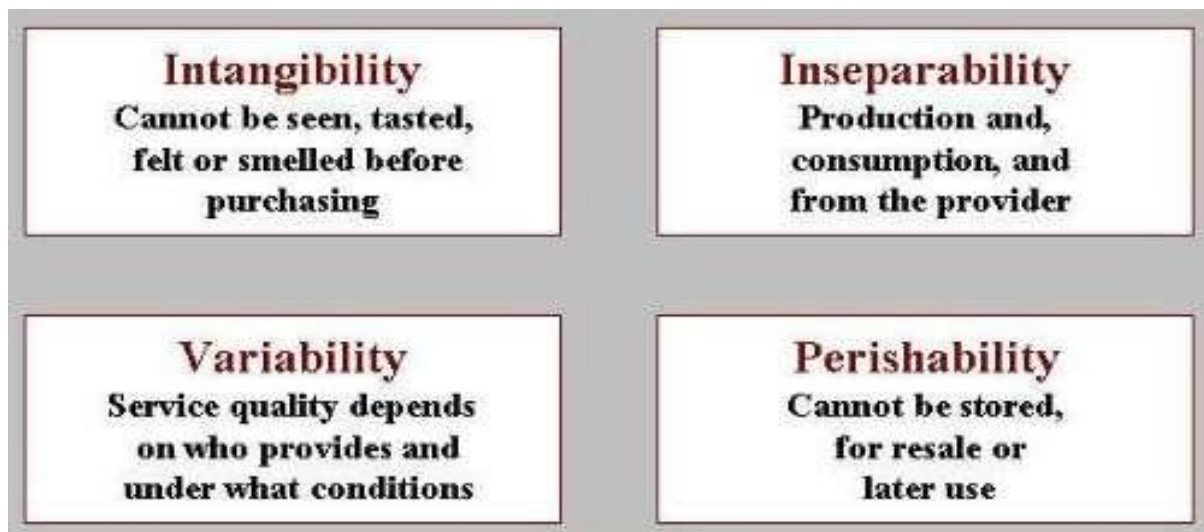
Services have different characteristics which assist users to differentiate them from products. Four points have been put forward on which dissimilarities have been established. These are consumption, durability, tangibility and inseparability. These characteristics will be discussed next in the context of this study.

2.6.3 Characteristics of a service

Service marketing became popular in academic literature in the 1950s and 1960s. Since then, four characteristics have been widely accepted as a standard to differentiate between a product and a service. These characteristics are perishability, heterogeneity, intangibility and inseparability (Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler 2013).

The characteristics of intangibility, perishability, inseparability and heterogeneity of services increase the chances that no service could be delivered in exactly the same way every time. The involvement of both service provider and service consumer render it so. The human element is not automated and even if one aspect such as the service provider, were automated, the consumer and in the case of this study the employee (internal customer) experiences and perceives SD differently at every encounter. Figure 2.2 below depicts these characteristics where further elaboration will be provided on the nature of these characteristics.

Figure 2.2: Characteristics of a service



Source: Characteristics of a service (2017)

- **Inseparability**

Services are “inseparable” because in most cases they are simultaneously produced and consumed (Ladhari 2009). Ma, Pearson and Tadisina (2005) explain that services are first sold, then produced and consumed simultaneously. The presence of both the buyer and the seller during production means that the service can only be provided to a specific number of consumers at a time. Zeithaml and Bitner (2009) contend that the involvement of the customers may slow down the delivery process of that service

The challenge posed by the characteristic of “inseparability” of a service is that often the customer is present, if not involved in the production of the service, which allows the consumer to not only influence the service process but also to influence other consumers using the service at the same time (Zeithaml and Bitner 2001). This is the case for the WrC tutors’ working environment as they work in an open plan office. Therefore, customer-contact employees in this kind of high-contact environment can easily influence one another. This could potentially lead to positive or negative outcomes depending on the recommendation of the customer, and in the case of this

study word-of-mouth amongst employees/ tutors. From an IM perspective, this could mean a difference in absenteeism, sick leave taken, productivity and overall employee welfare at DUT WrCs.

The active participation of the tutor in the production and delivery process of a service also allows for feedback to be constantly given. This feedback can be used to improve the quality of internal service delivered on a continuous basis. Furthermore, this is an invaluable advantage as the human resource is dynamic. The service provider also has the opportunity to influence the service recipient and in this case, the tutors at the WrCs.

- **Heterogeneity**

Heterogeneity refers to the nature of services that makes them almost impossible to be delivered in a standardised manner, increasing the difficulties associated with quality control (Ma *et al.* 2005). “The challenge posed by human intervention in each service encounter can to some measure be countered by the customisation of services in that the SD process can be adapted to each client depending on their own needs” (Ihlen 2010). However, this can also slow down the overall delivery process, increase the cost of delivery and increase uncertainty in customers regarding the consistency of service they are likely to receive in the future (Lubbe 2013). Furthermore, if internal SD is customised, adapting each delivery to each individual tutor, it may cause problems amongst colleagues as some may perceive that others are receiving preferential treatment. Yet this may be the riposte to excellent ISQ.

- **Perish-ability**

Perish-ability refers to the fact that a service cannot be stored or re-used, which leads to challenges in terms of supply and demand (Zeithaml and Bitner 2009). This characteristic is closely related to that of heterogeneity in that since a service is perishable each time it is delivered; it will potentially be different. Moeller (2010)

argues that services can however, be stored in machines, knowledge and people, and that the value created from a service offering could last for years.

- **Intangibility**

When an individual makes a purchase of a vehicle, they can see and feel it. They can even test it prior to the actual purchase being made. This is to say that products have tangible properties that provide information so that the consumer can compare products before a purchase is made. Services, on the other hand, are intangible. This means that there is no service experience or consumption before a purchase is made. This means there is no consumption of the job product until its production. Services are intangible because services as performances are difficult to assess before a sale (Lovelock 1981; Khan 2003; and Ladhari 2009). Moreover, as a result of this intangibility, service providers will have difficulty in ascertaining how consumers perceive their services (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry 1985). In the same way, internal service providers/ management at the Wrcs may experience difficulty in ascertaining how tutors perceive the ISQ. This means that both the service provider and consumer have no idea what the quality will be prior to production and consumption.

Each service encounter is unpredictable even between providers and recipients who have transacted before. By implication, an encounter is an opportunity for a new service experience between the same producer and consumer.

The following section will address the concept of SQ, which will be defined in the context of this research. The quality map will be briefly discussed and the dimensions of SQ to be measured in this study will also be explained. Customers' assessment of SQ is also addressed.

2.7 SERVICE QUALITY

Notwithstanding the differing views amongst scholars concerning the methodology, measurement, models, dimensions, items and even the definition of SQ, a consensus has emerged. This common ground has been realised on the idea that superior SQ “has enormous benefits for service organisations” (Amjad, Mamoun and Bayan 2013). Service quality “increases customer satisfaction; customer loyalty and retention; market share; profitability; and lowers costs” (Seth, Deshmukh and Vrat 2005; Dahiyat, Akroush and Abu-Lail 2011 in Amjad *et al.* 2013). Asubonteng, McCleary and Swan (1996) posit that SQ is a concept that is difficult to define and measure. The following section will highlight definitions of SQ that have been put forward by various researchers.

2.7.1 Service Quality defined

Ozment and Morash (1994) state that SQ is a worthwhile approach for marketers who intend to distinguish their service offerings, create customer value and satisfy customer needs. Furthermore, SQ is an important component of customer perception “which influences both the consumers’ evaluation of a service, as well as their satisfaction with the overall service delivery process” (Zeithaml and Bitner 2009). Internal customers’ perception of the quality of service they receive at the DUT WrC is critical because of the nature of the service they provide to the external customer. The WrC needs, along with other organisations, to “increase employee job satisfaction by treating jobs as products, that is, “designing jobs with features that give employees value” (Berry 1981). This investment in the job product in order to create value for the employee and to satisfy their needs encourages the development of organisation citizenship behaviours (OCB). This will increase customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and retention as well as aid in lowering recruitment and training costs at the WrC (Amjad *et al.* 2013).

Gilmore (2003) states that providing ISQ is the WrCs’ ability to meet or exceed customer expectations, which is what the tutors believe the WrC should offer to meet their needs. Satisfied tutors have been portrayed by George (1991) to exercise repeat purchase behaviours. From an IM perspective, in this context the repeat

purchase behaviour is evidenced by tutors' attendance at work; a decrease in sick leave days taken; a reduction in unexplained absenteeism; and more importantly, the achievement of WrC targets and goals; representing the brand appropriately, as well as providing excellent external service quality to patrons of the WrC.

According to Kapoor, Paul and Halder (2011) SQ differs from quality in relation to goods in that goods allow tangible measures of quality during production which tend to remain uniform for each product produced. Services on the other hand, are subject to consumers' perceptions and therefore, the quality of a service is whatever the consumer perceives it to be (Kapoor, Paul and Halder 2011). The job product does not allow for "tangible measures of quality during production" (Kapoor *et al.* 2011).

Perceptions and expectations are closely linked and "since expectations differ from consumer to consumer" (Zeithaml and Bitner 2009) and in the case of the WrC tutors, from one employee to the next, "the perceived quality of a service may also differ depending on the expectations of the consumer using the service" (Zeithaml and Bitner 2009). The authors further explain that this means that for each SD "encounter a consumer will have a minimum criterion or adequate service expectation as well as desired expectation, which is their highest expectation of the" SD process (Zeithaml and Bitner 2009).

Asubonteng *et al.* (1996) and Buttle (1996) indicate that managers in the service sector are under increasing pressure to demonstrate that their services are customer focused and that continuous performance improvement is being delivered. DUT WrCs aim is like any other service oriented organisations', namely to meet desired service expectations while ensuring that at minimum they exceed the adequacy expectations of their employees, who are the tutors in this study (Zeithaml and Bitner 2009). This would result in the service being delivered within the zone of tolerance or the area of expectation between adequate and desired SQ (Zeithaml and Bitner 2009). Employee expectations need to be properly understood and measured, as it is important to identify any gaps in SQ (Asubonteng *et al.* 1996).

2.7.2 The Quality Map

The Quality Map (Figure 2.3) illustrates nine crucial steps focusing on *Customers*, the *Organisation* and its *Employees*. The nine steps have 44 intrinsic indicators representing the minimum standards for service and business excellence. These will not be discussed further as they are not researched in this study. The steps and indicators aid an organisation and for this study, will aid the Wrc in measuring the efficiency of its internal processes. Such processes are expected to meet and satisfy tutor (internal) and tutee (external) customer needs.

Figure 2.3: The Quality Map



Source: *The Quality Map-9 Key steps (2013)*

Figure 2.4 below is an adaptation of the Quality Map to suit the ISQ concept. The "Internal Service Quality Map" depicts that employees require seven steps to ensure that ISQ is not compromised. It incorporates the four steps traditionally dedicated to customers. These have been applied to the employee, who is the internal customer. These steps are commonly approached from an internal marketing perspective. It

illustrates that employees need to be treated in a similar fashion as external customers in order to ensure that they are satisfied and ultimately positively influence external SD. In addition to resources, training and development, as well as SD, they would need the actions detailed below:

- Service recovery;
- Customer (employee) satisfaction improvement;
- Customer (employee) research; and
- The customer (employee) service promise.

These behaviours are described in detail below as they relate to the ISQ map. It exposes the activities and characteristics required for excellent internal SD and ultimately, excellent ISQ.

- **Service delivery (SD)**

This refers to the consistency of ISQ delivery. It also alludes to the employees' views, opinions and perceptions about the quality of the service delivered.

- **Training and development**

Investing in the training and development of employees ensures that employees are able to deliver the promised service to the external customer.

- **Resources**

This refers to all the facilities and equipment, as well as fellow colleagues required to deliver the promised service to the internal customer. Resource needs have to be identified and then provided.

- **Service recovery**

Service recovery refers to the way and tactfulness in which employee concerns and challenges are identified and addressed in order to ensure that they do not recur.

- **Employee satisfaction improvement**

This refers to the way in which internal service quality is improved, recognised and met.

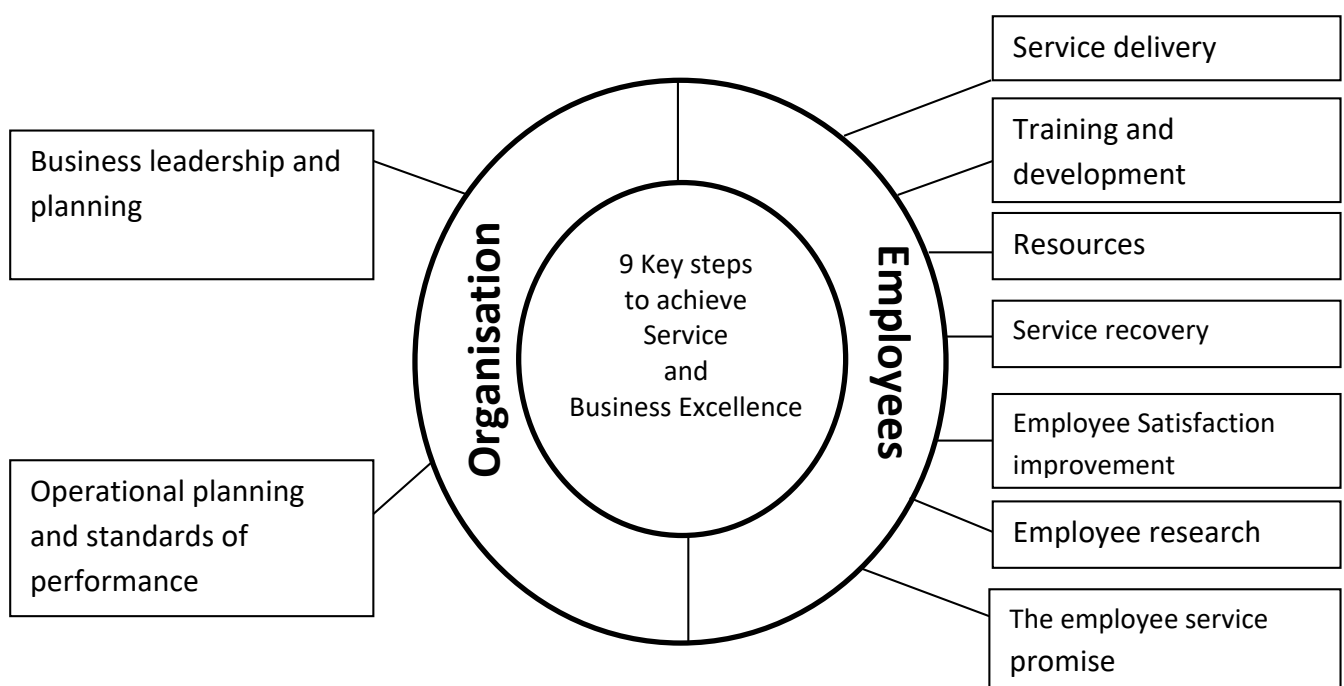
- **Employee research**

The methodology and tools utilised to determine employee expectations and perceptions of service quality are what comprise employee research.

- **The employee service promise**

This refers to what the organisation hopes the employee will experience and against which they form an opinion about the organisation.

Figure 2.4: Internal Service Quality map



Adapted and modified from: The Quality Map-9 Key steps (2013).

2.7.3 Dimensions/ Determinants of service quality

The exploratory work of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) revealed that consumers use a 10-point category scale as the criteria to assess service quality. These dimensions are shown as tangibles, responsiveness, competence, reliability, access, security, communication, courtesy, credibility and understanding/knowing the customer (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry 1988). "These components of SQ

were collapsed into five dimensions: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness” (Buttle 1996). Seven of the original components were collapsed into two dimensions (assurance and empathy). The remaining three, namely reliability, tangibles and responsiveness were unchanged. These dimensions are depicted in Figure 2.5 below.

Figure 2.5: The Service Quality dimensions



Source: SERVQUAL Model: A multi-item Tool for Comparing Customer Perceptions vs. Expectations (2015)

The SQ dimensions are further explained below as defined by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990). The SERVQUAL instrument is based on five salient dimensions of SQ, which are often identified with the acronym RATER: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness

Assurance: relates to the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence.

Empathy: refers to the caring, individualised attention the firm provides to its customers.

Responsiveness: refers to the willingness of service providers to help customers and provide prompt service.

Reliability: refers to the organisation's ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.

Tangibles: refers to the establishment's physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel.

2.7.4 Customers' assessment of service quality

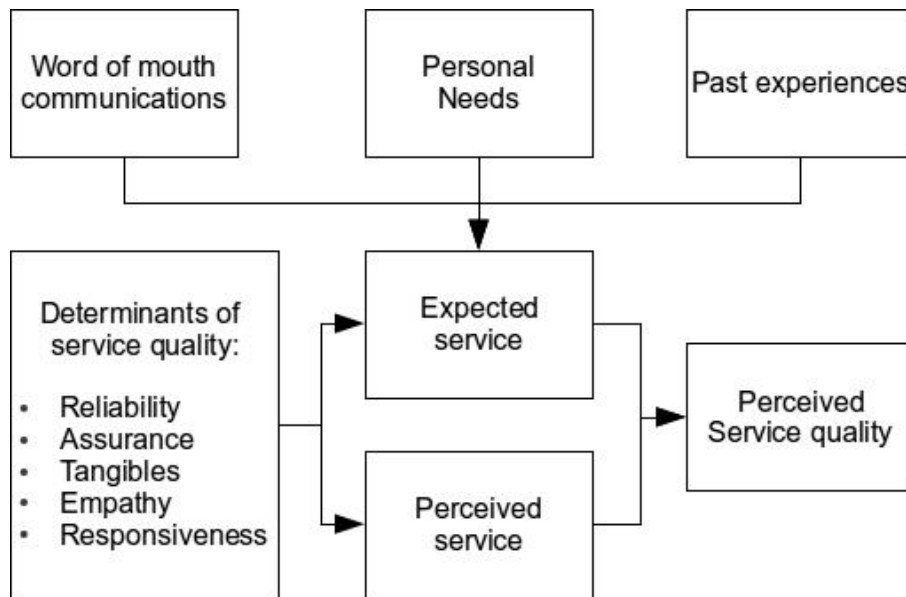
Chang, Chen and Lan (2013) posit that SQ "is a critical service outcome because it fuels customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and engagement of word-of-mouth behaviour". Therefore, it is imperative to understand what influences tutor expectations as it in turn influences the perceived SQ. This study measures the difference between customer expectations and perceptions and the difference will reveal the gaps that exist. These will assist management in strategically tailoring the job product to meet the expectations of its tutors.

According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) customers' expectations are influenced by the following factors

- Word of mouth;
- Personal needs of each customer;
- Past experience; and
- External communication from the service provider.

These factors are illustrated in Figure 2.6

Figure 2.6: Customer assessment of service quality



Source: Parasuraman et al. (1988)

The following section defines customer satisfaction. Employee satisfaction will also be discussed. The link between SQ and employee satisfaction will also be highlighted. Furthermore, employee satisfaction is discussed as a precursor to customer satisfaction. The pivotal role of employees, employee satisfaction and its dimensions will also be addressed. ISQ and employee satisfaction will be linked and finally, the importance of employee satisfaction in SD and SQ will be shown.

2.8 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION DEFINED

The introduction of a democratic government in South Africa in 1994 brought with it a new dispensation, which spearheaded the deregulation of social and economic services, and meant that the employee would become more informed and consequently demand more from the employer. This information reached the previously muted working class majority and conversations around ISQ became increasingly popular. Customer satisfaction became the watchword and hence “customer satisfaction gained new attention within the context of the paradigm shift

from transactional marketing to relationship marketing” (Sheth and Parvatiyar 1994 in Rahman (2014)).

Products and services were not going to be exchanged at a transactional level but because more consumers now had a voice, organisations were forced to start to listen and respond with products and services that satisfy the communicated need. Customer/employee satisfaction has generated much work in the area of academic research.

