FACTORS INFLUENCING A CUSTOMER SERVICE CULTURE IN A HIGHER EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

All organisations, including higher education institutions, are subjected to the demands and competition of the market in which they function. Over the past few years there has been a steady increase in the level of competitiveness of the higher education sector. The days when higher education institutions could dictate to learners are definitely something of the past, and quality service and customer care are becoming more important. In order to retain and expand market share, high-quality service must be rendered.

Due to the very nature of higher education institutions, the contribution and role of employees are quite significant. The nature of corporate culture and level of job satisfaction, as in the case of the private sector, have an impact on the delivery of customer service. The question, however, is: Do a positive corporate culture and high levels of job satisfaction contribute to the level of learner satisfaction in a higher education environment?

In order to investigate this matter, empirical research was conducted by presenting two structured questionnaires (a culture survey and a job satisfaction survey) to employees, and a learner satisfaction questionnaire to learners. Based on the data obtained through the research, a rank-order correlation was done to establish whether or not there is a significant relationship between corporate culture, job satisfaction and learner satisfaction.

The findings show that there is not a significant relationship between learner satisfaction and job satisfaction. However, a relationship was observed between corporate culture and learner satisfaction. From this observation it can be deduced that a positive corporate culture could contribute to learner satisfaction.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the problem

If one could spend some time in the environment in which higher education institutions function, it would be quite clear that the relatively calm waters of a few years ago are becoming more stormy. In an attempt to transform and streamline the higher education system, the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, has embarked on a process that will see a reduction in the number of higher education institutions in South Africa. A number of the universities and technikons will merge, leaving a smaller number of institutions to render the service to the learners in South Africa.

In addition to the vision of the Minister of Education, more and more privately owned institutions, and institutions from the international arena, are seeking business opportunities and ways of extending their market share in South Africa (Annual Report of the CHE, 1999). In a recent survey conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the factors that affect learners’ choice with regard to higher education was investigated (Cosser & Du Toit, 2002). One of the factors that were assessed was whether or not learners would like to continue their studies at private or public institutions. It is interesting to note that 9.6% of the learners intend to continue with their studies at private institutions (Cosser & Du Toit, 2002). In terms of the total number of learners furthering their studies, it may not seem to be such a high figure, but its significance lies in the fact that learners are considering private institutions above the public institutions. One wonders whether this figure will increase in the future. If that is the case, then it will be an indictment against the institutions for higher learning in South Africa, for not being able to render the required service that the customer or learner seeks.

Some of the reasons for this decision by the learners is that the private
institutions will prepare them better for the labour market, have better reputations in their field of study, and better reputations than the public institutions (Cosser & Du Toit, 2002, p. 5).

The competition is, however, not limited to the "outsiders". Amongst the traditional institutions, the competition is strong. When visiting the various websites, such as those of Stellenbosch University and Potchefstroom University, it is clear that there is a concentrated focus on branding and marketing those institutions. The radio is also used as a medium for marketing and for reaching potential customers for the next academic year.

This means that the market share of the public institutions is being reduced or at least competed for. With the unlimited possibilities of the information era (Pieters, 2002) and the free access through the Internet, students are now in a position to continue their studies at any institution in the world, without leaving their own homes. This development is making the business of higher education extremely competitive.

The Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997), makes provision for the establishment of the Council on Higher Education (CHE). In terms of this Act, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) is a statutory body that provides independent, strategic advice to the Minister of Education on matters relating to the transformation and development of higher education in South Africa. This will include the management of quality assurance and quality promotion in the higher education sector. The CHE arranges and coordinates conferences, publishes information regarding developments in higher education, including an annual report on the state of higher education, and promotes the access of students to higher education institutions.

The focus of the CHE is therefore the promotion of quality in higher education. This is not a unique situation, since there are many other countries in the world
that have these types of structures in place. For example, promotional activities are well established and common in institutions of higher learning in Great Britain (Annual Report, CHE, 1999). It would even be safe to say the concept may have been borrowed from them. Although the focus is, for the moment, on the quality of academic programmes and the accreditation of the various institutions' programmes, there must be room for better service delivery to the customer (in this case, the customers are predominantly students, but also include the employers in the country and the broader society).

It would also be fair to argue that quality is not only limited to the content of the academic programmes, the nature and the level of research or the number of articles published by the institution. Quality also relates to the levels of service that the customer receives. Cheales (1994, p.3) refers to King and the concept of excellent service. According to King, excellent service is a judicious blend of factors, the main being added value. The suggestion here is that if one wants customers to come back for more, you have to reward them. You must give them something they will not find elsewhere.

Cheales (1994, p. 4) makes the point that “the vital elements of [product] quality, namely design, welding expertise, paint application, manufacturing technique and fine attention, no longer provide the competitive edge...”. According to him, the competitive advantage is in the overriding philosophy that the customer is the first priority, since, if the customer does not return, one does not have a reason to continue with one’s activities.

The question is, however, whether any of this relates to the sector of higher education. The answer is affirmative – the CHE has the mammoth task of ensuring quality in higher education, but, apart from that, is there another reason why the higher education sector should have this debate? Slabbert, Prinsloo, Swanepoel and Backer (1998, pp. 1-24) argue that organisations must be mindful of the environment where they function, promote their business,
or render any services. The authors see the environment as "... the aggregate of all conditions, events and influences that surround and affect it".

In the survey conducted by the HSRC (Cosser & Du Toit, 2002), interesting information was gathered on preferred institutions for continued learning. To a certain extent, this could be seen as the potential market share the various institutions have, compared to the rest of the sector. According to the results of the survey, 16,6% of the learners indicated Technikon Pretoria as first choice where they would like to continue their studies. The closest competitor is Technikon Witwatersrand with 4,9% (Cosser & Du Toit, 2002). Cosser & Du Toit are of the opinion that the reason for this is the perception of customers that quality products and services are delivered. According to the survey, the most important factor influencing the choice of institution is the reputation of the institution, and the reputation of the school, faculty or department recommended by a friend. Although there are other factors, such as fees, sport facilities, accommodation and the alma mater of relatives, which influence the choice, it is clear that what the institution offers in terms of quality and the total package is of paramount importance.

It would, therefore, be reasonable to argue that the higher education sector in South Africa will increasingly be forced to conduct its business in a manner similar to that of its private sector neighbours in order to survive and retain and where possible grow market share. In order to succeed, more attention should be paid to the customer.

In addition to the above, key environmental variables can be identified at both an external and an internal level. At the external level, the variables are listed as the increased levels of competition by both the local and international public institutions, the increase in the competition by private institutions, the changing policy of the new government with regard to the higher education environment and its attempts to ensure quality, which will be the task of the CHE, and access
to higher education for all South Africans.

At the internal level, the internal programmes to promote quality in the organisation in terms of processes and procedures, the quality of the academic programmes, service delivery to learners, service delivery to employees in the execution of their task, and the sport and accommodation facilities are all aspects that should contribute to the promotion of the customer service and will impact on an institution’s ability to compete effectively.

1.2 Motivation for the study

Before one embarks on a study of this nature, the need for the study should be established. As indicated in the introduction, the environment of higher education is dramatically changing. Higher education institutions will have to come to terms with the fact that they have to be competitive. If they are not successful, their very existence may be in the balance. The vision of the Minister of Education is a clear signal of what the expectation for institutions of higher learning is.

In future, there will be more and more pressure on institutions to become world-class and competitive, and to facilitate an effective educational process that will deliver the high-quality manpower that will meet the needs of the South African labour market. If higher education institutions are not successful in this area, they will lose their market share. The question will be: Why do we keep these institutions if they do not meet the expectations? The biggest contribution an institution can make towards the economic growth and social upliftment of South Africa is to deliver high-quality manpower.

Underpinning this total effort is the level of customer service that is rendered to the client, and, more specifically, the learner. Quality customer service is one of the fundamental elements of being world-class, and one of the major elements
that influence quality customer service may be the culture of an organisation. It could therefore be argued that those elements (customer service and culture) should be studied in the context of the higher education environment in order to develop a strategy that could assist in meeting the expectations set for higher education institutions.

1.3 Definition of the problem

As has already been pointed out, all organisations are subjected to the test of competitiveness. Whether it is in the sector of selling goods, consultancy, service delivery or production, the organisation must meet the requirements of being world-class. This rule applies to higher education institutions, as well.

Higher education institutions must meet the requirements of being world-class. High-quality education must be delivered, and, therefore, customer service becomes an important issue. Gone are the days when the institution could dictate to the learners. The best learners only go to the best universities and technikons because of the high-quality education and customer care they find there.

The majority of the higher education institutions spend approximately 60% to 62% (Technikon Pretoria, 2003) of their annual budgets on employees. This is mainly in the form of salaries. The majority, if not all, of the services, including lecturing and non-lecturing services, are delivered by people. The process of training, development and education is greatly influenced by the inputs of employees. The difference between one department and another is not to be found in the technology, but in the attitudes of the employees who use the technology.

1.4 Value of the research

After the completion of the study, there will be a better understanding of the
various factors that influence the establishment of a corporate culture that promotes the delivery of quality customer service in a higher learning environment. As indicated earlier, the position of higher education institutions has changed. The Minister of Education and the external environment now demand a different approach.

The focus is ultimately on having the ability to function at a world-class level, being competitive, and retaining and expanding the market share, as in the case of the private sector. With the emphasis on the levels and quality of customer service, an organisation cannot claim that it is functioning at a world-class level and is competitive if it does not make an aggressive attempt to ensure customer service. Customer service is synonymous with world-class. As in the private sector, the major ingredient that makes the difference between one organisation and the next is the people within the organisation. The levels of employee satisfaction and the nature of the corporate culture in the organisation have an impact on the level and the quality of the customer service that is rendered to customers.

Once a better understanding has been established, a strategy can be developed to improve the levels of customer service. This would enable the institutions to meet the expectations and demands of the environment in which they function.

1.5 Summary

In this chapter, an introduction was given to the problem, and some information was highlighted with regard to the background of the problem. In the following chapters, the focus will be on the current level of knowledge regarding the research question of this study. Time will also be spent on relevant concepts and models to create the basis for the empirical research. In addition, this information will be used to interpret the findings of the empirical research process.
CHAPTER 2: THE FUNCTIONING OF A TYPICAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

2.1 Introduction

In many aspects, a higher education institution is similar to organisations in the private sector, but in other aspects there are huge differences between the two types of organisations. The legislative framework, approach to profit generation, funding and income models, roles and responsibilities are examples of aspects with major differences. However, it seems that corporate culture, client service and competitiveness in the market are present and very relevant in both the environments.

Little is, however, said about higher education institutions. One does not find many articles or comments about the institutions and their functioning in many journals or magazines. The only times when one reads about those institutions is when things go wrong or when their employees or students achieve something. It is, therefore, necessary to take a closer look at the typical higher education institution, at how it is established (legislative framework) and at its typical structures and core process. For the purpose of this study and because of its limited nature, the focus of this chapter will be only on Technikon Pretoria as a typical example of a higher education institution.

Technikon Pretoria was chosen because it is the largest residential institution in South Africa, and has a proven record of being managed in an effective and efficient manner. In many respects, Technikon Pretoria can be regarded as a leader in the higher education environment.

2.2 The higher education institution

As explained in the introduction, it is important to have a clear picture of the typical higher education institution. Only then will it be clear what the impact of
corporate culture, job satisfaction and learner (customer) satisfaction will be on an institution of this nature. This section will, accordingly, focus briefly on the strategic objective, vision, mission and values of the institution, and, secondly, the organisational structure and functioning of the institution will be discussed.

2.2.1 Strategic objectives, vision, mission and values of Technikon Pretoria

As is the case with all other organisations, tertiary institutions should establish their vision, mission, organisational goals and value systems. This obviously needs to be done within the context of the Higher Education Act and the general policy of the National Government. This being the framework, Technikon Pretoria has formulated its vision as follows (Technikon Pretoria, 2003):

“To be a world-class higher education institution of technology that provides innovative leaders and knowledge for prosperity in South Africa.”

The mission of the institution adds to this (Technikon Pretoria, 2003):

“We are committed to –

- Transfer relevant, cutting-edge knowledge and technology
- Promote innovative research and development
- Promote innovation and economic prosperity
- Serve the community
- Establish vibrant partnerships
- Recruit, develop, empower and retain excellent staff and students.

In an attempt to operationalise the vision and mission, the following goals were formulated (these goals also serve as a measurement standard to ensure forward movement and the institution’s performance):
• **Strategic goal 1 (core process)**
To function as a world-class, innovative higher education institution for the transfer of knowledge and technology

• **Strategic goal 2 (internal process)**
To be an effective, efficient and sustainable institution utilising sound business principles.

• **Strategic goal 3 (staff)**
To be a preferred employer by promoting staff excellence, equal opportunity and employment equity.

• **Strategic goal 4 (students)**
To lead in the holistic development of people for good citizenship, community upliftment and leadership.

• **Strategic goal 5 (social responsibility)**
To accept and execute social responsibility.

• **Strategic goal 6 (economic prosperity)**
To be a leading institution in innovation and technology transfer, thereby contributing to economic development, job creation and strengthening institution resources.

From the above, it appears that Technikon Pretoria places a high premium on the status of being regarded as a world-class higher education institution. But more revealing are the strategic goals of the institution. Strategic Goals 1 to 4 are the most significant of them, namely, “To function as a world-class, innovative higher education institution ...”, “… utilising sound business principles, to be a preferred employer ...” and “To lead in the holistic development of people for good citizenship, community upliftment and leadership.” It could therefore be argued that being world-class, functioning according to sound business principles, being
a preferred employer and having a holistic approach in the development of learners are the primary focus areas of the institution.

This notion is constantly supported and communicated through the various speeches made by the Vice-Chancellor and Rector of the Technikon. In a message delivered in Hungary 2002, the Vice-Chancellor highlighted the holistic development of the student (Ngcobo, 2002):

“... Technikon Pretoria not only focuses on training to develop technical skills, but also on the holistic development of students. This includes aspects such as interpersonal skills; independent thinking and the ability to change; communication skills, the ability to handle new technology; to gather information and knowledge independently and actively to solve problems; to be able to work in groups and to identify one’s own weaknesses and abilities; to be able to make decisions, to think about those decisions and to improve accordingly; and how to cope with and apply the vast amount of knowledge acquired during formal studies and in the industry.”

