

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND
DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

CUSTOMER CARE SERVICES AND STRATEGIES IN
ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN
KWAZULU-NATAL

BY

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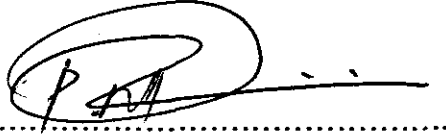
A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the Degree of
Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS)

Supervisor: Prof. D.N. Ocholla

Completed year 2004

DECLARATION

This thesis is entirely the original work of the author, except where due references are made, and neither has been nor will be submitted for the award of any degree to any other University.



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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my relatives and friends and to the best mother and father, Abrahams family especially Mrs. G.T. Abrahams, for their unconditional love, patience, and total support in all my endeavors.

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ABSTRACT

The study defined customer care as an activity that allows customers to make direct contact with an organization to pass comments on products and their use. It also observed customer care as a customer service that seeks to acquire new customers, provide superior customer satisfaction, and build customer loyalty. The aim of the study was to investigate customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. Two research assumptions were made. Firstly, it is assumed that academic libraries in South Africa do not have operational customer care strategies and services in place. Secondly, there is a relationship between poor information use and customer service and lack of customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in tertiary institutions. The study targeted 401 respondents, 307 students and 79 academic staff as well as 15 library staff. The study applied both quantitative and qualitative approaches and the population targeted was sampled by the use of stratified random sampling techniques. Three hundred and eighty six (386) questionnaires were distributed to both academics and students while interviews were conducted with the library management or unit and committee responsible for customer care. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze data from academic staff and students. This software was selected because it is a user friendly data management and analysis package that can perform a variety of data analysis tests and presentation functions. Additionally, Microsoft Excel was used to analyze data collected from the library staff respondents.

The study focused mainly on the problem areas, which depicts customer care policy and structures, customer care products and services, conducting of customer care, satisfaction of customers and strategies of customer care. It was discovered that some academic libraries do not have a formal policy on customer care in place. However, respondents were aware of and familiar with customer care policies in their libraries. Additionally, awareness and familiarity with information products and services was found to be known

among library users. Furthermore, it was found that academic libraries do not have proper methods and strategies of customer care.

Even those strategies that exist, are unknown among library users. It was further drawn out that library users are satisfied with information resources offered by their libraries. The study therefore, recommends that academic libraries should have a unit/person and committee responsible for customer care in place. In addition to that, library staff should attend workshops on customer care, to get formal training on how to deal with customers. It was observed that proper strategies and methods of conducting customer care must be implemented.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Customer Care

Customer care is a customer service that seeks to acquire new customers, provide superior customer satisfaction, and build customer loyalty (Brassington and Petit 2000:747).

Customer Strategy

Strategy often deals with ambiguous challenges alongside fundamental business values and performance factors. Every organization has natural goals and value premises that should serve to frame expectations, behaviors and performance.

Customer Service

It means anything that can be offered to satisfy a customer need or want. It is the way the product is delivered to customers.

Tertiary Institution

Means a higher level of educational institution, in which students study for their degrees and academic research is done. In South Africa that, includes Universities and Technikons.

Sales and Marketing

It means telling others what one has gained from using products and services offered, by a particular organization. For example sources of information can encourage others to use the products or services offered by the library. If these items are displayed well such as

on a counter or bulletin board in a waiting room — visitors will ask questions or read the information. Some may take those promotional materials and display them in other places, increasing its visibility.

Utility call centers

Utilities are seeking effective tools to retain existing customers and attract new ones. In addition, with call centers customers determine the products and service that best meet their needs and wants. Utilities as noted by Stockton are used to achieve customer loyalty and brand recognition in the library.

ABBREVIATIONS

UNIZULU : UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

DIT : DURBAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

**UN : UNIVERSITY OF NATAL (UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL)**

UDW : UNIVERSITY OF DURBAN WESTVILLE

MT : MANGOSUTHU TECHNIKON

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Conceptual setting

Customer care is an activity that allows customers to make direct contact with an organization to give comments on products and their use (Brassington and Pettitt 2000:747). The two authors' note that customer care is a customer service that seeks to acquire new customers, provides superior customer satisfaction, and builds customer loyalty. Further, they add that customer care has to do with good customer relations so that their expectations on products and services will produce the benefits and standard promised. Biblarz, Platoff, and Truitt (1998:1) point out that libraries today have competition from various sources, which include profit-making copy services that sell course packs (reserve reading) and from document delivery suppliers that provide many options for receiving materials - for a fee. In addition, customers can easily locate many research collections on the Internet, and they can find information that may, or may not, be available at the libraries. As a result of that, they note that libraries are expected to treat customers like Kings to ensure that all the information resources are used for the benefit of the community. It is widely believed that customers prefer speed, ease of access, personal attention, convenience, or simply the lack of hassle that they perceive to be available in the private sector (Brassington and Pettitt 2000:747).

Studies by Hisle (2002:1) and Nitecki (1997:1) suggest that academic librarians are there to shape and change their services to further improve learning and research problems faced by customers/ users. The two authors notes that the role of a library in an academic enterprise is to maintain the importance and relevance of the academic library as a place of intellectual stimulation and a center of activity on campus. These authors point out that academic libraries support new users in providing them with appropriate services and

resources, whether they are distance education students or those involved in new teaching and learning methods. Hisle and Nitecki warn that the organizational patterns of academic libraries are thought to be a barrier in providing students with access to instructions and information appropriate to their educational style. Good and effective service delivery in this is a crucial concern for the government of South Africa. This concern is emphasized in "What is Batho Pele", a government policy document which defines Batho Pele as a national governments' White Paper for transforming Public Service delivery. It emphasizes giving good customer service to the users of government services (Batho Pele, 2001). The White paper also provides eight principles/ guidelines for any organization dealing with customers as follows:

- **Consultation:** is a term that has to do with asking customers what they want and finding out how the organization can best meet their needs. This may be done by questionnaires or by talking to customers. These normally improve the image of the organization in terms of giving relevant services that answer customers questions.
- **Service Standards:** this has to do with the promises made by the organization that it will deliver its services at any time to its customers.
- **Access:** this may include access to all the resources provided by the organization, which may be too far to be reached by the clients. Good staff also play an important role in addressing customers in their own language which makes access easier.
- **Courtesy:** it is all about being polite to customers, like for instance being friendly, helpful and treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- **Information;** it has to reach all customers to make sure that they are well informed about the services provided by the organization. This may be done in a number of ways like for example through newspapers, radio, posters and leaflets. An

organization is expected to disseminate a Service Commitment Charter to inform customers about the services offered.

- **Openness and Transparency:** Batho Pele' principle encourages the staff to be open and be honest about every aspect of work done. An organization is expected to apologize to the public if it happened to fail to deliver the services expected on time. It should list reasons and find ways to improve the services.
- **Redress:** which is making it easy for people to tell the organization if they are unhappy with the services provided. Staff should be trained to deal with complaints in a friendly and helpful manner. The staff is expected to understand that complaints help improve customer services as they tell the organization what they want.
- **Best Value:** this means that giving customers the best service using all the resources available. In other words an organization is expected to partner with other service providers to support each other in the provision of best services to customers.
- **Innovation and Reward:** this innovation means new ways of providing better service, cutting costs, improving conditions, streamlining and generally making changes which tie in with the spirit of Batho Pele.
- **Customer Impact:** this means that looking at the benefits which the organization provides for its customers both internally and externally, it is how the eight principles link together to show the way in which the organization has improved in overall service delivery to its customers.

The Batho Pele policy can also be applied in the academic library under study. Customers of academic libraries in tertiary institutions include; students, staff, the surrounding community and other people permitted to use the library. Tertiary institutions in South

Africa are expected to cope with the needs and wants of their customers by making use of the modern business customers care methods and strategies in providing relevant products and services.

According to Clair (1993:8) any organization that is not committed to providing expectations of customer's point of view will not survive. He further points out that, important issues to be considered when taking care of customers include; giving customers accurate and reliable information; offer high quality service that is easily accessible and easily approachable service providers. Studies by Biblarz, Platoff, and Truitt (1998:2) reiterate that libraries care about customer service because they are so important and want them to use and to appreciate services provided. Additionally, the impact of good customer service is that it makes the job easier to do and a satisfied customer feel well treated, and they treat the librarians well each time they return to the library. Biblarz, Platoff, and Truitt add that librarians care about customer service, also, because it enriches their daily jobs and makes them focus on the customer, and that focusing makes sense to enlightened self-interest. For example, they observe that treating all customers equally always benefits both the user and the organization. In essence, this may mean that, libraries are expected to strive to satisfy its customers by trying to find ways to provide services that might take an extra step or extra effort that is stretching intellectually among librarians

1.2 Contextual setting

This section covers the background information of all tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal under study. This also includes information on the formation of libraries under the study.

1.2.1 University of Zululand

The University of Zululand was established in 1960. It is situated at Kwa-Dlangezwa community, approximately 142 km north of Durban and 19 km south of Empangeni near the N2 National Road of KwaZulu- Natal North Coast (the University of Zululand calendar: 2002). It was officially opened in 1961 and was then known as the University College of Zululand. It became the University of Zululand in 1970. Currently it has two campuses; the main campus that is at Kwa-Dlangezwa and the other one is at Umlazi in Durban.

The University of Zululand's main mission statement is to provide tertiary education and to pursue knowledge, which serve the needs of the country in general and those of the surrounding communities in particular. Its main role is to provide high quality education that is relevant and accessible to full-time and part time students. Lastly, the University of Zululand has got a population of five thousand two hundred and twenty two (5222) students, two hundred and sixty five (262) academic staff members and thirty four-library staff members' (34) (University of Zululand Calendar 2002).

1.2.1.1 The University of Zululand Library

A main library is situated at the center of the main campus. It provides resources and information services to support the learning, teaching, research and development in support of the mission of the University. The library provides information products and services to the University community as a whole. The building is designed to cater for the needs of a maximum of 7 500 students. The building consists of 7 levels of which 2 are basement levels, and 1 ground level and 4 upper levels. There are 80 study cubicles and 16 seminar rooms. Each cubicles accommodates 1 person and seminar rooms accommodate 10 persons. Furthermore, the building was designed to house 750,000

volumes of books of which it has got 250,000 volumes as of now. The library subscribes to approximately 1203 Periodical titles which are received regularly and it is fully automated. For instance, it is using URICA Integrated Systems (UIS), which is one of the subsidiary companies in UCS Group Limited. The system is rich in functionality in all modules and has a basic design, which allows the professional staff in libraries to process their tasks efficiently and provide a high level of service to the patrons. It has the ability to easily deal with different MARC formats. It caters for several Modules; that is, Information Retrieval; Circulation Control; Cataloguing; Catalogue Supervision; Monograph Acquisition; Serials Control; Interlibrary Loans Modules and OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue). The latest development is the Web Opac; which is up and running but still needs some refinement (University of Zululand Library Newsletter 2002). It is believed that the library has currently thirty-four-(34) library staff members. It serves the information needs and wants of five thousand two hundred and twenty two students (5222) and two hundred and sixty five academic staff members' (265).

1.2.2. The University of Natal library

The Libraries of the University of Natal provide resources and Information services to support the learning, teaching, research and development endeavors of the University community. Each of the campuses has a main library with branch libraries, which serve specialized needs of the students and staff. The library at the Haward College site consists of the main library, the E.G. Malherbe Library, and the four branch libraries, which are the Architecture, Law Music, and the Medical Library. The University Library in Pietermaritzburg also has the main library and two branch libraries, the Law and Life Sciences libraries (University of Natal Library, Annual report, 2002). The library system supports the University's mission of teaching, learning and community service and operate in a networked, computing environment that exploit the URICA integrated library system and access to local, national, and international information. The library has got a web page, which indicates the type of electronic services and resources available to the

users. There is a group of professional staff who, assisted by the para-professional staff provide general reference and instructional services to students, and staff the wider community (University of Natal:2002). The library is working towards fulfilling the needs of approximately twenty one thousand students' (21000), eight hundred and ninety sixty academic staff (896) and eighty seven-library staff (87) (University of Natal:2002)..