Dortoyl, Varinli and Kitapci (2014) have stated that customer satisfaction is “one of the most commonly studied components in marketing literature and there have been various attempts to define the concept “customer satisfaction” (Yang and Peterson 2004), but a generally agreed definition has not yet been determined” (Tsiotsou 2006). Therefore, a number of definitions have been used to explain what customer/employee satisfaction is.

Oliver (1999) in Gures, Arslan and Tun (2014) advances the idea that customer satisfaction is defined as “pleasurable fulfillment”. A consumer senses that consumption fulfills some need, desire, goal and so forth, and that this fulfillment is pleasurable. Employee satisfaction likewise deals with similar dimensions of fulfillment in this study. The SERVQUAL dimensions measured address the question of job-product “pleasurable fulfillment” (Gures *et al.* 2014).

Tse and Wilton (1988) defined customer satisfaction in Gures *et al.* (2014) as “a consumer response to the evaluation of the perceived difference between expectations and final result after consumption”. In this study however, the process of production and consumption is simultaneous due to the fact that services cannot be stored. Consumption and evaluation by the employee is similarly simultaneous. Woodside, Frey and Daly (1989) cited in Dortoyl *et al.* (2014) have said of customer satisfaction that “as a construct, customer satisfaction has been noted as a special form of consumer attitude; it is a post-purchase phenomenon reflecting how much the consumer likes or dislikes the service after experiencing it”.

Hence, any improvement on the job product delivery has to be continuous in order to keep up with the dynamism of the exchange process between the service provider and the consumer. Furthermore, this is also one of the reasons for the choice of the research instrument. The SERVQUAL battery measures the “perceived difference between expectations and the final result after consumption” (Gures *et al.* 2014).

Finally, “satisfaction” has further been explained as being “a judgment made on the basis of a specific service encounter” by Bolton and Drew (1991), Cronin and Taylor (1992) and Gures *et al.* (2014). The determination of employee “satisfaction has an important role in distributing the services effectively” (Gures *et al.* 2014). Evidently, employee satisfaction is “both a goal and a marketing tool for customer-centered companies” (Kotler and Keller 2012 in Rahman 2014).

Employee satisfaction can be addressed by ensuring that resources are channeled more effectively within the WrC in order to ensure that each employee/tutor receives the right amount of service required for them to be a more effective employee. Gures *et al.* (2014) posit that satisfied customers, and in this case employees/tutors, will provide copious benefits for the WrC.

2.8.1 Employee satisfaction: origins

Herzberg’s Two Factor theory of 1959 forms the foundational work into employee satisfaction. It was formed out of an adaptation of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. His theory postulated that satisfaction was a by-product of needs fulfilment (Lu, While and Barriball 2005). Herzberg separates satisfaction and dissatisfaction in his model, illustrating that the two may not be necessarily related. He classified them into two categories, namely hygiene factors and motivational factors, with each causing dissatisfaction and satisfaction respectively.

Associated with hygiene factors, Herzberg identified salary, supervision, working environment and company policies as being controlled by a third party and hence being external to the employee. This study seeks to investigate such factors characterised by the SERVQUAL dimensions as measured by an adapted

SERVQUAL battery. Those elements reflecting the content of the job were intrinsic to the employee and as such, Herzberg called them motivating factors. Examples of these are growth and recognition.

2.8.2 Service quality and customer satisfaction

According to Amjad *et al.* (2013), “SQ leads to customer satisfaction” (Dahiyat, Akroush and Abu-Lail (2011). It can then be said of ISQ that it leads to employee satisfaction. ISQ is impliedly a precursor to external SQ. Satisfaction then becomes a customer’s response to fulfilment. Rust and Oliver (1994) in Amjad *et al.* (2013) posit that it is an evaluation of and an “emotion based response to a service”. It can also be referred to as a reaction to the consumption experience (Rust and Oliver 1994).

Two views have emerged with regard to whether or not SQ is an antecedent to customer satisfaction or whether customer satisfaction drives SQ perceptions. The first view denotes that SQ is an antecedent to satisfaction. This notion is based on the view that SQ perception is a cognitive evaluation made by a customer. This in turn implies that it can either affect customer satisfaction positively or negatively (Amjad *et al.* 2013)

Therefore, Amjad *et al.* (2013) have suggested that SQ has a direct and positive relationship with customer satisfaction. Consequently, as ISQ improves, the probability that tutors will be satisfied increases as well. While some authors suggest that quality is driven by satisfaction, the preponderance of evidence is indicative of the fact that satisfaction is driven by quality. Amjad *et al.* (2013) agree with Dahiyat *et al.* (2011) that the total SQ – “satisfaction causal order receives considerable support and empirical validation”.

The following section highlights how the satisfaction of WrC tutors is antecedent to the satisfaction of the external customers, who are the students and staff members who patronize the services provided at the DUT WrCs.

2.8.3 Employee satisfaction: a precursor to external customer satisfaction

It has long been recognised that a nation's competitive advantage is dependent on the skills and innovativeness of its people (O'Neil 2005). This means that at the core of success at the WrC and in any enterprise or organisation are its people. Barsky (1995) in O'Neil (2005) postulates that for internal customer service efforts to achieve anything meaningful, an organisation needs to "reinvent and rejuvenate its human resource ethos through the development of internal partnerships through communication with employees and a general selling of the job to them". The same can be said for the WrC, that in order for internal customer service efforts to achieve anything meaningful, there is need for a rejuvenation and reinvention of its human resource ethos.

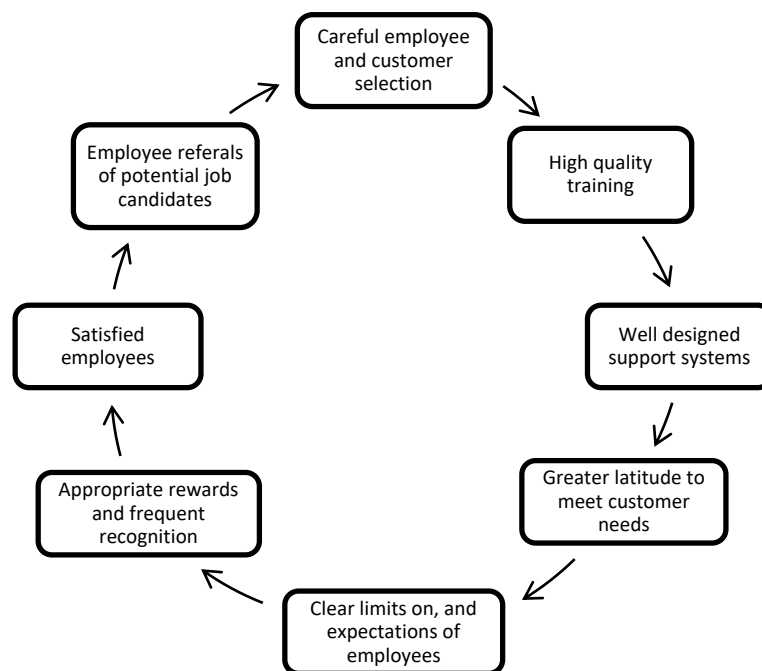
If the WrC has to achieve operational success, in as much as any other organisation, it has to concede the fact that this success is directly linked to the "commitment that an organisation makes to improve continually the lot of its employees" (O'Neil 2005). Such improvement can only be repetitively achieved through periodic employee research, such as the current study. Schlesinger and Heskett (1993) in O'Neil (2005), agree with this view when they propose that "capable workers who are well trained and fairly compensated," as well as provided with the necessary internal support from supervisory staff or management, "provide better service, require less supervision and (are) more likely to remain on the job".

Some of the consequences of such actions include lower employee turnover, increased productivity and a prevalence of OCB. The ISQ and the IM concept have emerged from employee satisfaction discourse where selling the job to employees precedes selling the service to customers. The IM concept, which is the theory that has informed this research, will be discussed at a later stage.

Heskett, Sasser and Schlesinger (1997a) in O'Neil (2005) illustrate clearly through their linkage model, which they have called the "cycle of capability" (Figure 2.7), "that the key to satisfied customers is a satisfied employee". It illustrates that even with careful employee selection, there needs to be high quality training when a tutor joins the WrC team of employees. Internal support systems that are well designed need to

be in place as they will provide greater latitude for tutors to meet the needs of tutees. Appropriate rewards and frequent recognition is also essential for the cycle to run smoothly, as this leads to employee satisfaction. O'Neil (2005) put it simply by stating that “quality techniques and controls do not work on their own, people create and deliver quality service”.

Figure 2.7: The cycle of capability



Source: Heskett, Sasser and Schlesinger (1997a) in O'Neil (2005)

Mansori (2014) reiterates Oliver's (2009) lexis when he states that “satisfaction or dissatisfaction is the outcome of comparison between customers’ perceptions about the quality or attribute of products (or) services and the deliverance of promises by (the) company”. Failure by the WrC to meet tutor expectations, which might be created by overselling by the management/supervisory staff as well as “the gap between customer expectation and the quality of the actual provided services, can cause dissatisfaction” (Mansori 2014). Hence, overselling within an organisation, even to its internal customers, can potentially cause dissatisfaction. This means the WrC may provide an array of internal services, in an attempt to address tutor needs,

but if these are not researched they run the risk of providing internal services, none of which address the needs of the tutors.

2.8.4 The pivotal role of employees

Gronroos (1981) stated that an internal environment that “supports customer – consciousness” should be created amongst the personnel in a WrC. “This can only be achieved if front-line people are treated the same way customers are” (Frost and Kumar 2000). They further state that an “appreciation of good service orientation is extremely important” (Frost and Kumar 2000). This culture when fostered is characterised by “service-related behavior, attitudes, judgment, decisions and actions” that revolve around the aims and objectives of the WrC (Frost and Kumar 2000).

The culture in a WrC has a significant impact on how well its employees adopt the culture and to what extent they behave like part-time marketers for the WrC. In this case, WrC tutors have the role of part-time marketers for the WrC. Therefore, employees play a pivotal role within a WrC (Frost and Kumar 2000).

2.8.5 Employee satisfaction and its dimensions

Employee satisfaction can be viewed as a meeting of the minds of the employee and the organisation in relation to rewards. However, contemporary literature has alluded to the idea that “satisfaction is not necessarily created solely through reward” (Gu and Siu 2009). Five expansive categories have been put forward by Lu *et al.* (2005) in an attempt to elaborate on the factors that influence employee satisfaction. These will be discussed below and related to how they possibly influence WrC tutor satisfaction.

- **Management satisfaction**

If employees feel that they are not being led effectively, the likelihood of dissatisfaction increases (Leimbach 2006). Management has an “impact on the

employees' performance" (Gu and Siu 2009). That is to say, WrC management has an impact on tutor performance. Garcia *et al.* (2010) have stated that employee satisfaction in relation to management is presented to be "based on management concern, showing understanding, considering employee suggestions and being accessible to employees, which constitute an employee's relationship with their immediate superior". In this study, the supervisory/management staff is the service provider and custodians of the job product.

Management has the responsibility of creating an environment which fosters OCB in their employees. They do so by influencing tutor attitudes when they articulate, communicate and express the WrC's vision and create a shared identity within the WrC that tutors can associate with (Wieske, Ahearne, Lam and van Dick 2008).

- **Work group satisfaction**

Organisational success can only be achieved to the extent to which the surroundings in which tutors operate are made more productive through co-operation with fellow tutors within the WrCs (Gu and Siu 2009).

- **Colleague satisfaction**

Conflict amongst colleagues in the work environment can lead to influencing employee satisfaction negatively. The WrC through its supervisory staff or management "can do little, except encouraging good relationships amongst colleagues to mitigate such dissatisfaction factors" (Gu and Siu 2009). Positive relationships at work "not only increase the feelings of pleasure...but also increase the likelihood of good performance since colleagues not only strive to not disappoint each other, but are also more likely to operate as a team" (Leimbach 2006).

- **Job satisfaction**

Gu and Siu (2009) state that the terms *employee* and *job satisfaction* are used interchangeably. However, the concept of job satisfaction can also be viewed as a

dimension of employee satisfaction. Satisfaction with one's job refers to the fulfillment an individual experience's in relation to the *job product*, its description and related tasks. This study utilises the later definition, where the concept of job satisfaction is viewed as a dimension of employee satisfaction. More importantly, the study uses the IM approach in line with service marketing, which posits through the work of scholars such as Frost and Kumar (2000) that the job in this case, is the product.

- **Physical environment satisfaction**

The physical environments in which tasks are completed contribute to satisfaction in that a pleasant and efficient environment encourages productivity and the successful completion of work, both of which are necessary for satisfaction (Gu and Siu 2009). Herzberg's theory covers this aspect under his hygiene factors, where he hypothesises that a favourable working environment may not increase satisfaction; but a poor one will definitely result in dissatisfaction.

- **Material benefits satisfaction**

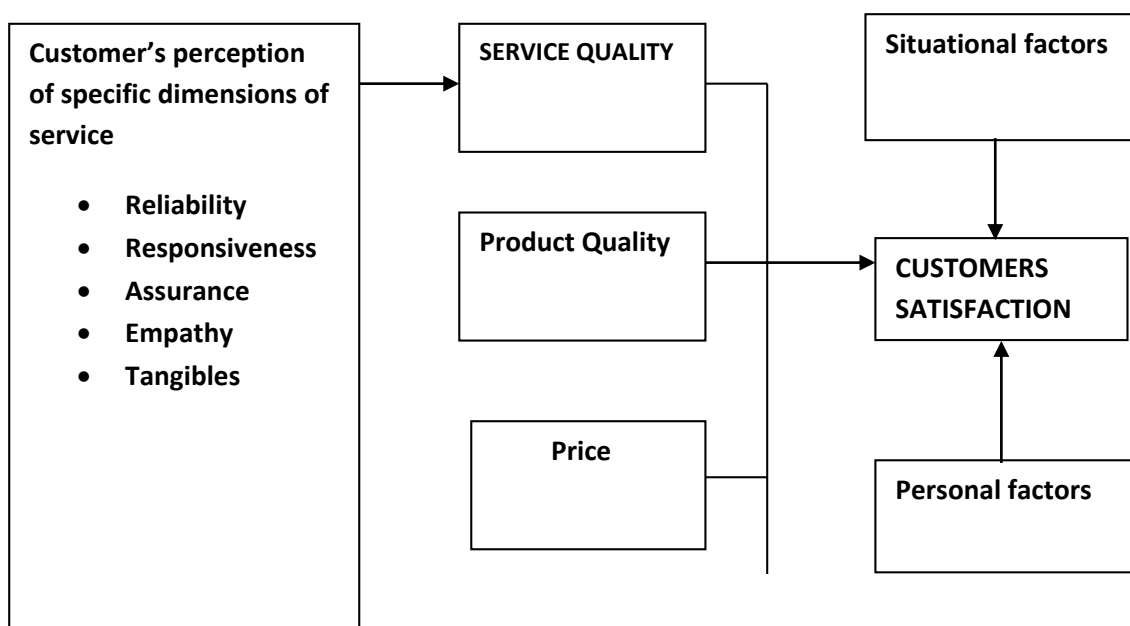
Organisations should be wary of erroneously assuming that remuneration is the key to employee satisfaction. "It is often beyond the organisation's control as to whether the material benefits offered satisfy needs" (Garcia *et al.* 2010). SQ and "the closely related customer satisfaction constructs are of vital concern for most service sector organisations", (O'Neil 2005) of which DUT WrC is typical. O'Neil (2005) recognises that the advance of innovative methods for improving both is crucial. He also states that one such system relates to the theory of IM, which suggests that the way to satisfy customers is through the establishment of a gratifying and self-reinforcing internal service cycle.

The next section highlights the link between SQ and employee satisfaction which is discussed in the context of this study.

2.8.6 Linking Internal Service Quality and employee satisfaction

Brink and Berndt (2010) explain that employee satisfaction is determined by the quality of the service provided. Organisations then endeavour to measure both these concepts, SQ as well as customer satisfaction. The indication is that an organisation can differentiate itself from its competitors by providing better ISQ (Brink and Berndt 2010). This results in a satisfied employee who will in turn ensure that external customers, such as students who utilise the facilities of the WrC, realise improved and increased customer satisfaction. The diagram below (Figure 2.8) illustrates the link between the concepts of SQ and employee satisfaction.

Figure 2.8: The link between Service quality and employee satisfaction



Source: Brink and Berndt (2005)

The next section highlights the link between employee satisfaction, service delivery and SQ. The importance of satisfaction amongst tutors at the DUT WrC will be discussed in this context.

2.8.7 The importance of employee satisfaction in Service Delivery and Service Quality

Zeithaml and Bitner (2009) are cognisant of the role employees play as marketers in a WrC. They refer to an employee's role metaphorically as being a boundary spanner. This metaphor was used to express the idea that they are the link between the WrC and the tutee that utilises the services of the WrC. Furthermore, that the tutor is essential for service provision and dialogue between the WrC and the tutee.

Employees attempt to customise SD through two methods. Firstly, through interpersonal adaptive behaviour and secondly, by attempting to adapt the service offering. The interpersonal adaptive behaviour involves an employee performing beyond their physical and mental skills during client interaction. This, for example, entails the tutor speaking the same language or dialect that the tutee speaks (Zeithaml and Bitner 2009).

The second dimension –adaptation of service offer- refers to a tutor's ability to customise the service offering to each individual tutee (Garcia *et al.* 2010). This trait is essential for WrC tutors to possess as each tutee is different and every consultation, even with the same tutee, is unique. That is to say, there is heterogeneity with every tutee and at every encounter.

The Figure 2.9 below shows that there are a number of factors that contribute to customer satisfaction. It shows the five RATER dimensions of SQ that are researched in this study. The variables investigated are those of reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance and tangibles. The figure also depicts that they constitute the basis of SQ. The arrow then shows that SQ leads to customer satisfaction and in turn, satisfaction leads to loyalty. ISQ is important as tutors will be satisfied and this will result in their loyalty as well. In this study, ISQ is investigated as perceived by the internal customer, the tutors at DUT WrCs.

Figure: 2.9 Service Quality and satisfaction



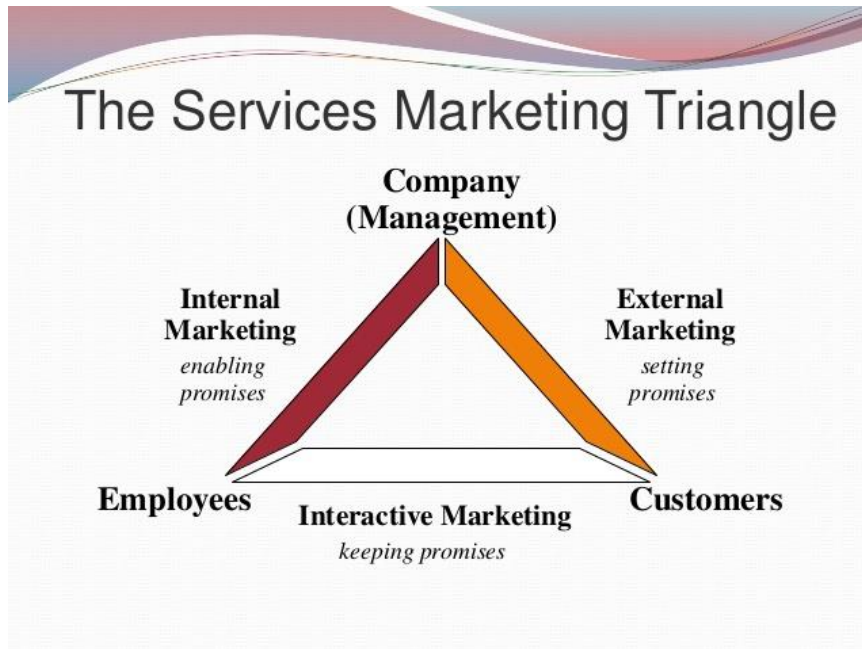
Source: Service marketing (2015)

2.9 THE SERVICES MARKETING TRIANGLE

Figure 2.10 below shows the role of IM in fostering customer satisfaction, which is a result of excellent ISQ leading to excellent ESQ. It shows that the relationship between the company/ management and the employee is one of enabling promises that have been given to the customers by the WrC. The relationship between the employees and the customers is that of keeping the promises that have been given. Therefore, WrC management creates an enabling environment for tutors to be able to keep the promises that the WrC has given to its customers/ potential tutees of the service to expect when they patronise the Centre. This is done by ensuring that the ISQ delivered is perceived as being excellent by the tutors. In support of this approach, Opoku, Atuobi-Yiadom, Chong and Abratt (2009) forward the position that IM is strongly related to the perceptions of ISQ. Hence, the services marketing

triangle is essential in explaining the importance of IM in order to ensure ISQ and guarantee ESQ.