He adds to this in his “Turning poverty into prosperity” speech of 2002 by pointing out the following:

“To assist in developing and ensuring a culture of entrepreneurship in South Africa, every course presented by Technikon Pretoria includes an entrepreneurial component. This empowers students with the knowledge and skills, as well as the mind set, to become entrepreneurs, and enables them to become job creators instead of job seekers when they graduate.”

In respect of functioning according to business principles, Ngcobo (2002) explains that:

“Specialisation in application and leadership through technology is supported by an innovative and entrepreneurial culture. This culture clearly distinguishes
Technikon Pretoria from other tertiary institutions. Entrepreneurship, in this context, is the ability to recognise potential business opportunities and transform them into value-added applications and activities.”

and

“Let me make it clear: good corporate governance is non-negotiable for Technikon Pretoria. As a public institution entrusted with taxpayers’ money, we have adopted a zero tolerance approach to theft, fraud and other crimes” (Ngcobo, 2002).

With regard to Strategic Goal 1:

“... becoming a world class, innovative higher education institution ...”, the following:

In all the speeches the Vice-Chancellor has made, there is a constant referral to being world-class and to the innovative transfer of technology. In a letter to the alumni of the Technikon regarding the mergers in higher education, he points out (Ngcobo, 2002):

“We will continue to offer the full range of qualifications, from National Diplomas to D Tech degrees, and will do so according to international standards. While the National Working Group advises against the renaming of technikons as 'universities of technology', provision has been made for the selective application of 'institutes of technology' status, where appropriate. However, alumni should note that this does not change Technikon Pretoria’s vision of becoming a unique, world-class institution – whatever it is called in the end. Our dream is not to eradicate by the stroke of a pen, and our mission remains unchanged.”

He further adds in his paper on “The Technikon Pretoria experience of
transformation” – Presentation to the Transformation Colloquium by Prof Reggie L Ngcobo, delivered at Stellenbosch on 15 November 2002, that:

“A culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, however, cannot exist in isolation. It needs to form part of a vibrant partnership programme with a range of critical stakeholders, such as other higher education institutions, locally and internationally, industry, government and communities. On a global scale, this ensures the international recognition and accreditation of qualifications and the development of joint educational programmes and research and development projects.”

To further affirm the commitment and importance of being world-class in the “Chairperson's overview” of the Council of Technikon Pretoria, the Chairperson, Mr Danana (2002), pointed out that –

“To ensure sustained world-class competitiveness, constant renewal of knowledge and expertise is needed, while symbiotic relationships with a variety of stakeholders have to be developed to maintain the relevance of academic outputs in a Southern African context.”

and

“In transforming Technikon Pretoria into a leader in technology transfer and application, Management has demonstrated that it is serious about being taken seriously as a world-class institution, while being flexible and innovative in turning this dream into reality.”

With regard to the strategic goal of being a preferred employer by promoting staff excellence, equal opportunities and employment equity, there is constant referral to staff and their importance (Ngcobo, 2002):

“With one targeted outcome of the transformation being a truly representative
institution in South African context, the Technikon Pretoria staff members are central to its equation of transformation.”

From the above, it is clear that the strategic goals are constantly communicated and promoted. This also suggests that there is a strong commitment to the vision and mission of the Technikon.

But to talk about the vision, mission and strategic goals is one thing; to implement and really live them, another. To implement this vision and mission and these strategic goals, a well-defined organisational structure should be in place to provide support. In the following section, the organisational structure will be discussed and explained.

2.2.2 Organisational structure and functioning of the institution

As the Technikon is an institution that was established in terms of the Higher Education Act, it is only natural to find that there are various statutory requirements that influence the organisational structure of the institution. The statutory requirements range from the appointment of the Chancellor and other senior managers and employee participation to the establishment of the management structures. This also includes the establishment of statutes and rules. In terms of section 33 of the Act, Technikon Pretoria had to establish and present to the Minister of Education a comprehensive set of statutes and rules, which would assist with the management of the institution. Those statutes must also provide guidance on what the functions of the various governing bodies are, as well as the composition of those bodies (organisational structure).

For the purpose of this study, the focus will, therefore, be on the sections of the Act pertaining to organisational structure and management functions. Issues such as the requirements related to the appointment of the senior staff members, student discipline and development will not be addressed.
2.2.2.1 Organisational structure: Statutory requirements

2.2.2.1.1 The Council of Technikon Pretoria

In terms of section 27 of the Act, the highest body in the organisation is the Council of Technikon Pretoria. The Council is regarded as the employer, and all employment contracts and other contracts are concluded, via the appropriate delegated structures, with all employees and service providers. Therefore, any action taken against the Technikon will be against the Council. The composition of the Council is also regulated by the Act.

The duties and responsibilities of the Council may be summarised in the following points, as determined by section 28 of the Act:

- The council governs the Technikon in terms of the Act and its statutes.
- The council, subject to the policy determined by the Minister, and with the concurrence of the senate, determines the language policy of the Technikon in terms of the Act, publishes it and makes it available on request.
- The council, after consultation with the senate, determines the admission policy of the Technikon in terms of the Act.
- The council submits the prescribed financial and other reports to the Minister in terms of the Act.

2.2.2.1.2 The Senate

The Senate represents the second highest body of authority of the institution. It is the highest academic authority in the institution. The Senate was also established in terms of the Act, with section 28 (2) being the guiding section.
As in the case of the Council, the Act stipulates the duties and responsibilities of the Senate (section 28). The duties of the Senate are as follows:

- Subject to the provisions of section 28 of the Act, the senate performs its functions under the control of the council, and is responsible to the council for the academic and research function of the Technikon, as well as for any other functions delegated to it by the council.
- Any function of the senate may be by means of a resolution be entrusted to any member or committee of the senate.
- Rules with regard to the matters contemplated in the first subparagraph may not be made without the consent of the senate.

![Diagram of Technikon Pretoria organisational structure](image)

**Figure 1:** Technikon Pretoria organisational structure: Structure established by statute and corporate governance structure.
In addition to this structure, there is an operational level that should be included in order to understand the way in which it functions. Figure 1 represents the line responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor and Rector.

2.2.2.1.3 Executive Management Committee (Rectorate)

The Executive Management Committee (EMC) is a statutory requirement and was established in terms of the Statutes of Technikon Pretoria. The EMC represents the top management of the institution and includes all the senior managers of the institution (See figure 2).

The duties and responsibilities of the EMC (Rectorate) can be summarised in the following points

- The Rectorate controls, manages and administers the Technikon from day to day.
- The Rectorate takes decisions in accordance with applicable legislation, as well as in accordance with the statutes and rules.
Figure 2: Executive Management Committee (EMC) and Non-Executive Management Committee as line functions of the Vice-Chancellor and Rector.

For the purpose of this study, and to ensure a proper understanding of the functioning of the Technikon, the various EMC members of the management structure will be explained by means of discussion and
relevant figures.

2.2.2.1.4 **Other important management structures** (non-statutory bodies)

All the EMC members have their own groups of senior managers who report to them. These groups form their executive committees and are used as an effective communication channel. These committees are more at an operational level. They must execute the decisions of the EMC and Council.

There are, however, two of these groups that need special mention, due to the significant impact that they have on the institution, namely the Academic Committee and the Operations Committee. These two committees will be discussed briefly.

2.2.2.1.4.1 *The Academic Committee*

The Academic Committee is responsible for the academic activities and policy matters. Chaired by the two Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic), this Committee also acts as a clearing house for new policies and decisions that may have an impact on both employees and students. Other senior managers that are members of the Committee are the seven deans of the seven faculties, the three campus directors of the three satellite campuses and the Registrar (Academic). The Academic Committee deals with all academy-related matters, such as registration, new academic programmes and policy matters. This Committee is also the link between the lecturing employees and non-lecturing employees (Academic Administration) (Du Preez, comments during a personal interview, 22 April 2003).
Figure 3: Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic) (1)

The structures of the two Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic) form the Academic Committee.

Figure 4: Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic) (2)

2.2.2.1.4.2 The Operations Committee

The Operations Committee deals with all matters related to the support functions within the institution, excluding finance, library and student support. This Committee, which reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations), is responsible for Human Resource Management, Information Technology Services, Building and Estate Management and Accommodation and Catering (Pretorius, comments during a personal interview 10 March 2003).
As in the case of the Academic Committee, the Operations Committee also acts as a clearing house for policies and decisions related to the general day-to-day business and certain strategic matters relating to the specialist functions within the group, such as Human Resource Management. As indicated, this is also where the management of the employment relationship lies at the collective and strategic levels. Individual relationships are more in the hands of the respective section heads and heads of departments (Pretorius, comments during a personal interview, 10 March 2003).

Figure 5 gives an indication of how the various members of the Operations Committee fit into the overall organisational and authoritative structure of the Technikon.

**Figure 5:** Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations)

2.2.2.1.5 *Communication forums and employee participation*

In addition to the above structure, a strong structure and policy are in place to support the communication at senior management and top-management levels, as well as employee participation. These issues will be briefly discussed.
2.2.2.1.5.1 Senior Management Communications Forum

This Forum is compiled of all the senior and top managers of the institution, namely the Vice-Chancellor and Rector (Chairperson), the deputy vice-chancellors, deans, registrars, chief directors and campus directors. It is purely a communication forum and has no decision-making authority. The aim of the Forum is to communicate the vision, mission and strategic direction and to provide an opportunity for opinions on related matters to be aired. It is also the Forum that works towards creating a team spirit.

2.2.2.1.5.2 The Workplace Forum

In terms of section 80 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 65 of 1995) (as amended), a Workplace Forum was established in 1997. This was done in order to promote employee participation and improve communication with the employees other than through union structures. It also provides an instrument for the management to address important employee-related policy matters. The duties and responsibilities of the Workplace Forum may be explained as follows:

Purpose of the Workplace Forum

- It must seek to promote the interests of all employees in the workplace, whether or not they are trade union members.
- It must seek to enhance efficiency in the workplace.
- It is entitled to be consulted by the employer, with a view to reaching consensus about the matters referred to in section 84.
- It is entitled to participate in joint decision making about the matters referred to in section 86.
2.3 Other structures that assist with the management of the organisation

2.3.1 Dean of Student Affairs

The main task and responsibility of the Dean of Student Affairs is to render supportive services to the learners (clients). Those services range from counselling and career guidance to sport development and financial support (see Figure 6). The contribution of this group is of great importance to the holistic development of the learner and his or her ability to interact and contribute successfully to the economy and society of South Africa.

![Diagram of Dean of Student Affairs structure]

Figure 6: Dean of Student Affairs

2.3.2 Registrar (Finance)

Keeping the books, maintaining financial control, and reporting to the Council on the financial well-being of the Technikon is the responsibility of the Registrar (Finance). This is a critical function for the success of any higher education institution (Figure 7).
2.3.3 Registrar (Academic)

The Registrar (Academic) is responsible for the academic records, the rules of the institution and the academic administration process. This is a very important function, which, with the academic process forms the core of the business. Keeping the records is also strongly dictated by the Act. A very large portion of the staff at the Technikon is employed in this area (Figure 8).
2.3.4 **Strategic Planning and Information**

The Directorate of Strategic Planning and Information is mainly responsible for gathering and processing data that assist with the development of the strategic plan for the organisation. This Directorate is also concerned with the promotion and coordination of institutional research. This includes the development of new knowledge related to the various areas of study within the institution, but also the development of new knowledge related to enhancing the quality of the education delivered.

The focus is to establish a link between the various industries and the institution, via strategic initiatives. These initiatives will hopefully not only lead to the sharing and enhancing of new knowledge, but will also create an additional income for the institution. This is an important aspect, since the funding levels of the Government are on the decrease, which places more pressure on higher education institutions to find alternative sources of sustainable income to meet their ever-increasing financial needs (Van Eldik, comments during a personal interview, 22 April 2003).

![Diagram of the Directorate of Strategic Planning and Information]

*Figure 9: Directorate of Strategic Planning and Information*
2.4 **The main process (value chain)**

The questions, however, remain: how does all of this fit together in respect of the delivery of service to the learner, how does the main process, which is vital to learner satisfaction, look, and how do the various structures contribute to the experience of the learner? In Figure 10, an attempt is made to give a schematic representation of the main process of the Technikon. From this, it is clear that the focus is on the learner (student). The schematic representation provides insight in the service delivery model that can be regarded as the value chain of the Technikon. The model is built around the learner, focussing strongly on the fact that all activities should add value to the learning experience of the learner. It should be noted that this is a very basic representation of the core process of the institution.

![Diagram of the main process of Technikon Pretoria and the impact of the support functions of the organisation.](image)

**Figure 10:** Main process of Technikon Pretoria and the impact of the support functions of the organisation. (Quality promotion system, Technikon Pretoria, 2003)
Technikon Pretoria. On closer investigation, a few interesting and important aspects can be identified. A brief discussion of those aspects follows.

The basic systems approach was followed in the design of the service delivery model (value chain). In the model there are three main phases, namely input, process and output.

The first phase (input) is defined as the foundational process, and in this phase all the main activities (excluding the faculties), as explained in the first part of this chapter, are situated. These activities include all the strategic and support services, such as Human Resources, Information Technology Services, the Registrars (Finance) and (Academic), Students Affairs, Buildings and Estates, Library Services, Strategic Planning and Information, the Technikon Foundation, Accommodation and Catering, Logistical Services, Staff Development and Corporate Relations. To a large extent, these activities provide the framework for the development of and support to the learner outside the academic realm.

The second phase is the process known as the education and training process. This is the main and most probably the most important part of the process. In this process, education and training are the focus areas. The quality of the training programmes, levels of standards, relevance of programme content and levels of research (postgraduate work) come to play. This is also an aspect that allows a higher education institution to compete at national and international levels with other institutions. It also provides a better understanding of the real value that the institution adds to the learner.