1.2.3 The University of Durban-Westville (UDW)

According to the University of Durban-Westville Calendar (2000-2005) the University of Durban Westville was established at the height of political repression forty years ago as the University College for Indians on Salisbury Island in the Durban Bay. The apartheid government of the day designated universities on ethnic and racial grounds. UDW was compelled to admit students of Indian origin. Student numbers were low throughout the 1960s.

The late 1960s showed a change in the boycott strategy in favor of 'education under protest' designed to transform apartheid institutions into "sites of struggle". Student numbers grew rapidly, drawing ideological sustenance from the emerging Black Consciousness Movement (University of Durban-Westville Calendar 2000-2005).

In 1971, the College was granted academic independence and became a fully-fledged University. The following year, the newly named University of Durban-Westville moved to its impressive modern campus. UDW students spearheaded the campaign for Student Representative Council's (SRC) to be recognized by the University authorities. SRC's became rallying points for activist Politics (University of Durban-Westville Calendar 2000-2005). It became an autonomous institution in 1984 operating under the same financial formula as the older universities in South Africa. A change in the Education Act and enormous pressure from students and faculty resulted in a more open policy on student admissions. The University of Durban Westville has got nine thousand four

hundred and forty students (9440), three hundred and fifty two academic staff members (352) and forty five library staff (45) (University of Durban Westville Calendar 2002).

1.2.3.1 The University of Durban Westville Library

According to the University of Durban Westville Library (2002) the library consists of the main library which is situated in the B Block near the center of the campus and the Joe Ryan Dentistry Library which is located at the Dental Hospital. The library holds a large 850 000 volume of materials including books, journals, audiovisual materials and a variety of other materials in its own collections and in addition provides information via CD-ROM databases, online links and the internet.

The library acts as a gateway to electronic information sources and through the subject librarians, the students have unprecedented access to online information and materials, powerfully connecting them to an international network. The periodicals and Government Publications collections provide some of the best sources of up-to-date information. The library subscribe to a number of online bibliographic databases and hold others in CD-ROM format details which can be found in the university library Electronic Resources page.

All materials held in the Main and Dentistry libraries are catalogued. These are the computerized online public access catalogue (OPAC) and the printed catalogue. The subject librarians also provide ongoing user education to facilitate easy access to information. The training covers, the use of OPAC, indexes and abstracts and how to access various online subject databases. A staff of dedicated professionals' provides services for each faculty to be attended by students who feel a need of those services. Members of staff regularly attend professional meetings, workshops and conferences which assist them in enhancing their service to users. The library serves to cater for the

needs of nine thousand four hundred and forty students (9440), three hundred and fifty two academic staff members' (352) and forty five library staff (45).

1.2.4 Mangosuthu Technikon

Mangosuthu Technikon is a modern higher educational institution which provides superior quality, technologically advanced programmes and services in Engineering, Natural Sciences and Management Sciences. Established in 1979 with private funding, Mangosuthu Technikon was the first institution in South Africa to offer training opportunities for black technicians. Mangosuthu Technikon is situated on the outskirts of Durban and overlooks the beautiful Indian Ocean and at Umlazi, south and close to the Durban International Airport. Mangosuthu Technikon co-operates closely with commerce and industry to ensure that the curriculum of a particular qualification is completely relevant to the chosen field and that the qualification is market driven. Theoretical studies as well as a period of in-service training form part of the programme. Graduates enter the workplace equipped with the essential knowledge, range of abilities and practical experience relevant to their chosen careers. The institution currently has an enrolment of six thousand three hundred and eighteen students (6318), one hundred and sixteen academic staff (116) and twenty four library staff (23).

1.2.4.1 Mangosuthu Technikon Library

According to Mangosuthu Technikon Library (2002) the library is an academic resource which strives towards service and product excellence by providing access to the information needs of students, staff, researchers and the community. It supports their learning, teaching, and research through an advanced information system and professional expertise. It caters the users with books, magazines, newspapers, reference materials and government publications. These are mainly related to courses offered on campus. The collection is arranged in numerical order on the shelves according to Dewey

Decimal Classification System. The library uses computerized catalogue system called (URICA) which can be accessed through computer terminals at various positions in the library. This library is divided into four folds, namely; general collection which consists mainly of books which can be borrowed for two weeks that is 14 days. Secondly, periodical/journals collection, which includes magazines. Latest issues of periodicals are shelved on the display area. Thirdly, reference collection, depicts, dictionaries, encyclopedias, year books and almanacs. Lastly, Short loans collection is the one that consists of books that are in great demand including past examination papers, reports, statutes and other tertiary institution calendars. This collection can only be used for a limited period for example one hour. The library caters for the information resources of about six thousand three hundred and eighteen students (6318), one hundred and sixteen academic staff (116) and twenty four-library staff (23). The library caters for the information resources of about six thousand three hundred and eighteen students (6318), one hundred and sixteen academic staff (116) and twenty four-library staff (23).

1.2.5 Durban Institute of Technology

The Durban Institute of Technology, formed by the merger of Technikon Natal and ML Sultan Technikon, is a vibrant multi-campus tertiary level institution at the cutting edge of higher education, technological training and research. It is committed to producing highly skilled graduates who are equipped to meet the demands of the workplace and the special needs of a changing society. April 1st 2002 was a momentous achievement for all concerned. The two prestigious Technikons M L Sultan and Natal merged (Durban Institute of Technology, 2002). It has the following faculties Arts, Commerce, Engineering and Science. Durban Institute of technology has got twenty thousand four hundred and twenty five (20425) students, eight hundred and six (806) academic staff and one hundred and three (103) library staff.

1.2.5.1 Durban Institute of Technology Library

The Durban Institute of Technology has four libraries serving the needs of students and staff. Three of these libraries are on the main campus. The Alan Pittendrigh Library is centrally situated on the Berea Campus, two of the City Campus Libraries are situated adjacent to George Campbell Square and the Pietermaritzburg branch library. These libraries serve the needs of approximately twenty thousand four hundred and twenty five (20425) students, eight hundred and six (806) academic staff and one hundred and three (103) library staff.

Together the libraries have a total book stock of some 75000 volumes and subscribe to 1350 periodicals, as well as providing state-of-the-art technology in the form of information on compact discs and electronically. In addition, the libraries are equipped to handle a wide variety of non-book material such as videotapes and slides. Photocopying facilities are also available. The library participates in the State Inter-Library Loan Service and is linked to SABINET (SA Bibliographic and Information network), as well as to numerous international databases via the Internet. The teaching interests of Durban Institute of Technology's various faculties are monitored by Subject Librarians whose task is to familiarize users with the library's stock in their subject field, to liaise with the staff that teach in the field and to assist their students (Durban Institute of Technology General Hand Book, 2002).

1.3 Statement of the problem and motivation

Academic libraries exist to serve the learning needs of students, academics, researchers, the community and those people mandated to use it. Academic libraries are expected to make sure that all services and products available are well known to its users/ and that its customers' needs are well catered. Experience has shown that service providers, for instance librarians, that are reluctant to associate themselves with customers end up having no users and books lie on shelves unread because information products and

services are not marketed to the clients, whose needs are not normally familiar/known and satisfied. It is noted that customer care has transformed the way in which organizations provide products and services to their clients, role of advertising, and importance of customer care in a business. It is assumed that if tertiary institution libraries can take into considerations the importance of customers, the use of resources can tremendously improve.

1.4 Motivation

The researcher's interests have been inspired by the concern raised by the government about poor service delivery and its Batho Pele's White Paper. Another concern on poor service provision was raised by the study conducted by DoE/European Higher Education-Libraries Programme (2002) which was based on customer satisfaction with information products and services offered by the libraries. DoE's/European Higher Education-Libraries Programmes study concentrated mostly on user satisfaction and information products and services offered by academic libraries. The study concluded that academic libraries do not have customer care in place. Additionally, a study on marketing library services conducted by Dlamini (2002), revealed among other things that academic libraries do not effectively market their information products and services to their library users. However, the study discovered that academic staff and postgraduate students were more aware of information products and services offered by the library than undergraduate users. The study concluded that there is an interaction between the library staff, academic staff and postgraduate students, while undergraduate students depend heavily on their lecturers to feed them with information. This compelled the study to conclude that there is a need to market all information products and services on campus to benefit all library users.

1.5 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal.

1.6 The objectives of the Study

In fulfilling the aim of the study, the following objectives will be pursued:

To find out the composition of customers served by the academic libraries in the tertiary institutions.

To establish if there are customer care structures and policy in place

To identify and evaluate the customer care products and services.

To establish how customer care is conducted in tertiary institutions

To establish levels of customer satisfaction with library services.

To compare the customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal so as to determine the appropriate approach to these services.

To suggest a strategy to improve customer care strategies and services in academic libraries

1.7 Hypothesis

- Academic libraries in South Africa do not have operational customer care strategies and services in place.
- There is a relationship between poor information use and customer service and lack of customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in tertiary institutions.

1.8 Research questions

- Which customers does the library serve?
- Does the library have customer care policy?
- Are the customers aware of information products and services in the library?
- Do they feel that the library care for them as customers?
- Are you satisfied with information products and services offered by the library?
- Which strategies and services are applied by the library for customer care?

1.9 Significance of the study

The study is expected to explore a strategy to improve customer care services in academic libraries in tertiary institutions in KwaZulu- Natal. Presumably, its outcome will help all the academic libraries in South Africa in planning and improving customer care services. By knowing the strategies and services of customer services, academic libraries in tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal will be in a better position to strategize and provide customer services more effectively.

The study will also be of significance to research, learning and information literacy among customers of academic libraries, especially the new users. It will help the researcher in gaining knowledge on the customer care services and strategies applied in academic libraries. It will contribute to the growing number of literature on customer care and academic research, more especially in South Africa where little has been written on the subject, particularly in relationship to customer care in non- profit making organizations.

1.10 Scope and limitation of the study

The study included all academic libraries in tertiary institutions, in KwaZulu-Natal. These tertiary institutions have been selected because they represent various groupings in the country. The University of Natal and the Durban Institute of Technology belong to the historically advantaged institutions; both the University of Zululand and Magosuthu Technikon belong to the historically disadvantaged institutions while the University of Durban-Westville historically came from political repression. The population of the five tertiary institutions comprised of students, academics like for instance researchers, educators or lecturers, the surrounding community and people mandated to use the library as well as the library staff. the study investigated customer care strategies and services in the tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. Although the researcher had an opportunity to interview the library staff respondents, however, it was impossible to interview the library users of the University of Natal. This was due to technical and legal issues, which allow a researcher to distribute the questionnaires to the library users. The researcher was given a go ahead very late and could not be able to administer the questionnaires on time.

The study was confined to the tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. It excluded the other tertiary institutions in South Africa because of the distance, cost and time. For example the researcher did not have enough money to cover all the tertiary institutions in South Africa. In addition, differences in academic calendars of the tertiary institutions mean that the distribution of questionnaires and the research in general could not be done simultaneously in all the institutions in the country. Though the study was done in 10 months, which is from March to December 2003, there were many problems that interfered with the study. For instance, distance, time and resources as well as communication breakdown.

1.11 Dissemination of research results

According to Ocholla (1999:141) possession of information without dissemination is useless and that research is not complete until it is disseminated. Results of this study will be disseminated through the libraries of all tertiary institutions in South Africa.

Results will also be disseminated through seminars, conferences, and internal workshops. In order to reach a much wider audience, it is intended that the findings be published in major journals.

1.12 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter one Introduction

This covers the introduction and conceptual and contextual setting, statement of the problem, motivation of the study, aim and objectives of the study, significance of the study, hypotheses and definition of terms.

Chapter two Literature review

Chapter two covers literature reviewed from books, journals articles and internet resources. The literature was reviewed according to each category of users/customers, the library staff and the management of the institution.

Chapter three Research methodology

This chapter focuses on how the research was designed and conducted and covers sections on the research method, study population, data collection techniques, validity and reliability, pilot study, data collection procedure, and data analysis.

Chapter four Analysis and interpretation of data/ Findings

This chapter presents an analysis of data from the questionnaires and interviews done among students, library staff and the management.

Chapter five Discussion of results

This chapter discusses the results of findings from chapter four, which looked at responses from students, library staff and the management of tertiary institutions.

Chapter six Summary, recommendations and conclusion

This last chapter provides the summary, recommendations and conclusions based on the research findings.