Figure 2.10: The Services Marketing Triangle



Source: *The Services Marketing Triangle* (2015)

2.9.1 The impact of Internal Marketing on Internal Service Quality

EISamen and Alshurideh (2012) posit that the IM activities employed by an organisation have an impact on the perceptions held by employees of the SQ. Their research revealed a positive relationship between the two constructs. Their resultant recommendation was that service providers should employ IM strategy in an effort to enhance perceptions of ISQ and to improve external SQ.

2.9.2 Benefits of providing excellent ISQ

Berry *et al.* (1989) highlight several benefits associated with excellent SQ which can be adapted to excellent ISQ. It has been presented by Berry *et al.* (1989) as an antecedent to customer loyalty and in the case of this study, employee loyalty has

been shown to influence external customer loyalty. It also encourages positive word-of-mouth amongst employees, employee satisfaction and commitment. Another invaluable advantage is an enhanced corporate image and cost reduction through a reduction in turnover, which inexorably leads to an increase in overall business performance.

2.10 SERVQUAL

2.10.1 SERVQUAL defined

SERVQUAL is a theory established on the opinion that the customer's assessment of SQ is paramount. "This assessment is conceptualised as a gap between what the customer expects by way of SQ from a class of service providers" (Buttle 1996). The SERVQUAL instrument is a multiple-item scale utilised for the measurement of SQ (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988). SERVQUAL provides "a technology for measuring and managing service quality" (Buttle 1996).

The SERVQUAL instrument, which builds on the disconfirmation paradigm used in the Grönroos model, compares customer expectations with their perceptions of SD. The SERVQUAL instrument is based on five salient dimensions of SQ, which are often identified with the acronym RATER: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness.

2.10.2 The SERVQUAL debate

While the SERVQUAL instrument is commonly applied and esteemed by researchers and experts, probable complications have been recognised "with its conceptual foundation and empirical operationalisation" (Mahfooz 2014) (See also Ladhari 2009 and Cronin and Taylor (1992). The suggestion has come from researchers to "customise existing SQ scales," depending on the business or industry to which they are applied (Mahfooz 2014) (see also Ladhari 2009). A similar need has been identified for the current study with DUT Wrcs. The SERVQUAL instrument was customised to suit the current study.

The Brandon-Jones and Silvestro (2010) study contributed to the argument in SQ literature concerning “both the theoretical and practical effectiveness of expectations data in the measurement of ISQ”. They tested the “Gap-based and perceptions-only approaches to measuring ISQ” (Brandon-Jones and Silvestro 2010). Their tests indicated that “both the gap measure and perceptions-only measure are reliable and valid”. This research study will utilise the Gap-measure as a means of data analysis.

2.10.3 SERVQUAL: A popular method

Kim-Soon *et al.* (2014) advocates the idea that SERVQUAL is invariably the most popular model used for the measurement of SQ. Mahfooz (2014) alludes to the fact that the SERVQUAL “scale has been pointed to as being the most extensively and successfully used service quality measurement tool in the twenty-first century”. This is one of the reasons why the researcher chose this method for SQ measurement in this study. Kim-soon *et al.* (2014) also agree with Kim-soon and Jantan (2010) when they reiterate the idea that management would be wise to tirelessly and deliberately direct resources towards the improvement of SQ as this contributes towards the success of the business. “Kim-soon (2012) reviewed that by focusing on quality, an organisation can substantially improve on its performance” (Kim-soon *et al.* 2014). Since its conception, the SERVQUAL instrument has been adapted and used in a variety of settings (Mahfooz 2014).

Table 2.1 below is a compilation by the researcher of studies that have utilised the SERVQUAL instrument for collecting data. The purpose of the table is to show the different industries and settings in which it has been adapted and used. These include, amongst others, hospitals/ healthcare, telecommunication, education and banking.

Table 2.1: The use of the SERVQUAL instrument

INSTRUMENT	INDUSTRY/SETTING	USED BY
SERVQUAL	Healthcare/ Hospitals	Carman, 1990; Babakus and Mangold, 1992; Kilbourne, Duffy, Duffy, and Giarchi, 2004; Borie and Damanhour, 2013
	Telecommunication	Van der Wal, Pampallis and Bond, 2002; Lai, Li and Bai, 2007; Borie and Damanhour, 2013
	Education	Vaz and Mansori, 2013
	Urban Bus transport	Barabino, Deiana and Tilocca, 2012
	Banking	Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Spreng and Singh, 1993; Amin and Isa, 2008; Ramseook-Munhurrin and Naidoo, 2011
	Dental clinic	Carman, 1990
	Discount and Department stores	Finn and Lamb, 1991; Teas, 1993; Dobholkar et al, 1996; Mehta, Lalwani and Han, 2000; Va'zques, Rodriguez-Del Bosque, Diaz and Ruiz, 2001; Kim and Jin, 2002.
	Wet markets and supermarkets	Bougoure and Lee, 2009
	Websites	Iwaarden, Wiele, Ball, and Millen, 2003.
	Fast food	
	Mobile Telecommunication	Samen, Akroush and Abu-Lail, 2013

Source: Researchers own

SERVQUAL'S popularity has not come without criticism within SQ literature (Samen, Akroush and Abu-Lail 2013). Criticisms have hailed from different perspectives (Seth *et al.* 2005; Sangetha and Mahalingam 2011; Dahiyat *et al.* 2011), (Samen *et al.* 2013). Baldwin (2014) also states that "the many positive references to the value of SERVQUAL as a tool for measuring service quality are countered by Buttle's (1996) critique of the robustness of the instrument by Parasuraman *et al.* (1988)". In light of Buttle's (1996) critique and others who share the same school of thought, a brief account of such will be made in the next section, as discussed in the work of Samen *et al.* (2013).

2.10.4 SERVQUAL Criticisms in brief

- Firstly, the use of gap scores to measure SQ which has been argued as not being universally applicable (Carman, 1990; Cronin and Taylor 1992; Teas 1993; Lee *et al.* 2000; Martinez and Martinez 2010) as noted by Samen *et al.* (2013).
- Secondly, Samen *et al.* (2013) state that SERVQUAL “was criticized because of its unstable dimensionality and conceptualisation. The majority of the studies indicate that the SERVQUAL dimensions are either less than five or other dimensions are added to them”.
- The third criticism mentioned by Samen *et al.* (2013) is that “SERVQUAL measures the attributes of the functional service quality (ie. Process) and it lacks technical quality” (Carman 1990; Cronin and Taylor 1992; Newman 2001).
- Fourthly, ‘the SERVQUAL dimensions also appear to be different according to the type of service industry and country’ (Samen *et al.* 2013).
- Lastly, Samen *et al.* (2013) make mention of the fact that “a number of empirical studies have also challenged the validity and reliability of the SERVQUAL instrument and its dimensions amongst several service settings”.

These criticisms make it clear that “...there is still an avenue for a potential contribution to service quality literature” (Samen *et al.* 2013) and such studies as the current research serve to add to the existing body of knowledge on the subject.

2.10.5 INTSERVQUAL (Internal Service Quality)

This study will follow the methodology or pattern put forward by Frost and Kumar (2000). It will make use of their work where they adapted the SERVQUAL instrument for use in an internal environment in a service department (Frost and Kumar 2000). The study will use the conceptual model known as the “Internal service Quality model”- designed by Frost and Kumar (2000) - based on the original GAP Model postulated by Parasuraman (1988). Frost and Kumar (2000) further affirm that:

“The acceptance of the postulated hypothesis has confirmed the importance of the internal service quality construct, thus acknowledging the usefulness of the INTSERVQUAL

instrument and the conceptualised Internal Service Quality Model proposed in this research study”.

Furthermore, Kang, James and Alexandris (2002) postulate that “a critical component of internal marketing is the provision of internal service quality”. In their study, they adapted the SERVQUAL instrument for a service environment and “empirically tested and confirmed that it is appropriate for measuring internal service quality” (Kang *et al.* 2002). This study adopted a similar approach, where the SERVQUAL instrument was modified for the purpose of the research.

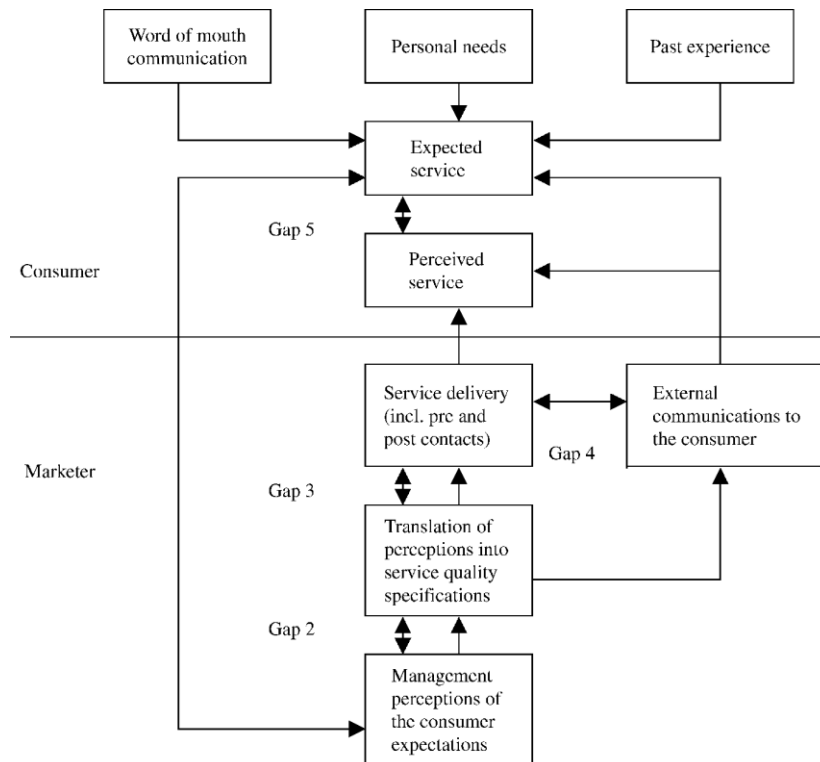
In addition, the work of Samen *et al.* (2013) examines the SERVQUAL dimensions from customers’ and managers’ and employees’ perspectives comparatively (Samen *et al.* 2013). This further builds the argument for the measurement of ISQ through the use of the conventional SERVQUAL instrument with adaptations.

This section has briefly highlighted how the SERVQUAL instrument has been adapted and applied in recent studies. This forms the basis for the use of the same instrument in the current research study where ISQ is measured. The methodology postulated by Frost and Kumar (2000) is employed and their model is used in the study.

2.11 A GAP MODEL OF SERVICE QUALITY

The figure which follows depicts the GAP model of service quality. A model proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985)

Figure 2.11: The GAP model



Source: Parasuraman *et al.* (1985)

Source: Parasuraman *et al.* (1985)

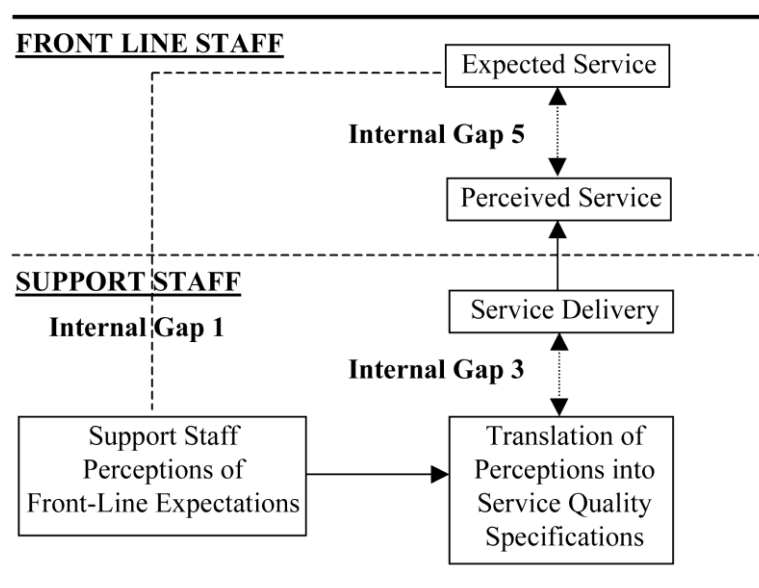
2.11.1 Internal Service Quality model

Although there has been much debate amongst many researchers with regard to the use of the SERVQUAL instrument and the GAP model, it still draws much support in SQ measurement literature. Much of the debate centres on the general RATER structure as proposed by Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) and Seth *et al.* (2005).

The initial modeling was done by Parasuraman *et al.* (1985), who modeled SQ gaps as existing between the consumer and the marketer at different levels. This was then revised by Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) who updated and modified the measurement tool, –SERVQUAL. Frost and Kumar (2000) used SERVQUAL and the gap model as a base for ISQ modeling.

Frost and Kumar (2000) used the concept of the Gap model to develop an internal model designed to measure SQ. When tested, it was successful in measuring and evaluating the SQ dimensions as well as their relationships amongst internal customers and internal suppliers. As such, this research study evaluates similar issues, namely the relationship between dimensions as they determine ISQ, with the internal customer being the employees/ customer contact staff at the Wrcs and the internal suppliers being the supervisory or management staff.

Figure 2.12: Internal Services Quality model



Source: Frost and Kumar (2000)

2.11.2 Defining the Internal Gaps

Gap 1

This gap highlights the internal suppliers' (managers) perception versus the internal customers' (tutors) perceptions.

The perceptions of both these groups are likely to differ. Managers need to know what employees expect. This is the first crucial step in providing quality service. There are a number of factors that contribute to this gap. These include insufficient

marketing research efforts geared towards the investigation of tutors' expectations and the inadequate use of marketing research information. Also, a lack of communication between the two players (tutors and management) contributes to the creation of this gap.

The following recommendations have been put forward by Zeithaml *et al.* (1990):

- Wrcs should frequently carry out marketing research. Their managers should learn how to interpret research information in order to be able to turn insights into action.
- The management staff should interact with the tutors and themselves experience service delivery.
- The upward communication channel should be used and improved.
- A tall organisational structure distances managers from customers (employees/tutors). Hence, the elimination of these levels allows managers to be much closer to their customers (employees).

In this study, Gap 1 is measured by applying the SERVQUAL Battery to the tutors to measure expectations and perceptions held by the group, the greater the difference between the scores, the greater the gap.

Gap 2

It is the notable difference between SQ "specifications and the service actually delivered, resulting in an internal service performance gap".

This difference comes to be a result of the gap between SQ specifications and the actual service delivery. Zeithaml *et al.* (1990) identify key issues that potentially contribute to this gap. These are as follows:

- Lack of perceived control on the part of employees;
- Inappropriate supervisory control system;
- Poor employee-job fit;
- Role ambiguity;
- Lack of teamwork;
- Role conflict; and

- Poor technology-job fit.

Constant communication between employees and management (customer-contact staff and supervisory staff) needs to be maintained. Tutors need to know what the performance expectations are. Furthermore, their performance needs to be appraised against standards and expectations that management have set for them. Constant training will increase the confidence levels of employees (Zeithaml *et al.* 1990).

Gap 3

This gap focuses on the internal customer, - the tutors. It is based on the difference between front-line staff's expectations and perceptions of management staff (internal supplier) SQ.

Figure 2.12 illustrates the model that was introduced by Frost and Kumar (2000), the internal service quality model. This model has three characteristic gaps in contrast to the original gap model, which showcases five gaps in total. This model leaves out gaps two and four as they are of no use in the measurement of ISQ as gaps of measure. This model is the one that has been employed by this study. In this study, the perceptions and expectations of SQ are measured internally.

2.12 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter discussed the theoretical framework that informed this study as being the IM theory. The literature reviewed the relationship of ISQ with external SQ. It was found that for "moments of truth" to qualify as positive, the quality of the internal service delivery has to be addressed as well. This is made possible by employee research which informs an organisation of which aspects in the service delivery need attention. For this study, the modified SERVQUAL battery along with focus group discussions has been employed and will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The third chapter of this research describes the approach utilised in this study. The data collection instrument, the census approach and the techniques employed for analysis, are discussed.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Design refers to the “design or strategy that justifies the logic, structure and the principles of the research methodology and methods and how these relate to the research questions, hypothesis or proposition (Davies 2006). The survey approach was utilised in this study. The researcher gathered primary data by distributing the questionnaire for self-administration and then utilised descriptive and inferential statistics to evaluate the data and formulate conclusions. Descriptive research mainly deals with describing phenomena. The study also utilised secondary data, being a record of proceedings of focus group discussions held in January 2016. This data was qualitative in nature and a thematic analysis was employed when analysing the data. The RATER dimensions were used as the themes under which responses were categorised.

Seminal and contemporary researchers have commonly employed the quantitative method. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in this study. This was done in order to best understand the ISQ phenomenon. It allowed the researcher to compare and contrast the different findings in order to produce well-validated conclusions and ultimately, appropriate recommendations.

3.3 EXAMINING A PHENOMENON FROM THE QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES

These two approaches mainly differ in how they gain knowledge. Both, however, can be applied to research the same problem, as in the case of the current study. Quantitative research looks for relationships between the variables. When the qualitative approach is used, an in-depth understanding of individual experiences is gained (Maree 2007). Each approach presents a different perspective on the problem.

3.3.1 Mixed Methods Approach

Mixed methods research has been defined by Creswell (2009) as a means by which data is collected, analysed and mixed (both quantitative and qualitative) at some stage of the process of research in an effort to better understand a research problem. The researcher collects numeric data (scores or ratings) and text data (observations or open-ended interviews) to respond to research questions. In this research, the numeric data is collected using the SERVQUAL Battery, which is designed as a Likert scale. The text data is analysed from focus group discussions. “Mixing” refers to the integration of data or findings at one or several points within a study.

The mixed method approach is based on both qualitative and quantitative approaches. “In mixed methods research, the researcher constructs knowledge about real-world issues based on pragmatism, which places more emphasis on finding the answers to research questions than on the methods used” (Maree 2007).

The researcher gathers both numeric and text-based data sequentially. Variables and standard units of analysis are selected to address the study purpose and answer the research questions derived from the data. The two methods complement each other and allow for a thorough analysis of the research phenomenon (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009).

A mixed method approach is beneficial when gathering in-depth information and it provides for better comprehension of the emerging patterns and trends. It is also helpful for generating and testing theoretical frameworks and developing new instruments for measurement. The relationships between variables and diverse perspectives can also be better understood (Maree 2007).

3.3.2 The main reasons for combining methods

Researchers have tabled various rationales for employing the mixed methods approach. Maree (2007) gives a number of reasons for combining methods from which the researcher finds justification for combining the methods in the current study. These are detailed as follows.

The methods are combined:

- To describe the results by combining both quantitative and qualitative data;
- To utilise qualitative data to propose a new instrument to measure a particular construct or theory that can be tested at a later stage;
- To formulate conclusions after comparing qualitative and quantitative data in order to produce well-validated deductions; and
- To augment a study with additional data. For this study the secondary data was used to supplement the primary data.