The third and last phase, the output phase, focuses on the outcomes of the total learning experience (including both the foundational and education and training process). The outcomes may be summarised as equipping the learner with knowledge, skills and values that will meet the demands of the national and international markets; learning programmes that will assist in the development of society; and applied research and technology that meet the demands of local markets in terms of industries and commerce, and rendering services.
A fourth aspect of the model that supports the total process is continuous quality management in all three its phases. This suggests that there is a continuous process of evaluation and development to enhance the business processes and service delivery. It is clear that this model has also been designed to support the vision, mission and strategic goals of the institution, as highlighted in the first part of this chapter.

2.5 Summary

In this chapter, the focus is on the functioning of a typical institution of higher learning. Attention was paid to the requirements contained in the Act in terms of the establishment and functions of various statutory bodies.

An issue that was highlighted extensively was the focus of the institution on customer care and employees. A great deal of attention was devoted to the endeavours of the senior management team, via the Vice-Chancellor, to promote the vision, mission and strategic goals of the institution. These were obvious attempts to create a specific focus within the organisation. A full discussion followed on how the organisation functions. Specific attention was given to how the various main sections fit together. Finally, the main or core process (the value chain) was explained. This will provide a better understanding of Technikon Pretoria as a higher education institution.

In the next chapter, the focus will be on the literature review. The relevance of customer care and the importance of corporate culture and employee satisfaction will be investigated.
CHAPTER 3: A LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

In 1993, Louis V Gerstner, Jr (2002) accepted the daunting task of turning Industrial Business Machines (IBM) from a nearly bankrupt situation to a financial successful and sustainable organisation. In accepting this challenge, he noticed that various issues impacted negatively on his efforts unless they were managed effectively and efficiently:

Two issues stood out above all others, namely customer care, and culture. In terms of customers, Gerstner (2002, p. 69) noted that –

“... priority for the company ... is to win the battle in the customers' premises...”

There was, therefore, a concerted effort to focus on the needs of the customer, and to implement integrated solutions, which made the company more effective and profitable, while fulfilling the needs of the customer. Adding value to the customer was a top priority.

With regard to organisational culture, Gerstner (2002, p. 182) points out that –

“... in my time at IBM I realised that culture isn’t just one aspect of the game – it is the game.”

Gerstner says that, in all his years as a consultant, he noticed how organisational culture contributed either to the success of an organisation or the lack of it. This point of view is strongly supported in the thinking of Wiersema (1998, p. 32), who makes the following comment:

“The promising soul of a customer-intimate company is special. Its soul is alive with the knowledge and experience that the customer’s results drive its own results, the customer’s wins are its wins; the customer’s productivity increases are its productivity increases.”

In the mind of Wiersema, there are strong and clear relationships between culture and customer care/services. If there is not a positive culture that supports the quality of the customer care/service that is rendered, there is little chance that customers would be satisfied.
In this chapter, the focus is on the importance and relevance of customer care/service and corporate culture. These two concepts are investigated in detail. To assist in this attempt, the Service Profit-Chain Model will be used to understand the dynamics of customer-service-orientated corporate culture.

3.2 Customer care and its relevance

In Chapter 1, the point is argued that there is a link to be found in the levels of customer care and market shares. Admittedly, the information cited in Chapter 1 does not necessarily represent all the possible elements that may influence the choice of students; it does, however, give an indication of the basic thinking in this regard, and warrants further investigation. In this section, the focus is on the relevance and importance of customer care.

Gitomer (1998, p.45) is of the opinion that the challenge for the 21st century is not just serving the customers “... it is understanding the customer, being prepared to serve customers, helping an angry customer immediately, asking the customer for information, listening to customers, being responsible for your actions when a customer calls, living up to your commitments, being memorable, surprising customers, striving to keep customers for life and getting unsolicited referrals from customers ... regularly.” He feels strongly that the focus should not only be on delivering a good service to the customer, but also to generate loyalty to the customer, so that the customer would continue to do business with the organisation. In the present case, which is that of a higher education institution, learner retention (in other words continued/further studies with the same institution) will be regarded as customer loyalty.

One should ask the question, “why is good customer care so important?” To be competitive and be successful in the globalised world, where the information era forms a part of reality, requires that an organisation functions on a level that can be regarded as world-
According to Hodgetts, Luthause and Lee (1994) and Belohlau (1996), being world-class should be regarded as a prerequisite to be successful in a globalised market.

In support of the argument, maybe more in a South African context, Slabbert et al. (1998) argue that “... if we don’t succeed in making our organisation more competitive in the international arena, in becoming ‘world-class’, there are very few chances of creating meaningful job opportunities and of escaping the path toward social-economic decay and eventually becoming ‘just another lost African Country’.” Although this represents a harsh perspective, it is a true reflection of the realities that a country such as South Africa is faced with. In order to be successful in the international economy, the organisation should be world-class.

What, however, is the definition of a world-class organisation? Hodgetts et al. (1994, p.1) define a world-class organisation as “... the best in its class or better than its competitors around the world at least in several strategically important areas.” Therefore, a world-class organisation is an organisation that is not only the best, but also remains ahead of its competitors. Hodgetts et al. (1994) point out a variety of characteristics that are to be found in all world-class organisations. The characteristics of a world-class organisation may be summarised as follows (Steudel & Desruelle, 1991, pp. 3 - 8) and (Olson, 1990, pp. 6 - 19):

- customer-care driven
- leadership/visionary leadership
- participation
- some type of remuneration system
- prevention rather than correction
- a long-term focus
- partnership development
- a new culture of thoughts and goals
- worker participation and people development
- shared values
- performance evaluation
- flatter organisational structures

Although Hodgetts et al (1994), supported by Steudel &
Desruelle (1991, pp. 3 - 8) and Olson (1990, pp. 6 - 19), list various characteristics of a world-class organisation, the characteristic that stands out is the aspect of customer care. Dannhauser & Roodt (2001, p.8) are of the opinion that “In the present highly competitive and global market-environment, an increased emphasis is placed on organisations to adopt a new corporate paradigm, i.e. a value orientation towards delivering total quality customer service”. This notion is supported by Tersine, Harvey and Buckley (1997, p. 47). They are of the opinion that the “… global market has brought about a renewed emphasis on the customer as being the focal point of business activities. In a buyer’s market, being customer-centric is paramount”. Therefore, it can be argued that the ability of an organisation to deliver a high-quality customer service is a requirement for being regarded as world-class and competing effectively in the global market.

3.2.1 *What is customer service/care?*

Morea (1996), points out that “customer service is not a department, nor a programme. Customer service is a lifestyle”. In this short sentence, she captures a great deal of relevant and important thinking for any service-delivery-type organisation. This may also apply to any higher education institution. Morea (1996, p.1) points out that customers in South Africa have a wide choice and can take their business anywhere. In Chapter 1, it was pointed out that higher education finds itself in the same position as private business. The market in higher education is fiercely contested, and all the institutions are implementing some strategy to retain and expand current market share. According to Morea (1996, p.1), the quality of service that is delivered is the determining factor in the decision of the customer. She takes the argument further.
She believes that the behaviour of the frontline employee towards the customer on a consistent basis will be what influences the customer’s decision to do business with any service provider. We have seen in Chapter 2 that the world of higher education institutions is more complex and that various elements influence the choice of prospective customers/learners. The argument of Morea (1996) does however have value. It would be safe to argue that higher education institutions are paying more attention to the satisfaction levels of learners. This satisfaction is not limited to the quality of the programme, but includes the total employee package. In the package, the role of the employee should not be underestimated, since ± 60 - 62% of the annual budget of a higher education institution is spent on salaries, and all services are rendered by employees. From a customer/learner perspective, the employee is the organisation.

In research done by the Technical Assistance Research Institute (SA) on why customers do not return to a service provider, it was interesting to note that 68% of the respondents indicated that the change was made because of employees’ attitudes (Morea, 1996, p. 11). This strongly confirms the notion that there is a relationship between employee attitude and customer care. The research indicates that there are other reasons for the change (see Figure 11). The strongest motivator, however, remains employee attitudes.

Employee attitudes are, however, not something that employees are born with. There is a direct link between the attitude of employees and their feelings, emotions and notions. This concept is highlighted in more detail by Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser and Schlesinger (1994) and the Service-Profit Chain Model. According to Heskett et al. (1994), there is a strong relationship between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction.

The concept of employee satisfaction will be discussed in more detail in the following section. The focus will also be on how this relates to customer satisfaction.
Figure 11: Motivation for changing service providers (Morea, 1996, p. 11)

3.3 The Service-Profit Chain Model

Heskett et al. (1994) propose a model in the form of a “service-profit chain”. This provides a framework that can be used to operationalise the strategies that will enhance the current levels of customer care to a level equal to that of meeting the world-class demands.

The Service-Profit Chain deals with a variety of issues, the main ingredients being customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction. Because of the very nature of the concept of customer care, customer care is not something that can be delivered or provided by machines. It may enhance the process and assist in the delivery of better customer care, but, ultimately, customer care is delivered by people.

Figure 12 is a schematic representation of the link in the Service-Profit Chain and clearly shows that there is a link between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction and the profitability of the
The people’s behaviour in the organisation must enforce the values of the organisation (Gubman, 1995, p.16). Tersine et al (1997, pp. 46-49) take this thinking a step further in arguing that the behaviour of the people within the organisation should not just only enforce the value, but rather that an organisational culture should be established that can act as the driving force behind the customer care.

Pete Peterson, Vice-President of Human Resources of Hewlett-Packard, supports this notion: “Everyone will tell you that people are important, but we put our words into action. Good people management is the very key to our overall environment. We believe that if we hire topnotch, creative, dedicated people and if we provide the proper environment, they will succeed” (Verespay, 1990, p.23). Therefore, if you want to succeed as an organisation, you need the best people and you need to create an environment that will make them want to stay and an environment that is conducive to productivity and performance.

Grant-Marshall (2002), in the article “Companies to die for”, underpins this principle in more detail. She is of the opinion that “...smart
companies are the ones who are making workplaces great places”. The comment that is made is based on the Financial Mail’s Top 100 companies (2002) and other best companies to work for. In the article, she investigates why the various organisations are regarded as the best companies to work for. The companies that were listed were Hollard Insurance, Cell C, Vodacom Group, Discovery Health, Deutsche Bank, Investec Bank and HBD Capital Venture. The reason why these companies were included in the list is because of the way in which they manage and deal with employees. Time and money are spent on employees. Training and development and a good working environment appear to be high on the priority list of the management. Thus, work becomes fun and the employees work productively. It is also safe to say that those companies are doing well in the area of economic performance.

Employee satisfaction is, therefore, a critical element in the strategy to deliver customer care. Neely, Adams and Kennerly (2002) provide a practical application and link between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. They start the discussion with the wants and needs of employees. The focus is on recognising that the wants and needs of employees may not be the same as the wants and needs of employers. In their view, the wants and needs of employees may be summarised in four short words (Neely et al. 2002, p. 254):

- **Purpose:** - Employees seek interesting work or at the minimum, work that they can take pride in accomplishing.

- **Care:** - Employees wish to be cared for in a variety of different ways. They want to be treated with respect, they want to work in a pleasant, safe and comfortable environment with a practical and ergonomic layout.

- **Skills:** - Employees wish to pick up the transferrable skills that would be useful to them in enhancing their careers.

- **Pay:** - The compensation package offered by organisations is important to potential employees seeking opportunities, to ambitious incumbent employees who may be tempted to take their skill-set elsewhere (where better packages are offered), and, also, to those more “long-in-the-tooth”
employees who intend to retire with a decent pension provided and contributed to by their former employer.

To understand the full concept, one should also consider the wants and needs of the employer. Those wants and needs may be summarised in the following points (Neely et al., 2002, p. 256):

- **Hands**: An organisation seeks to hire and retain the relevant skills it requires, in the sufficient quantities it needs, in the place where it wishes to deploy them.

- **Hearts**: Employers generally want to retain loyal and committed employees. They are the nucleus of the firm and possess a bank of knowledge about the company – its history (successes and failures), its people, its processes, its products and services; its customers and its competitors in the industry in which it does business.

- **Minds**: To have the hearts and hands of employees is not enough – what is required is that employees should not leave their brains behind when they come to work. Employees are involved in a broad range of disciplines to help resolve systemic problems within the organisation’s business processes, and to implement solutions.

- **Voices**: Employers look for articulate people who demonstrate a positive and constructive attitude, who communicate well with other employees and their bosses; who work well in a team environment, who will advocate the firm as a good employer, who are friendly towards customers and other important stakeholders.

It is, therefore, important to establish a balance between the needs and wants of the employee and those of the organisation. If the balance is
not maintained, it may result in high levels of employee turnover, which will impact negatively on the performance of the organisation (Neely et al., 2002, p. 259). Gratton (2000) shares the opinion that it is not technology and finance that give an organisation a competitive advantage, but rather the people in the organisation. If there is a high level of satisfaction among employees, then it is highly possible that the organisation would also perform. In addition to the theoretical point of view and the model of Heskett et al. (1994), an example of the Service-Profit Chain in action is to be found in the attempt made by Sears, Roebuck and Company. In the early 1990s, the company experienced some difficulties. It was time for the organisation to get back on track in terms of financial performance and customer retention. The model that was regarded as the best to take the organisation forward was the Service-Profit Chain Model (Ulrich, 1998, p. 231). At Sears, a revised form of the Service-Profit Chain was implemented (see Figure 13), with great success.

One of the important factors of the model was the fact that there should be a clear measurable indication of the increase in organisation performance. The model, as presented and implemented by Sears, set clear targets for an increase in performance. According to the model, a five-point improvement in employee attitude (satisfaction) would drive a 1,3 point improvement in customer satisfaction, which, in turn, would drive a 0,5% improvement in revenue growth (Rucci, Kirn and Quinn, 1998). It should however be noted that the employee satisfaction was established within the context of a positive and well-established corporate culture.
3.4 Corporate culture as a driving force in employee satisfaction

3.4.1 Defining corporate culture

Employee satisfaction cannot be created, established or maintained, in isolation. True employee satisfaction can only be achieved in an organisation with a positive and constructive corporate culture. In order to give substance to this claim, one should go back to the beginning. The beginning may be defined as a culture in the anthropological sense.

Malinowski (1948) defines culture as “... an integral whole consisting of implementing and consumer goods, of constitutional charters ... of human ideas and crafts, beliefs and customs ... partly material, partly human, and partly spiritual, by which man is able to cope with the concrete, specific problems that face him.”