Bibliography

Appendices

1.13 Summary

This chapter has covered the introduction and conceptual setting in which information on customer care in academic libraries was defined. Other topics covered include the statement of the problem, motivation of the study, aim of the study, research objectives and assumptions as well as research questions, significance of the study, scope and delimitation's and definitions of terms. The next chapter looks at the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

According to Bush and Harter (1980:70) literature review is an in-depth analyses, synthesis and evaluation of information sources to gain insight and understanding of the problem under investigation. Neuman (2000: 445) points out that literature review is based on the assumptions that knowledge accumulates and that we learn from and build on what others have done. He further identifies four goals of a literature review, which are:

- a) To demonstrate a familiarity with a body of knowledge and establish credibility.
- b) To show the path of prior research and how a current project is linked to it.
- c) To integrate and summarize what is known in an area.
- d) To learn from others and stimulate new ideas.

In developing the literature review, the study has used the following objectives: firstly, by finding out the composition of customers served by the academic libraries in tertiary institutions. Secondly, by establishing if there are customer care structures and policy in place. Thirdly, by identifying and evaluating the customer care products and services offered by academic libraries. Fourthly, by establishing how customer care is conducted in tertiary institutions. Fifthly, by establishing levels of customer satisfaction with library services. Sixthly, by comparing the customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in South Africa so as to determine the appropriate approach to these services.

Lastly, by suggesting a strategy to improve customer care strategies and services in academic libraries.

This chapter reviews the literature on previous research, based on customer care strategy and services in academic libraries. The research reports, journals, relevant books and Internet was used in order to get different viewpoints on customer care strategy and services in academic libraries in tertiary institutions.

2.2 Composition of customers served by academic libraries

According to Poll (2003) and Simmonds, Andaleed and Sead (2001) academic libraries are described as the "heart" of the learning community, providing a place for students and faculty to do their research and advance their knowledge. Libraries provide numerous services to users, addressing their diverse needs, characteristics and interests. Mgobozi (2002:6) reminds us that academic libraries serve specialized needs of the students and staff. Studies by the University of Otago Library (2002) notes that academic libraries firstly, support and promote the mission and goals of the University as they relate to the library. Secondly, support and promote current and anticipated research and teaching at the university through the library's function. Thirdly, to affirm the role of the library as a partner with academic departments in pursuit of knowledge and of the University's educational goal. Fourthly, to ensure that decisions made in the library are informed by the interest of the user community. Fifthly, promote the concept that learning to use information knowledge resources is a significant part of a University education. Sixthly, to promote wide reading habits in the student population and to support the concept of education for life. Seventhly, promote the services offered, educate readers in the use of library's resources and services and encourage responsibility in use of such. Lastly, to affirm the role of the library as a partner with information technology services in the use of information relating to the delivery of library services. DoE/ European Higher Education-Libraries Programme (2002) points out that it is almost a universal

acknowledgement that academic libraries are the hearts of the institutions. This is because who ever works, learns or visits the institution depends heavily on the library to get relevant information. According to the University of Natal Durban Annual Report (2002) academic libraries provide resources and information services to support the learning, teaching, research and development in support of the mission of the University. The library's professional and para-professional staff provides services to the University community as a whole.

Studies by DoE/Europeans Higher Education-Libraries Programme (2002), Mgobozi (2002) and Moyane (2002) reiterate that customers of academic libraries vary from library to library, but in most cases they are the same. The three authors point out that customers or users of academic libraries depict the following: learning students, academics, researchers, the community and colleagues as well as the people mandated to use the library. The three authors further inform that even the library staff falls under customers of the library since they also heavily rely on information products and services of the library to up-date themselves. The University of Otago Library (2002) affirms that because academic library users have varying needs and expectations, it is the responsibility of the library staff to know needs and strive to meet users. Providing quality services in academic libraries is a major issue among academic librarians. Libraries are expected provide and access to service quality than just a physical place.

Biblarz, Platoff and Truitt (1998:2) affirm that academic libraries need to care about customer service in order for the customers to use and appreciate services provided. In essence, this may mean that academic libraries are expected to strive to satisfy its customers by providing services that might take an extra step or extra effort that is stretching intellectually among librarians.

2.3 Customer care policy and structures

Studies by Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (2002) clarify that library policy covers all aspects of accessibility to library services. These include location, opening hours, physical access, furniture and equipment, stock and services, access to staff and adequate space; and sets the standards against which individual users and communities can measure their needs, rights and expectations. According to the Empowerment International Customer Care Policy (2001) customer care policy is all about solving problems and delivering quality services and products to users. Empowerment International Customer Care Policy (2001), The University of Hull Academic Services Libraries (2002) and Jordanhill Library- Customer Care Policy (2000) point out that libraries are committed to customer satisfaction policy to ensure that a library;

- Provides a service, which is friendly, helpful and responsive to customer needs.
- Provides the fullest possible service at all times, within the constraints of available resources.
- Creates a pleasant and welcoming environment in which users can work.
- Makes available materials and information resources appropriate to user needs.
- Trains and develops the library staff so that they continue to provide quality service.
- Uses the information gathered from user complaints and suggestions scheme and user surveys to help the library improve services.
- Publicizes the library range of services, library regulations and opening hours, and keeps users informed of any changes in the library.
- Meets and exceeds customers expectations
- Provides the highest – quality products, training and services to all customers
- Treats all users with respect and courtesy
- Is aware of, and assists users with disabilities and users whose first language is not English.

- Keeps users informed about library services and opening hours, rules and regulations and publicize any changes.
- Consults users, for example by meeting with Library Representatives, conducting regular surveys of user opinion and providing a suggestions Box
- Offers a professional and effective service based on up- to -date information sources and modern technology.

2.3.1 Privatization of information on customers

Libraries are expected to treat personal information in the strictest confidence in particular, by not giving any information supplied to librarians to any other organization without customer consent or unless the library required to by law. Academic libraries have to ensure that they adopt a set of Privacy Protection Guidelines and measuring and constantly upgrading the library performance against its principles (Academic Services Libraries, 2002 and Jordanhill Library- Customer Care Policy 2000).

2.3.2 Policy on library customers

Studies by the University of Hull Academic Services Libraries (2002) clarifies that a policy on library customers should include:

- Taking good care of library materials, properties and equipment.
- Returning the materials borrowed on time.
- Expecting users to carry their user card with them whenever they visit the library and not lending it to anyone else.
- Refraining from eating, drinking, smoking and using personal stereos and mobile phones in the library.
- Treating library and fellow users with respect and courtesy.
- Studying quietly in open study areas, using study carrels for group study and discussion, and not reserving seats or equipment

- Users are mandated to ask library staff when ever they need assistance
- Users are given enough time to complete their work before closing time.

2.4 Customer care products and services

Customer care products and services mean the information products and services that are offered by the library to users.

2.4.1 Customer care products in libraries

Dlamini (2002:22) refers to the product as anything that can be offered by a library to satisfy a user/customer need. Studies by DoE/European Higher Education-Libraries Programme (2002), Dlamini (2002:22) and Mgobozi (2002:13) point out that in relation to the library, a product is associated with information sources/ materials offered by the library. These authors further identify the information products as follows;

2.4.1.1 The traditional printed journals

These journals are usually in a paper form and are placed on shelves in an information center or library. They are placed on shelves systematically and consulted for a particular reason, by learners and educators as well as researchers. Wells (1999) notes that communication between scholars depended heavily on personal contact and attending meetings that were arranged by the early learned societies such as the Royal Societies. Because of the large numbers of the membership; he, observes that more people could not attend the meetings therefore proceedings that were usually circulated as the record of the last meeting became a place to publish papers for the benefit of the members who were not at the meeting. Scholarly journals therefore developed this way (Wells, 1999).

2.4.1.2 The electronic journals

According to Klemperer (1999) electronic journals are serial publications that are available in digital format. These electronic journals may be distributed in various ways such as CD-Rom and internet. Those delivered through internet are available through World Wide Web and E-mail. Sweeney (1997) defines electronic journals as "pay as you go"... DIALOG may be an example whereby powerful searching tools are used to retrieve documents from printed journals.

These journals are printed on paper and thereafter scanned, stored and distributed electronically to a membership list, or only the table of contents and abstracts may be provided with a specific information on how to obtain the full electronic text of an article. Rao (1998) states that these are digitized journals.

2.4.1.3 CD-ROMS

CD-ROMS tend to be electronic versions of the existing printed journals. Powerful searching tools are used with CD-ROMS (Homby 2002).

2.4.1.4 Books

According to Homby (2002:122) a book is a printed work with pages bound along one side. They are kept in one place systematically, usually in libraries or bookshops.

2.4.1.5 Newspapers

Homby (2002:789) defines a newspaper as a set of large printed sheets of paper containing news, articles, and advertisements and usually published every day or every week. They usually contain local, regional and national as well as international news.

2.4.1.6 Cassettes

They are flat plastic case containing tape for playing or recording music/sound or information/photographic films that can be put into camera, radio or VCRs, (Hornby, 2002:168). It is normally used by those people who want to listen to the music, stories, and watch films. In libraries cassettes are placed in the audiovisual section.

2.4.1.7 Microfilm

They are usually kept in the audiovisual section, according to subjects. Microfilms are used for storing written information on in print of every size. It can only be read by a special machine (Hornby, 2002:741).

2.4.2 Customer services in libraries

Mason (2003) defines customer service as a means of more than a polite “have a nice day”. It means having the knowledge and ability to explain important points to potential and existing customers. According to Banwet and Datta (2003) the quality of library services can be classified into two dimensions technical (outcome) dimension and the functional (process) dimension. Technical quality or tangible quality can be expressed primarily as a quality and volume of literature available in the library. Functional quality or intangible quality refers to the manner in which the library services are delivered. Services achieve quality in perception when its performance meets or exceeds the level of the consumer’s expectations (Banwet and Datta, 2002).

According to Leonicio (2001: 53) recognizing the power of a customer in an era in which ideas are the medium of exchange is the underlying philosophy of quality service. In other words, it means that the quality of customer service is a culture of shared values in

the library organization. Banwet and Datta (2002), Hemon (2003) and Peter (2001) point out that service quality focus mainly on the interaction between the customer and the service provider (for example a library), which involves an evaluation of specific attributes. Leonicio (2001) affirms that customer service has seven characteristics which depicts; a written statement of customer service philosophy, training of employees in effective service delivery, evaluation and measurement of service quality, use of data to monitor policies, services and operations, established process of gathering data, service policies that provide latitude for staff to service customers and an internal customer service program.

The University of Otego library (2002) and Ximena (1994) point out that library customer service has to ensure that services are always provided in a timely fashion and urgent needs are met whenever possible. Secondly, ensure that high standard of service is provided to users. Thirdly, provide courteous, helpful and skilled assistance to users. Fourthly, to meet the needs of the library's users for ready access to clear and comprehensive records of the collections by building and maintaining a bibliographic database. Fifthly, to develop and maintain service to access information and knowledge in the owned collections and database by every appropriate means. Sixthly, help users in identifying and locating relevant information whether within or external to the University. Seventhly, encourage staff and students of the University to learn efficient and effective use of the library's services and collections, by providing user education programmes as well as by individual assistance. Eighthly, to maintain a lending system responsive to the needs of library users and to disseminate information about library service and collection by maintaining a publication programme. Ninthly, to promote the collection and services by mounting display and exhibitions and appropriates publicity. Lastly, to provide access to the University's library resources and bibliographic data for other libraries and for members of the wider community where appropriate. Identification and satisfaction of changing user needs and expectations, to determine where user needs are not being met, and to develop new or enhanced services as resources allow.

According to the University of Zululand Library Calendar (2001) academic libraries have a variety of services offered to its users which depict the following;

2.4.2.1 Acquisitions

The main purpose of this section is collection Development. It is the responsibility of the acquisition section to prepare and control the library budget. It is also responsible for; selection that is identification of new and most needed and relevant materials for purchase. In addition, ordering cards from the academics via subjects librarians, receiving new books and donations from donors.

2.4.2.2 Circulation

This area involves the following transactions: Lending Services, Short Loan Collection and Interlibrary Loan Services.

2.4.2.3 Short Loans

In the Short Loans area the information products are used within the area for 2 hours or photocopied. There are no overnight or weekend loans. The material may be renewed after 2 hours but once.