3.4 TARGET POPULATION

Welman (2005) posits that the “population encompasses the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions”. The aim of the study is to investigate ISQ perceptions held by tutors at the DUT WrCs. The target population in this study is all tutors who are the customer contact employees of the DUT WrCs. Partiality may however be noted due to the following issues:

- Only one WrC (Steve Biko) has introduced the new online booking system;
- Differences may be noted because of the different nationalities;
- Differences may also be realised due to the age and level of study; and

- Differences may be noted due to work experience outside the DUT WrC.

3.5 SELECTION OF A SURVEY METHOD

A survey based on probability sampling measuring the entire population –census– was used. This was done in order to curb against the difficulty of measuring bias or sampling error. There are four popular ways of administering survey questionnaires, namely:

- The mail questionnaire;
- Conduct a personal interview;
- Conduct a telephone interview; and
- Email or post the questionnaire online.

This study utilised the personal interview approach at the Steve Biko campus and the mail questionnaire approach at the other campuses.

There are a few considerations to take note of when choosing a mode of administration. These are:

- Response rates;
- Anonymity of the respondents’;
- Interviewer influence; and
- Survey costs.

The researcher employed a different strategy with each WrC in order to increase the chances of participation. Hence, the response rate was fair. Survey costs were minimised and the interviewer’s influence was minimised as well. The anonymity of the respondent was respected and this helped increase the response rate.

The researcher utilised different approaches to questionnaire distribution and administration for each of the WrCs. These have been detailed in Table 3.1, which follows, detailing how the questionnaires were administered at each WrC.

Table 3.1: Questionnaire administration

WrC Campus	HOW THE QUESTIONNAIRES WERE ADMINISTERED
Steve Biko	The researcher was at the WrC to meet and give the participants the questionnaires. The researcher gave each respondent a questionnaire and it was completed in the researcher's presence.
ML Sultan	The researcher left the questionnaires in the tutor room for tutors to complete at their convenience. The researcher returned to collect completed questionnaires periodically.
City Campus	The researcher went to the WrC and spoke to some tutors. The questionnaires were handed over to the manager who indicated they would help by giving them to the tutors to complete at their convenience. These were all returned within the stipulated time for data collection at that site.
Riverside	The researcher gave the questionnaires to the manager to give to the tutors for them to complete at their convenience. These questionnaires took one week longer to complete the cycle due to the distance. The campus is in Pietermaritzburg and the researcher is based in Durban.
INdumiso	The researcher gave the questionnaires to the manager to give to the tutors for them to complete at their convenience. These questionnaires took one week longer to complete the cycle due to the distance. The campus is in Pietermaritzburg and the researcher is based in Durban.

3.6 SAMPLING METHOD

According to Davidson (2006), sampling is a technique that is used “used to select groups from a wider population, because it is not usually possible to include whole populations in research”. The basis of sampling theory is derived from the supposition that connections can be made, or conclusions drawn, with regard to the population from which the sample is taken. The study “attempted to collect data from every member of the population being studied, rather than choosing a sample” (Harding 2006). Hence, a census of the entire population was conducted.

3.6.1 The sampling technique

The sample population was 36 units, being the entire population at the time of the study. Harding (2006) provides two definitions of what a census is. This study employed the one previously stated. This also ensured proper representation of the population.

Table 3.2: The study units

Study units	Total	To be included
Tutors	36	36

The choice of the census method assisted in dealing with the following concerns:

- Sampling error, which is the difference between the population and the sample arising from selected units;
- Sampling bias, manifested due to an intentional preference; and
- Non-sampling error, which occurs regardless of the sampling method utilised.

The SERVQUAL instrument was adapted for this research. Its design is discussed below.

3.7 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

The questionnaire design is in keeping with the original design for measuring service quality advocated by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988). The SERVQUAL instrument was used with minor modifications to suit the current study (Appendix “D” for the questionnaire). The first modification was adapting it to an internal environment, hence calling it INTSERVQUAL. This is in agreement with the findings of Frost and Kumar (2000) who posited that the instrument can be used to measure the ISQ construct. This questionnaire has the Likert scale as its main feature. Garwood (2006) defines a Likert Scale as “a summated rating scale used for measuring attitudes”.

3.7.1 Design of the measuring instrument

One questionnaire was designed for this study. It contained three sections (Appendix 'D': questionnaire). The questionnaire contains statements that measure the tutors' views on each of the SQ RATER dimensions.

The internal consistency/reliability of the questionnaire is measured by computing the Cronbach's Alpha. It tests the consistency/reliability of the items as they relate to a single dimension in the INTSERVQUAL instrument. The instrument has been tested in other studies for internal consistency/reliability by Parasuraman *et al.* (1988; 1991) and the values obtained will be compared with those of the current study.

Section A of the questionnaire

- Five demographic questions designed to capture the data necessary for analysis comprised this section.

Section B of the questionnaire

This section measures the tutors' **expectations** of what an excellent WrC would be like.

- The Likert scale is used to capture data.
- Statements 1-5 measure the Reliability construct.
- Statements 6-8 measure the Responsiveness construct.
- Statements 9-12 measure the Assurance construct.
- Statements 13-16 measure the Empathy construct.
- Statements 17-20 measure the Tangibles construct.

Section C of the questionnaire

This section measures the **perceptions** held by the tutors of what the current WrC ISQ is like.

- The structure is similar to that used for section B.
- The Likert scale is used.
- Similar statements are posed, as in section B. However, this time the respondent expresses their perception of reality.

The questionnaire distribution and administration has been described in Table 3.1. A consent form was attached to the questionnaire schedule (Appendix “A”: the consent form).

The Likert scale

The Likert scale is the most widely used scale, providing ordinal measures of the attitude of a respondent. Its most popular application is when asking respondents whether they agree or disagree with a statement. In any case, at least two categories are necessary. It can be used for multi-dimensional attitudes. This scale is also valuable when measuring a construct. This is done by asking a series of questions and calculating a total score for each respondent by assigning values to the categories. Then each respondent's values are added (Maree 2007).

3.8 PRE-TESTING

The purpose of pre-testing is to make sure the instrument will collect accurate data. It also checks if the instrument is user-friendly, understandable and free from errors. This was done by requesting tutors at another institution who work in a similar capacity to complete the questionnaire (see Appendix “E” for the pilot report). They were required to read and complete the questionnaires and thereafter give feedback. A few concerns arose from the pre-testing session and these are noted next.

- Statements 4 and 9 in section A used the term department. It should have read “Writing Centre” like the other statements. This was changed to Writing Centre for both statements.
- Section B’s instructions were reported as confusing. This was changed by simplifying it so that it became clearer.
- The word “Centre” in some cases was not prefixed by the word Writing. This was addressed by making sure that the word centre in both sections was prefixed by the word “writing”.
- Some respondents suggested the use of a 5-point scale as opposed to a seven as this can cause confusion when trying to make a distinction between 7 points of agreement. The researcher chose to leave it as is as reducing the scale would compromise on the sensitivity of the instrument. Furthermore, the original scale by Parasuraman *et al.* (1994b) had a 9-point scale.
- Two respondents highlighted similarities between some questions. The researcher decided not to change the questions as this would compromise the veracity of the SERVQUAL instrument.

The instrument was slightly modified to suit the WrC. It utilised a 7- point Likert scale for respondents to indicate their agreement level in relation to the statements. (see Appendix “D”: the questionnaire).

Cooper and Schindler (2003) propose a number of considerations to be made during pre-testing. These have been briefly discussed below.

- *Meaning-* It was important to determine whether or not the meaning intended by the researcher was clear to the respondents. This was a concern of note since the researcher had adapted the questions to suit a WrC environment. The pre-test did not reveal any concerns in this regard.
- *Continuity and flow-* The instructions on the questionnaire needed to be particularly clear since the questionnaires were to be self-administered. The pre-test revealed that the statements were clear and the questions easily understandable.
- *Participant interest-* The reaction to the study and the questions can be determined by observation, amongst other things. During the pilot study the

researcher noted interest in the study and at times, a curiosity to understand the specific objectives of the study.

- *Question transformation-* This is intended to determine whether or not the respondents derive the same meaning from the questions as intended by the researcher. Upon explaining the theory of IM and its influence on ESQ, respondents were better equipped to prescribe the appropriate meanings to the questions.
- *Length and timing-* The initial response from respondents was that the questionnaire was too long and had too many questions. However, upon completing the questionnaire they found that the ten-minute allocation for completion was adequate or more than ample time for completion. Hence, there was no additional time given during the data collection for the study.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION

3.9.1 Secondary Data

This data was collected in focus group discussions earlier in the year at an orientation session involving the same tutors who have completed the questionnaire. The tutors were grouped according to the WrC in which they work. Colleagues were required to respond to a set of questions and give feedback to the entire group. None of the managers sat in on any of the sessions. This ensured that tutors were free to express their sentiments without fear of prejudice. Appendix “F” outlines the questions and provides a summary of the responses given in the discussions.

3.9.2 Primary Data

In order to ensure that this study is firmly embedded within the required research ethics, the researcher sent out emails to the WrC Co-ordinator, who is the overall head for all the WrCs at the institution, as well as the different managers before an email was sent to the tutors at the relevant WrCs. This email had the information

letter, ethical clearance and IREC approval letter attached to it for their information (Appendix “C” contains the information letter while Appendix “G” the ethical approval and the IREC approval). The nature of the research was explained to the WrC coordinator in a meeting in which he gave verbal support for the exercise. Participants were allowed to ask questions and address any concerns during that time. Thereafter, it was made clear to the participants that participation was voluntary and withdrawal from the process would not attract prejudice. The signing of consent forms was proof that no coercion was used.

Data was collected using the survey design methodology. Due to the fact that the tutors work in shifts, data collection was done in four phases over a three-week period. Each WrC was put into a phase in order to better manage the data collection. The initial data collection time had to be extended by a week as some of the respondents had not returned the completed questionnaires. In the case of the tutors based in Pietermaritzberg (PMB), the researcher had to go and collect the completed questionnaires. The table below details the strategy employed in terms of time spent on data collection.

Table 3.3: Phases of data collection

Phase	Campus/ WrC	Date and Activity
1	Steve Biko	17/10/2016 to 21/10/2016 Data collection
2	City	20/10/2016 to 25/10/2016 Data collection
3	M.L. Sultan	19/10/2016 to 28/10/2016 Data collection
4	Riverside and Indumiso	24/10/2016 to 4/11/2016 Data collection

Source: Researchers own

3.10 DATA STORAGE

Data collected during the process of research and all documents related to the research were stored physically where possible and electronically on Microsoft Excel and SPSS. It will be kept securely and stored by the researcher for a period of five years. Only original documents were stored and all copies were destroyed. The privacy of individuals will be safeguarded by limiting access to the data to the researcher and the research supervisor.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

The quantitative data collected was analysed by use of “one of the major computer packages for analysing quantitative data,” which is the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Version 23 of this package was used in the analysis of qualitative data (Foster 2006).

The qualitative data is analysed by coding the text segments and thereafter labels will be assigned. Similar codes will then be aggregated into themes. The data analysis will be based on the meaning and values the participants perceive for their context (Creswell 2003).

These methods will be combined within one study in order to:

- Explain quantitative results with the aid of qualitative data;
- Utilise both quantitative and qualitative data to produce well-validated conclusions; and
- Use qualitative data to support the quantitative data.

3.12 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data obtained from the questionnaires is analysed by the use of descriptive and inferential statistics.

3.12.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to summarise measures and for this study they will be used to summarise the central tendency measures of the INTSERVQUAL scores. These include the arithmetic mode, mean and median. Dispersion or variability is concerned with the standard deviation, the variance and the range of the INTSERVQUAL scores of the tutors. The variation of the arithmetic mean can be computed to determine how the real arithmetic mean may move. The data is said to be representative when the internal consistency is high (Maree 2007).

The data set is tested for internal consistency. There has not been a specification on the minimum Cronbach's Alpha value that is permissible. The general rule is that the coefficient should be 0.7+. Reliabilities of 0.5 and 0.6 have been accepted for early stages of research. However, in complete a coefficient of 0.9, where 0.9 is the desired standard when the results are to be used for decision-making (Nunnally 1967). Additionally, a high coefficient value may not be desirable because a high alpha value for the entire scale could be indicative of the absence of a dimensional structure. The high alpha value could denote poor design of the INTSERVQUAL instrument. It could indicate that the respondents perceived duplication of the items on the scale.

3.12.2 Frequencies and percentages

Frequencies assist in determining whether or not the distribution is even across categories. It will also reveal any clusters (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell 2005). Frequencies are commonly displayed in bar graphs and pie charts. Skewed responses are common in instances where a population group feels strongly about a particular item. Percentages help by making data easier to compare and contrast. Graphs have been used to depict results.

3.12.3 Inferential statistics

This type of analysis is concerned with hypothesis testing. The independent t-test is the most commonly used parametric test for the measurement of intervals. In this

study, it would relate to the significant difference between perception and expectations of ISQ. The inferential statistics are conducted on the basis of the INTSERVQUAL dimension scores and the demographic variables.

3.12.4 Factor analysis

Maree (2007) highlights the purpose of factor analysis as being for the determination of the particular items that “belong together”. This is determined by the fact that they are answered similarly and hence measure the same dimension or factor. This is also referred to as “common factor analysis”. It is also useful when a researcher needs to use a few hypothetical factors to represent a number of questions. Such is the case with the use of the INTSERVQUAL instrument where, in this study, twenty items are represented by five variables. Items that are measured on a 5-point or 7-point Likert scale are ideal for this type of analysis. This study utilises a 7-point Likert scale, hence factor analysis was applicable.

3.13 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

3.13.1 Validity

According to Jupp (2006), validity is defined as the degree to which conclusions drawn from research provide a precise “description of what happened or a correct explanation of what happens and why”. SERVQUAL has scored well with high reliability and is consistent when it comes to factor structures across several independent samples (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988).

Jupp (2006) additionally posits that “the assessment of the overall validity of conclusions drawn from a research project can be made by addressing three aspects”. The first of these is termed “validity of measurement”. In this case the question is to whether or not the research instrument, and in this case, the INTSERVQUAL battery, actually measures what it purports to (Jupp 2006). Secondly, is “validity of explanation”, which has also come to be known as internal validity. It authenticates explanations and deductions drawn from research in relation

to the specific constructs and subjects within the context they have been researched. Thirdly, there is “validity of generalisation” or external validity. This encompasses determining whether the deductions drawn from the study can be generalised to other people (population validity) and other contexts (ecological validity). For this study, the conclusions cannot be generalised because it is a case study and the results are applicable and specific to this particular study. Furthermore, Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) advance the idea that the measures utilised in the development of the SERVQUAL instrument satisfy both qualitative and quantitative evaluative requirements.

3.13.2 Reliability

Jupp (2006) posits that reliability is the degree to which an assessing device gives consistent outcomes. Jupp (2006) also identifies three comprehensive methods of evaluating reliability. The first is the, “test-retest reliability” which “involves administering the same test to the same set of respondents but on different occasions. Correlation coefficients are calculated to compare the different data sets. The higher the coefficient, the more reliable the measuring instrument. Values of 0.7 are considered good. The problem with test-retest reliability is that individuals may become familiar with items and simply answer on the basis of their memory of what they answered on the previous occasion”. Also, for this study this method may not be possible since the researcher may have only one opportunity to collect data.

The second type is “alternate-form reliability” (Jupp 2006). For this, the same variable is measured under different item names. The split halves method is used where the sample is tested at two separate times or two samples are tested at the same time on condition that the two sub-samples are very similar. In order to measure reliability and compare the two data sets, the correlation coefficients are computed.

The third assessment Jupp (2006) identified is that of “internal consistency reliability” which “involves using groups of items (as opposed to a single item) to measure different aspects of the same concept. Internal consistency is measured by Cronbach's alpha, which is a measure of how well the different items complement

each other in measuring the same concept and form a single scale” (Jupp 2006). This study employed this method to test reliability.

3.14 CONCLUSION

Chapter three addressed the approach taken for research methodology. It has been expressed to highlight adherence to appropriate and relevant application of the different techniques in conducting research. The next chapter presents the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The presentation of data collected is necessary to attempt to answer the research questions in this study. This evidence will be essential in providing the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the data. This data will also be essential in addressing the objectives of this study. The research findings are presented in two sections. Firstly, the primary data is discussed and then the findings of the secondary data are presented in the second section of this chapter.

4.2 INTSERVQUAL APPROACH

The INTSERVQUAL instrument, which is a modified SERVQUAL instrument, was utilised to measure ISQ in this study. The RATER dimensions are measured in this study to determine what DUT WrC tutors perceive concerning ISQ. The tutors ranked perceptions and expectations of ISQ at DUT WrC' by using a seven-point Likert scale. Parasuraman *et al.* (1985) forwarded the following formula to determine perceived SQ, which was used in this study to determine perceived ISQ.

$$Q (\text{Quality}) = P (\text{Perceptions}) - E (\text{Expectations})$$

The net satisfaction expected by each tutor is determined by subtracting the perceived rating from the expected rating.

The internal gap score is calculated for each respondent using the formula adapted from Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990). The formula is presented below:

$$ISQ = P_i - E_i$$

ISQ =INTSERVQUAL score for a single dimension

P_i = the individual's perception of the performance of stimulus i with respect to a single dimension.

E_i = the individual's quality expectation for that single dimension.

4.3 RESPONSE RATE

Chapter three of this study highlighted that data was collected by means of self-administered questionnaires. These were left at the different WrCs for respondents to complete. The questionnaires were completed by WrC tutors who were employed at the various WrCs between October 17th and November 11th 2016.

Data collection realised a total of 33 out of the expected 36 questionnaires being returned. This equates to a response rate of 86%. Of the 33 questionnaires returned, two were rejected. This was due to a pattern being identified within the responses, indicative of the notion that a participant selected the same response throughout, denoting that a true response was probably not given. As a result, a total of 31 questionnaires were usable for the data analysis.

4.4 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

The biographical characteristics of the respondents in this study are presented in this section. These are the gender of the respondents, their ages, nationalities, tenure and qualifications. These assisted in analysing the data presented.

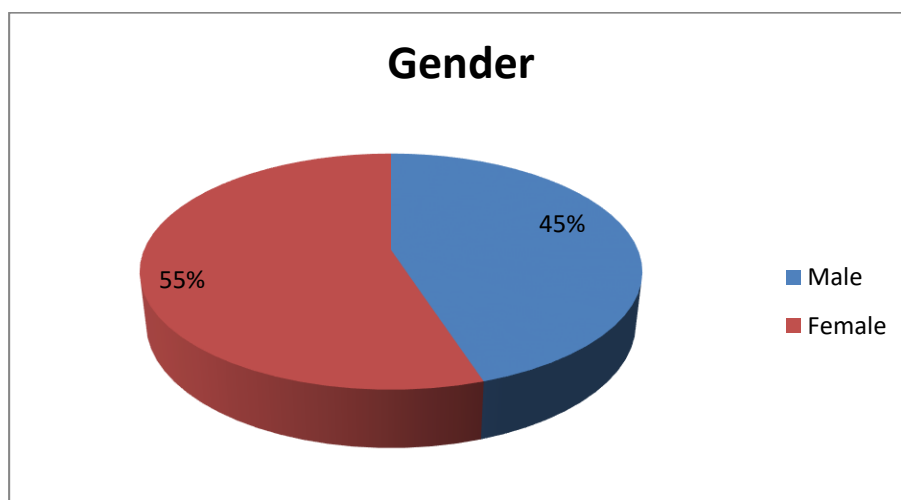
4.4.1 Gender

Figure 4.1 below shows the gender split of the participants in the study. The sample comprised more female respondents (55%) than male respondents (45%). All respondents indicated their gender. This reflects the biographic profile of the DUT WrCs at the time of the study. The statistics reveal that the majority of the tutors at the DUT WrCs are female.