Lewis (1969) adds: “Every culture ... has three fundamental aspects ... the technological, the social and the ideological ... The technological is
concerned with tools, materials, techniques and machines. The sociological aspects involve the relationships into which men enter ... The ideological aspects comprise beliefs, rituals, art, ethics, religious practices and myths.”

From the above, it is clear that culture is not just a uni-dimensional matter. There are various elements and aspects to culture that makes it multidimensional (Lessem, 1990, p.2). It would also be safe to argue that culture would cut across all the traditional business disciplines, e.g. production, marketing, finances and human resources.

Corporate culture may be defined in the context of the words of Peters and Waterman (in Lessem, 1999, p. 2). “As we worked on research of our excellent companies we were struck by the dominant use of the story, slogan, and legend as people tried to explain the characteristics of their own great institutions. All the companies we interviewed, from Boeing to MacDonalds, were quite simply rich tapestries of organisational myth and fairy tale. And we do mean fairy tale. The vast majority of people who tell stories about JT Watson of IBM have never met the human or had direct experience of the original more mundane reality ... Nevertheless, in an organisational sense, the stories, myths, and legends appear to be important, because they convey the organisational shared values, or culture.”

**Figure 14:** Corporate culture is the organisation
For Veldsman (2002, p. 216), corporate or organisational culture is the unique but common way of understanding, interpreting and responding to entities, events and outcomes, shared by a set of organisational members. There is, therefore, a strong focus on the concept of sharing the experiences.

Schein (1999), explains that the biggest danger in dealing with and understanding culture is to oversimplify it. He regards corporate culture as a multi-level concept that should be analysed at every level before it can be understood. Schein (1999, p.24) defines corporate culture as “... the learned, shared, tactical assumptions on which people base their daily behaviour.”

In line with the thought that culture is multi-levelled, Schein (1999, pp.25-26) identifies three levels, viz. that “culture is deep” — if you treat it as a superficial phenomenon, if you assume that you can manipulate it and change it at will, you are sure to fail; “culture is broad” — as a group learns to survive in its external and internal relationships; and, “culture is stable” — the members of a group want to hold onto their cultural assumption, because culture provides meaning and makes life predictable.

Sadri & Lees (2001) see corporate culture as “an intangible concept, it clearly plays a meaningful role in corporations, affecting employees and organisational operations throughout a firm.” They go even further and are of the opinion that culture not only determines the success or failure of the organisation, but that a positive culture can be a competitive advantage over competing firms or organisations. In addition to this point of view of Sadri & Lees (2001), Bliss (1999, p.1) believes that corporate culture is very important, since it is the total sum of the values, virtues and accepted behaviours, which includes the good and not so good. Bliss (1999) agrees with the point of view that the success that the organisation achieves is strongly influenced by the culture of the organisation.

Ogbor (2001), however, adopts a more cynical approach to corporate culture and to what it is. Contrary to Schein (1999) and Sadri & Lees (2001), Ogbor sees corporate culture as “… managerial control and a whole-hearted acceptance of the means through which employees in an organisation are repressed.” He argues further that corporate culture “… remains an ideology, which is socially constructed to reflect and legitimize the power relations of managerial elites within an organisation and society at large.”
Payne (1991), also discusses the issue of corporate culture and, more specifically, “what is corporate culture?” He is of the opinion that it is “...the pattern of all those arrangements, material or behavioural, which have been adopted by a society (corporation, group, team) as the traditional ways of solving problems of its members; culture includes all the institutionalised ways and the implicit cultural beliefs, norms, values and premises which underlie and govern behaviour.” In his definition of culture he goes further and distinguishes implicit and explicit culture. According to Payne, explicit culture refers to “...typical and distinctive behaviour of people and the typical and distinctive artefacts they produce”, and implicit culture refers to the “...total set of cultural beliefs, values, norms and premises which underlies and determines the observed regularities in behaviour making up the explicit culture”. It is therefore clear that corporate culture is a very complex issue. It would also appear from the work of Payne that corporate culture impacts on employee satisfaction. This notion is also supported by the work of Heskett et al. (1994) in their Service-Profit Chain Model.

Irrespective of what one’s point of view on culture is and whether it is positive or negative, the reality is that corporate culture does exist within every organisation, and according to Sadri & Lees (2001) and Bliss (1999), corporate culture plays a significant role in the success or failure of an organisation and cannot be divorced from the concept of customer service. Wiersema (1998, p. 162) confirms this point of view. He is of the opinion that “... the culture of a customer-intimate company – with its distinctive behaviours, beliefs and mind-set - is the single most important underpinning of successfully adopting the customer-intimate discipline.

3.4.2 Roles and functions of organisational culture

To define corporate culture is only part of the answer and not the full answer in understanding the concept of corporate culture. To create an even better understanding of corporate culture, one should investigate the role and functions of organisational culture. Veldsman (2002, p. 219) gives a schematic representation of the role and functions of corporate culture (see Figure 15).

Corporate culture provides organisational members with –

- an identity - We are an externally focused market-driven organisation;
- a place in the world - The exposure is a resource to be exploited;
a way of interacting - We are achievement and task - orientated; and
insight into how things work - Changes are threats which must be eliminated as quickly as possible.

To create an even better understanding of corporate culture, one should investigate the role and functions of organisational culture. Veldsman (2002, p. 219) gives a schematic representation of the role and functions of corporate culture (see Figure 15).
Corporate culture enables the members of the organisation to be part of an action community or to perform as an organisation.

### 3.4.3 The basic building blocks of organisational culture

Veldsman (2002, pp. 220-223) identifies the most commonly recognised building blocks of culture as being assumption, beliefs, values and attitudes. In the definition of corporate culture the various writers, such as Payne (1991), Sadri & Lees (2001) and Bliss (1999) also refer to those elements that could be regarded as the building blocks of culture. A brief discussion of those building blocks will facilitate a better understanding of organisational culture.

- **“Assumption”** refers to the premise or way in which people view the world or a particular activity or incident. Such assumptions provide a framework to employees for the interpretation of the world around them.

- **“Beliefs”** refers to the accepted truths about entities, events, outcomes and their relationships. The beliefs give organisational
members a world view.

- “Values” refers to the relative worth ascribed to entities, events or outcomes, in general. Typical examples would be: “The customer is always right,” and “People are our most important asset”. The values of the organisation form the content of the organisational philosophy and people’s work ethics.

- “Norms” refers to the accepted and/or expected standards of acting towards entities, events or outcomes. The norms of the organisation spell out the rules of the game. The code of conduct with regard to how business is done would be a typical example of a norm-building block.

- “Attitudes” refers to the learned precise positions to respond in a consistent manner, whether positively or negatively, to specific entities, events or outcomes. This, in terms of customer care, is a very important element. If the attitudes towards customers are negative, then the level of success in that area would be limited, because attitudes enable organisational members to direct, guide and prioritise their actions.

Veldsman (2002) argues, furthermore, that these building blocks interact on three cultural layers of increasing depth, visibility and concreteness. The three levels may be distinguished as: immediate setting, life sphere and foundation.

- “Immediate setting” refers to the meaning sets attached to a specific organisation, occupation, relationship or person (e.g. teachers have a specific point of view due to the organisation they work for, their training, etc.).

- “Life sphere” refers to meaning sets related to a general domain of action; for example, work, leisure, social life and country (e.g. biltong, rugby and braaivleis).

- “Foundation” refers to the ultimate meaning regarding beauty, truth, the origin of entities, events and outcomes, as well as to ethics.

It is important to note that although organisational culture relates to the first layer, it is strongly influenced by the second and third layers. If one should investigate the way things are done in the various higher education institutions and how that is taken into the workplace by the graduate employees, it would impact on the culture of that organisation.
The maintenance of culture in an organisation is an ongoing creative process, both in terms of its production of and its utilisation by organisational members; members are socialised into a culture, but are, simultaneously, individualising the culture to meet their own ends (Veldsman, 2002, p. 222). Culture and individuals are, therefore, in a constant process of interaction that moulds, influences, changes and develops both the culture and the individual, as explained in Figure 16.

![Diagram of organisational culture and its relationship with the experiential landscape](image)

**Figure 16:** Building blocks of organisational culture and their relationship with the experiential landscape (Veldsman, 2002, p. 222)

With a better understanding of what the role of corporate culture is and what the fundamental building blocks of corporate culture are, one is forced to deal with the question of “how” culture is carried into the organisation.
3.4.4 Carriers of corporate culture

For any corporate culture to exist and be maintained there have to be carriers. These are used to establish the culture and, at the same time, maintain the carriers that have established the culture, in the first place. One may ask, however, “what are these carriers?”. They cannot be one thing only, but are a variety of things.

Veldsman (2002) gives an indication of what may be regarded as carriers, but one has to look at the work of other leaders in thought who expanded and substantiated the principles and strategies of the organisation (Sayles & Wright, 1985), the organisational structure of the organisation (Peters, 1988), management style in the organisation (Pearson, 1987), and, the interaction of teams/groups within the organisation, individuals and technological structure and systems (Veldsman, 2002). In this section, these carriers are discussed in greater detail.

3.4.4.1 Leadership and strategy

Bellingham (2001, pp. 2-3) confirms the major business drivers in the world of business, today. He sees the global village, customer-focused relationships, faster pace and strategic collaboration as the main and most important aspects that an organisation should consider in order to be effective and competitive in the international market. He, furthermore, argues that such business drivers have a profound impact on the business strategy of the organisation.

This line of though is supported by other leaders in this field already listed in this chapter. The significance, however, is that Bellingham makes the link to corporate culture. If the organisation wishes to be successful, the overall leadership and business strategy should be supported by the culture of the organisation, while the opposite would also be true. Corporate culture is an instrument of the leadership in the organisation (Sayles & Wright, 1985). In the implementation of a new strategy, one should make sure that the culture supports the new strategy; if that is not the case, the culture should be changed or adapted in such a way that the support is in line with the strategy. A clear example of this is the experience of Gerstner (2002) and the new leadership and success of IBM. The corporate culture did not support the new strategy or focus on the customer. This had to be changed first before the new strategy could be
implemented. For IBM, one of the elements of the new strategy was to provide customers with integrated solutions, which, in some cases, meant that the technology of competitors had to be used. This was not supported by the prevailing culture at the time. IBM went into a process that led to a change in the culture, as well as the establishment of a new strategy for IBM.

The role of the Chief Executive Officer in this process is of great importance (Maxwell, 1998). The CEO should give direction and establish the value system, although the value system should be shared – the direction should come from the leader of the organisation (Bellingham, 2001, p. 1); Sayles & Wright (1985) share this point of view. According to them, “Culture is often conceived of as being like charisma, you know it when you feel its influence, but can’t do much about it. In truth, culture is manipulable and changeable”. This is the role of the CEO. At the same time, it should be pointed out that, if the CEO is not strong enough or the strategy is not good enough, the culture would ultimately see the better of the leader and strategy.

The important element is that leadership and business strategy are strong and important carriers of corporate culture (Maxwell, 1998).

3.4.4.2 Organisational structure

The organisational structure of the organisation is often dictated by the leadership and business strategy of the organisation. Organisations sometimes establish an organisational structure that is not supportive of an effective corporate culture. Bellingham, Cohen, Edwards and Allen (1990) found that in many US organisations the organisational structure was very bureaucratic, rigid, formal and top-down-orientated. Some organisations even had fifteen layers of management that made the decision-making process extremely slow and difficult. That was in the eighties and early nineties, however. Today, it is no longer the case. These days, the organisational structure of most organisations is flattened, having only a few levels of management (Bellingham, 2002, p. 4).

The point is, however, that the organisational structure has an impact on culture, and vice versa. Peters (1988) points out that the old traditional military model for organisations is no longer applicable, but for the purpose of the military, with its need for
discipline, line of command, value system and strategies, an organisational culture demands a structure of that nature. This, however, would not be relevant or applicable in the highly competitive and dynamic world of information technology. There, the focus would be on teams, cross-functional cooperation and fewer levels of decision-makers. Peters (1988) refers to the flexible, porous, adaptive, fleet-to-float organisation. Those types of organisations function in a way that contributes to the competitive advantages that are required, not only to achieve, but also to maintain a leadership position in the market. This, however, presupposes a culture that differs from that of the military. There would be fewer formalities, quicker decision-making, less rigidness and greater flexibility (see Figure 17).

![Diagram](image)

**Figure: 17** Organisational forms and environmental demands (Nolan, Pollock & Ware, 1988)

The important point is that a specific culture demands a particular organisational structure, and vice versa.
3.4.4.3 Management style

There are various models for management and management style training. Bellingham et al. (1990) are of the opinion that those training models and programmes do not make provision for the most important influence on the management style, namely corporate culture. Bellingham et al. (1990) believe that the corporate culture has the biggest impact on the management style in the organisation. It is, therefore, clear that, unless the culture is compatible with human resources development, there will be little or no change in the management style, in the long term.

Pearson (1987), although an older source, points out that, while most organisations agree that their business success hinges on the quality of their people, very few executives are willing to adopt the tough, aggressive approach to managing people that is required to produce a dynamic organisation. This sentiment is shared by Bossidy & Charan (2002). They argue that, “After all, it’s the people of an organisation who make judgements about how markets are changing, create strategies based on these judgements, and translate the strategies into operational realities. To put it simply and starkly: If you don’t get the people process right, you will never fulfill the potential of your business”. They believe that all individuals should be evaluated, in depth. It provides a framework for identifying and developing the leadership talent – at all levels of all lands – the organisation will need to execute its strategies down the road. And it fills the leadership pipeline that is the basis of a strong succession planning.

This comment or line of thought is very important. Management style within the organisation should contribute to the sustainable success of the organisation (Van der Post, De Coning and Smit; 1997). The framework referred to applies not only to the market and business environment, but also to the culture of the organisation. If this is not done within that mind set, how can the organisation be successful? It provides the basis for the development of the leaders and managers of tomorrow that will continue and further develop the corporate culture. In addition to this, with an effective management style in place that corresponds to the prevailing corporate culture, the standards of performance and deliverables can be raised.