2.4.2.4 Interlibrary Loans

The interlibrary loans provide services to researchers, by obtaining photocopied, books and /or micro material not owned by the library from other institutions in southern Africa as well as worldwide.

2.4.2.6 Computer service

This section involves the following transactions; library computer network and registration cards and photocopying services.

2.4.2.7 Photocopy services

Users buy photocopying cards from the assistant and feed in money to be able to use the machines. Few machines operate by using coins.

2.4.2.7 Periodicals

The periodical section is responsible for the processing of all periodicals, newspapers, abstracts and indexes. The main functions in this section are the following:

- Selection of new journals
- Ordering
- Receiving, recordings, displaying of new issues in order to up- date the current issues. When the next issue arrives, the old issue is replaced by the new one
- Preparation of complete issues/ volumes for binding.
- Recommends cancellation of periodicals that are not used.

Newspapers are stamped and put on display for users to access. Abstracts, indexes, journals and newspapers are not issued / loaned out. All the materials in this area is used within the library.

2.4.2.8 Reference service and cataloging

Subject librarians offer services in this section by selecting new materials; cataloging the materials; offer reference services; user education and orientation to all library users.

2.4.2.9 Audiovisual

The audiovisual section provides users with all types of Non Book Materials that are available. This section has got video cassettes, audio cassettes, microfiches and microfilms, books with computer software, CD-ROM (ASFA, Science Citation Indexes with abstracts, Social Science Citation Index, Current Contents).

Materials are strictly on closed access- they can only be used within the audio –visual section. Staff is allowed to take the material for overnight to preview before presenting to the class. Audio-visual materials are arranged in the same way as all other materials in the library. They are listed in the computerized catalog as well as in the printed list available in the audiovisual section.

2.5 Conducting customer care studies

It is believed that once the customer has been identified, an organization must then find out what these customers want (Customer Care, 1989:18). According to Gerkes (2000) libraries need to focus on the requirements and expectations of end-users, in order to determine their needs and their wants. Once this is done, it will be easier to evaluate the degree of currently available products and services. The two authors points out that conducting customer care is important to maintain an up-to-date understanding of user needs and expectations. In addition there are many ways that libraries can use to conduct customer care for the benefit of users.

2.5.1 Customer surveys

According to Customer Care (1989:18) and Gerkes (2000) it is important to conduct periodical user requirements analysis (interviews and questionnaires) in order to best understand users' needs and to put in place mechanisms to frequently evaluate the level of user satisfaction to keep the quality of the service provided in line with user expectations. The two authors reiterate that the information obtained by these surveys can be used to develop a library policy. It can also reveal a considerable degree of dissatisfaction with information products and services offered. Lastly, surveys can help put in place all loop holes of the library in terms of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with information products and services.

2.5.2 Opinion Polls

It is believed that an opinion poll is another way of conducting customer care satisfaction with information products and services (Customer Care, 1989:19). In addition this normally helps librarians to have a clear picture on satisfaction of library users against information products and services offered. The document further states that opinion polls help the library to understand whether the services and products are of a good value for money paid by users. It also helps a library to know where it stands with its users, whether the use of library material is increasing or decreasing.

2.5.3 Joint customer/ Employee committees

According to Customer Care (1989:22) a great strategy for improving social services is through consumer-employee committees. Joint customer/employee committees according to the document, create mutual understanding among the library staff and customers/users. They both communicate easily through understanding one another in

terms of finding out if products and services offered meet the expectations of users. The document further suggests that, users contribute a lot if put in a joint committee with the staff because in most cases libraries buy information products initiated by users.

2.5.4 Direct democracy

The purpose of this form of decentralization is to bring services closer to the consumer, in order to provide the service users with genuine opportunity for involvement in the way they are offered by the library (Customer Care, 1989:22). The document presents that library users are encouraged to have a say on the way in which information products and services are provided by the library.

2.6 Customer satisfaction

Studies by Cooper and Dempsey (1998) and McCarville, O' Delle and Siegenthaler (2000) affirm that customer satisfaction represents the degree to which a library has met a user's needs and expectations. Cooper and Dempsey point out that satisfaction is based on the concept of disconfirmation, which represents the gap that exists between customer expectations and service performance.

The five authors above are of the view that customer satisfaction creates a win/win situation in which libraries gain valuable support from their constituents. Library staff for instance attempt to move beyond satisfaction by exceeding user expectations and by addressing customer's desires for innovation and activity. According to Rowley (1994) in the ever-more competitive world of information and document delivery channels, libraries used to focus sharply on customer satisfaction, since satisfied customers are returning customers. Rowley notes "quality service" as a service which fulfils the customer expectations. This assume that good quality library service is the one that offers users an experience with which they are satisfied. Rowley further points out that if

customers have a low narrowly-defined expectation of a service, then they may rate that service as being of good quality despite the fact that other competitive channels may be more attractive. According to Marriott Library User Satisfaction Survey (1999) users/customers feel satisfied when the library staff demonstrate a genuine focus and interest in their needs and wants. Thus users feel supported through print and online user guide, instruction sessions and assistance at reference desks to ensure that they understand searching protocols. Marriott Library User Satisfaction Survey further affirms that users feel satisfied when there is better communication with library staff about what help is available, including printed handouts and online messages and assistance.

McCarville, O' Dell and Siegenthaler (2000) point out that customers feel delighted when they receive a service or product that not only satisfies, but provides unexpected value or unanticipated satisfaction. The three authors clarify that client satisfaction is a task that literally never ends. It is a goal worth pursuing and satisfactions is linked directly to loyalty and repeats behavior.

Monash University Library (2000) and Rowley (1994) reiterate that there are ways that can make users feel satisfied with information products and services offered by the library. These include the following;

2.6.1 Speed of service delivery

Monash University Library (2000) and Rowley (1994) affirm that customer care satisfaction is on access time. For customers to feel satisfied, when asking for documents or information not available in that specific library, the speed of inter-library loan and access to external databases is important.

2.6.2 Convenience

This is often closely associated with speed delivery and as with the speed of delivery, location is a significant factor in convenience. It also reflects how well the service matches the requirements of the user. It also influences opening times, range of services available from one service point and the extent to which specifically tailored services are offered for speed groups (Rowley, 1994:9).

2.6.3 Choice

Customers appreciate options- different products at different prices. By making a choice the library service is not undermining the viability of another service or product. Customers feel satisfied if they find that the library has got many copies of documents since they will not wait to be brought back after they are used (Rowley, 1994:10).

2.6.4 Lifestyle

The lifestyle of customers is important in accessing which products or services they appreciate. Librarians are expected to know where their customers spend their time and to know their priorities. In short customers feel satisfied if the librarian's concern themselves with their environmental stay (Rowley, 1994:10).

2.6.5 Discounting

According to Rowley (1994:9) it is a common practice that many library services are not particularly price sensitive, since prices are low anyway and some services are free.

2.6.6 Value adding

Libraries nowadays have developed electronic products for the purpose of current awareness services. Users feel comfortable if they find what ever they want based on their needs and wants (Rowley, 1994:9).

2.6.7 Customer Service

Customer service focuses on the interactions between users and the library staff. Customers feel pleasant and satisfied to get positive response from the library staff whenever they want assistance (Rowley, 1994:9).

2.6.8 Missing books and journals are dealt with promptly

Customers are informed about missing books and journals within one working day to ensure that they do not get annoyed. The library staff ensure that all missing books and journals are brought back instantly for the benefit and satisfaction of users, (Marriott Library User Satisfaction Survey, 1999).

2.6.9 New materials are brought to the awareness of users/customers

According to Marriott Library User Satisfaction Survey (1999) libraries make arrangements with book suppliers for some categories of books and journals to be sent as soon as they are published, to ensure that all users are up-to-date with new publications. The use of electronic information when selecting and ordering new books is very important to make users feel satisfied. Once an item arrives in a library, it is displayed on the shelves for new books and journals to ensure that all users have access to it.

2.6.10 The library catalogue must provide clear and useful information

Improving the accuracy of the catalogue and to convert old substandard records is of importance (Monash University Library 2000). Once this is done, the library catalogue (OPAC) would be in a position to search and retrieve accurate and reliable information sources.

2.7 Customer care strategies

According to Stockton (2000) institutions are looking at implementing a spatially enabled customer care strategy as a means to gain a competitive edge in a market. It enhances communication before the sale, service positioning and delivery, service verification, monitoring customer satisfaction, marketing, and customer data tracking and analysis for decision support. Taking good care of customers is the key to success in a comparative deregulated institutions. Pawling (2001) points out that customer care strategies help an organization realize the importance of customers by solving problems faced by users and increase satisfaction and empower them with self service and capabilities and access to real-time information.

Organizations apply different strategies to improve what is known as “customer care” for the benefit of community (Pawling, 2001 and the University of Natal Report, 2002).

Strategies of customer care may include the following;

2.7.1 Customer care technology

Pawling (2001) and Stockton (2000) clarify that fundamental shifts are occurring in the way utilities access, disseminate, analyze, and store information. The two authors point out that companies realize that internet for instance can help customers to save money, solve problems, increase satisfaction and empower users with self service capabilities and

access to real-time information. It is observed that if technology is introduced, in libraries customers can be in a position to solve their own issues and get the information they need in a single contact one and done (Pawling, 2001).

Pawling add that if technology turns products into commodities, then customer service is even more vital, as it becomes the differentiating factor that gives a company a competitive advantage. It is believed that a winning strategy is to introduce internet, since customers are demanding web based customer service, and companies that do not use technology are left behind.

2.7.2 Utility call centers

Studies by Stockton (2000) reiterates that success in libraries is determined by quick response to customer complaints and problems. All calls from different customers are screened in order to know well the problems faced by users regarding information products and services offered. Stockton postulates that with utility call centers, service providers can store attribute data to each an every customer including location. This is key for communicating with information delivery and accessibility for reporting to management and other departments.

2.7.3 Sales and marketing

Pawling (2001) and Stockton (2000) reinforce that an important retail marketing activity is analyzing population demographics with current customer lists to see what type of person might be attracted to a particular service area. Location based analyses can be used to target potential customers and determine what types of services might be offered (Stockton, 2000). Sales marketing as a strategy for customer care can also be used to target marketing efforts toward a specific audience, determine which services will be

marketed in an attempt to increase user awareness. Sales marketing as a strategy leads to customer satisfaction and to more focused service and expansion plans, (Stockton, 2000).

2.7.4 Customer service

Pawling (2001) and Stockton (2002) emphasize that customer service is a field service delivery that requires utilities to track customer complaints, determine trouble types and location of service problems. The information they note can then be passed to the proper personnel or librarian responsible for handling specific types of emergencies. They further note that location enhances service records that can also be analyzed and correlated with historical data, thus allowing librarians to see where recurring trouble poses service threats to decide how best to resolve customer care difficulties.

2.7.5 Tactics

Utilities are seeking effective tools to retain existing customers and attract new ones (Stockton, 2000). It is believed by Stockton that with this method, customers determine the products and services that best meet their needs and wants. Utilities as noted by Stockton are used to achieve customer loyalty and brand recognition in the library. Moreover, Stockton observed that today's internet technology, competitors are evaluating the cost of attracting customers on the web verse via mergers and acquisitions.

2.7.6 Know and work closely with customers

Pawling (2001) opines that all organizations need a deeper understanding of interest and preferences of customers in order to provide relevant information. He argues that organizations have made huge mistakes in estimating the information products and services habits of customers. For example, academics might be comfortable with e-mail interactions, but might not like self-service options, such as searching a company Web-

site. He further warns that determining customers' needs can be challenging, therefore the best way to do it is to talk to customers. For example "tell us what to do and work with us and tell us if we are doing right". This can be done through focus groups, e-mail, face to face situation and online surveys (Pawling, 2001).

2.8 Summary

This chapter has looked at customer care strategies as they apply to the study. A variety of studies has been reviewed related to the current study undertaken.

This review has been able to distinguish customers served by academic libraries through other studies conducted locally and internationally. In addition by reviewing related studies, the researcher has been able to compare different methodologies used and how it could be applied in the current study. The literature review has helped to determine the extent of the importance of customer care in academic libraries. The next chapter discusses the research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The aim of the study was to determine whether customer care is done in academic libraries. The chapter explains the research methodology that was applied in the study. Neuman (2000:190) defines methodology as a research plan of action to measure variables of interest. Saravanavel in Dlamini (1990:17) notes that research methodology is a study of methods by which we gain knowledge. It deals with the cognitive process imposed on research by problems arising from the nature of its subject matter.