Table 4.1: Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	14	45.2
Female	17	54.8
Total	31	100.0

Figure 4.1: Gender of respondents



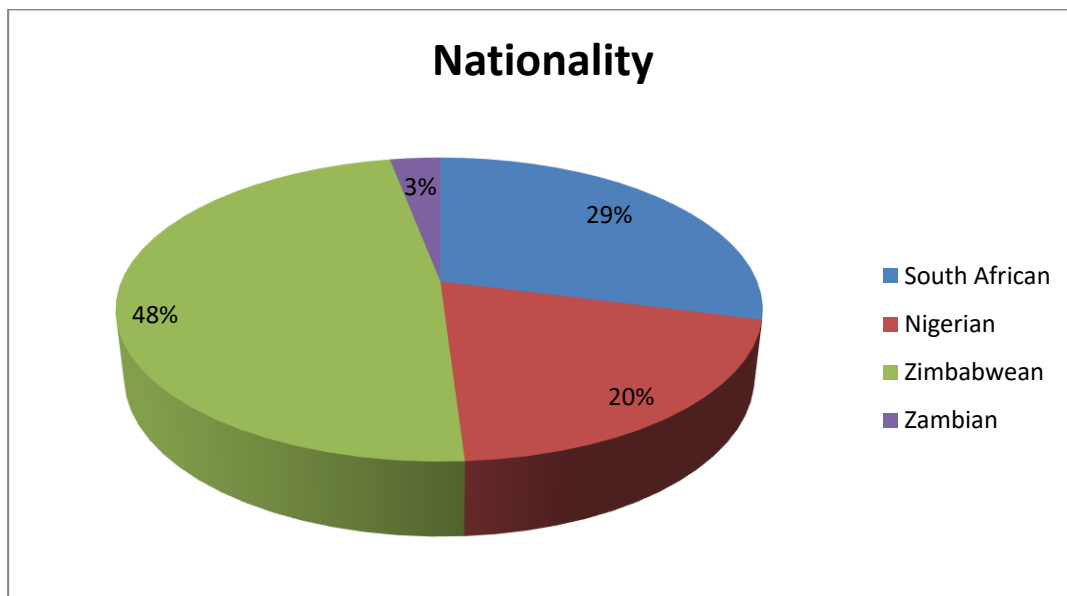
4.4.2 Nationality

Figure 4.2 depicts the nationalities of the participants in this study. Four distinct segments emerged. It was found that 29% were South African; 20% were Nigerian; 48% were Zimbabwean nationals; and 3% were Zambian. The findings indicate that the majority of the tutors were Zimbabwean. South African nationals accounted for 29% of the total population in the study. This made the sample quite heterogeneous and representative.

Table 4.2: Nationality

	Frequency	Percent
South African	9	29
Nigerian	6	20
Zimbabwean	15	48
Zambian	1	3
Total	31	100

Figure 4.2: Nationality



4.4.3 Qualification

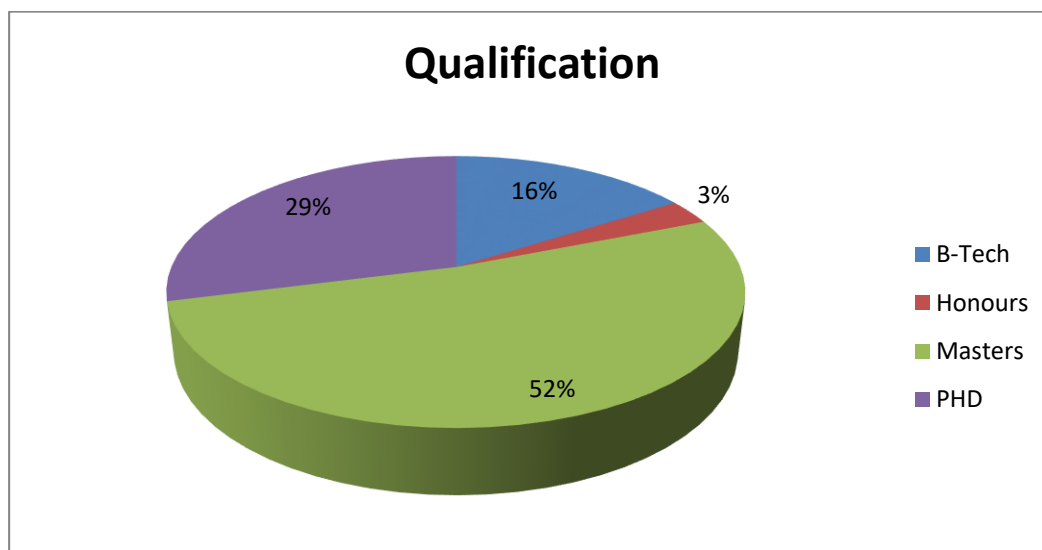
One of the demographic questions asked in the study pertained to the level of study or the highest academic achievement attained. This demographic variable revealed the following: The Wrcs' tutors comprise 16% at B-tech level; 52% at Masters; 3% at Honours; and 29% at PHD level. It was found that the majority of the tutors (52%) are at Masters level. After combining the two, Masters and PhD levels, it was found

that 81% of all the tutors were studying towards or had attained their PhDs or Masters qualifications.

Table 4.3: Qualification

	Frequency	Percentage
B-Tech	5	16
Honours	1	3
Masters	16	52
PHD	9	29
Total	31	100

Figure 4.3: Qualification



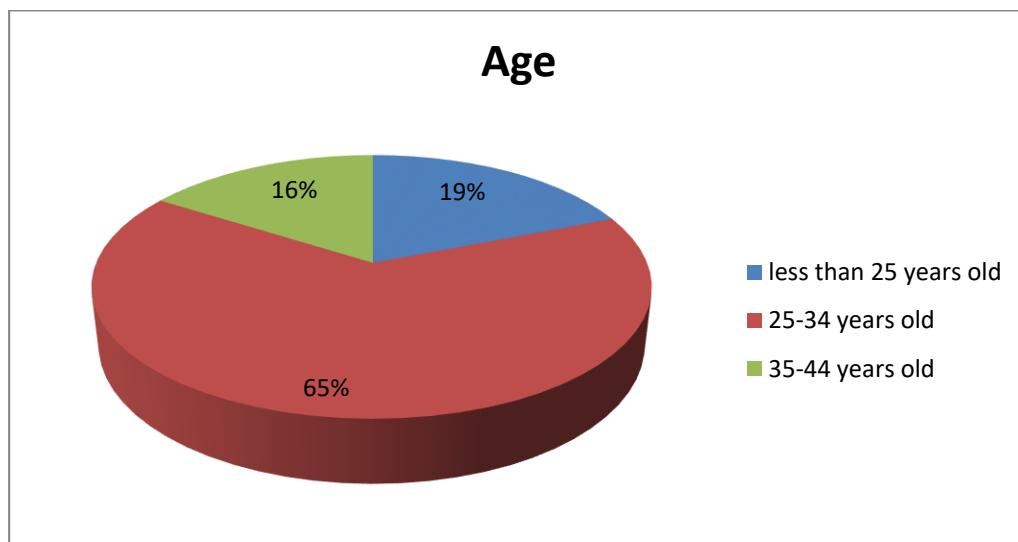
4.4.4 Age

Figure 4.4 displays the distribution of tutors according to age. It highlights that 65% of the respondents fell into the 25-34-year age group; 19% were less than 25 years of age; and the lowest percentile was for those who fell into the 35-44 years' age group, who made up 16% of the total.

Table 4.4: Age

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 25 years old	6	19
25-34 years old	20	65
35-44 years old	5	16
Total	31	100

Figure 4.4: Age of respondents



4.5 CRONBACH'S ALPHA

According to Leech, Onwuegbuzie and O'Conner (2011), Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency. It measures the extent to which an instrument can produce replicable scores and it is a summarised statistic measure of the reliability of the responses given to the statements within a questionnaire. Leech *et al.* (2011) notes that it also highlights the sample's response pattern and is mostly used to determine the reliability of scales such as the Likert scale. It in turn was used to calculate the reliability coefficient in this study. The Cronbachs Alpha reliability

coefficient's range is from zero to one. The lowest acceptable reliability score is 0.70 (Helm *et al.* 2006).

4.5.1 The Reliability in this study

Two main scales of expectations and perceptions were found to be reliable as the Cronbach alpha for both scales were above 0.70, which is above the minimum expected level. The reliability for the expectations scale was 0.88, while the coefficient alpha for the perceptions scale was 0.95.

Reliability of the two scales

Table 4.5 Cronbach alphas for the main scales

Main Scales	Expectations α	Perceptions α
Cronbach Alpha coefficient	0.88	0.95

The Cronbach alphas were also calculated for the sub-scales. The calculations were done for the expectations scale and the perceptions scale. These were all found to be reliable, being above the minimum acceptable of 0.70. The Table 4.6 below depicts this.

Table 4.6 Cronbach alphas for the sub-scales

Sub scale	Expectations α	Perceptions α
Reliability	0.72	0.93
Assurance	0.74	0.88
Tangibles	0.85	0.84
Empathy	0.79	0.85
Responsibility	0.85	0.96

4.6 More descriptive information

The following table presents descriptive data based on the two main scales, that of expectations and perceptions along with all the sub-scales in each of those main scales. The Cronbach's alphas for each of the scales are also given in the table.

- **Minimum statistic**

This represents the lowest score recorded for each and every scale in the table.

- **Maximum statistic**

This represents the highest score recorded for each of the scales. For example, reliability had a score of 35, while responsiveness had a score of 28. Participants' responses can be analysed by referring to the minimum and maximum scores.

- **Standard deviation**

This measures the deviation of scores from the obtained mean. In other words, it records the dispersion of scores from the recorded mean of a particular scale.

The column reporting the Cronbach alphas for all the scales is the most important. It validates the reliability of the scales. The issue of the reliability of the scales has been discussed earlier in this chapter.

- **Skewness**

Skewness is one of the two numerical measures used to describe the shape of a distribution. Maree (2007) describes skewness as a measure that "describes how far the distribution deviates from symmetry". When data has a longer tail to the right it is considered to be positively skewed and when it is "spread out to the left or lower end of the scale the distribution is negatively skewed" (Maree).

- **Kurtosis**

Kurtosis is a measure describing how peaked or flat a distribution is. Kurtosis can be said to be normal, abnormally peaked or abnormally flat. Positive values indicate that the distribution is abnormally peaked; negative values indicate that it is abnormally flat and values equal to zero or close to it are indicative of normal kurtosis (Maree 2007).

- **Mean**

The mean is a commonly used measure of location, a statistical average calculated by dividing the total of all values by the number of values (Maree 2007). The recorded means in the table represent the average scores recorded for the expectations and perceptions scales, as well as the sub-scales in the study.

Table 4.7: Descriptive statistics

Scale	Minimum statistic	Maximum statistic	Mean statistic	Standard deviation	Skewness statistic	Skewness std error	Kurtosis statistc	Kurtosis std error	α
Total Expectation	105.00	140.00	129.16	10.18	-0.89	0.42	-0.10	0.82	0.88
Total perceptions	54.00	138.00	108.10	20.86	-1.12	0.42	1.15	0.83	0.95
Expectations-reliability	24.00	35.00	32.48	3.04	-1.13	0.42	0.68	0.82	0.72
Expectations-responsiveness	14.00	21.00	19.61	2.01	-1.40	0.42	1.13	0.82	0.85
Expectations-empathy	17.00	28.00	25.77	2.79	-1.80	0.42	3.48	0.82	0.79
Expectations-assurance	20.00	28.00	26.61	1.96	-1.74	0.42	3.08	0.82	0.74
Expectations-tangibles	10.00	28.00	24.68	4.20	-1.74	0.42	3.74	0.82	0.85
Perceptions-reliability	13.00	35.00	28.58	6.23	-1.25	0.42	0.94	0.83	0.93
Perceptions-responsiveness	14.00	21.00	19.61	2.01	-1.40	0.42	1.13	0.82	0.95
Perceptions-empathy	10.00	28.00	20.74	5.12	-0.34	0.42	-0.64	0.82	0.85
Perceptions-assurance	20.00	28.00	26.61	1.96	-1.74	0.42	3.08	0.82	0.88
Perceptions-tangibles	10.00	28.00	19.51	5.28	-0.08	0.42	-1.03	0.82	0.84
Tenure	2	48	21.13	13.41	0.31	0.42	-0.60	0.82	

4.7 Independent Sample T-Test

This test was conducted to note any expectation or perception differences between male and female tutors at DUT WrCs. This was done by testing both scales.

The results obtained from this test are detailed below.

INTSERVQUAL perceptions scale

Table 4.8 Levene's test for equality of variance and T-test for equality of means

	F	Sig	t	df	Sig(2-tailed)
Total Perceptions	0.63	0.43	-0.74	28	0.47
			-0.72	23.96	0.48

An Independent sample t-test was conducted in order to determine whether or not there were any notable perceptual differences between male and female tutors at DUT WrCs. The results obtained from the test were as follows. The mean perceptions for females (M= 129.59) was higher than the mean for males (M= 128.64). The results indicate that there is a small difference between the perceptions of female and male tutors at DUT WrC tutors.

INTSERVQUAL Expectations scale

Table 4.9 Levene's test for equality of variance and T-test for equality of means

	F	Sig	t	df	Sig(2-tailed)
Total Expectations	0.64	0.43	-0.25	29	0.80
			-0.25	25.81	0.80

An Independent sample t-test was conducted in order to determine whether or not there were any notable "expectation" differences between male and female tutors at DUT WrCs. The results obtained from the test were as follows. The mean expectations for females (M= 129.59) was higher than the mean for males (M= 128.64). The results indicate that there is a small difference between the expectations of female and male tutors at DUT WrC tutors.

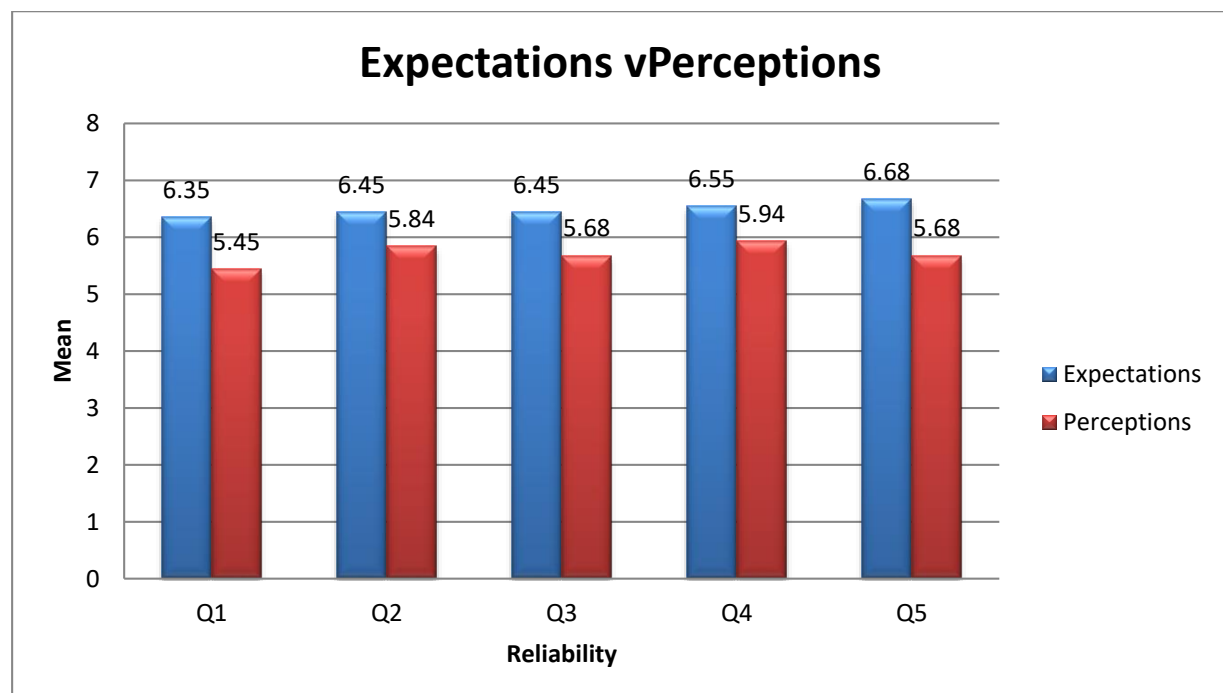
4.8 DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS OF EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS

This section addresses the specific expectations versus the perceptions for each of the five ISQ dimensions. The dimensions are discussed in relation to their individual items.

4.8.1 Reliability: Expectations versus Perceptions

Figure 4.5 shows the items covered in the dimension of reliability. The gap scores for the reliability items were for question one (Q1) relating to keeping promises 0.9; problem solving (Q2) 0.61; equipping for job performance (Q3) 0.77; keeping of service promises timeously (Q4) 0.61; and information sharing (Q5) 1.0. Of all the items under the reliability dimension, information sharing (Q5) was rated the highest expectation item while problem solving (Q2) and keeping service promises timeously (Q4) were rated the lowest expectation items.

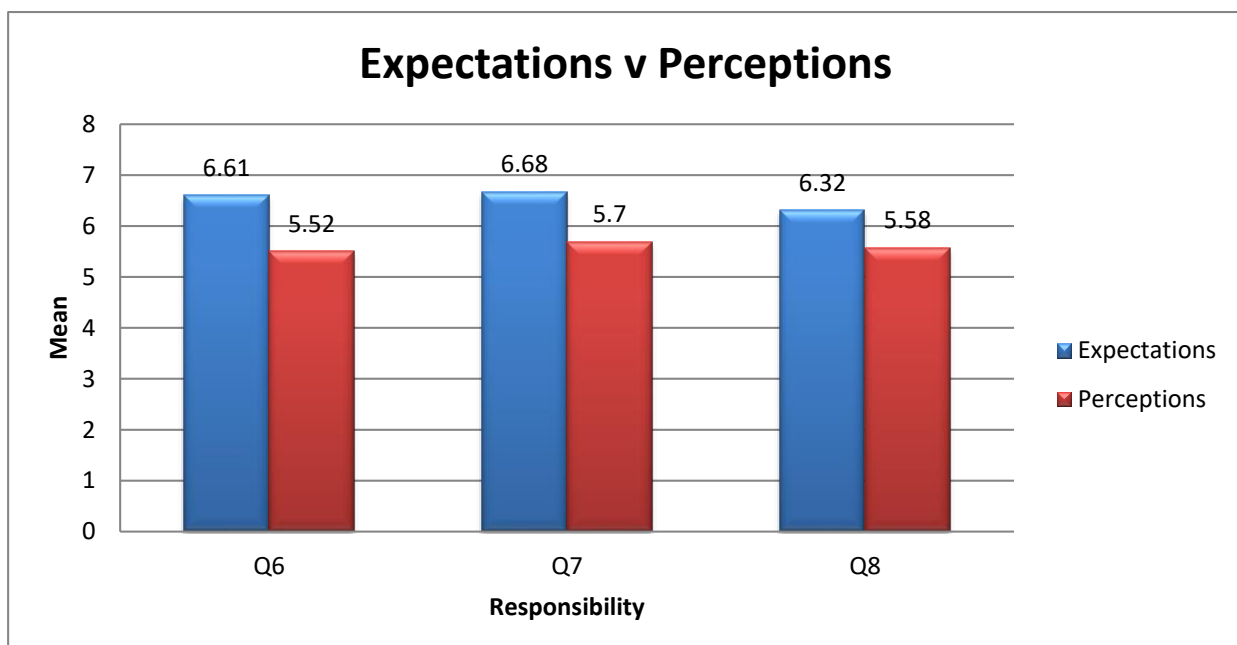
Figure 4.5: Reliability- Expectations versus Perceptions



4.8.2 Responsibility: Expectations versus Perceptions

Figure 4.6 highlights the items presented in the dimension of responsibility. The gap scores for the three responsibility items were for question six (Q6) relating to prompt service 0.9; being helpful (Q7) 0.98; and responsiveness to tutor requests and queries (Q8) 0.74; of the items under this construct. Prompt service (Q6) 1.09, was rated the highest expectation item. The lowest expectation item in this dimension was (Q8) 0.74.