3.4.4.4 Interaction of teams/groups within the organisation

Teams provide the ideal opportunity to act as carriers of the corporate culture (Van der Post et al; 1997). When individuals are taken into
teams and they interact across boundaries and functions, the culture is expanded, tested, maintained or, in some cases, even changed. Bellingham (2001) believes that this creates an opportunity for the motivation and empowerment of employees. This will lead to the solving of complex problems in a creative and innovative way, which, in turn, will lead to better customer-care levels.

All of the above elements act as carriers of corporate culture. It should be mentioned that they may have either a negative or positive effect on the corporate culture, or may even cause the corporate culture to be changed, as was explained in terms of the IBM experience.

3.5 Proposed model

In the above survey of available literature, one may deduct that a relationship exists between corporate culture, job satisfaction and customer satisfaction. The way in which these variables function is not completely clear. Based on the literature survey, the following model has been constructed (see Figure 18).

In addition to the proposed model and to clarify the model, one may ask the following questions:

- What are the factors influencing corporate culture within the Technikon?
- What is the link between the Technikon corporate culture and employee satisfaction?
- What is the link between corporate culture and learner satisfaction?
- What are the links between all of the above and customer-service strategy?

Summarised, the problem may be stated as follows: “What are the relationships between the level of employee satisfaction, the Technikon corporate culture, and learner satisfaction with the services offered by Technikon Pretoria?”
3.6 Summary

In this chapter, attention was paid to developing a better understanding of concepts such as customer care, corporate culture and employee satisfaction as elements of corporate culture.

The importance of and interactions between these concepts were investigated and explained. From the text it was clear that all organisations must deliver customer service of a high quality to have a competitive advantage in the market. Customer service is, however, rendered by employees and the levels of employee satisfaction and the quality of the corporate culture impact on the delivery of quality customer care. If the organisation wants to be competitive, it should focus on the development, establishment and maintenance of a corporate culture that will contribute to the competitive advantage of the organisation.

In the following chapter the focus will be on the detailed discussion of the research design for this thesis.
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter 4 will explain in more detail the research methodology that was used in the study. The focus will be on the hypothesis, aims, research design, participants and the instruments that were be used in the collection of the data.

This will assist in the understanding of the study as well as in other attempts to replicate the study for further research questions and opportunities.

4.1 Aim of the study

The aim of this study can be summarised as follows:

4.1.1 To determine the relation between corporate culture and employee satisfaction.

4.1.2 To determine the relation between employee satisfaction and learner satisfaction.

4.1.3 To establish what the relation is between learner satisfaction and corporate culture.

From the above, the following hypothesis was formulated:

- If there is a positive corporate culture, supported by high levels of job satisfaction, there will be high levels of customer satisfaction, and in the case of the higher education sector, there will be high levels of learner satisfaction.

4.2 Research design

A mostly positivistic approach was followed in the empirical part of the study. However, the approach was also, to a certain extent, interpretive. The design of the questionnaire was such that the respondents were given an opportunity to give comments or add additional information that they regarded as being relevant to the specific matter at hand. The information gained in this manner provided insight into some of the choices the respondents made.

4.3 Participants and location of the data

Because of time constraints and restricted research resources, this study focused on Technikon Pretoria. Technikon Pretoria is the largest residential Technikon in South Africa. With a staff complement of ± 1
500 permanent employees and ± 2 500 temporary employees, and almost 40 000 students (full-time and part-time) enrolled in the various programmes offered by the institution, the Technikon compares very well with all other technikons, and, in some respects, with some of the universities. In the arena of higher education it is recognised as one of the major institutions and it enjoys a fair amount of respect as one of the leaders in the sector.

Owing to the limited nature of this study, a non-probability approach was selected. For the purpose of this study the focus was only on those sections and groups of employees that interact with the learners on a daily basis. The sample was composed of the following groups:

- Lecturing employees at the Peromnes post levels 5 to 9 in all faculties.
- Academic Administration employees at the Peromnes post levels 5 to 19.
- Financial Administration employees at the Peromnes post levels 5 to 19.
- Accommodation and Catering employees at the Peromnes post levels 5 to 19.
- Student Affairs employees at the Peromnes post levels 5 to 19.
- Library employees at the Peromnes post levels 5 to 19.
- Buildings and Estates and Logistical Services employees at the Peromnes post levels 5 to 19.

The reason for selecting this sample was that this group of employees spend the majority of their working days interacting with learners. These employees also represented the majority of the total number of full-time employees and were in the best position to provide an opinion on corporate culture and employee satisfaction. From this group of 1 112 employees, a 20% convenience sample was drawn to participate in the study. The sample was stratified in terms of lecturing/non-lecturing, post level, and faculty/directorate.

A far as the learners are concerned, the focus was on the senior learners, including the B Tech learners. These learners have adapted to the new higher education environment, and they are typically involved in the various organisational structures and leadership bodies available to learners. They also enjoy representation on the Council of the institution; have had the benefit of being part of the higher education experience; and should have an informed opinion. A convenience sample was drawn per faculty, stratified according to
department, race and gender.

The Division for Statistical Support assisted with the sampling plan and the data-capturing process.

4.4 Measuring instrument/data gathering

In this study, three already developed measurement instruments were used. The first instrument focused on the measurement of the Technikon's organisational culture; the second made an assessment of the links of job satisfaction; and the third and last instrument focused on the satisfaction levels of learners. The three instruments will be briefly discussed below.

4.4.1 Organisational culture measurement instrument (Annexure A)

To assess the organisation's culture, the Organisation Culture Questionnaire (OCQ), as developed by Van der Post et al. (1997), was used. Van der Post et al. (1997) developed the OCQ by following an extensive process, including a literature review and an evaluation panel consisting of human resource experts. From this process the 15 subdimensions were formulated. The OCQ was also developed in the South African environment. In this study various roles and carriers were identified from the literature review that correlated with the subdimensions of the OCQ. The subdimensions are:

- Conflict resolution
- Culture management
- Customer orientation
- Disposition towards change
- Employee participation
- Clarity of goals
- Human resources orientation
- Identification with the organisation
- Locus of authority
- Management style
- Organisation focus
- Organisation integration
- Performance orientation
- Reward orientation
- Task structure

Based on the studies done by Van der Post et al. (1997), the reliability
coefficients for each of the cultural dimensions varied between 0.788 and 0.939. In the study by Van der Post et al. (1997) it was not possible to employ an external criterion to determine the validity of the instrument, however, the construct validity was tested using factor analysis. In terms of validity Van der Post et al. (1997) reported that a high to moderate factor loading on each of the subdimensions were obtained, that is between 0.8408 and 0.3916 that suggests an acceptable level of construct validity. In a study by Sempane, Reiger and Roodt (2002), the reliability of the OCQ was supported by a Cronbach Coefficient of 0.987. Thus, the questionnaire appeared to meet the standards of good scientific practice.

In order to facilitate the opinions of the participating employees in the study, a seven-point Likert scale (1 = completely disagrees, 2 = mostly disagrees, 3 = slightly disagrees, 4 = undecided, 5 = slightly agrees, 6 = mostly agrees, 7 = completely agrees) was implemented with this questionnaire.

4.4.2 Job satisfaction questionnaire (Annexure A, sections 1 and 2)

The questionnaire to be used to determine the level of job satisfaction amongst employees, is a shortened version of the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (MJSQ), developed by Weiss, Dawis, England and Lofquist (1967). The motivation for the use of the MJSQ is to be found in the reported validity of the instrument as reported by Jewell, Beavers, Kirby and Flowers (1990). (The content validity of the instrument was critiqued by a panel of experts). Jewell et al. (1990) also reported a high level of stability in testing and retesting, and Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.89. Bodur (2002) reported that the internal consistency of the questionnaire was 0.849, obtained by using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. In a further study a Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.92 was obtained by Sempane et al. (2002).

This measuring instrument is fairly simple and straightforward. It contained twenty items covering a variety of issues that are related to the work experience. These items included the meaningfulness of the task or job ethics, opportunities to utilise abilities and skills, conditions of employment, rewards for performance, management style and team relations.

All items were stated in the positive and were phrased in simple and easily understood language. Respondents were required to record their responses on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = not satisfied or dissatisfied, 4 = satisfied and 5 = very
This questionnaire was submitted to employees with the organisational culture questionnaire, to ensure that the questionnaires did not get lost or mixed up with any other respondent's responses, and to assist with and streamline the surveying process.

4.4.3 Learner satisfaction questionnaire (Annexure B, section 3)

This questionnaire had originally been developed in Australia. A qualitative analysis of 60,000 comments written by graduates on Australia's Course Experience Questionnaire confirms the need to include the full range of items as contained in the Students Satisfaction Survey. This questionnaire asks respondents to rate the items on importance as well as performance. The instrument is thus a self-validating tool (personal communication with G. Scott, University of Technology Sydney, 2004). According to Scott (2004) research on what engages students in productive learning in post-secondary and higher education indicates that it is the total experience of university, not just what happens in the traditional classroom that influences learning, and the current research done in Australia with successful graduates has confirmed the sub-scales covert in the questionnaire. In addition the Student Satisfaction Survey was benchmarked with a survey used by another Australian University who first administered it in 1994 (Scott; 2004). The above information supports the validity of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument as applied to Technikon Pretoria, were evaluated once the results of the study were obtained (refer to paragraph 5.3, p.68).

Through a cooperation agreement between Technikon Pretoria and the Australian Universities of Technology Network (AUTN) a project was initiated to apply the Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) at Technikon Pretoria. After a limited pilot study was done, the questionnaire was adapted for the South African higher education environment. The only dimension that was added was one relating to the student newspaper, Taxi, which is unique to the learners of Technikon Pretoria (Genis, comments during a personal interview, 3 February 2004).

This and the abovementioned confirms that this questionnaire poses an acceptable level of reliability and validity.

For this study eighty-seven statements, divided into seven
subdimensions, were presented to learners. The learners had to respond with regard to the importance of the item and the level of satisfaction (performance). For the purpose of this study the focus will be more on the level of satisfaction. The following subdimensions were tested:

- Programme quality and content (academic students)
- Outcomes of the study programme
- Administration
- Access to facilities
- Study assistance
- Student services
- General student facilities
- Student Representative Council
- *Taxi*, a student publication

All items were stated in the positive and were phrased in simple and easily understood language. Respondents were required to record their responses on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = not satisfied or dissatisfied, 4 = satisfied and 5 = very satisfied).

4.5 **Research methodology**

All the members of the identified group (sample) of participants were exposed to the structured questionnaires. The questionnaires were forwarded to the individuals (employees) via the offices of the deans and directors of the various sections of the Technikon. With regard to the learners, the questionnaires were distributed via the internal communication systems of the respective faculties.

The deans and directors of the various faculties and directorates were called in advance to explain the purpose of and reasons for the study. The confidentiality of the study and the respondents' responses were explained and maintained at all times. After the respondents had completed the questionnaire, they had to return it to the researcher for further processing. Independent data-capturers were appointed to capture and verify the data. The information was then sent for statistical analysis. The statistical assistance was provided by the Division for Statistical Support at the Directorate of Research and Development of Technikon Pretoria.
4.6 **Statistical analysis**

Keeping in mind that the research problem was to identify the issues that influence a customer-service culture within a higher education institution, and in order to obtain meaningful results from the data-gathering process, the following statistical analyses were done:

- Descriptive statistics on variables of a quantitative nature in the questionnaire.
- Frequency analyses on questionnaire items to evaluate the Technikon culture.
- Rank-order correlation was used to establish the relationship between culture, employee job satisfaction and learner satisfaction.
CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on discussing the statistical results obtained by means of the various questionnaires used in the study. Attention will also be given to the sample size, response rate and some biographical information pertaining to the sample.

As was briefly discussed in Chapter 4, three measurement instruments were used in the study. The reason for this approach was to measure three different variables, namely organisational culture, job satisfaction and learner satisfaction, and to investigate the interrelatedness or correlation between those three variables. A more detailed discussion will be provided on the results obtained from the application of the three instruments.

5.2 Sample and biographical information

In Chapter 4 it was explained that, for the purpose of this study, the focus will only be on those areas that have a direct impact on and/or contact with the learner. The motivation, as supported by the literature study, is that the level of customer satisfaction is strongly influenced by the people in the organisation that work directly with the customer. In the case of a higher education institution, most of the customers are learners.

However, because there are two distinctive groups in the study, namely the employees of Technikon Pretoria and the learners of Technikon Pretoria, convenience samples were drawn from each of these groupings. Based on these groupings, some biographical information was generated, which will be discussed in this section.
5.2.1 Employee sample and biographical information.

5.2.1.1 Employee racial data

The racial distribution of the sample is set out in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race group</th>
<th>Number of employees responding</th>
<th>% responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>35,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>60,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Employee racial data

From the table above, it is clear that the majority of the respondents participating in the study were from the white race group, namely 60,9%. The African race group was second, with a 35,4% participation, and the smaller two groupings were the Asian group at 2,2% and the Coloured race group at 1,3%. In view of the current employment equity distribution report, this appears to be a fair reflection of the current levels of diversity within the institution.

5.2.1.2 Employee gender data

The gender distribution of the sample is set out in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of employees responding</th>
<th>% responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>39,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>60,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Employee gender data

There was a very strong presence of female respondents in the study, with a participation of 60,4%. The male participation was lower, at 39,5%. As in the case of the racial distribution, these figures are also in line with the current gender composition, as reflected in the employment equity report of the institution.
5.2.1.3 *Highest academic qualification*

The highest academic qualifications of the respondents in the sample are contained in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Number of employees responding</th>
<th>% responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower than Grade 12</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12 with a diploma</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3: Employee qualification data**

It is interesting to note that only 27.6% of the respondents have a postgraduate degree, with 13.3% holding an undergraduate degree. It is also a matter of concern that 22.7% of the respondents do not have a Grade 12 qualification (matriculation certificate). One would expect that, in a higher education environment, the level of postgraduate qualifications would be higher.