3.2 Research Design and Methods

There are different fundamental ways of studying a phenomenon, usually referred to as approaches to research, and their differences are often exhibited in the methods used in observing, measuring and understanding the social reality that is being studied. According to Vulliamy, Lewis and Stephens (1990) there are many approaches to social research and the choice of any one approach depends on the nature, scope, aims and objectives of the study

According to Ikoja (2002:184) a research method is a means by which a research project is implemented, while research design provides the structure that describes what is to be done and how it is to be done. The author notes that the objective of a research design is to plan, structure and execute the study in a way that maximizes the validity of its findings. The selection of a research method and design is therefore crucial since it not only determines the way by which research outcomes will be researched, but also influences and sets out the expected outcomes (Ikoja 2002).

The study applied both quantitative and qualitative approaches. According to Creswell in Leedy (1997:104) and Popenoe (1999:120) quantitative methods are designed to study variables that can be measured in numbers, such as income, age and educational level. Leedy (1997) explains that the quantitative approach is typically used to answer questions about the relationships among measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling phenomena. Marsland, Wilson, Abeyasekera and Kleih (2000) point out that quantitative research is aimed at testing theories, determine facts, statistical analyses, demonstrating relationships between variables, and prediction. Examples of quantitative studies include experiments, survey research, content analysis and existing statistics. Creswell (1997:1) defines qualitative approach as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words and reporting detailed views of respondents. In this study the qualitative research technique used included the use of documents such as theses and dissertations, journal articles and research reports and the researcher's observation.

The study used qualitative and quantitative methods because they both systematically collect and analyze empirical data and carefully examine the patterns in them to understand and explain social life (Nueman, 2003:139). The two approaches are inseparably useful in data collection and analysis, thus this study finds both of them relevant. The descriptive analysis, such as the socio-demographic profile of the crowd, may allow a representative sample to be drawn for the qualitative analysis. Studies by Mugenda (1999) clarify that both qualitative and quantitative methods supplement each other in that qualitative methods provide the in depth explanations while quantitative methods provide the hard data needed to meet required objectives and to test hypotheses. Mugenda further states that using both types of research helps to avoid biases in that each method can be used to check the other. For example, the subjectivity associated with qualitative research is minimized by the objectivity of quantitative research. The findings derived from one approach validates the other. Casebeer (2002) states that quantitative research may confirm or deny the representativeness of a sample group for such

qualitative research. Thus the mixed methodology will guide the researcher who is carrying out qualitative research, that his or her sample has some representative ness of the overall population. Casebeer elaborates that the two approaches are used firstly, to develop measures, secondly, to identify relevant phenomena, thirdly, to interpret/explain quantitative data, fourthly, to explain/interpret qualitative data, fifthly, to gain equal/parallel value from both types of data and lastly, to conduct effective multistage (longitudinal) analysis.

In addition questionnaires used were both quantitative and qualitative. They were quantitative because the respondents were at times required to indicate answers that needed Yes, No Sometimes of which during the analysis only statistical information was needed. It used qualitative methods because at times questionnaires asked needed the respondents to give suggestions and comments which means that only descriptive or exploratory information was needed. These explain that both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used in this study.

3.3 Target Population

Neuman (2003:216) observes that a target population represents a specific pool of cases that a researcher wants to study. Neuman further clarifies that a population can be a person, a group, an organization, a written document or symbolic message, or even a social action (for example, an arrest, a divorce, or a kiss) that is being measured.

In this study, the population is made up of the University of Zululand, University of Natal, University of Durban Westville, Mngosuthu Technikon, and the Durban Institute of Technology in KwaZulu-Natal University. In these tertiary institutions, academic staff, students and the library staff were targeted. Five faculties were selected for sampling purposes. These were the faculty of Arts, Commerce and Administration, Law, Science and Agriculture from all Universities, while only the faculties of Management Sciences, Natural Sciences and Engineering Information Technology were considered for

For the library staff population, the researcher used the judgmental sampling method, by selecting all professional librarians. This has been done because the total population of professional librarians is small in number and thus the researcher has thought that it will be manageable. In addition it is easier to identify only professional librarians. Firstly, the University of Zululand has got 34 library staff. Secondly, University of Durban Westville has got 45 library staff. Thirdly, Mangosuthu Technikon has got 23 library staff. Fourthly, Durban Institute of Technology has got 103 of the library staff. Lastly, The University of Natal has got 87 library staff. This gives the researcher a total number of 292 of the total number of the library. This number is manageable but the researcher only identified the professional librarians.

3.4 Data collection instruments

According to Neuman (1997:30) every researcher collects data by using one or more techniques, and that some techniques are more effective when addressing specific kinds of questions or topics. Several methods or instruments exist and their use depends on the type of information sought. This study employed the use of questionnaires and interviews for data collection. Questionnaires were used for the distribution of questions to students and the academic staff while interviews were conducted among the library staff respondents.

3.4.1 The questionnaire

The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain information regarding the perception and availability of customer care in academic libraries in all tertiary institutions targeted by the study. Questionnaires are the most widely used survey data collecting instruments that are normally distributed through the post to be completed by the respondents during their own time (Behr, 1988:157). Two different sets of questionnaires were designed. The first set targeted the academics and students, while the second set targeted and

interviewed the library staff. The reason behind separating them was that one category (academics and students) comprises the library customers while the librarians are the ones that provide customer services; therefore the questions differ in many ways.

The questionnaires for the academics and the students were divided into two sections. Section one contained questions on personal information and section two contained questions on customer care awareness. Questionnaires for the librarians were divided into two sections as well. The first section covered personal information and the second part contained information on customer care in academic libraries

3.4.1.1 Factors to consider in questionnaire construction

In designing the questionnaires, the following guidelines by Neuman (2003:273) were considered:

- Avoid jargon, slang and abbreviations. The vocabulary should be targeted to the audience.
- Avoid ambiguity, confusion, and vagueness. Confusion causes inconsistencies in how different respondents assign meaning to and answer questions. Questions should be specific with non-use of indefinite words.
- Avoid emotional language and prestige bias. Words with strong emotional connotations can influence how respondents answer questions. Avoid associating a statement with prestigious person or group because respondents may answer on the basis of their feeling to that person or group.
- Avoid leading questions. Leading questions can make the respondents aware of the answers the researcher wants which might not necessarily be a representation of their view.

- Avoid asking questions that are beyond the respondents' capabilities. Asking questions that few respondents know frustrates respondents and produces poor quality responses.
- Avoid false premises. A better question clearly asks the respondent to assume a premise is true, and then asks for a preference.
- Avoid overlapping or unbalanced response categories. Make response categories or choices mutually exclusive, exhaustive and balanced.

3.4.2 Interviews

An interview is a short-term, secondary social interaction between two strangers with the explicit purpose of one person obtaining specific information from the other (Neuman, 2003:267). Interviews can be structured, that is, using questionnaire type format and including closed form questions. They can also be semi structured. Neuman notes that the semi structured interview goes beyond the structured interview by probing beyond the asked questions in order to obtain additional information and seek clarification on matters that might arise from the answers given. He further notes that it is important to plan for interview schedule like one does in the questionnaire approach. For the purpose of this study, interviews were conducted with professional librarians of all tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. It was noted that some of the information required would not have clearly come out from the questionnaires. Like for instance, they were asked question like, "please comment on your library policy, particularly how the policy addresses customer care services and strategies (please provide the interviewer with a copy of the policy)".

3.5 Pilot Study

Validity is concerned with the soundness, the effectiveness, of measuring the instruments, (Leedy, 1993:32). A pilot study is the one that lets a researcher to do pre-testing of questions asked to the respondents, thus doing away with ambiguity.

A pilot study was carried out using respondents from the University of Zululand, in may 2003 with 15 library customers/users and 2 library staff respondents. This was done in order to gain insight and familiarity with the environment of the study and improve on the research instruments. The preliminary trial of a questionnaire is useful to determine if items are yielding the required information. The researcher conducted the pilot study with 17 respondents consisting of 5 academic staff members, 10 students and 2 professional librarians. Two sets of questionnaires were administered: one for the academic staff members and students and the second one for the library staff. It was not possible to get proper presentation of faculties, nevertheless, students consisted of 4 Undergraduates, 3 Honours students, 2 Masters students and 1 PHD student. The academic staff consisted of 1 Professor, 2 Senior lecturers and 2 Lecturers. The library staff were 1 Senior librarian and 1 librarian.

3.5.1 Results of the pilot study

Preliminary responses from the academic staff and students revealed that; all academic staff and student respondents (100%) were customers of the academic library. The majority 10 (67%) indicated that they were unaware of any customer care policy within the library. All respondents (100%) reported that the library sometimes satisfy their information needs. The majority 11 (73%) of the respondents were unaware of customer care strategy in the library. All (100%) respondents indicated that the library uses displays and exhibitions, personal communication as well as e-mails to inform them on new information products and services.

3.5.1.2 Results from the library staff

Views expressed by the library staff largely concurred with that of the users. For example, all respondents (100%) indicated that the library had no customer care policy in place, 100% of the respondents revealed that the library had no unit/person responsible for customer care, (100%) of library staff respondents confirmed that library users are always satisfied with information products and services offered and finally they identified the customer care strategies as follows; sales and marketing, user education, technology (Internet) for example, EBSCO and SA media and consultation with faculties.

The purpose of the pilot study was to test the research design and methodology. It emerged that certain questions needed clarity, and the researcher was required to add some information especially in the category of customers. Instruments were then adjusted where respondents had indicated a problem of understanding. Some items were corrected for clarification such as instances where they could use "yes or no". Though respondents indicated some problem in understanding the naming of the person responsible for customer care this was not removed, but "Yes or No was the option to use. Surprisingly, more than half of the responses received from the pilot study concurred with that of the major study where the sample population was larger and diversified.

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

Content analysis was used to analyze data that was collected through distribution of questionnaires. This was done by tertiary institutions and by category of users, that is academics, students and librarians. Academics and students questionnaires were also subdivided according to faculties, status and level of study. In addition, descriptive statistics, especially frequency distribution and percentages were chiefly used to analyze data that was collected through questionnaires. The latter was facilitated by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. This software was selected because it is a

user friendly data management and analysis package that can perform a variety of data analysis tests and presentation functions. For the library staff respondents, their data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel and Microsoft word. Data was then analyzed and presented in the form of tables, bar charts and pie charts in chapter 4.

3.7 Summary

The researcher has discussed the method and methodology used and the justification for using the written questionnaires and interviews for data collection. The study population, sampling procedure, sample size and sample frame were also discussed. When conducting a study, a researcher is expected to encounter some difficulties. The researcher encountered a lot of problems when conducting this study: firstly, it was difficulty to secure a reliable number of students in all tertiary institutions targeted by the researcher. The researcher was referred to different offices before securing the right figure. In addition it was difficult for the researcher to find information on academic libraries on-line. As a result of that, the researcher had to telephone all academic libraries to secure the number of library staff. Even when the researcher telephoned the libraries, it was very difficulty to secure the reliable figure of library staff. The researcher had to visit the academic libraries physically, as there is no database with updated information on the libraries. The other problem encountered by the researcher was that questionnaire distribution coincided with the closing of tertiary institutions in Durban and it was difficulty to get students to complete the questionnaires on time. The researcher had to wait for the third term, which started mid July to continue collecting data. Lastly, the researcher came across a very crucial problem at the University of Natal. It was difficulty to distribute questionnaires to the students and academic staff without securing permission from the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research. The researcher had to phone, e-mail and fax the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research, but it was all in vain. The researcher had to make an appointment with the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research to get a go ahead with the distribution. He was permitted to see the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research mid

October. When the researcher got permission, it was too late to distribute the questionnaires, thus the researcher decided to exclude the University of Natal students and academic staff from the study.