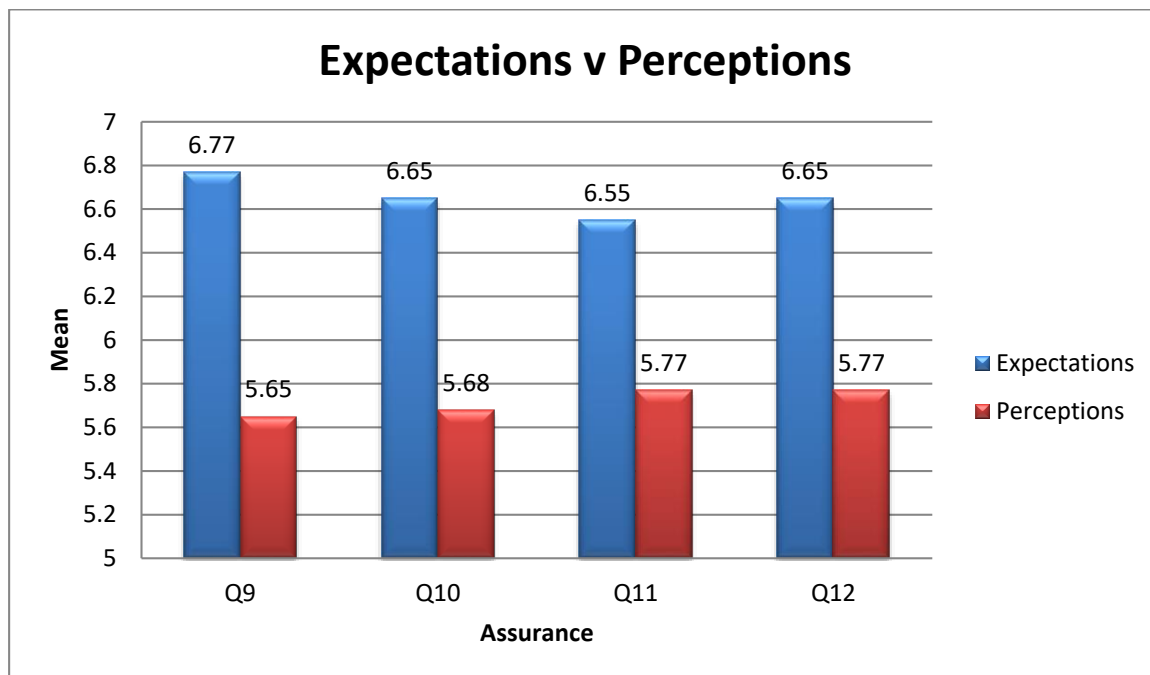
Figure 4.6: Responsibility-Expectations versus Perceptions



4.8.3 Assurance: Expectations versus Perceptions

The items under the dimension of assurance are depicted in Figure 4.7. The gap scores for the four items relating to assurance were for question nine (Q9) relating to instilling confidence 1.12; healthy relationships with management (Q10) 1.05; courteous interaction amongst tutors (Q11) 0.78; and knowledge sharing (Q12) 0.88. The highest expectation item emerged as being instilling confidence (Q9) 1.12 and the lowest expectation item was (Q11) 0.78.

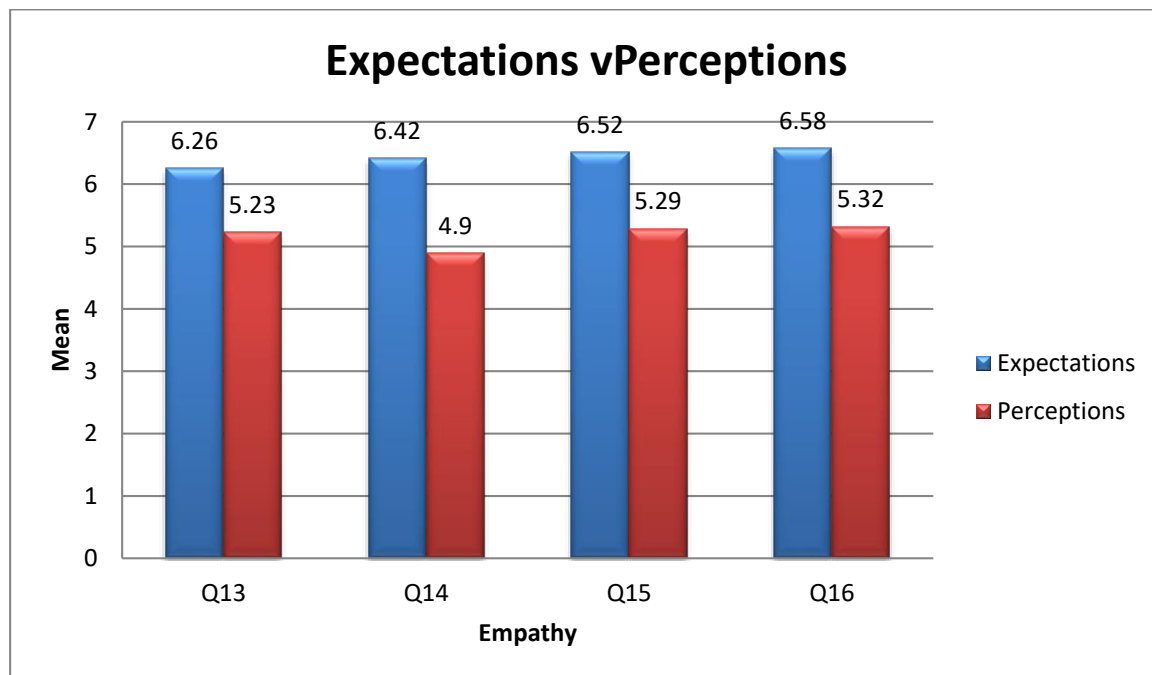
Figure 4.7: Assurance-Expectations versus Perceptions



4.8.4 Empathy: Expectations versus Perceptions

Figure 4.8 portrays the items presented in the empathy dimension. The gap scores for the four items relating to the empathy items were for questions thirteen (Q13) relating to individual attention 1.03; individual attention from management (Q14) 1.52; having tutor interests at heart (Q15) 1.23; and understanding internal needs (Q16) 1.28. The highest expectation item emerged as being individual attention from management (Q14) 1.52.

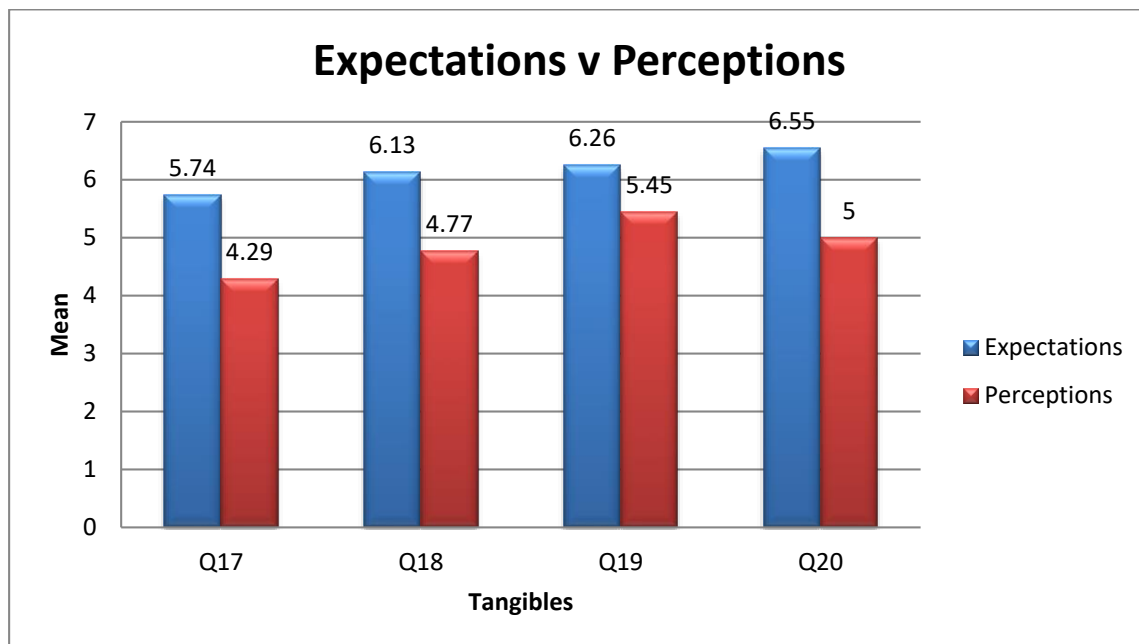
Figure 4.8: Empathy-Expectations versus Perceptions



4.8.5 Tangibles: Expectations versus Perceptions

Figure 4.9 below shows the items presented in the tangibles dimension. The gap scores for the four items relating to tangibles were questions seventeen (Q17) modern looking equipment scoring 1.45; physical facilities that are visually appealing (Q18) 1.36; neat and well-dressed colleagues (Q19) 0.81; and materials associated with the service (Q20) 1.55. Of the four items, materials associated with the service (Q20) was rated the highest expectation item, while neat and well-dressed colleagues (Q19) 0.81 was the lowest expectation item

Figure 4.9: Tangibles-Expectations versus Perceptions



The following table provides a summary of the data analysed quantitatively. It details the scores for each of the sub-scales under the expectations and perceptions scale. The gap scores are also highlighted in the table. The column for description states the particular statement for which the score was attained.

Table 4.10: Summary of quantitative analysis

Dimension	Statement	E	P	Difference	Description
Reliability	1	6.35	5.45	0.90	Keeps promises timeously
	2	6.45	5.84	0.61	Interest in problem solving
	3	6.45	5.68	0.77	Equipping for job performance
	4	6.55	5.94	0.61	Keeps service promises on time
	5	6.68	5.68	1.00	Communication and information sharing
Responsiveness	6	6.61	5.52	1.09	Prompt service
	7	6.68	5.70	0.98	Helpfulness
	8	6.32	5.58	0.74	Responsive to requests and queries
Assurance	9	6.77	5.65	1.12	Instills confidence
	10	6.65	5.68	1.05	Healthy relationship with supervisors
	11	6.55	5.77	0.78	Courteous interaction
	12	6.65	5.77	0.88	Imparts knowledge
Empathy	13	6.26	5.23	1.03	Individual attention received
	14	6.42	4.90	1.52	Individual attention from management
	15	6.52	5.29	1.23	Employee interests at heart
	16	6.58	5.32	1.28	Understands internal needs
Tangibles	17	5.74	4.29	1.45	Modern looking equipment
	18	6.13	4.77	1.36	Visually appealing physical facilities
	19	6.26	5.45	0.81	Neat and well-dressed colleagues
	20	6.55	5.00	1.55	Pamphlets and other internal documents visually appealing

4.9 GAP ANALYSIS

The researcher employed the procedures suggested by Zeithaml *et al.* (1990) to determine the final scores. The last three were not used as they were beyond the scope of this study.

- Subtract the expectation score from the perception score for each pair of statements ($P_i - E_i$)
- Add the scores on the statements pertaining to the dimension and divide the

sum by the number of statements making up the dimension;

Table 4.11 INTSERVQUAL gap score

Dimension	Expectations (E)	Perceptions (P)	Score (P-E)	Rank
Reliability	6.50	5.74	-0.76	4
Assurance	6.66	5.72	-0.94	3
Tangibles	6.17	4.88	-1.29	1
Empathy	6.45	5.19	-1.26	2
Responsiveness	6.54	5.60	-0.94	3
Mean	6.46	5.43	-1.04	

4.10 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD)

The FGD centred on tutors giving feedback on their opinions of what successes and challenges they have experienced at the WrCs. Tutors were grouped according to the campus on which the WrC is based and the responses were recorded by a scribe in every group.

4.10.1 Qualitative data analysis

The analysis was on-going and tended to be iterative. The collection, processing, analysis and reporting of data are intertwined. It is often difficult to separate the process into successive steps (Maree 2007). Common words, phrases, patterns or themes were identified in the responses from participants, which helped the researcher group them into respective themes.

4.10.2 Data coding

Coding is a process of marking data segments with symbols and descriptive words (Maree 2007). The themes then acted as collection points for significant data and as

a marker to the manner in which the data was to be rationalised or understood. This was done in relation to the overall study objectives. The process of coding enables researchers to retrieve data that they have associated with a thematic idea easily. The coded data can then be examined and differences as well as similarities noted in that respect.

The data was analysed by filtering through the responses identifying those that expressed any of the RATER dimensions, whether positive or negative. These were then grouped under the RATER themes. Table 4.12 shows how the thematic analysis was done.

4.10.3 Priori coding

Priori coding was used for the data analysis. Existing codes were identified as being the RATER dimensions and these were utilised in the qualitative analysis. These were identified during the literature review of the study. Therefore, the list of themes was used to search the data for statements and responses which fell into the identified categories.

4.10.4 Category verification

The transcript was re-read, as suggested by Maree (2007), to check whether or not all essential insights emerging from the data were captured during coding and categorisation. Maree (2007) further states that in order to bring meaning to the words, qualitative analysis has to do the following:

- Identify the themes or patterns, ideas, concepts, behaviours, interactions, incidents, terminology or phrases that will facilitate understanding.
- Organise them into coherent categories that summarise and bring meaning to the text.

The analysis in this study attempted to achieve both goals.

Table 4.12: Perspectives on ISQ at DUT WrCs

WrC Campus	Code	Theme	Statement
ML. Sultan	Challenges with manual booking system	Tangibles	18
	Reports to be given to students on time	Tangibles	17
	Tutors work collaboratively	Assurance	11
	Road-show was a success	Tangibles	17
	Media literacy project	Reliability	3
	Interaction with grade 4 learners	Reliability	3
	World Library day	Reliability	3
	Celebrating Birthdays	Empathy	13
	Open-mic event	Reliability	3
City	Tutors need to respect each other	Assurance	11
	Tutors need to meet appointments	Assurance	11
	Tutors need to adhere to policy	Assurance	11
	Consistency and uniformity	Assurance	12
	Computers are virus free	Tangibles	17
	Tutors get on very well	Assurance	11
	Team building for tutors	Tangibles	11
	Donation of books to the WrC	Tangibles	17
	Right and wrong techniques	Tangibles	18
Riverside	Strengthened relationships among tutors	Assurance	11
	Venue too small	Tangibles	18
	Printer needed	Tangibles	17
	IT system needs improvement	Tangibles	17
	Clarity oh how tutors can assist students	Reliability	3
	Stationary etc needed	Tangibles	20
	WrC banner to have images of PMB tutors	Tangibles	20
Indumiso	Road-show was a success	Tangibles	17
	Good relationships among tutors	Assurance	11
	Working area is small	Tangibles	18
	It problems such as viruses	Tangibles	17
	Clarity on tutor responsibility needed	Reliability	3
	Time management amongst tutors	Assurance	11
Steve Biko	Tutors get on very well	Assurance	11
	Celebration of birthdays	Empathy	13
	End of semester bring and share	Empathy	13

	On-line booking system a success	Reliability	3
	Cabinet needed to store tea and coffee	Empathy/ Tangibles	15
	Trays needed on every work station to help organise	Tangibles	17

4.11 KRUSKAL WALLIS TEST

The Kruskal Wallis H Test allows a researcher to compare the scores on a continuous variable for three or more groups. This analysis is between groups, hence the members in each group have to be different, without dual membership. Testing was done to determine if there is a difference in perceptions and expectations across the different age groups, different qualification levels and across the different nationalities.

Table 4.13: Age (Kruskal-Wallis test)

Age		N	Mean	Kruskal Wallis Chi-s	df	P
Total ISQ Expectations	Less than 25	6	17.17			
	25-34	20	15.25			
	35-44	5	17.60			
	Total	31		0.39	2	0.82
Total ISQ Perceptions	Less than 25	6	10.42			
	25-34	19	14.50			
	35-44	5	25.40			
	Total	31		8.58	2	0.01

Table 4.14 Qualification (Kruskal-Wallis test)

Qualification		N	Mean	Kruskal Wallis Chi-s	df	P
Total ISQ Expectations	B-Tech	5	18.60			
	Masters	16	14,66			
	PHD	9	16.11			
	Honours	1	23.50			
	Total	31		1.45	3	0.69
Total ISQ Perceptions	B-Tech	5	12.10			
	Masters	16	13.91			
	PHD	8	19.13			
	Honours	1	29.00			
	Total	30		4.99	3	0.17

Table 4.15: Nationality (Kruskal-Wallis test)

Nationality		N	Mean	Kruskal Wallis Chi-s	df	P
Total ISQ Expectations	South African	9	16.67			
	Nigerian	6	19.42			
	Zimbabwean	15	14.43			
	Zambian	1	13.00			
	Total	31		1.46	3	0.69
Total ISQ Perceptions	South African	9	13.67			
	Nigerian	6	16.83			
	Zimbabwean	14	15.32			
	Zambian	1	26.50			
	Total	30		2.10	3	0.55

4.12 PEARSON CORRELATION

Pearson's Correlation is used to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables (Pallant 2010). The Pearson product movement

correlation was employed for this analysis. It was needed to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between tenure and the two main scales (perceptions and expectations). The correlation with the sub-scales (represented by the RATER dimensions) is also presented in the table below. However, for the purposes of this study the relationship with the two main scales is what will be considered, where the strength of the relationship is determined by the size of the absolute value. Pallant (2010) goes on to suggest that the negative sign in front of the values means that there is a negative correlation between the variables.

The size of the value can range from -1.00 to 1.00. The value is indicative of the strength of the relationship between two variables. In the case of this study, it is tenure and expectations as well as tenure and perceptions. A correlation of 0 means that there is no relationship and a correlation of 1.00 signifies a perfect positive correlation. A value of -1.0 signifies a perfect negative correlation.

Pallant (2010) further alludes to the interpretation put forward by Cohen (1988) when she suggests the following guidelines when interpreting values between 0 and 1. These guidelines are what have informed the discussion on correlation in chapter 5.

- Small $r =$ 0.10 to 0.29
- Medium $r =$ 0.30 to 0.49
- Large $r =$ 0.50 to 1.0

A correlation analysis was done to determine the relationship between tenure and the variables measured in the study.

4.13 THE SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL

The statistical significance level does not communicate how strongly the two variables are related. Rather, the level of confidence to be expected in the results obtained is what it denotes. The significance of the Pearson correlation coefficient is to a large extent influenced by the size of the sample. Pallant (2010) advises that in a small sample such as $n = 30$, moderate correlations may be noticed that do not

reach statistical significance at the traditional $p < 0.05$ level. This is the case for the current study, where $n = 31$. Hence, focus in the discussion is given to the strength of the relationship.

Table 4.16 Tenure

		Total Exp	Total Percep	Rbty-E	Resp- E	Ass- E	Emp- E	Tan- E	Rbty- P	Resp- P	Ass- P	Emp- P	Tan- P
Tenure	Pearson correlation	-0.12	-0.09	0.02	-0.23	- 0.09	-0.38	- 0.12	0.05	-0.23	- 0.09	-0.09	-0.30
	Sig.(2 tailed)	-0.53	0.64	0.90	0.21	0.63	0.84	0.52	0.80	0.21	0.63	0.62	0.10
	N	31	30	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31

4.14 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the analysis of the data that was collected. The quantitative data was analysed by use of SPSS version 24 and then a GAP analysis was done to determine the ranking of the RATER dimensions. The qualitative data was analysed through priori coding and a thematic analysis was done of the secondary data from the FGD. This data is what will inform the discussion in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter forms the climax of the study. It explains the meaning of the results presented in chapter four. The significance of the findings will also be explained in relation to the research objectives.

5.2 DISCUSSION

The study objectives and questions served as a guide throughout this study. The main objectives were to establish WrC tutor's expectations and perceptions of ISQ and perform a gap analysis to determine the gaps in the internal SD. As highlighted in the literature review chapter of this study, IM formed the theoretical framework which informed the study. It is a theory which forwards the notion that employees can be and should be treated as customers. It posits that the same marketing efforts employed with external customers can be and should be employed internally. Frost and Kumar (2000) advocate the idea using the SERVQUAL instrument to measure ISQ and this is the approach that this study has followed.