5.2.1.4 *Employee sample data*

Table 4 provides an outline of the sample sizes and the number of employees returning the questionnaires.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty/Directorate</th>
<th>Number of people employed</th>
<th>Number of employees returning the questionnaire</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts Faculty</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Economic Sciences</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Engineering</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Social Development Studies</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Natural Sciences</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Agriculture, Horticulture and Nature Conservation</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Health Sciences</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Information and Communication Technology</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>595</strong></td>
<td><strong>93</strong></td>
<td><strong>15.6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPERATIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings and Estates</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Catering</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistical Services</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>282</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STUDENT AFFAIRS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Development</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Development</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Support</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Support Bureau</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar (Finance)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar (Academic)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 112</strong></td>
<td><strong>231</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Employee Sample data
In Chapter 4 it was highlighted that the sample would include only the permanent employees employed at post levels 50 - 190 (Peromnes post grading system) who deal directly with learners. In this sample, both academic and administrative employees are included. It is important to note that all the faculties are included in the sample and questionnaires were sent to all employees in their respective sections.

From Table 4 it should be noted that 231 employees responded out of a total of 1112 people employed. Of the 595 Academic employees (possible respondents), 93 (15.6%) returned their questionnaires. Two faculties, the Arts Faculty and the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology, both returned 21% of their questionnaires, which would be regarded as sufficient. The Faculty of Engineering had the lowest return, namely 10.3%, while the Faculty of Economic Sciences had a 12% return rate.

The support sections, namely Library Services, Operations, Student Affairs, Finances and Academic Administration, responded well. The lowest response (20%) came from Finances and the highest response (39%), came from Student Affairs. Other responses from the Library (31%) Academic Administration (30%) and Operations (25%) contributed the study.

5.2.2 Learners sample and biographical information

In this section, a short description will be provided to clarify the biographical information of the respondents who participated in the study. As indicated in Chapter 4, the questionnaire was submitted to full-time learners.
5.2.2.1 **Racial data**

The racial distribution of the sample is set out in Table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race group</th>
<th>Number of learners responding</th>
<th>% responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2038</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5: Learner racial data*

The majority (66.6 %) of the respondents were from the black race group. That was to be expected, since the majority of the learners at Technikon Pretoria are black. The white learners represent the second largest grouping, with 30.8%, and the smaller groups are the Coloured (1.5%) and the Asian learners (0.9%). It is interesting to note that, as opposed to the racial distribution of the staff, where the majority of the staff belong to the white race group, the majority of the learners are black.

5.2.2.2 **Gender data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of learners responding</th>
<th>% responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1 323</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1 813</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6: Learner gender data*

Based on the respondents' responses it would appear that more female (57.8%) than male (42.1%) learners are studying at the institution. This correspond with the demographics of the institution.
5.2.2.3 Learner sample data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Number of learners in the faculty</th>
<th>Number of learners returning the questionnaire</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>1 572</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>21,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Sciences</td>
<td>5 631</td>
<td>1 275</td>
<td>22,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>2 838</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>15,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Development Studies</td>
<td>2 016</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>10,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>1 672</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>31,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Horticulture and Nature Conservation</td>
<td>2 002</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>1 487</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>22,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</td>
<td>1 883</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19 101</strong></td>
<td><strong>3 195</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Learner sample data

The majority of the learners in the various faculties responded well to the study. The Faculty of Natural Sciences responded the best with 31%, Economic Sciences (22.6%), Health Sciences (22.1%) and Arts with 21.4% response. Disappointing responses were obtained from ICT (2.5%) and Agriculture, Horticulture and Nature Conservation with a 2.1% response. The effect of this low response of the faculties mentioned above brought the response for the total sample down to 16.7%.

5.3 Reliability analysis

In order to justify the use of the instruments, reliability analysis were performed. For the culture survey, a Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.773 was obtained. For the job satisfaction instrument, a Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.91 was obtained, and a Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.978 was obtained for the learner satisfaction instrument. Thus high reliability levels were achieved for all three instruments.
5.4 **Discussion of results**

In the analysis and interpretation of the data for each scale, the best two to three items were compared with the worst two to three items.

5.4.1 *Employee organisational culture survey*

In the previous discussion it was pointed out that the organisation culture survey was structured in a specific way. In the questionnaire, 15 subdimensions of culture were constructed. The results of the questionnaire will be discussed by using those subdimensions as a framework. In order to identify basic trends, a frequency analysis was done on the total sample.

5.4.1.1 *Identification with the institution*

This subdimension contained seven items. These included a commitment to make the organisation’s strategic vision a reality. Other aspects are emotional involvement, employee socialisation and business friendship.

Of the respondents, 80,4% agreed with the statement that employees are committed to the institution, 73,5% of the respondents believed that the employees of Technikon Pretoria share a strong degree of commitment to make the institution successful, and 69,9% of the respondents were of the opinion that employees do identify with the institution. Figure 19 is a representation of all the items in this subdimension.
6. At Technikon Pretoria, employees are committed to making the institution successful.

26. Employees at Technikon Pretoria have confidence and trust in each other.

77. Employees experience a sense of belonging to Technikon Pretoria.

85. Employees at Technikon Pretoria assist each other because they share a high degree of commitment to making the institution successful.

87. Employees at Technikon Pretoria identify with the institution.

91. Technikon Pretoria does encourage its employees to identify with each other and the institution.

95. Employees at Technikon Pretoria share a high degree of commitment to making the institution successful.

Figure 19: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "identification with the organisation"

Although one of the items (item 26) scored a low rating, it would appear that there is a strong feeling of identification with the institution and what it should stand for.
5.4.1.2 *Locus of authority*

The subdimension “locus of authority” relates to the freedom and independence individual employees experience within the institution. This will include whether or not there is a centralised or decentralised management approach.

With the exception of item 10 (72.3%) all the items show an agreement level of 60% (item 3) and less. Figure 20 shows the frequency analysis for this subdimension.

3. At Technikon Pretoria, the authority to make decisions is only in the hands of senior managers (post levels 1-4).
4. At Technikon Pretoria, decisions have to be referred upwards all the time.
10. Employees at Technikon Pretoria have the freedom and independence to do their jobs effectively.
55. At Technikon Pretoria, employees are empowered to make appropriate decisions and they do not have to refer everything to the senior management (post levels 1-4).
89. Employees at Technikon Pretoria are encouraged to use their own initiative in doing their jobs.
94. Employees at Technikon Pretoria are not allowed to get on with their jobs because they have to double-check all decisions with their
95. Employees at Technikon Pretoria share a high degree of commitment to making the institution successful.

**Figure 20: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "locus of authority"**

Based on the above, it seems that the freedom to take decisions is limited at Technikon Pretoria. Some of the respondents feel more free to make their own decisions than others. The reason for this is that some of the items appear to contradict each other.

5.4.1.3 *Management style*

The subdimension “management style” refers to the degree to which managers communicate clearly with their immediate subordinates and provide them with direct assistance and support. The focus here was on whether or not employees generally perceive the higher levels of management to be helpful and supportive when required, or whether it is a matter of “sink or swim”.

The frequency analysis of this subdimension indicates that the Technikon, according to the sampled group, is not performing too well in this area. Of the respondents, 56% (item 18) believed that Technikon Pretoria does not treat its employees as valued resources. Only 38.2% (item 36) of the respondents agreed with the statement that Technikon Pretoria listens to the views of employees. This viewpoint was supported by low levels of agreement on the remaining items in this subdimension (see Figure 21).
18. Managers (heads of departments) at Technikon Pretoria communicate clearly with their subordinates and provide their subordinates with assistance and support.

36. Technikon Pretoria listens to the views of its employees.

51. At Technikon Pretoria, senior management (post levels 1-4) are helpful and supportive when required.

74. At Technikon Pretoria, there is a low level of trust in, and openness with, senior management (post levels 1-4).

79. At Technikon Pretoria, the communication flows freely and accurately throughout the institution – upwards, downwards and laterally.

80. Employees at Technikon Pretoria can rely on management (post levels 1-4 and HoDs) support when needed.

**Figure 21:** Frequency analysis for the subdimension "management style"

The level of performance in this subdimension is negative and reflects an area of concern with regard to management style.
5.4.1.4 Organisational focus

The focus of the organisation relates to the extent to which the organisation is perceived to be concentrating on the activities which form part of the fundamentals of the business, in other words, does the institution stick to its business? A more positive opinion is reflected by the response of the participants in the study. The strongest items were 66 (67.4%) and 88 (69.1%), which indicate that there is a focus on what needs to be done to ensure that the institution is successful.

14. Technikon Pretoria does allow itself to get side tracked by issues which do not really matter.

39. Technikon Pretoria has a good understanding of the things that really matter.

49. All of the activities at Technikon Pretoria centre around things that are really vital to its success.

66. Technikon Pretoria knows what it needs to do exceptionally well in order to survive and prosper.

76. Technikon Pretoria allows its employees to concentrate their efforts on the right activities.
This is a focused institution that knows how to get the basic things right.

**Figure 22:** Frequency analysis for the subdimension "organisation focus"

5.4.1.5 *Organisation integration*

The cross-functional and boundary cooperation between the various units of the institution is very important, and the subdimension “organisation integration” focuses on the degree to which employees are encouraged to work together to achieve the institution’s objectives.

Only 52.8% of the respondents were of the opinion that the sharing of information between various departments is encouraged. This was supported by item 30 (50.4%), item 33 (50.8%) and item 46 (53.6%). The only more positive indication of organisation integration was item 34, where 64.2% of the respondents indicated that employees of different departments are encouraged to work together for the overall good of the institution.
8. At Technikon Pretoria, the sharing of information between departments and work groups is encouraged.

30. At Technikon Pretoria, support across work group and departmental boundaries is strongly encouraged.

33. The different subunits at Technikon Pretoria are encouraged to work together effectively towards the achievement of the institution’s goals.

34. At Technikon Pretoria, employees of different departments are encouraged to work together for the overall good of the institution.

46. At Technikon Pretoria, interdepartmental cooperation is very strongly encouraged.

54. At Technikon Pretoria, managers (post levels 1-4) and HoDs) go out of their way to ensure that different departments operate in a coordinated way.

**Figure 23:** Frequency analysis for the subdimension "organisation integration"

5.4.1.6 *Performance orientation*

Performance, by its very nature, is an issue that all organisations should focus on. The subdimension “performance orientation” determines to which extent emphasis is placed on individual accountability for clearly defined results and a high level of performance.

Figure 24 provides the full picture. In terms of item 48, 70,7% of the respondents indicated that the Technikon does set performance standards for employees. At item 72, 73,5% of the respondents agreed that there is a norm to maintain progress and strive towards excellence. Item 2 received the least support from the respondents. It would therefore save to argue the focus is on performance.
2. At Technikon Pretoria, the emphasis is on doing a good job.
16. At Technikon Pretoria, the emphasis is placed on performance standards.
58. At Technikon Pretoria, emphasis is placed on the achievement of goals.
72. At Technikon Pretoria, there is a norm to maintain progress and strive toward excellence.
75. The goals that are set in this organisation are tough but realistic.

**Figure 24: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "performance orientation"**

5.4.1.7 *Reward orientation*

The subdimension "reward orientation" refers to which reward allocations are based on employee performance, in contrast to seniority or favouritism. This includes whether or not the employee perceives that there is a link between performance and reward.
5. At Technikon Pretoria, employees are expected to contribute towards the achievement of the institution's objectives and that which is rewarded.

12. Technikon Pretoria does reward good performance.

29. At Technikon Pretoria, emphasis is placed on rewarding employees for success rather than punishing them for failure.

38. Technikon Pretoria rewards employees on the basis of performance.

59. At Technikon Pretoria, employees are rewarded not for whom they know, but for what they produce.

70. Technikon Pretoria treats employees like good performers rather than poor performers.

96. At Technikon Pretoria, there is a clear link between reward and performance.

Figure 25: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "reward orientation"

The participants were not convinced that the institution has a high level reward orientation. According to the responses obtained (see Figure 25), with the exception of item 5 (63.0%), all the items were rated in the lower fifties or lower.
From a performance management perspective, it would appear that the performance management system can be improved.

### 5.4.1.8 Conflict resolution

This subdimension deals with the degree to which the organisation is perceived to encourage employees to air conflicts and criticism openly.

Conflict resolution does not appear to be a subdimension where the Technikon performs well. From the respondents' responses (see Figure 26), it seems that the opinion is that conflict and criticism are not dealt with openly and that different opinions are not encouraged.

![Graph showing data for conflict resolution](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>56.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Employees are encouraged to reveal any differences of opinion which they may have with their supervisors or seniors.

24. Differing views are encouraged at Technikon Pretoria.

32. At Technikon Pretoria, the senior management (post levels 1-4) do like to hear the other side of the story.

56. Technikon Pretoria deals with differences of opinion, does not ignore them or pretend that they do not exist.
68. The people at Technikon Pretoria are interested in hearing views that do not agree with their views.

81. There is an air of openness and trust at Technikon Pretoria.

92. Differences of opinion are welcomed at Technikon Pretoria.

**Figure 26: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "conflict resolution"**

5.4.1.9 *Culture management*

This subdimension indicates to what extent the organisation is actively and deliberately engaged in shaping the organisation's culture. This includes expressive events, ceremonies or rituals.

The respondents (63,0%) indicated that the Technikon has a strong value system that is widely shared by employees, and 65,0% of them are of the opinion that employees have a clear understanding of what the values and philosophies are. With regard to the senior managers' attempts to communicate the institution's values and philosophies, the respondents indicated weaker agreement (see Figure 27). It is a matter of concern that the senior managers were singled out in this regard, especially if the general feeling is that employees are aware of the values and philosophies. This suggests that there is a lack of communication by senior managers.
40. There are many things that hold Technikon Pretoria together and bind its employees to one another.
44. Technikon Pretoria has strong values, which are widely shared by its employees.
45. Managers (post levels 1-4) at Technikon Pretoria communicate to employees what the institution's values and philosophies are.
63. Managers (post levels 1-4) at Technikon Pretoria show employees what is important for the institution's long-term success.
73. Technikon Pretoria consistently makes employees aware of how they are expected to behave at work.
82. Employees at Technikon Pretoria have a clear understanding of what its values and philosophies are.

Figure 27: Frequency analysis of the subdimension "culture management"

5.4.1.10 Customer orientation

Customer orientation refers to the extent to which the organisation takes the views of customers seriously and actively responds to such views. The opinion of the customer and the level of service delivery are therefore important to the institution.
The data show that this subdimension enjoyed the highest level of agreement of all the subdimensions. From the responses received, it can be concluded (see Figure 28) that the Technikon does see its customers as a high priority and is aware of the fact that the quality of service must be excellent.