The study findings have been presented and analyzed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data in a manner in which it can be more easily understood, such that deductions and correlations can be drawn from it. This chapter is divided into two sections. Section one deals with academic staff and students while section two deals with the library staff. In addition section one reports on questionnaires distributed among students and academic staff respondents. Section two reports on interviews conducted with library management staff and or committee responsible for customer in the three Universities and two Technikons in KwaZulu-Natal. The questionnaires were distributed to respondents in four tertiary institutions as follows: in the students' category, 52 were distributed at the University of Zululand, 94 administered at the University of Durban Westville and 204 were distributed at Durban Institution of Technology while 63 at Mangosuthu Technikon. In the academics category, 26 were administered to the academics at the University of Zululand, 35 were distributed to the academics at the University of Durban Westville while 81 were distributed to academics at Durban Institution of Technology and 11 administered to the academics at Mangosuthu Technikon. The distribution was done on the sample size of 1% to both students and academic staff as shown in chapter three. In total, 413 questionnaires were distributed of which the overall response rate was 67% (386). In the students category from 52 distributed to students at the University of Zululand 49 (94%) responses were received, 94 were administered at University of Durban Westville and 52 (55%) responses received while 204 distributed at Durban Institute of Technology and 176 (86%) was received and 64 were administered at Mangosuthu Technikon and only 30 (47%) was

returned. From the academic staff category, 26 were administered at the University of Zululand and 15 (57%) were returned, at the University of Durban Westville 35 questionnaires were administered and 16 (45%) were returned while 81 were administered at the Durban Institute of Technology and only 41 (50%) returned questionnaires lastly, 11 distributed at Mangosuthu Technikon this was represented by 7 (63%) only. The questionnaire was structured into two sections. Section one (A) required respondents to give their personal information, while section one (B) looked at customer care within the library. Section two shall be presented at the end of section one.

It must be noted that the study did not administer questionnaires to academic staff and students at the University of Natal, for the reasons explained in chapter three.

Table 1: Representation of respondents
(N=386)

Name of Institution	Academic Staff Respondents	Student Respondents	Total
University of Zululand	15 (4%)	49 (12.6%)	64 (17%)
University of Durban-Westville	16 (4%)	52 (13.4%)	68 (18%)
Durban Institute of Technology	41 (10%)	176 (46%)	217 (56%)
Mangosuthu Technikon	7 (2%)	30 (8%)	37 (10%)
Total	79 (20%)	307 (80%)	386 (100%)

Table 1 above indicates that the majority 307 (80%) of respondents were students while 79 respondents (20%) were academic staff. Students have shown the highest response rate compared to academic staff.

4.2 RESPONSES FROM ACADEMIC STAFF AND STUDENTS

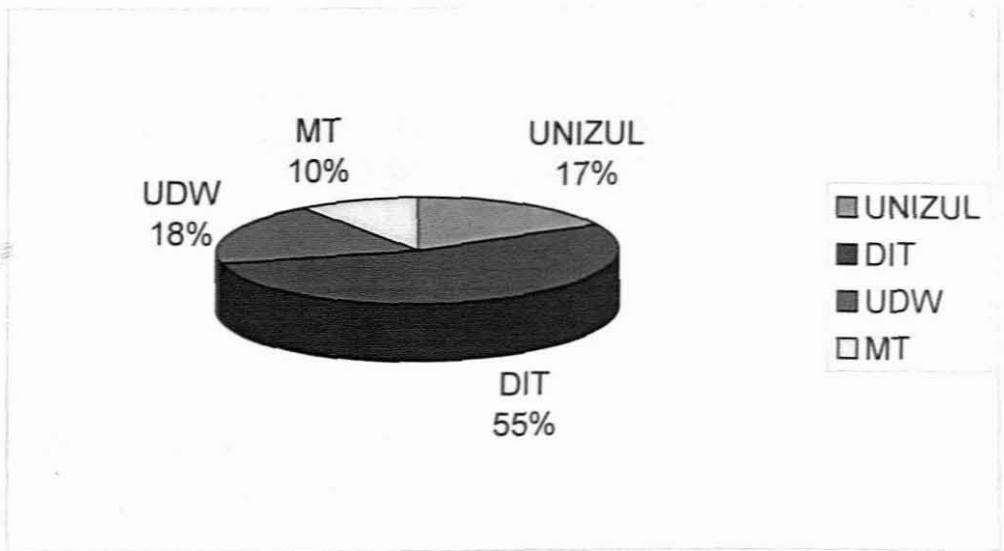
This section deals with both students and academic staff respondents. It shows their personal information and perceived knowledge on customer care in academic library.

4.2.1 Section one (A) Personal Information

4.2.1.1 Institutional affiliation

It was important to ask respondents to indicate their institutional affiliation. This was done to ensure the inclusion and separation of responses from all tertiary institutions. Pie Chart 1 shows the results.

Pie Chart 1: Tertiary Institution
(N=386)

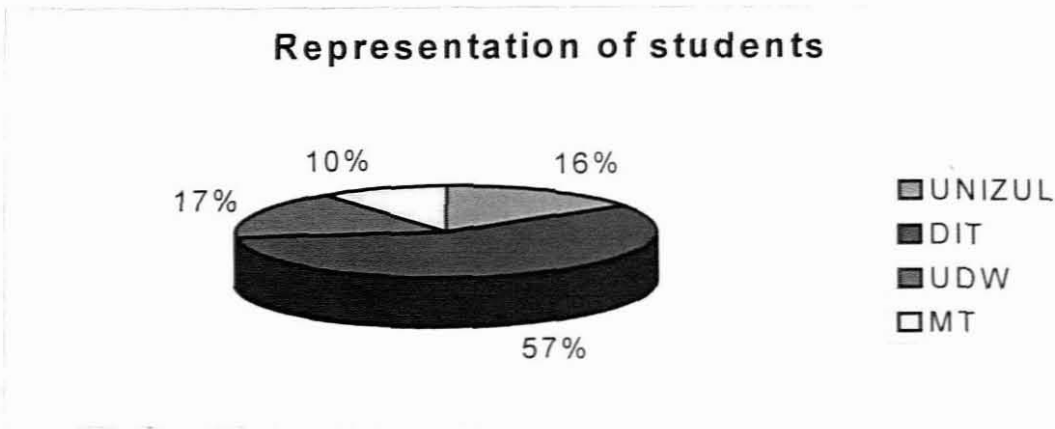


The pie chart above shows that there were 217 (55%) respondents from the Durban Institute of Technology, 68 (18%) from University of Durban Westville, 64 (17%) respondents were from the University of Zululand and 36 (10%) from Mangosuthu Technikon. The reason for the larger representation from the Durban Institute of Technology was because they had many students and academic staff as compared to other tertiary institutions, even though 1% sample was used in all tertiary institutions.

4.2.1.2 Representation of students

The purpose of having the representation of students was to ensure that students from all tertiary institutions are covered by the study. Pie Chart 2 summarizes the findings.

Pie Chart 2: Representation of students
(N=307)

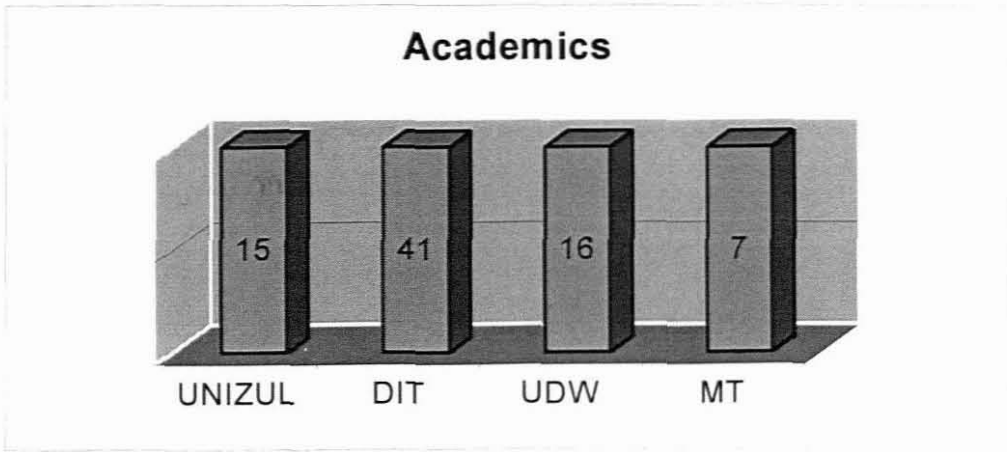


This representation was based on a 1% sample of the population as was explained in chapter three. The Durban institute of Technology has a larger representation because 1% produced many students compared to other tertiary institutions.

4.2.1.3 Academic Staff

The study found it important to have the representation of academic staff to ensure that they are covered by the study. The bar chart below shows the results.

Bar Chart 1: Academic Staff
(N=79)

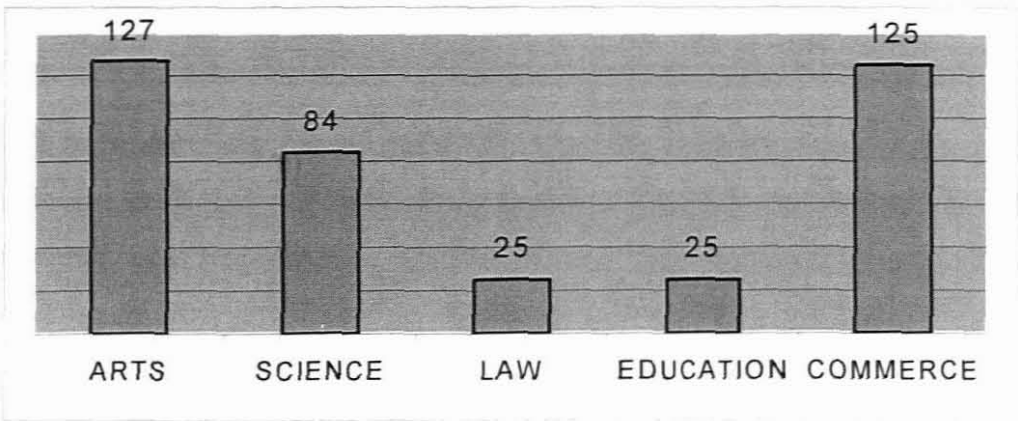


The bar chart above reveals that most of the academics 41 (52%) were from the Durban Institution of Technology while 16 (20%) were from the University of Durban Westville. Lastly, 15 (19%) academics were from the University of Zululand while 7 (9%) from Mangosuthu Technikon. The Durban Institute of Technology has a larger representation of academic staff because their population was large compared to other tertiary institutions.

4.2.1.4 Representation of students and academic staff by faculty

The respondents were asked to indicate which faculty they belonged to. The main aim behind this item was to ensure that all faculties targeted were covered or represented. The bar chart below summarizes the results.

Bar Chart 2: Distribution of students and academic staff by faculty
(N=386)



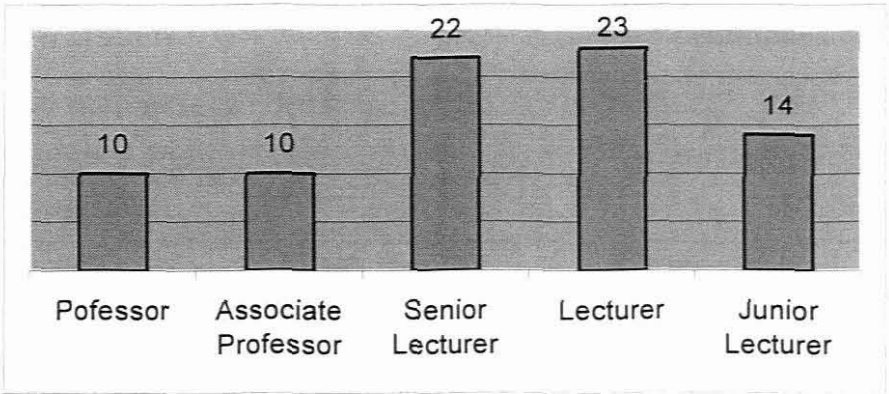
The bar chart above shows that from all tertiary institutions there were 127 (33%) respondents from Arts, 84 (22%) Science, Law 25 (2%), Education 25 (2%) and 125 (39%) Commerce. It was found that Mangosuthu Technikon and the Durban Institute of Technology had no faculties of Law and Education, thus there was smaller representation in the two faculties.