The following discussion addresses the findings from the quantitative and qualitative analyses highlighted in the previous chapter. This is where the findings of the study will be combined/mixed in an effort to relate the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study. The first part will address the findings highlighted in Table 4.10, Table 4.11 and Table 4.12 in the previous chapter.

5.3 TANGIBLES

The tangibles ISQ dimension refers to the actual physical facilities, the materials and appearance of the service delivered. The gap score for tangibles (-1.29) was the

highest amongst the RATER dimensions. A seven-point scale was used for measurement. The expectations score of 6.17 was very high indicating that the participants really expect a great deal in terms of SD in this area. The FGD agreed with this finding. It also revealed the areas where tutors perceived ISQ to fall below expectations. The expectations included a printer, improved information technology systems, larger office space, a cabinet to store tea and coffee, stationery, a redress of the manual booking system and computers that are free of viruses.

The perceptions score of 4.88 was slightly above the median of 4. The FGD indicated that the online booking system, which was positively rated by some tutors, was still a pilot program at the Steve Biko campus WrC. Hence, the other campuses exhibited low perceptions about the booking system. The low score can also be attributed to the fact that the current study was undertaken after a fire had gutted the Steve Biko WrC offices, leaving nothing but ashes in most parts. Due to the fact that the Steve Biko WrC is housed within the Allan Pittendrigh library, the WrC operations were suspended for a week until an alternative venue was made available. The temporary tutor room was a room that is limited in space, with tutors using their personal equipment (for example, laptops and extension cords) during consultations. Both tutors and students likewise had to adjust to the conditions. This required the co-operation of all tutors, often requiring some to sit in the area outside the designated consultation room in order to create room for students with consultations.

The findings indicate that tutors are most dissatisfied with tangibles when it comes to SD in the WrCs. The largest gap was realised for the attribute relating to WrC materials being visually appealing. This indicates that the physical facilities need improvement. The smallest gap score was realised for the attribute relating to fellow tutors appearing neat and well dressed. This indicates that tutors feel that the salient dress code is adhered to.

5.4 EMPATHY

The empathy dimension is characterised by tutors receiving individual attention, having their best interests at heart, flexibility and a general understanding of internal environmental needs. The expectations score in this dimension was 6.45, which was considerably high. The score for perceptions was at 5.19. Although above the median score, it still fell short of expectations. This dimension had the second largest gap, indicating that when attempting to improve IM it should take second place on the priority list. The largest gap score was 1.52 and it concerned the item relating to individual attention received from management. The lowest gap score was 1.03 and it related to attention received from the WrC in general. Investing in improving perceptions about this dimension in ISQ will greatly improve the quality experience at the “moment of truth”. A feeling of being valued by employees will translate into motivation and improved external SD.

The FGD revealed that the perceptions score was influenced by the tutors’ expectation to have the WrC banner represent PMB tutors as well. The current banner only has images of tutors from the other WrCs (Steve Biko, City and ML. Sultan). This can cause employees to feel like they do not belong and they may possibly fail to identify with an organisation. Hence, the OCB which is sought after by every employer will not be realised. This negatively affects the “moments of truth” and the quality of external SD. Another aspect highlighted was the need for an improved rate of pay, which has not been adjusted for the last three years despite inflationary pressures.

The perceptions score was well above the median score, which can be attributed to two main things highlighted by tutors. They mentioned that they celebrated birthdays and some of the WrCs hold end of semester functions where they bring and share food. This positively influences the sense of belonging, directly linking to statements 13 and 14 in the questionnaire. This indicates that there is a need to improve ISQ on the empathy dimension.

5.5 RELIABILITY

The reliability ISQ dimension relates to the WrCs ability to dependably deliver and to perform the promised service to DUT WrC tutors. It measures whether problems are solved within a reasonable time, whether or not promises are kept and whether information related to work related resources is shared with tutors. The reliability expectation score was very high at 6.50 and the perception in this dimension was high as well, scoring 5.74. The scores indicate that tutors expect better ISQ than that being currently received. The highest gap score (1.0) in this dimension was for the attribute relating to communication with tutors as to when resources will be made available to them. The lowest gap score was for the attribute relating to problem solving.

The FGD highlighted that tutors felt ill-equipped to perform their duties. They cannot perform their job-related tasks correctly the first time. Tutors at both the PMB WrCs noted that they needed clarity or a guide on how best to assist students during a consultation. This contributed to the gap in the reliability dimension. The high perception score can be attributed to the Media Literacy project, which the tutors found to be informative. The World Library Day event had a similar effect, facilitating tutors to feel like they are involved in the overall mission of the WrCs. The meetings that are held every two months at some of the WrCs' to discuss WrC activities also contribute greatly to the positive perception of reliability at the WrCs. One of the other aspects that were pointed out as positively contributing to this dimension is the online booking system. Tutors at the Steve Biko campus spoke highly about this system, its effectiveness and user-friendliness.

5.6 RESPONSIVENESS

This dimension has been described as an ability and willingness to help and to respond to employee requests and queries. The expectations score was the highest recorded score on the expectations scale, measuring 6.54. The perceptions score for this dimension (5.60) reflects what tutors perceive as being the actual service

delivered. The highest gap score (1.09) was for willingness to help, while the lowest score (0.74) related to responsiveness to requests and queries.

Responses from FGD did not reflect any responses under this dimension. This could be attributed to the following reasons:

- This dimension is not easily articulated;
- Participants only responded to the statements on the INTSERVQUAL questionnaire without conceptualising what categories were inherent; and
- The FGD was analysed using an a priori method, hence the dimensions were not articulated to the participants beforehand.

5.7 ASSURANCE

This ISQ dimension refers to the WrCs ability to communicate trust and confidence to the tutors. It also involves its ability to inspire knowledge and courtesy amongst the tutors. Expectations scored 6.66, which indicate a very high level of expectation in this dimension. The perception score of 5.72 ranked lower than expectations though high on the scale. Confidence is a very important attribute for a tutor to possess, which can be achieved intentionally by creating an atmosphere in which tutors perceive themselves to be knowledgeable about the service they provide. Assurance greatly improves the quality of external SD and the moments of truth. The highest gap score (1.12) in this dimension was realised for the attribute of instilling confidence in the tutors. The lowest gap score (0.78) was for courteous interaction, indicating that more effort needs to be put into this area.

Responses from FGD revealed that the team building provided for tutors was well received and appreciated by the tutors. They also mentioned that there is a good relationship between tutors and management. This positively contributed to the perceptions score. The negative perceptions were attributed to complaints from some tutors about the conduct of fellow tutors. They highlighted a lack of professionalism, respect and courtesy. They highlighted the following:

- Tutors need to respect each other with regard to time keeping;

- Tutors need to adhere to policy and rules;
- Tutors need to turn up for commitments; and
- Courtesy amongst tutors needs to improve.

5.8 DISCUSSION ON THE KRUSKAL-WALLIS TEST

5.8.1 Age

The Kruskal-Wallis Test revealed that the significance level was more than 0.05 for the output for total ISQ expectations for the demographic variable of age. It was 0.82, suggesting that there is no difference in optimism levels across the different age groups. The highest optimism score was for the age group 35-44 years. The highest rank was 17.60 for this age group. The test revealed that the significance level for ISQ perceptions was less than 0.05, which means that there is a statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the three age groups. It measured 0.01. The highest optimism score was for the 35-44 age group with a mean of 25.40, while the lowest was for the age group which is less than 25 years of age. It was also revealed that perception and expectation scores across the dimensions for all the age groups were successfully researched. Hence, successfully fulfilling the aim of the research and addressing the research questions.

5.8.2 Qualification

The Kruskal-Wallis Test for the demographic of qualification revealed that the significance level for ISQ expectations was more than 0.05 at 0.69. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the four groups in the demographic of qualification. The test revealed the results for the ISQ perceptions to be more than 0.05 at 0.17, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the four groups as well. It was also revealed that perception and expectation scores across the dimensions for all the age groups were successfully researched. Hence, successfully fulfilling the aim of the research and addressing the research questions.

5.8.3 Nationality

The Kruskal-Wallis Test for the demographic variable of nationality revealed that the significance level for ISQ expectations was more than 0.05 at 0.69. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the four groups. When tested for the ISQ perceptions, it revealed that the significance level was higher than 0.05 at 0.55. This indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in the continuous variable across the four groups. It was also revealed that perception and expectation scores across the dimensions for all the age groups were successfully researched. Hence, successfully fulfilling the aim of the research and addressing the research questions.

5.9 CORRELATION

The correlation coefficients will be discussed in the following terms provided by Pallant (2010):

- Small $r = 0.10$ to 0.29
- Medium $r = 0.30$ to 0.49
- Large $r = 0.50$ to 1.0

There was a small negative correlation between tenure and SERVQUAL expectations, $r = -0.12$ and $n = 31$. There was also a small negative correlation between tenure and SERVQUAL perceptions, $r = -0.09$ and $n = 31$. Table 4.16 provides a summary of the Pearson correlation coefficients for the SERVQUAL sub-scales for each of the main scales.

5.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the results presented in the fourth chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings were presented in chapter five of this report. This chapter will provide a detailed discussion relating to the research objectives. Recommendations are also made in this chapter.

6.2 THE STUDY IN BRIEF

This study has focused on ISD perceptions and expectations held by tutors at DUT WrCs. This area is important because tutors operate in a service provision capacity. Scholars such as O'Neil (2005), Ahmed and Rafiq (2002), ElSamen and Alshurideh (2012) and Al-Hawary *et al.* (2013) have postulated the idea that ISQ directly affects external SQ. Hence, it being a precursor and an employer would do well to invest in its employees in order to positively influence the “moments of truth” in external SD.

The overarching aim of the study was to determine where ISQ gaps exist by use of a modified SERVQUAL instrument adapted for internal use (Frost and Kumar 2000). The results were analysed by means of the GAP analysis approach. Feedback from a FGD was also analysed by use of a priori method. The results were mixed in the discussion chapter. The following objectives informed the data collection and analysis.

The objectives of the study were:

- To determine Writing Centre tutors' expectations of internal service quality at DUT Writing Centres;
- To evaluate Writing Centre tutors' perceptions of internal service quality at DUT Writing Centres;

- To identify gaps between expectations and perceptions of internal service quality at the DUT Writing Centres; and
- To identify customer service expectations and perceptual differences in relation to biographical variables in the population.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS IN TERMS OF THE LITERATURE

Conclusions will also be presented in terms of literature. Conclusions in terms of the applicability of the IM concept will be presented and will be discussed in reference to the findings of the study. This section will also discuss conclusions in terms of the “Internal Service Quality Map” posited in this study, as well as how all the elements can be incorporated to improve internal SD at DUT WrCs.

6.3.1 Internal Marketing

Internal Marketing was presented as the theoretical framework of this study. EISamen and Alshurideh (2012) propose that a company should market its brand to its internal customers who are its employees and get them to appreciate the brand. This will ensure that the external customer will love it as well (Berry *et al.* 1994). Hence, the quality of the service provided to employees is essential to ensure the overall performance of the WrC (EISamen and Alshurideh 2012).

Berry (1984) in EISamen and Alshurideh (2012) describes IM as “viewing employees as internal customers, viewing jobs as internal products, and endeavouring to offer internal products that satisfy the needs and wants of these internal customers while addressing the objectives of the organisation”. In this study, this definition informed the way in which tutors were viewed as internal customers of a WrC.

Furthermore, Keller *et al.* (2006) concur that IM is the adoption of marketing-like tools to develop elements within the WrC with the aim of meeting employee needs. This idea is what motivated the researcher to design the Internal Service Quality map, an adaptation of the Service Quality map, which clearly displays what elements are required for ISQ to be excellent. The ISQ map is discussed next.

6.3.2 Internal Service Quality Map

The conclusions will be presented in terms of the seven elements required for excellent internal service quality to be realised by employees.

- **Service delivery**

This refers to the consistency of ISQ delivery. The WrC has to strive to devise an excellent internal SD strategy and strive for consistency in this regard. This can be ascertained through employee research and by using the findings from research, such as the current study, to tailor the internal SD to the needs of the tutors. It also alludes to the employees' views, opinions and perceptions about the quality of the service delivered.

- **Training and development**

Investing in the training and development of employees ensures that employees are able to deliver the promised service to the external customer. In this case, training tutors on how to handle various types of consultations increases their confidence levels and ensures excellent external SD. By implication, the "moments of truth" at the external SD point are positively influenced.

- **Resources**

This refers to all the facilities, equipment as well as fellow colleagues required to deliver the promised service to the internal customer. This study, through the FGD, corroborated the results of the quantitative approach, which indicated that the WrCs need to improve the "Tangibles" at the WrCs. The resource needs were identified and now have to be provided in order to attend to the gap revealed in this area.

- **Service recovery**

This refers to the way and tact in which employee concerns and challenges are identified and addressed in order to ensure that they do not recur. Employee research such as the current study, offers an avenue through which service recovery can be possible. The recommendations in this study serve to inform the service recovery strategy to be employed at the DUT WrCs.

- **Employee satisfaction improvement**

This refers to the way in which internal service quality is improved, recognised and met. For external service quality to be excellent, employee satisfaction has to be made a priority.

- **Employee research**

The methodology and tools utilised to determine employee expectations and perceptions of SQ comprise employee research. This study, which has utilised a mixed method approach employing FGD as well as the modified SERVQUAL battery, formed the approach utilised to determine expectations and perceptions of ISQ.

- **The employee service promise**

One of the dimensions measured in this study was that of “empathy”, which was ranked fourth. It ascertains employees’ perceptions of whether or not promises made are actually kept by the WrC. In this regard, the WrC hopes the tutor will experience and form an opinion about the WrC against its ability to keep its service promise.

The biographical concepts of age, gender, nationality, qualification and tenure were included in this study in order to determine their influence on tutors’ expectations and perceptions of ISQ. These variables were included as there is not much literature in the area of ISQ which highlights the effects and influence of these variables on employee expectations and perceptions of ISQ.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

6.4.1 Objective 1

To determine Writing Centre tutors' expectations of internal service quality at DUT Writing centres

The results detailed in Table 4.11 clearly show that for every item measured, the expectations for internal SD exceed the perceptions of internal SD. Employee dissatisfaction is realised when expectations exceed perceptions. Such is the case in this study. All the RATER dimensions (Table 4.11) reveal that expectations exceed perceptions. These gaps need to be addressed by the WrC as its employees expect excellent ISQ. Once again, this is of paramount importance as ISQ has been presented in this study as a precursor to external SQ.

6.4.2 Objective 2

To evaluate Writing Centre tutors' perceptions of internal service quality at DUT Writing Centres

Perceptions can be determined in relation to expectations. These are also directly linked to employee satisfaction levels as shown in this study. The findings presented in chapter four indicate that expectations on all the RATER dimensions exceed perceptions (Table 4.11). The results of the FGD indicate that there indeed exists a gap between expectations of ISQ and perceptions of ISQ. In some instances, for example with the WrC banner, the tutors were specific in pointing out some of the reasons why the perceptions are lower than the expectations.

6.4.3 Objective 3

To identify gaps between expectations and perceptions of internal service quality at the DUT WrCs

The GAP analysis method was utilised to identify the gaps between expected and perceived ISQ for all the RATER dimensions at DUT WrCs. A negative quality gap was realised for each dimension under investigation. The largest gap was in the

tangibles dimension with a gap of -1.29, followed by empathy with a gap score of -1.26. Third place was shared between the assurance and responsiveness dimensions with a score of -0.94. In fourth position was the reliability dimension with a gap score of -0.76 (Table 4.11).

6.4.4 Objective 4

To identify customer service expectations and perceptual differences in relation to biographical variables in the population

Data relating to biographic variables (age, gender, nationality, qualification and tenure) was collected during the data collection process. These were analysed in chapter four to determine the significant difference (p-values) in terms of expectations and perceptions in the sub-scales.

6.5 CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE ISQ DIMENSIONS

Conclusions also need to be drawn in terms of the RATER dimensions. The conclusions discussed in relation to research objectives pertained to the main scales being those of expectations and perceptions. Therefore, conclusions will now be discussed in relation to the RATER dimensions.

6.5.1 Reliability

This dimension was ranked in 4th place (-0.76) when the gap scores were computed by subtracting expectations from perceptions (P-E). On a scale of 1-7, the expectations were very high at 6.50 while the perceptions score was 5.74. This finding implies that tutors are dissatisfied with the current ISQ at DUT WrCs. The FGD indicated what areas could be improved to address this gap.

6.5.2 Assurance

This dimension was ranked in third place along with responsiveness. A gap score of -0.94 was realised. The score for expectations was 6.66, while that of perceptions was 5.72. The study revealed that more confidence needs to be instilled in the tutors in order for them to perform their job-related tasks more effectively and consequently influence “moments of truth” and external SQ.

6.5.3 Tangibles

This dimension showed the highest gap, with a score of -1.29. This implies that the WrCs need to improve the physical facilities. Some participants in the FGD indicated that consultation rooms were too small and restrictive, especially when consulting with a group of students working on an assignment or project. Additionally, the computers need to have up to-date software and information technology systems. Software such as “Whitesmoke”, “Turnitin”, “Endnote”, SPSS and the Internet are helpful during consultations and go a long way towards influencing the perceptions of external SQ. This also allows tutors to perform their job-related tasks effectively by influencing “moments of truth” and ultimately, external SQ.

6.5.4 Empathy

This dimension emerged as the one with the second largest gap score of -1.26. The study showed that in this dimension as well, the perceptions score (5.19) was lower than that of expectations (6.45). Resources can be directed towards improving the perceptions of ISQ under the empathy dimension. The ultimate goal once again for a service organisation is to ensure that the external customer and in this case, the tutee is satisfied with the quality of service received.

6.5.5 Responsiveness

This dimension was ranked in third place along with that of assurance, with a gap score of -0.94.

6.6 CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND ISQ

Conclusions will now be discussed in relation to the demographic factors and ISQ. It is important to note how demographic factors affect the perceptions of ISQ held by tutors at the WrCs. In so doing, management can effectively deploy resources with the right mix to positively influence ISQ perceptions.

6.6.1 Age

The study revealed that 19% of the respondents were in the less than 25 years old age group, 65% were in the 25-34-year-old age group and 16% were in the 35-44-year-old age group. The results also indicated a very significant difference between the expectations and perceptions scales (Table 4.13). The expectations score was highest in the 35-44-year-old age group and highest for perceptions in the 35-44-year-old age group once again. In addition, the lowest expectations score was for the 25-34-year-old age group, while, it was lowest on the perceptions scale for the less than 25 years old age group.

6.6.2 Nationality

The study revealed that 29% of tutors were South African nationals, 20% were Nigerian, and 48% were Zimbabwean, while 3% were Zambian. Furthermore, the results indicated a significant difference between the expectations and perceptions scales (Table 4.15). The expectations score was highest for Nigerian nationals and the perceptions score was highest for Zambian nationals. Furthermore, the expectations score was lowest for Zambian nationals, while it was lowest for the perceptions scale for South African nationals.

6.6.3 Qualification

The study showed that 16% of the respondents were B-Tech students; 3% were Honours students; 52% were either studying towards their Masters or were Masters holders; while 29% were either studying towards a PHD or had attained a PHD. In addition, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated a significant difference between the expectations and perceptions scales. The expectations and perceptions scores were highest for the tutors who were studying towards an Honours qualification. It also revealed that the lowest expectations score was with the Masters group, while the lowest for the perceptions scale was with the B-Tech (students).

6.6.4 Tenure

The findings showed that there was no relationship between tenure and the INTSERVQUAL dimensions.

6.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Employee research is necessary to ensure that they (employees) are equipped and sufficiently motivated to perform their job-related tasks.