19. Technikon Pretoria really values its learners.
23. At Technikon Pretoria there is an informal atmosphere, which helps employees to get the job done.
37. Technikon Pretoria is definitely customer-oriented.
47. Technikon Pretoria really takes its customers/learners seriously and listens to them.
53. At Technikon Pretoria there is an emphasis on giving the customer/learner the best quality and service.

Figure 28: Frequency analysis of the subdimension "customer orientation"

5.4.1.11 Disposition towards change

The subdimension “disposition towards change” relates to the degree to which employees are encouraged to be creative and innovative and to constantly search for better ways of getting the job done.
Being creative and innovative is part of the higher education environment, and according to the data obtained from the respondents, there is support that creativity and innovation are encouraged at Technikon Pretoria.

41. At Technikon Pretoria, there is emphasis on individual initiative.
43. At Technikon Pretoria, employees are encouraged to be creative and innovative.
65. At Technikon Pretoria, employees are always encouraged to search for better ways of getting the job done.
67. Technikon Pretoria is an innovative institution and new ideas are generally encouraged.
69. Creativity is definitely encouraged at Technikon Pretoria.

**Figure 29**: Frequency analysis of the subdimension "disposition towards change"
5.4.1.12  

Employee participation

Employee participation is regarded as the extent to which employees perceive themselves as participating in the decision-making process of the organisation.

According to the response received from the respondents, this subdimension does not appear to be as positive as some of the other subdimensions. With the exception of item 61 (63.0%), all the items in this subdimension received weaker support (see Figure 30).

27. Employees at Technikon Pretoria are consulted in respect of decisions regarding what the institution plans to do.
31. Employees at Technikon Pretoria are genuinely encouraged to participate in broad institutional policy matters.
50. Technikon Pretoria allows employees to participate in the decision-making process.
61. Employees at Technikon Pretoria have a say in their own work goals.
64. Employees at Technikon Pretoria have a say in the institution’s work methods.
83. Technikon Pretoria has a participative management style.
86. At Technikon Pretoria, employees are involved in decisions which directly impact on their work.

Figure 30: Frequency analysis of the subdimension "employee participation"

5.4.1.13 Clarity of goals

This subdimension refers to the degree to which the organisation creates clear objectives and performance expectations. This includes whether or not employees are clearly informed of the plans and objectives of the organisation and understand their particular roles.

According to item 25, 68.2% of the respondents were of the opinion that employees at Technikon Pretoria are sufficiently aware of the institution's goals. This is supported by item 42, where 73.1% of the respondents are of the opinion that employees at Technikon Pretoria know what is expected of them in their jobs.
Employees at Technikon Pretoria are sufficiently aware of the institution's goals.

Employees at Technikon Pretoria do understand what contribution is expected from them.

Employees at Technikon Pretoria do know what is expected of them in their jobs.

Everything that employees do at Technikon Pretoria is directed at accomplishing the institution's goals.

At Technikon Pretoria, goals are clearly defined.

Employees at Technikon Pretoria understand the objectives of the institution.

**Figure 31: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "clarity of goals"**

5.4.1.14 *Human resources orientation*

This subdimension provides an indication of the extent to which the organisation is perceived as having a high regard for its human resources. The question is, does the institution value its human resources as being important contributors to the success of the organisation?

In the opinion of the respondents, there is a fair amount of agreement with the notion that the institution values its employees as a resource that contributes to the success of the institution. Figure 32 provides a good indication of what the level of agreement is.

Of particular interest is item 71, according to which 69.9% of the respondents were of the opinion that Technikon Pretoria views its employees as important contributors to the institution's success.
Managers in general at Technikon Pretoria really care about employees.
Technikon Pretoria has a high regard for its employees.
Technikon Pretoria treats its employees as if they are a valued resource.
Technikon Pretoria does really value its employees.
Technikon Pretoria treats its employees as though they contribute towards the institution’s performance.
Technikon Pretoria views its employees as important contributors to the institution’s success.

Figure 32: Frequency analysis for the subdimension “human resource orientation”

5.4.1.15 Task structure

The last subdimension relates to the degree to which rules and regulations and direct supervision are applied to manage employee behaviour.

Of the respondents, 59,3% agreed with the statement that employees have to get approval from senior managers before they can act. According to item 78, the respondents (71,5%) were of the opinion
that there are many standard procedures which employees have to adhere to at all times.

It should be noted that a high level of agreement with the various items is actually negative, since too many rules and procedures make it difficult for employees to do their jobs without constraints (see Figure 33).

13. At Technikon Pretoria, there are not too many rules, regulations and standard procedures.
17. Employees at Technikon Pretoria do not have to get approval from senior management (post levels 1-4) before they can act.
20. At Technikon Pretoria, employees do not have to observe many rules and regulations in doing their work.
21. At Technikon Pretoria, employees have to follow many standard procedures in doing their jobs.
23. At Technikon Pretoria, there is an informal atmosphere that helps employees to get the job done.
52. At Technikon Pretoria, not following the chain of command to get a job done is frowned upon.
60. Employees at Technikon Pretoria are not constrained by rules, regulations, policies and procedures in doing their jobs.
At Technikon Pretoria, there are many standard procedures that employees have to adhere to at all times. Employees at Technikon Pretoria understand the objectives of the institution.

Figure 33: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "task structure"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture sub-scales</th>
<th>Ranked mean scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer orientation</td>
<td>5,26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition towards change</td>
<td>4,90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification with the organisation</td>
<td>4,77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance orientation</td>
<td>4,75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resource orientation</td>
<td>4,59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture management</td>
<td>4,53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational focus</td>
<td>4,52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation integration</td>
<td>4,38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of goals</td>
<td>4,27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward orientation</td>
<td>4,24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee participation</td>
<td>4,21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>4,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management style</td>
<td>4,06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus of authority</td>
<td>4,01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task structure</td>
<td>3,57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Ranking of means scores for the culture questionnaire

Table 8 provides a macro view of how the various subdimensions were rated (expressed in means) by the respondents. The subdimensions that were rated the highest were customer orientation, followed by disposition towards change, identification with institution, performance orientation and human resource orientation.

On the lower end of the spectrum, task structure was rated the lowest, followed by locus of authority, management style, conflict resolution and employee participation. The focus on the customer is very positive.
However, one would argue that the institution should address the subdimensions at the lower end. This could also have a negative influence on the culture, in general, of the Technikon.

5.4.2 Job satisfaction questionnaire results

In this section, the focus is on the results of the job satisfaction questionnaire. The job satisfaction questionnaire contained twenty statements which tested various aspects of working at the Technikon. Figure 34 provides the frequency analysis of the items.

From figure 34, it is noted that a really weakest level of satisfaction were to be found on items 12, 13 and 14. Item 12, with a 55.9% satisfaction level, relates to the way in which company policies are put in practice. Item 13, the item rated the second lowest, with a 44.5% satisfaction level, deals with the remuneration that is given for the work that is done, and the lowest item was item 14 (38.7%), which relates to the chance of advancement on the job.
1. Being able to keep busy all the time.
2. The chance to work alone on the job.
3. The chance to do different things from time to time.
4. The chance to be “somebody” in the community.
5. The way my senior handles his / her staff members.
6. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions.
7. Being able to do things that don’t go against my conscience.
8. The way my job provides for steady employment.
9. The chance to do things for other people.
10. The chance to tell people what to do.
11. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities.
12. The way company policies are put into practice.
13. My pay and the amount of work I do.
14. The chances for advancement on this job.
15. The freedom to use my own judgement.
16. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job.
17. The working conditions.
18. The way my co-workers get along with each other.
19. The praise I get for doing a good job.
20. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.

Figure 34: Frequency analysis for the job satisfaction survey

A further important observation is the next three lowest items, namely 15, 17 and 19. Item 15 specifically deals with the freedom employees have to make their own decisions, item 17 refers to the working conditions and item 19 focuses on the praise an employee gets for doing a good job.

The response on items 19 and 13 corresponds well with the subdimension “reward orientation” in the culture survey. All of these items deal with reward and remuneration, and in both cases the respondents scored the items low or lower than the rest of the items.

Item 12 of the job satisfaction survey and the subdimension “locus of authority” (see Figure 20) deals with the authority the employees have to make decisions, and to what extent there are rules and regulations that govern the behaviour and activities of employees. In both these assessments, weaker scores were given, suggesting that these issues are matters that the respondents believe are not satisfactory.

The best items were item 1 (being able to keep busy all the time), item 2 (the chance to work alone on the job), item 8 (the way my job provides for steady employment) and item 9 (the chance to do things for other people).

5.4.3 Learner satisfaction

As indicated in previous chapters, the focus of the study includes the satisfaction levels of learners. In order to determine what the levels of satisfaction among learners are, a questionnaire was submitted to the learners and the results set out below were obtained.

As in the case of the organisational culture questionnaire, the learner satisfaction questionnaire is also divided into subdimensions. These subdimensions will provide the framework for the reporting on the results of the study.
5.4.3.1 Academic programme

This subdimension relates to the extent to which learners are satisfied with the academic programme, including learning material, subject content, learning and teaching methods, workload and assessment, and also what their perceptions had been before they enrolled at the Technikon, and what they really experienced after enrolment.

Because this subdimension is extended, two figures will be provided to plot the responses from the respondents.

Items: The Technikon Pretoria programme which I am enrolled in –

1. Is meeting the expectations I had prior to my enrolment.
2. Is accurately described in Technikon Pretoria's promotional brochures.
3. Has up-to-date subject content.
4. Closely links theory and practice.
5. Has useful and relevant learning materials and equipment.
6. Has well-equipped lecture halls, learning areas and laboratories.
7. Employs interesting and appropriate teaching and learning methods.
8. Has roughly equivalent workloads between different subjects.

**Figure 35:** Frequency analysis for the subdimension "academic programme" (1)

Items 3 (has up-to-date subject content) and 4 (closely links theory and practice) received the highest scores, while item 7 (employs interesting and appropriate teaching and learning methods), and item 8 (Has roughly equivalent workloads between different subjects) received the lowest scores.

The lecturing material and facilities (items 5 and 6) are meeting the needs of the learners (70.9% and 71.4%, respectively).

Items: The Technikon Pretoria programme which I am enrolled in –
9. Has a majority of employees who regularly consult students about the programme’s quality.
10. Clearly states assessment requirements in all subjects.
11. Applies and provides relevant and fair assessments.
12. Provides timely and constructive feedback on learning after assessment.
13. Has contact class locations which are easily accessible and make participation easy.
14. Has class attendance timetables that suit my needs.
15. Has classes with student numbers which allow me to participate fully in all my subjects.
16. Has classes which comfortably accommodate the students in each of my subjects.

Figure 36: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "academic programme" (2)

The strongest items were item 13 (has contact class locations which are easily accessible and make participation easy), item 14 (has class attendance timetables that suit my needs), while the weakest item was item 9 (has a majority of employees who regularly consult students about the programme’s quality).

5.4.3.2 Outcome of study

The sub dimension “outcome of study” determines the extent to which the academic programme develops the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the learners. This includes the extent to which the programme prepares the learner for the world of work and the ability to function effectively in such an environment.

Item 17 (an ability to think critically) and item 18 (an ability to successfully solve problems in the field of study) were the strongest. The weakest was item 22 (a respect for alternative viewpoints).
Items: The Technikon Pretoria programme which I am enrolled in promotes the development of –

17. An ability to think critically.
18. An ability to successfully solve problems in the field of study.
19. A capacity for creativity and innovation.
20. Up-to-date knowledge and skills needed by industry and commerce.
21. Ethical values, like honesty and integrity.
22. A respect for alternative viewpoints.
23. Non-sexist attitudes.

Figure 37: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "outcome of study"(1)
Items: The Technikon Pretoria programme which I am enrolled in promotes the development of:

25. The skills necessary to undertake on-going self-directed learning.
27. Interpersonal communication skills.
28. Competence in using appropriate modern technology.
29. The ability to work as a member of a team.
30. An ability to handle the unexpected effectively.
31. A capacity to manage change.

Figure 38: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "outcome of study"(2)

The strongest item was item 29 (the ability to work as a member of a team) and the weakest items were items 30 (an ability to handle the unexpected effectively) and 31 (a capacity to manage change).

5.4.3.3 Administration

Administration is the subdimension that indicates the extent to which learners are satisfied with the process and flow of the registration and academic administration processes.
Apart from the content and the outcome of academic programmes, it is also important to consider the administration side of the business. In Chapter 2, a detailed explanation was given to provide a better understanding of the functioning of a typical institution of higher education. This was done because administration does contribute to the level of customer (learner) satisfaction.

**Items: The following are accessible and available when I need them:**

32. Easy-to-obtain information and admission procedures.
33. Easy-to-follow admission procedures.
34. Clear and accurate information about enrolment procedures.
35. Quick and convenient enrolling and re-enrolling.
36. Evenly spaced exams over the examination period.
37. Easily resolved exam timetable clashes.
38. Current and accurate information on the fee structure and my financial liability.
39. Accurate information about programmes and subjects.
40. Effectively and efficiently resolved administrative matters.
41. Student representatives who give effective voice to my views at Faculty, Senate and Council meetings.

**Figure 39:** Frequency analysis for the subdimension "administration"
Access to information regarding the administration process and programme content (items 32, 33, 34 and 39) were the strongest items. The respondents rated all three the items at a score of more that 60%. The weakest items were those relating to the enrolment and re-enrolment process and resolution of administrative (item 35 and 40), and the inability of student representatives to give effective voice to students views at Faculty, Senate, and Council meetings (item 41).

5.4.3.4 Access

This refers to the extent to which the various facilities on the campuses are available and accessible to the learner.