4.2.1.5 Status of academics

Academic staff were requested to indicate their position by choosing from 5 options: professor, associate professor, senior lecturer, lecturer and junior lecturer. The reason for asking this information was to ensure that all categories of the academics were represented in the study. The findings are shown on the bar chart below.

Bar Chart 3: Academic Status

(N=79)



The bar chart above reveals that 10 (13%) of the academics were professors, 10 (13%) associate professors, 22 (28%) senior lecturers, 23 (29%) lecturers and 14 (18%) junior lecturers. Less representation was recognized among professors and associate professors because the study intended to get at least one or two of them per faculty.

4.2.1.6 Level of study for students

The purpose of this item was to ensure that students from all levels of study are included in the study. Table 2 below shows the results.

Table 2: level of study for students
(N=307)

Level of study	Tertiary Institutions									
	UNIZUL		DIT		UDW		MT		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Undergraduate	39 (13%)		176 (57%)		44 (14%)		30 (10%)		289 (94%)	
Honours	6 (2%)		0		5 (2%)		0		11 (4%)	
Masters	2 (.7%)		0		3 (.9%)		0		5 (1.6%)	
Doctorate	2 (.7%)		0		0		0		2 (.7%)	

The overall response from the four tertiary institutions showed that 289 (94%) were undergraduate students, 11 (4%) honours students, 5 (2%) masters students and 2 (.7%) were doctoral students. The study found that there were no postgraduate students at Mangosuthu Technikon and Durban Institute of Technology. Further, at the University of Durban Westville doctoral students were not available since they only come for consultation and in the process of data collection they were not available, thus they were not represented. In essence, there were less postgraduate students compared to undergraduates. It is because there are more registered undergraduate students compared to postgraduates.

4.2.1.7 Gender

The respondents were asked to state their gender. The purpose of this question was to ensure that both gender groups were covered by the study. Results are summarized on the table below.

Table 3: Gender for students and academic staff
(N=386)

Institutional Affiliation	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
UNIZUL	34	(9%)	30	(8%)
UDW	35	(9%)	33	(9%)
DIT	70	(18%)	147	(38%)
MT	21	(5%)	16	(4%)
Total	160	(41.5%)	226	(58.5%)

Table 3 above indicates the overall response rate of respondents from all tertiary institutions. Two hundred and twenty six (58.5%) were female respondents while 160 (41.5%) were male respondents. These findings suggest that all genders are represented as intended by the study.

4.2.2 Section One (B) Customer Care in Academic Libraries

4.2.2.1 Customer

This item was meant to find out if respondents considered themselves as customers of the academic library. The table below summarizes the findings.

Table 4: Customers of academic library
(N=386)

Institutional Affiliation	Customer					
	Yes		Sometimes		No	
	N-	%	N-	%	N-	%
UNIZUL	40	(10%)	17	(4%)	7	(2%)
DIT	149	(39%)	52	(14%)	16	(4%)
UDW	50	(13%)	11	(3%)	7	(2%)
MT	18	(5%)	19	(5%)	0	
Total	257	(66.5%)	99	(25.6%)	30	(7.7%)

The overall response shows that 257 (66.5%) of the respondents considered themselves as customers of the academic library, 30 (7.7%) were those who said that they are not customers of the library at all and 99 (25.6%) reported that they are sometimes customers of the library. These findings suggest, that the majority of the students and the academic staff respondent's consider themselves as customers of academic library.

4.2.2.2 Academic status as customers

The main aim behind this item was to observe whether academic staff considered themselves as customers of the academic library. The results are shown on the table below.

Table 5: Status of academics as customers

(N=79)

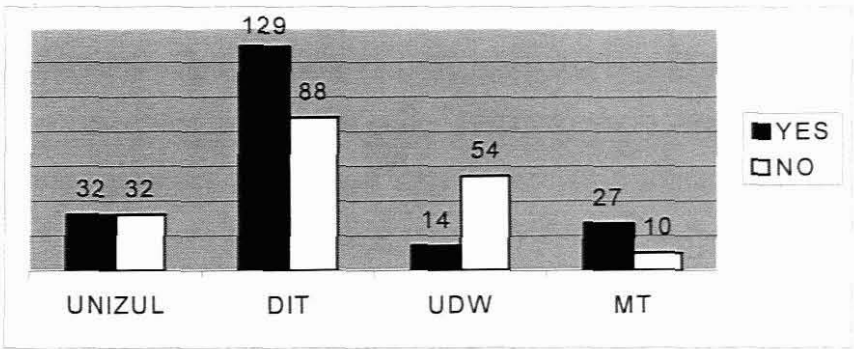
Customer	Academic staff					Total	
	Prof.	Assoc. Pro	Senior Lec	Lecturer	Junior Lec	N	%
Yes	10 (13%)	3 (4%)	20 (25%)	17 (22%)	14 (18%)	64	81%
Sometimes	0	7 (9%)	0	1 (1%)	0	8	10%
No	0	0	2 (3%)	5 (6%)	0	7	9%

Information presented on the table above reveals that the majority 64 (81%) of the respondents considered themselves as customers of the academic library. While 8 (10%) said they considered themselves sometimes customers of the academic library and 7 (9%) respondents were not customers of the academic library. These findings tend to express that most of the academic staff respondents were customers of academic libraries.

4.2.2. 3 Awareness of customer care policy

Respondents were required to indicate if the library had a customer care policy. It was important to ask this question in order for the respondents to indicate the rules and regulations to be abided by when using the library. Findings are summarized on the bar chart below.

Bar Chart 4: Awareness of customer care policy
(N=386)



Bar chart 4 reveals that slightly more than a half of the respondents 202 (52%) are aware of customer care policy and 184 (48%) were unaware of customer care policy within the library. Furthermore, it was noted that the majority 54 (79%) of the respondents were unaware of customer care policy within the library at the University of Durban Westville. From the three tertiary institutions namely, the University of Zululand and the Durban Institute of Technology as well as Magosuthu Technikon, the findings have shown that there is customer care policy in place. At the University of Durban Westville it was found that there was no customer care policy in place.

4.2.2.4 Familiarity with customer care policy in the library among the academic staff and students

This item on policy familiarity required respondents to indicate the policy familiar to them when using the library. Table 6 shows scores of respondents towards policy familiar to them in the library. In the undergraduate's category, a high rating 269 (93%) was noted in which a student/staff card is used to borrow books. An average rating 125 (43%) was scored in which the library provides the quality products, training and services all times. Additionally, services meet and exceed customer's expectations. Further, a low rating 2 (11%) was noted among postgraduate students where they indicated that the

library provides a quality service to customers and a high rating 18 (100%) was noted in the familiarity of using a student or staff card to borrow books from the library and the returning of materials borrowed on time. On the academic category, a high rating 76 (96%) was noted in which a student/staff card is used to borrow books from the library. it was noted that an average rating 39 (49%) was recorded by the policy which says the library provides the highest quality products, training and services at all times. The overall response rate in rating the policy familiar to the customers of academic library is as follows; more than 50% of customer care policies are well known by users and they are only a few which recorded less than 50%. The results suggest that, library customers are familiar with customer care policies within their libraries.

**Table 6: Familiarity with library customer services policies
(N=386)**

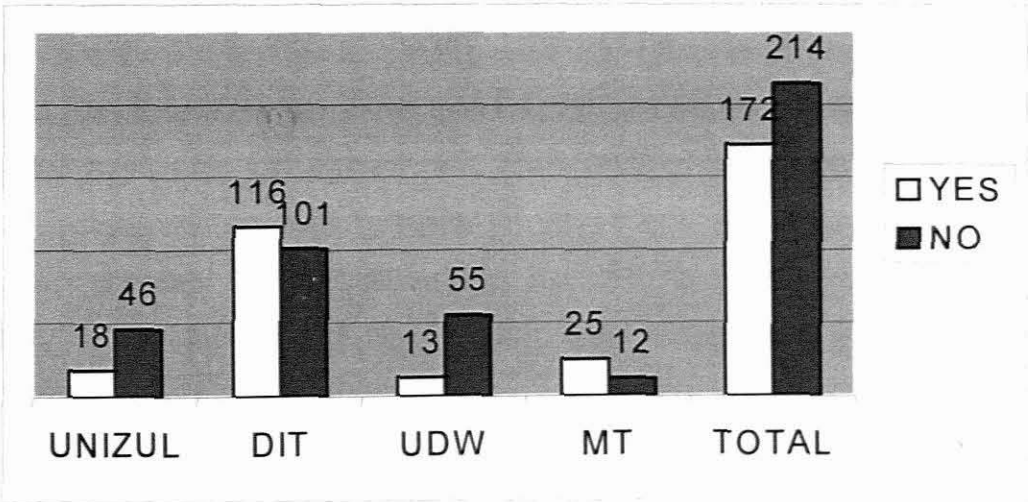
Policy	Undergraduate students N=289		Policy familiar Postgraduate students N=18		Academic staff N=79	
	Freq. (N)	%	Freq. (N)	%	Freq. (N)	%
Student/staff card is required to borrow a book	269	(93%)	18	(100%)	76	(96%)
Return the materials borrowed on time	251	(87%)	18	(100%)	75	(95%)
It is essential that good care of library materials, properties and equipment is observed	202	(70%)	15	(83%)	74	(94%)
Treat library and fellow users with respect and courtesy	211	(73%)	13	(72%)	59	(74%)
Refrain from eating, drinking, smoking and using personal stereos in the library	206	(71%)	10	(56%)	53	(67%)
Users are at liberty to consult with library staff whenever they need assistance	201	(70%)	14	(78%)	52	(66%)
Tearing or mutilating of books is forbidden	194	(67%)	8	(44%)	55	(70%)
The library provides a service, which is friendly and helpful to customers	178	(62%)	4	(22%)	47	(59%)
The library creates a pleasant and welcoming environment in which users can work	160	(55%)	4	(22%)	41	(52%)
The library makes available materials and information resources	151	(52%)	4	(22%)	47	(59%)
The library publicizes the library range of services, library regulations and opening hours	154	(53%)	4	(22%)	47	(59%)
The library provides the fullest possible service at all times to customers Appropriate to users needs	157	(54%)	5	(28%)	41	(52%)
Beware of and assist users with disability	133	(46%)	3	(17%)	45	(57%)
The library services meets and exceeds customer's expectations	125	(43%)	2	(11%)	43	(54%)
The library provides the highest quality products, training and services at all times	125	(43%)	2	(11%)	39	(49%)

4.2.2.5 Unit/person responsible for customer care

Respondents were required to indicate whether they were aware of customer care unit / person within the library. The purpose of this question was to find out if the library had a unit or person responsible for customer care services within the library and whether such unit/person is known to the customers. Bar chart 3 below shows the results.

Bar Chart 5: Unit/person responsible for customer care

(N=386)



Information presented on the bar chart above indicates that slightly more than half 214 (55%) were unaware of any unit/person responsible for customer care while 172 (45%) revealed that they were aware of customer unit or person in the library. Findings have shown that there is no significant difference between those who are aware and those who are not as the rate is simply 10 units interval.

4.2.2.6 Identification of the person responsible for customer care

Respondents were required to state whether they were aware of the customer care unit/person responsible for customer care. This item required respondents to name the person responsible for customer care services. One (2%) respondent from the University of Zululand said that he/she could name the person responsible for customer care while 63 (98%) could not. All 72 (100%) respondents from the University of Durban Westville said that they could not name the person. In addition, 24 (11%) from the Durban Institute of Technology revealed that they could name the person while 193 (89%) could not. 35 (95%) respondents from Mangosuthu Technikon revealed that they could not name the person while 2 (5%) said that he/she could name the person responsible for customer care. The overall response shows that 363 (94%) of the respondents could not name the person responsible for customer care. These findings tend to suggest that most of the respondents could not name/recognize the person responsible for customer care. It could also be presumed that respondents could not name the person responsible for customer care, because the majority revealed that there was not unit/person responsible for customer care.

4.2.2.7 Frequency of visiting the library by users

Respondents were requested to indicate how frequent they use the library. They were to choose between (regular 1-5 times a week, sometimes weekly or monthly and never). The aim behind this item was to find out how frequent users visit the library. The results are summarized on table7 below.