- The WrC needs to prioritise the acquisition of larger consultation rooms for the two WrCs at Riverside and iNdumiso campuses in PMB. This will ensure that tutors are comfortable in their work environments.
- The WrC management must consider introducing the online booking system to the other WrCs as this will alleviate the challenges related to making bookings, writing reports, sending reports to students and will also do away with the need to store consultation forms.

- The WrC needs to consider preparing a code of conduct for tutors to adhere to in an effort to address the challenges relating to courtesy amongst fellow tutors.
- The WrC needs to produce a tutor guide with tools and step-by-step directions in some instances on how to handle a consultation or address certain issues in tutor sessions.
- The WrC must consider updating the banner that is used in promotions at road-shows and other WrC activities in order to reflect a proper representation of the WrCs staff complement.
- Management should procure an IT specialist to timeously attend to queries raised by the WrC. This individual can service all the WrCs on a rotational basis.

6.8 INDICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study focussed on WrC tutors at DUT. In future, the perceptions and expectations held by the management staff may also be researched. A gap analysis between the tutors' perceptions and expectations and those of the management staff can be done. A gap score between the two groups can be computed as well.

More research can also be conducted with other departments or programs that are staffed by tutors within the DUT to investigate ISQ. This will help improve external SQ in other departments and sections of DUT. In addition, future research may focus on comparing the gap scores for the RATER dimensions between the WrCs. Last but not least, once change has been implemented, the effectiveness of ISQ improvements should be measured in the various dimensions.

6.8 CONCLUSION

The importance of ISQ within a service-oriented organisation has been shown by highlighting how it can positively or negatively affect external SQ. For a service oriented organisation to survive, due attention needs to be given to improving the quality of the employee by improving the “job” product. In so doing, the “moments of truth” are positively influenced, leading to satisfied external customers.

One of the key factors influencing a customer’s perceptions of a service is their interaction with the staff delivering the service (Zeithaml and Bitner 2009). Employees then become pivotal in SD. IM, which has formed the theoretical framework of this study, alludes to this fact as well. It advocates for staff development through an improvement of the job product in order to enhance external SQ. The definition provided alluded to IM as being a methodology to employ, a process to be utilised internally, or to be coupled or grouped with other processes in the system in an effort to enhance external SQ. The literature revealed that it can be used effectively to motivate employees, especially those in service marketing.

The conclusions and recommendations presented in this chapter can be used by the DUT WrCs to inform their decisions in the area of internal SD with the aim of influencing external SD. Resources can be allocated and utilised effectively since the RATER dimensions have revealed through this study the areas that need urgent attention. When resources are scarce, research such as the current one assists decision makers on how and where to apportion limited resources.

This chapter marks the end of this report.

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Appendix A: Consent form



CONSENT

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

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

**Full Name of Participant
 Thumbprint**

Date

Time

Signature / Right

I, _____ (name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Full Name of Witness (If applicable) Date

Signature

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable) Date

Signature

Appendix B: Ethical Clearance



*Directorate for Research and Postgraduate Support
Durban University of Technology
Tromso Annexe, Steve Biko Campus
P.O. Box 1334, Durban 4000
Tel.: 031-3732576/7
Fax: 031-3732946
E-mail: moyos@dut.ac.za*

7th October 2016

Ms Sibongile R. Nhari
c/o Department of Public Management and Economics
Faculty of Management Sciences
Durban University of Technology

Dear Ms Nhari

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE DUT

Your email correspondence in respect of the above refers. I am pleased to inform you that the Institutional Research Committee (IRC) has granted full permission for you to conduct your research "Investigating Internal Service Quality (ISQ) at the Durban University of Technology (DUT) Writing Centres (WrC)" at the Durban University of Technology.

We would be grateful if a summary of your key research findings can be submitted to the IRC on completion of your studies.

Kindest regards.
Yours sincerely



PROF. S. MOYO
DIRECTOR: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT

Appendix C: Information Letter



LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: Investigating Internal Service Quality (ISQ) at the Durban University of Technology (DUT) Writing Centres (WrC).

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Sibongile Ruth Nhari

Qualification: (BComm Honours in Business Management)

Supervisor: Dr. Thokozani Ian Nzimakwe

Brief introduction and purpose of the study

Achieving organisational goals is not an easy task. This is directly related to the achievement of departmental goals. The human resource and marketing element is rarely integrated, and these departments hardly ever communicate about strategy. Internal Marketing offers a solution by combining the best of both practices. The study will investigate the service quality dimensions as they are perceived from the customer-contact employees' perspective. The study will utilize the GAP analysis approach to determine the differences between perceptions and expectations held by customer-contact employees; In this case the tutors of DUT writing Centre. SERVQUAL (Service Quality) dimensions will be researched in a local context.

Outline of the Procedures: All writing centre tutors are welcome to participate. Responses may be completed at your work station. The questionnaire will take 12 minutes to complete. There are two questionnaires each requiring six minutes to

complete. The first one measures your perceptions and the second one measures your expectations. These will be captured and analysed by use of SPSS version 23 to determine the gaps in the internal service quality.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant: No physical risk or discomfort is posed by this research study and anyone is welcome to participate.

Benefits: The results of the study will be used for academic purposes. It is also intended for publication. A summary of findings will be provided on request. The participant will also benefit when their views and perceptions are taken into consideration when designing a conducive work environment.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study: The participant may be withdrawn due to illness, and non-compliance. The participant is free to withdraw from the study at any stage in the process. Such withdrawal will be received without prejudice.

Remuneration: No remuneration will be extended to the participants neither will there be any other incentive.

Costs of the Study: The participant is not required to cover any costs related to the study. Questionnaires along with pens will be provided in the data collection process.

Confidentiality: All responses and respondents will be kept confidential. No names are required to be filled in on the questionnaires. The managers will not be involved in the data collection. This is in a bid to ensure confidentiality.

Research-related Injury: there will be no compensation for any research related injury as provision for this had not been made. The researcher deems it unlikely due to the nature of the research.

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

1. **Researcher:** Sibongile R. Nhari
Management Sciences
Department of Public management
Mobile: 0834965649
Email: Sponge75@gmail.com

2. **Supervisor:** Dr. Thokozani Ian Nzimakwe
School of Management, IT& Governance (UKZN)
Private Bag X54001,
Durban,
4000
Tel: +27 (0)31 260 2606/7951
Mobile: +27 (0)82 959 2635
Email: nzimakweth@ukzn.ac.za

3. **Institutional research Ethics Administrator**
Lavisha Deonarian
Email: lavishad@dut.ac.za
Tel: +27 (0)31 373 2900

4. **Director: Research and Postgraduate Support**
Prof S. Moyo
Tel: 031 373 2577
Email: moyos@dut.ac.za

Appendix D: Service Quality Questionnaire

INTERNAL SERVICE QUALITY SURVEY

Thank you for completing this survey. This questionnaire will measure the difference between the *expectations* and *perceptions* you have of your departments' internal service delivery. What will be measured is the gap between what you think your organization *should do* and what you *actually* experience it to be.

The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The first section asks for demographic information. The second section will follow with questions about an excellent department. All information will be kept confidential.

Section A

1. How long have you been working at the Writing Centre? _____
2. What qualification are you studying towards? _____
3. What nationality are you? _____
4. Gender : **Tick** Male ☐ Female ☐
5. What range does your age fall into: **Tick**

Less than 25 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>
25-34	<input type="checkbox"/>
35-44	<input type="checkbox"/>
45-54	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section B

Based on your experience as an employee please think about the kind of Writing Centre you would like to work for. **Show the extent to which you think an excellent Writing Centre will possess the feature described in each statement.** Circle the response that closely corresponds to your opinion. "1" means you strongly Disagree with the statement, while circling a "7" means you strongly agree.

Employees SERVQUAL scale

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
1. When an excellent Writing Centre promises to do something by a certain time, it is done	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. When an employee has a problem, an excellent Writing Centre shows sincere interest in solving it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. An excellent Writing Centre will equip its employees to perform their job related service tasks correctly the first time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. An excellent Writing Centre provides its service at the time it promises to do so	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. An excellent Writing Centre keeps its employees informed about when resources will be made available to them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. The excellent Writing Centre gives prompt service to its employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. The excellent Writing Centre is generally willing to help its employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. A Writing Centre which is excellent is never too busy to respond to employee requests and queries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. An excellent Writing Centre instills confidence in its employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. The excellent Writing Centre that fosters a healthy relationship between management and its employees provides excellent service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. An excellent Writing Centres' work environment fosters/encourages courteous interaction within the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. An excellent Writing Centre equips its employees with knowledge to answer client queries and attend to inquiries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. An excellent Writing Centre gives its employees individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. The management at an excellent Writing Centre gives employees individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. An excellent Writing Centre has its employees best interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. An excellent Writing Centre understands its internal environmental needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. An excellent Writing Centre has modern looking equipment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. An excellent Writing Centres' physical facilities are visually appealing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. The employees of excellent Writing Centres' appear neat and well dressed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Excellent Writing Centre materials associated with the service such as pamphlets and other internal documents are visually appealing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**The following page is Section C of the INTSERVQUAL instrument measuring
the Perceptions of the participant**

Section C

This section deals with statements about “your” Writing Centre. **For each statement please show the extent to which the Writing Centre has the feature described by the statement.** Circling a “1” means that you strongly disagree with the statement while circling a “7” means that you strongly agree with the statement.

Employees SERVQUAL scale

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
1. When an excellent Writing Centre promises to do something by a certain time, it is done	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. When an employee has a problem, an excellent Writing Centre shows sincere interest in solving it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. An excellent Writing Centre will equip its employees to perform their job related service tasks correctly the first time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. An excellent Writing Centre provides its service at the time it promises to do so	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. An excellent Writing Centre keeps its employees informed about when resources will be made available to them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. The excellent Writing Centre gives prompt service to its employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. The excellent Writing Centre is generally willing to help its employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. A Writing Centre which is excellent is never too busy to respond to employee requests and queries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. An excellent Writing Centre instills confidence in its employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. The excellent Writing Centre that fosters a healthy relationship between management and its employees provides excellent service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. An excellent Writing Centres’ work environment fosters/encourages courteous interaction within the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. An excellent Writing Centre equips its employees with knowledge to answer client queries and attend to inquiries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. An excellent Writing Centre gives its employees individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. The management at an excellent Writing Centre gives employees individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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19. The employees of excellent Writing Centres’ appear neat and well dressed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Excellent Writing Centre materials associated with the service such as pamphlets and other internal documents are visually appealing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix E: Pilot report

Pilot testing of research instrument: Service Quality Questionnaire

Research title: Investigating Internal Service Quality at Durban University of Technology Writing Centres

The purpose of pretesting is to make sure the instrument will collect accurate data. It also checks if the instrument is user friendly and understandable and free from errors. This was done by testing the instrument among University of KwaZulu Natal Wrc tutors by use of convenience sampling as they also work in a tutoring capacity. A total of five questionnaires were distributed to the tutors.

According to van Tieljlingen and Hundley (2002) the term pilot study can also be referred to as a feasibility study. It is a crucial element to a good study design and is likely to "increase the likelihood of success." Scholars such as Mujis (2011: 44) suggest that challenges related to the research design itself can be identified during the pilot stage. It is with this knowledge that the researcher tested the instrument in order to identify any potential problems with validity and reliability. Piloting allows the questionnaire to be evaluated in relation to the overall research objectives. According to Burns and Bush (2010: 210) a pilot study of the questionnaire opens it to criticism and comments from respondents who are typical of the main population before the main enquiry.

The pilot study revealed the following:

The comment	How it has been addressed
The time allocated for the responses was sufficient	The time allocated for responding was unchanged
Statements 4 and 9 in section A used the term department. It should read as Writing Centre like the other statements	This has been changed to Writing Centre for both statements
Section B The description was confusing. Some respondents may not understand it	The wording on the description has been changed, simplified
"Centre" should be prefixed by writing	Centre in sections A and B has been prefixed by writing
The questions were clear and easy to understand	These remain unchanged

Signed by:

Student name SIBONGILE R. DHARI

Signature  Date 10/10/2016

Supervisor NZIMAKWE T.I.

Signature  Date 10/10/2016

Appendix F: Focus group discussion minutes

First Session 9:15

Date: 29/01/16

Nonhlanhla Zuma (NZ) welcomed everyone to the session. She highlighted its importance since the tutors did not get the opportunity at the end of last year.

Purpose: Feedback from Wrc tutors for 2015 / one person in each group to give feedback.

ML Sultan

Challenges

- Challenges with the manual booking system. Tutors need to adopt uniformity.
- For example: The turnit-in report must be given the following day to the students.
- Tutors must maintain giving the wrc stamp on the 2nd or 3rd day of consultation and not on the first day.
- One tutor needs to deal with one particular long assignment instead of the student dealing with multiple tutors.
- The one hour booking time is sometimes not ample when a group of students need assistance.

Successes

- We work in a collaborative way.
- The Roadshow was hosted on our campus and it was a successful programme.
- More students were visiting the Writing Center after the Roadshow.
- Media Literacy Project took place during library week.
- We interacted with Grade 4 learners playing learning games in a fun way to grasp English.
- Teachers were very impressed.
- World Library day, we hosted Grade 2 students with games and fun ways of learning. It was well received and successful.
- Mandela Day was a day of community of service on which we donated sandwiches.
- 67mins clean-up of city campus and the park.
- Birthdays are also celebrated at our WRC.
- Open Mic event- first event included poetry, singing and public speaking.
- ML Library Manager was a guest at the open mic event- he encouraged programs to be continued.

City Campus

Challenges

- Tutors need to learn to respect each other, with regards to time keeping.
- Tutors need to turn up for commitments
- Tutors need to keep to policy and rules
- Consistency and uniformity is needed among the team members.

Successes

- It was reported that all computers are virus free. Tutors get on very well. There is a lot of team-building for the tutors.
- Social responsibility- Mandela Day- provided food to the Nest Shelter in the CBD
- Food parcels were also given during the xenophobic attacks.
- It is important to uphold the reputation and give back to the community.
- We have a blackboard classroom- text video and handouts are uploaded on the system.
- Regular meeting take place at the WRC to discuss what is taking place in the center. This happens once every 2 months.
- A handout was created called the Right and Wrong techniques based on experience.
- Eg. When to use TO and TOO
- Professor Anthony Collins donated many books to our mini library within the writing center.
- Purpose: encourage students to visit the Wrc and engage in social and pass-time reading.
- Books range from classics and contemporary
- It has been a very successful project.

Riverside Campus

Successes

- Increase in students at the WRC including undergraduates and post-graduate students.
- M-Tech and B-Tech
- Significant improvement in writing skills
- Referencing and essay structure improved
- We have a good relationship with the library eg: awareness drives in collaboration with the library which has encouraged students to visit the WRC.
- Recommended that the Roadshow be held in the 1st and 2nd semester.
- At the writing center relationships have strengthened amongst tutors

Challenges

- Venue is too small, a bigger venue is needed. During the end of the semester it becomes very busy with the center
- Printer needed/recommended.
- IT System needs improvement
- It is wise that there people on standby to update system when needed urgently.
- With regards to the Roadshow, it is important that lecturers attend these events to learn more about WRC and its function.
- Example: Clarity as to how the tutor can assistant the student.
- Resources such as stationery and other supplies needed at the WRC.
- WRC Banner should represent the PMB tutors as well.

PMB Campus

Successes

- Roadshow was very successful. However it is recommended that the even take place much earlier in the year.
- There has been a better turnout in consultations.
- Students from the PMB campus won the writing center competition- students were very motivated to better writing skills.
- Students on the whole need to be consistent through the different parts of the writing process.
- Great relationship amongst all the tutors. Everyone gets on very well.

Challenges

- Space to work is too small when dealing with large group of 3-6 coming in at once.
- There has been IT issues regarding viruses with the memory-sticks.
- Sometimes students are not receptive of corrections.
- Clarity on the responsibility of the tutor needs to be highlighted. Lecturers send though work for editing.
- Improve grammatical/English competency.
- Respect each other's time, sometimes there is a lack of courtesy
- Time Management – uniformity with all tutors.

Steve Biko Campus

Successes

- The writing competition really enhanced the image of the WRC in a positive light. We look forward to more events.
- Subsequently more students visited the WRC like undergraduates and thesis students.
- All tutors get on very well. Birthdays are celebrated and we have an end of the semester bring and share.

- We participated in the Library week as well as the Mandela Day events.
- Online booking system was piloted at the Steve Biko wrc
- Time Management- the online booking system works very well and is flexible.
- Email is sent to the tutor through the online booking system with regards the session booked and what the student expects to work on during the session.

Challenges

- Problematic – students book for more than one hour at a time.
- Every tutor must have a file for consultation forms.
- Consultation forms should not be kept on the desk. The writing space serves the purpose for the tutor and tutee
- A cabinet should be made available for tea and coffee.
- Lecturers have the misconception that tutors need to edit the work. Further clarity is needed on this issue.
- The responsibility of the tutor is to develop and reinforce proper writing skills.
- Sometimes certain lecturers recommend specific referencing guides- therefore this just creates added confusion between the tutor and tutee.
- At the writing center- the Harvard Referencing guide is used.
- A remuneration/salary increase is much needed.
- Overall, we share a very good relationship with tutors as well as management.

NZ thanked the participants for the feedback. It was indeed a great session. She noted that she has noted the issue of space and remuneration which is a recurrent theme. She noted that she hopes that these issues are addressed soon. One must remember that we have achieved so much since the opening of the WRC. Issues such as lecturer misconceptions and stamps are a major concern. Writing is the core business. Students must not just come in for that 10% at the WRC center.

Andrea Alcock highlighted that between 7am-10am on the 1st of February a “zip it and write” session will take place.

10:25hrs tea break

Prepared by: Karmeni Chetty

Appendix G IREC Approval



*Directorate for Research and Postgraduate Support
Durban University of Technology
Tromso Annexe, Steve Biko Campus
P.O. Box 1334, Durban 4000
Tel.: 031-3732576/7
Fax: 031-3732946
E-mail: moyos@dut.ac.za*

7th October 2016

Ms Sibongile R. Nhari
c/o Department of Public Management and Economics
Faculty of Management Sciences
Durban University of Technology

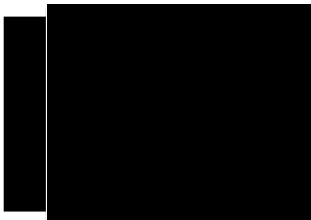
Dear Ms Nhari

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE DUT

Your email correspondence in respect of the above refers. I am pleased to inform you that the Institutional Research Committee (IRC) has granted full permission for you to conduct your research "Investigating Internal Service Quality (ISQ) at the Durban University of Technology (DUT) Writing Centres (WrC)" at the Durban University of Technology.

We would be grateful if a summary of your key research findings can be submitted to the IRC on completion of your studies.

Kindest regards.
Yours sincerely



PROF. S. MOYO
DIRECTOR: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT

Appendix H: Editor's Note

696 Clare Road

Clare Estate

Durban

4091

07 February 2017

Editing of Dissertation: Sibongile R. Nhari – Student Number : 21450651

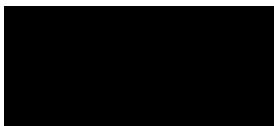
Case Study: Investigating Internal Service Quality (ISQ) at Durban University of Technology (DUT)

Writing Centres (WrCs) at the Durban University of Technology

This letter confirms that the aforementioned dissertation has been language edited.

Any queries may be directed to the number listed below.

Kind Regards



MP Mathews

083 676 478

Appendix I: Turnitin report

Turnitin Originality Report - Mozilla Firefox

https://turnitin.com/newreport_printview.asp?eq=1&eb=1&esm=4&oid=769164943&sid=0&n=0&m=0&svr=339&r=45.3

Turnitin Originality Report

Investigating Internal Service Quality at Durban University of Technology Writing Centres at the Durban University of Technology by Sibongile R. Nhari

From Originality (Research Thesis)

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<http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/iims/article/viewFile/37206/21643>

Virus remove