The best item was libraries (item 42), which was rated at 80.2%, the rest of the items were rated in the low sixties, high fifties and a few in the forties. The weakest scores were for items 43 (computers), 46 (child care) and 47 (transport). These items achieved satisfaction levels of 44%, 40.2% and 42.8%, respectively.
Items: The following are accessible and available when I need them:

42. Library
43. Computers
44. Sport facilities
45. Cafeterias
46. Child care
47. Transport
48. Security services
49. Book loan services
50. Information desk services
51. Reserved collection for my field of study
52. Provision of materials listed in study guides
53. Provision of study space and desks
54. Photocopiers or a photocopy service

Figure 40: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "access"

5.4.3.5 Study assistance

This subdimension assess the level of study assistance that the institution renders to learners.

The item that scored the strongest was item 55. This item assessed the language support for learners on campus. (Of the respondents, 60.9% indicated that they were satisfied with the current level of support).

The weakest was Item 59 which deals with the aspect of tutorial support by lecturers and peers. A score of 34.5% was obtained from the respondents, clearly indicating that learners require more assistance.

Figure 41 will provide more information in respect of the rest of the items in the subdimension.
Items: Study assistance

55. English language skills support on campus
56. Study-skill support
57. Career counselling
58. Tutorial support by lecturers and peers
59. Student employment centre
60. Appropriate computer hardware in computer centres
61. Computer software appropriate to my study field
62. Support in computer centres

Figure 41: Frequency analysis for the subdimension "study assistance"

5.4.3.6 Student service

Student service refers to the extent to which student services are available and accessible to learners. This includes the Dean of Student Affairs and all sections and services that are associated with that Directorate.

In general terms, the respondents did not show a high level of satisfaction with this service. It is not the lowest of all the subdimensions, but there is an indication that an improvement is expected. The two items with the highest scores were items 65 (Aids
Centre) and 68 (Accommodation). These items scored a rating of 60.4% and 57.2%, respectively. The two items with the lowest scores were items 69 (Bursaries) and 71 (Dean of Student Affairs). For these items, score of 41.2% and 43.2%, respectively, were obtained. It would appear that this area, in general, needs to be attended to.

**Items: The following are accessible and available when I need them:**

63. Counselling services
64. Medical services
65. Aids Centre
66. International student service
67. Special services for students with disabilities
68. Accommodation
69. Bursaries
70. Study loans
71. Dean of Student Affairs

**Figure 42:** Frequency analysis for the subdimension "student services"
5.4.3.7 General student facilities

This subdimension includes the extent to which the general facilities are available and accessible to learners, and also the Student Representative Council (SRC) and the learners' newspaper, *Taxi*.

The facility that received the strongest rating was the Bookshop (item 74), and the weakest items were Transport (item 73) and Support for affiliated sporting codes (item 78).

**Items:** The following are accessible and available when I need them:

72. Visitors' Information Centre
73. Transport
74. Bookshop
75. Internet Cafe
76. Security after hours
77. Support for inter-technikon competitions
78. Support for affiliated sporting codes
79. Sport Department facilities

**Figure 43:** Frequency distribution for the subdimension "general student facilities" (1)
The strongest item was 86 (Taxi was easy to obtain), and weakest items were item 80, 81, 82, 83 and 84 all related to the effectiveness of the SRC.

**Items: SRC and Taxi**

80. Conduct effective education campaigns.
81. Effectively represent students' interests.
82. Have collective clubs and societies that are easy to become involved in.
83. Have publications which provide information about students' rights.
84. Would provide capable support if I had problems with a programme or lecturer.
85. Taxi is easy to contribute to and participate in.
86. Taxi is easy to obtain.
87. Taxi provides relevant information on higher education and social justice issues.

**Figure 44:** Frequency analysis for the subdimension "general student facilities" (2)
Some of the subdimensions rated more positively than others. Table 9 shows the ranking of the subdimensions according to their means.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subdimension</th>
<th>Means scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome of studies</td>
<td>3,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic programme</td>
<td>3,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access and study assistance</td>
<td>3,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Taxi</em></td>
<td>3,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>3,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student services</td>
<td>3,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General facilities</td>
<td>3,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRC</td>
<td>2,837</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Subdimensions ranked according to means (highest to the lowest)

According to the responses of the respondents, the subdimension "outcome of studies" was rated the highest. The second subdimension was the subdimension "academic programme" (3,62). Third in line was the subdimension "access and study assistance". This is a very encouraging situation, since this is the focus of the institution; therefore, a high level of learner satisfaction suggest that the learners, in terms of these dimensions, are getting value for their money.

From a learner perspective, the SRC achieved the lowest level of satisfaction. Student leaders should pay attention to this aspect of the learner community.

Of concern to the senior management should be the lower level of satisfaction with the student services subdimension. The part that this section plays in the full development of the learner is quite significant. One would expect this area to be a strategic focus area that renders services to the satisfaction of the clients (learners). Although the administration subdimension is lower down in the table, it was still indicated as providing a relatively acceptable level of satisfaction. An improvement in this area would be to the advantage of the institution. Of course, one has to accept the fact that the registration process is inevitably a long and tedious process.
### 5.5 Summary of the frequency analysis findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Subdimension</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification with the institution</td>
<td>employees are committed to make the institution successful</td>
<td>a lack of trust and confidence amongst employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus of authority</td>
<td>freedom and independence to do jobs effectively</td>
<td>lack of empowerment to make appropriate decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management style</td>
<td>clear communications with subordinates</td>
<td>low level of trust and openness with senior management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational focus</td>
<td>focussed institution</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation integration</td>
<td>employees were encourage to work together</td>
<td>managers ensure coordination of different departments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance orientation</td>
<td>norm to maintain progress and strive for excellence</td>
<td>little emphasis on doing a good job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward orientation</td>
<td>employees expected to contribute to the institutions objectives</td>
<td>lack of a clear link between reward and performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>people interested to hear opposing views</td>
<td>lack of openness and trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture management</td>
<td>employees aware of work expectation, values and philosophies clear and strong</td>
<td>lack of communication of values to employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer orientation</td>
<td>institution really values learners, informal atmosphere helps get jobs done</td>
<td>lack of customer orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition towards change</td>
<td>innovative institution and creativity is encourage</td>
<td>lack of encouragement for better ways of doing work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee participation</td>
<td>have a say in own work goals</td>
<td>little participation in broad policy matters, decisions and work methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 10: Summary of culture subdimension

From the above the conclusion can be made that there appear to be different groups of employees with different opinions. It may be possible that these represent academic employees with a more positive attitude as opposed to administrative employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clarity in goals</th>
<th>know what is expected</th>
<th>do not know what is expected of them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human resources orientation</td>
<td>employees viewed as contributors to success</td>
<td>does not treat employees as a valued resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task structure</td>
<td>many standard procedures to follow</td>
<td>not following the chain of command is frowned upon and lack of understanding institution objectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job satisfaction</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>keep busy all the time</td>
<td>the way policies put into practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chance to work alone</td>
<td>pay relative to work load</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provide steady employment</td>
<td>opportunity for advancement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do things for other people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Summary of job satisfaction

Again, two groups, academic versus administrative employees may be influencing the above results.
## Table 12: Summary of learner satisfaction

The issues highlighted by learners are obviously what is concerning them most and on the positive side it appears that these needs are being met. But on the negative side issues have been raised that should be addressed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner satisfaction</th>
<th>Subdimension</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic programme</td>
<td>up to date subject content and closely linked theory and practice, easily accessible class locations and suitable time tables</td>
<td>non-equivalent work loads between differing subjects, lack of consultation about programme quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcome of study</td>
<td>ability to think critically and work as team member</td>
<td>no respect for alternative view points, lack ability to handle the unexpected and lack capacity to manage change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>easy admission and enrollment procedures, accurate information about programmes</td>
<td>lack of effective SRC representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>library</td>
<td>computers, child care and transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study assistance</td>
<td>english language skill support</td>
<td>student employment centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student service</td>
<td>aids centre</td>
<td>bursaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General student facilities</td>
<td>bookshop, Taxi easy to obtain</td>
<td>transport, support for affiliated sporting codes, SRC issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6 The relationship between organisational culture, job satisfaction and learner satisfaction

Table 13 provides a macro perspective of the responses of the respondents (expressed in means) on all three variables (corporate culture, job satisfaction and learner satisfaction) for all the faculties and directorates concerned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty/Directorate</th>
<th>Culture 1 - 7</th>
<th>Job satisfaction 1 - 5</th>
<th>Learner satisfaction 1 - 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Science</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Development</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Horticulture</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and Communication</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings and Estates</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistical Services</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Catering</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Affairs:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Development</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Development</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Support</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Support</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar (Finance)</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar (Academic)</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Culture, job satisfaction and learner satisfaction expressed in means
The major objective of this study was to establish the relationships between culture, job satisfaction and learners satisfaction within Technikon Pretoria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Job satisfaction</th>
<th>Learner satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner satisfaction</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: Rank order correlation matrix: culture X job satisfaction X learner satisfaction

Not all of the departments could be used for the rank order correlations, because data was not available for the learners (operational departments). However, the eight academic faculties could be compared, and eight pairs are acceptable for the rank order correlation.

An examination of the results shows that there were no significant correlations between the variables at the significance level \( p < 0.10 \). However, the correlation between culture and learner satisfaction approached significance.

5.7 Summary

Chapter 5 was devoted to the description of the results obtained from the measurement instruments and data-gathering process. Detailed information was given with regard to the biographical information of both the learner and employee surveys. The biographical information, including the sample size and distribution, was presented in the same manner. A sufficient sample size was obtained for the total population to make reliable comments with regard to the results.

Both the employee and learner survey results were presented in the framework of the subdimensions in the questionnaires. This was done to simplify the description of the results easier. The job satisfaction results were presented in an uncomplicated and limited manner to highlight the most significant elements. In the last part of this chapter, the focus was on the relationship and correlation between the three variables in the study. No clear correlations were found. However, the relationship between culture and learner satisfaction approached significance.
In Chapter 6, the last chapter of the study, the findings will be interpreted. Based on this interpretation, recommendations will be made on how to achieve a corporate culture that would promote customer care.
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Discussion

This chapter will focus on the findings of the study, and recommendations will be formulated as to how service delivery to learners can be improved via a customer care oriented corporate culture.

The results did not support a relationship between the culture and job satisfaction. In view of the literature that had been studied, a strong relationship between corporate culture and job satisfaction could be expected. In this study that was not the case.

The relationship between culture and learner satisfaction was not significant, but there was definitely a much strong tendency displayed. This tendency might be explained by the fact that the institution places a high premium on quality service delivery to learners and that the learners are important to the institution. Customer orientation was the dimension in the questionnaire that received the highest rating.

The relationship between staff job satisfaction and learner satisfaction also did not approach significance. In view of the Service-Profit Chain model, it could have been expected that a significant relationship would exist between job satisfaction and customer (learner) satisfaction.

Bearing in mind these results, the model developed by the author was subjected to an evaluation. Firstly, using the ranked means scores for the culture, job satisfaction, and learners satisfaction questionnaires sub-scales, positive factors (those strengths which were identified through the rankings) which could influence the relationships between culture, employee satisfaction and learners satisfaction and ultimately learner retention were assessed, and an attempt was made to explain the results.
Figure 45: The Learner Satisfaction Model - Corporate Strengths

Figure 45 suggests that cultural strengths such as a strong customer orientation, a strong disposition to change, a strong identification with the organisation, a strong performance orientation, and human resource orientation might have related to higher levels of learner satisfaction found in the areas of outcome of studies, academic programme and access to study assistance. The culture factors appear to be essentially “outward looking” and could also be related to enhanced learner retention and market share. (Please note that the breakdown of culture strength is based on the data in Table 8, p.89)

Strengths identified in the employee job satisfaction area eg, being busy all the time, the chance to work alone, the chance to do things for others, and steady employment appear to be mostly “inward looking”, and perhaps not related to learner satisfaction, and with the broader culture issues within the organisation.
Secondly, using the ranked means scores for the culture, job satisfaction, and learners satisfaction questionnaires sub-scales, figure 46, examines weaknesses within corporate culture, employee job satisfaction, and learners satisfaction. Culture weaknesses discovered were: management style, locus of authority, task structure, conflict resolution, and employee participation. These negative aspects could relate to weaker service delivery issues expressed by learners such as dissatisfaction with the general facilities, the SRC, student services, and administration. (Please note that the breakdown of culture weaknesses is based on the data in Table 8, p.89)

As previously suggested, the culture issues appear to be “outward looking”, thus possibly relating to learner satisfaction and retention. Areas of staff dissatisfaction lay in chances for advancement, poor pay and heavy work load, the way company policies were put in practice and the amount of praise people received for doing a good job. These appear to be “inward looking” and not related to broader culture and learner satisfaction issues.
It seems, on reflection that, the relationship and interaction between the lecturers (employees) and the learners (customers) may not be the same as in the case of the normal business environment. The learner is not only the customer, but also the product, suggesting that there could be leadership and mentoring relationships that bring a new dimension to the delivery of pure customer service. It would also seem that employees and learners did not move in the same circles and employees obtained their satisfaction from different things than learners. The frequency analyses lends more in depth insight into the above discussion.

For example the culture and job satisfaction appear to be influenced by different groups of employees with different opinions. It may be possible that these represent academic employees with a more positive attitude as opposed to administrative employees. The result of this could be that some groups are enhancing the organisational culture and the other groups could be pulling in a different direction.

The issues highlighted by learners are obviously what is concerning them most and on the positive side it appears that these needs are being met. But on the negative side issues have been raised that should be addressed. The aspects which influence the students positively may be arising from the positive elements in culture and job satisfaction, and at the same time negative issues may be influencing the learners negatively.

6.2 Recommendation

The results suggested that the culture of the institution was one where the customer was perceived to be important. Excellence is important and people knew what they had to do to be successful, but with this strong focus on performance, other aspects that would promote a stronger culture might have been lost, such as worker participation, reward orientation, management style and conflict resolution. The relationship between the employees and learners could be developed more. That should contribute to the enhancement of learner satisfaction and retention.

In future, if the institution really wants to establish itself as a leader in higher education and promote learner satisfaction, the gap between the positive and negative aspects in corporate culture should be reduced.

The focus on the vision, mission and strategic goals should be maintained, but the management style, reward orientation and employee participation should be addressed so that a higher level of satisfaction in this respect would be achieved.
By addressing these issues the level of learner satisfaction should increase.
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