Table 7: Frequency of visiting the library by users
(N=386)

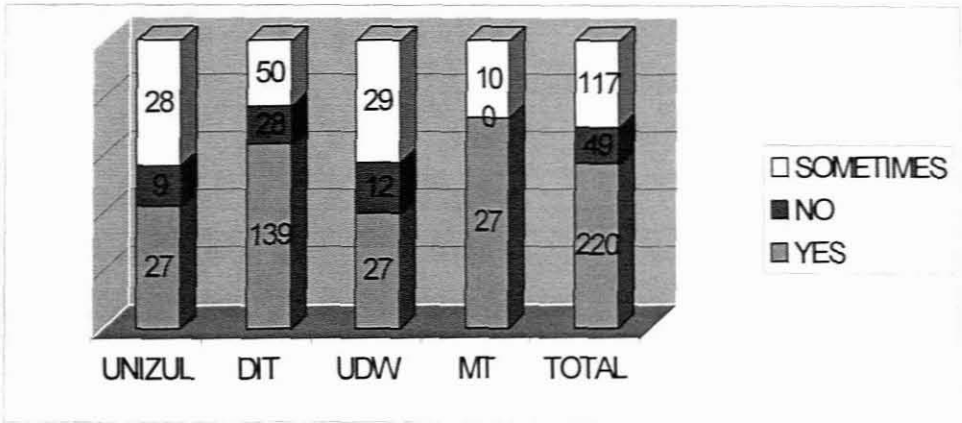
Level of study and status	Frequency of visiting the library		
	Regular (1-5 times a week)	Sometimes (weekly or monthly)	Never
Undergraduate	112 (38%)	169 (58%)	7 (2%)
Postgraduate	11 (61%)	7 (39%)	0
Academic Staff	20 (25%)	56 (71%)	3 (4%)

Table 7 above reveals that in the category of undergraduates 123 (38%) visit the library regularly (1-5 times a week), 169 (58%) sometimes (weekly or monthly) visit the library and 7 (2%) had never visited the library. Further, from the postgraduates category 11 (61%) revealed that they visit the library regularly (1-5 times a week) and 7 (39%) sometimes (weekly or monthly) visit the library, none of them said they never visited the library. In addition in the academic staff category respondents 20 (25%) said that they regularly (1-5 times a week) visit the library, 56 (71%) sometimes (weekly or monthly) visit the library and 3 (4%) never visited the library. The results show that the majority of library customers visit the library all the time.

4.2.2.8 Awareness of information products and services offered

Respondents were required to indicate if they were aware of information products and services offered by the library. The purpose of this item was to observe answers secured from respondents if they could identify those information products and services offered by the library.

Bar Chart 6: Awareness of information products and services offered
(N=386)



The bar chart above reveals that most 220 (57%) of the respondents were aware of information products and services while 117 (30%) were sometimes aware and 49 (13%) were not aware of information products and services at all. These findings suggest that the majority of the respondents are aware of information products and services offered by the library. It could also be presumed that awareness of information products and services is triggered by the fact that more respondents revealed that they visit the library all the time.

4.2.2.9 Level of study and status against awareness of information products and services

This was meant to find out if there was a difference in the awareness of information products and services by academic staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students. The table below summarizes the findings.

Table 8: Level of study and academic status against awareness of information products and services
(N=386)

Level of study	Awareness of information products and services		
	Yes	Sometimes	No
Undergraduate	162 (56%)	35 (12%)	92 (32%)
Postgraduate	10 (56%)	1 (6%)	7 (38%)
Academic Staff	48 (61%)	13 (16%)	18 (26%)

The table above indicates that 162 (56%) undergraduates were aware of information products and services offered by the library while 92 (32%) were sometimes aware of information products and services and 35 (12%) were not aware of any information products and services offered by the library. Furthermore 10 (56%) of the postgraduate respondents were aware of information products offered by the library while 1 (6%) was not aware of information products and services offered by the library and 7 (38%) were sometimes aware of information products and services offered by the library. Lastly, 48 (61%) of the academic staff were aware of information products and services offered by the library while 13 (16%) were not aware of information products and services and 18 (26%) were sometimes aware of information products and services offered by the library. Overall response rate shows that 220 (56.9%) of the respondents were aware of information products and services, 49 (12.6%) were sometimes aware and 117 (30%) were unaware.

4.2.2.10 Identification of information products and services in the library

Respondents were requested to indicate/identify the information products and services familiar to them in the library. The purpose of this item was intended to draw and lead to a question on the fulfillment of information requirements adequately.

The results are listed on table 10 below according to the level of study for students and status of academic staff. In the undergraduate category, it was noted that, most of the information products and services recorded high ratings, which were more than 50%. This suggests that frequenting the library makes them familiar with information products and services offered. Coming to the postgraduate's category, almost all the products and services recorded high ratings, which were more than 50%. These findings indicate that postgraduate students visit the library regularly and thus become more familiar with almost all information products and services. On the academic staff category, most of the information products and services received low ratings, which means less than 50%. This shows that academic staff visits the library occasionally.

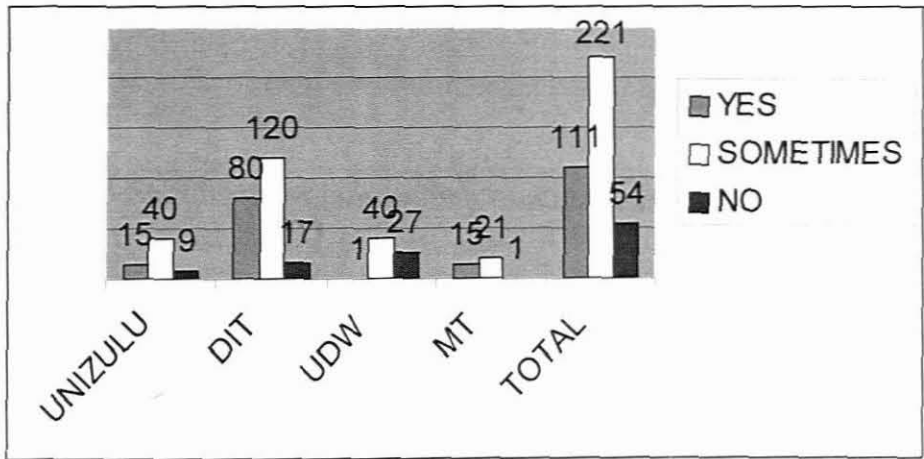
**Table 9: Identification of information products and services in the library
(N=386)**

Products and Services	Customer category					
	N= 289 Undergraduate		N=18 Postgraduate		N=79 Academic	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Books	283	(98%)	17	(94%)	79	(100%)
Newspapers	226	(78%)	14	(78%)	56	(71%)
Magazines	191	(66%)	13	(72%)	55	(70%)
Journals	214	(74%)	17	(94%)	73	(92%)
Reference sources (e.g. dictionaries and encyclopaedias)	210	(73%)	16	(89%)	51	(65%)
Grey Literature (e.g. minutes of meetings and correspondence)	83	(29%)	9	(50%)	31	(39%)
Conference proceedings	61	(21%)	12	(67%)	25	(32%)
Industrial and commercial literature (e.g. patents and designs)	51	(18%)	11	(61%)	24	(30%)
Research reports (e.g. theses and dissertation)	135	(47%)	15	(83%)	40	(51%)
Official and government publications (e.g. legislations)	112	(39%)	12	(67%)	25	(32%)
Past examination papers	167	(58%)	15	(83%)	31	(39%)
Internet and e-mail (with the help of the librarian)	144	(50%)	10	(56%)	32	(41%)
Short Loan Services	157	(54%)	15	(83%)	43	(54%)
Interlending Services	104	(36%)	13	(72%)	40	(51%)
Lending Services	144	(50%)	14	(78%)	27	(34%)
Audiovisual Services (e.g. use of TV and CD-ROMs)	112	(39%)	11	(61%)	38	(48%)
Referral and Reference services	210	(73%)	18	(100%)	20	(25%)
Photocopying	166	(57%)	13	(72%)	33	(42%)
Orientation	129	(45%)	15	(83%)	20	(25%)
Customer consultation and advisory (by the librarian) services	179	(62%)	18	(100%)	17	(21%)
Reading (use of library reading rooms)	117	(40%)	12	(67%)	24	(30%)
Information Literacy Services	98	(34%)	17	(94%)	12	(15%)
Use of Special Collection (e.g. Africana/Uzulu collection)	179	(62%)	15	(83%)	23	(29%)
Displays and exhibitions	15	(.05%)	0	0	21	(27%)

4.2.2.11 Information requirements

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the library fulfills their information requirements adequately, with the option to choose “yes, no and sometimes. The bar chart below shows the results.

Bar Chart: 7 Information requirements
(N=386)



It is observed on the bar chart above that the overall response rate shows that 221 (57%) respondents said the library sometimes fulfills their information requirements, 111 (27%) indicated that it fulfills their information requirements while 54 (16%) revealed that the library does not fulfill their information requirements. These findings tend to suggest that the majority of library users feel that their libraries fulfill their information requirements.

4.2.2.12 Reasons why information requirements are not fulfilled

This item was to be answered by those respondents who felt that the library does not fulfill their information requirements. The aim behind this question was to establish why the library does not fulfil information requirements for user/customers.

- Books are not enough to cover all users 71 (18%)
- No latest books and journals 56 (15%)
- Sometimes librarians are not found at their offices 53 (14%)
- Users are not eligible to take with them journals for a longer time 25 (6%)
- Audiovisual services are poor 19 (5%)
- Sometimes books have missing pages 17 (4%)
- No internet access to customers 14 (4%)
- No advertisement of new information products and services 9 (2%)

4.2.2.13 Fulfillment of information requirements

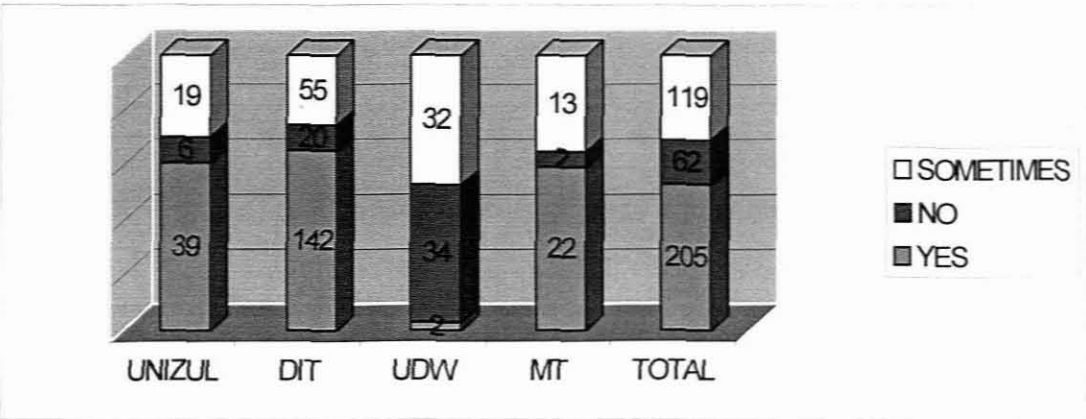
Respondents, who indicated that the library supports and fulfills their information requirements adequately, were to support their views. The following views emanated from them;

- Books are packed neatly on shelves 99 (27%)
- There are wide range of information sources 95 (25%)
- Get latest journals 78 (20%)
- Resource sharing 77 (20%)
- Subject librarians search information for users on the internet 64 (17%)

4.2.2.14 Caring for users by the library staff

Respondents again were asked to state whether they felt that the library cares for them as customers. The aim behind this question was to give a road map to a question on the attitude of library staff towards library customers. Results are shown on the bar chart below.

Bar Chart 8: Caring for users by the library staff
(N=386)



It was observed from the bar chart above that slightly more than 205 (53%) said that the library care for them while 62 (16%) felt that the library does not care for them and 119 (31%) were of the opinion that the library sometimes cares for them. These findings suggest that library staff care and pay attention to their users.

4.2.2.15 Attitude of library staff

Respondents were requested to comment on the attitudes of the library staff towards them as users of the library. The purpose of this question was to find out whether respondents/ library customers are well treated in the library. The table below shows the results.

Table 10: Attitude of library staff
(N=386)

Tertiary Institutions	Attitude of library staff			
	Unfriendly	Supportive	Friendly	Very Friendly
UNIZUL	5 (1%)	20 (5%)	31 (8%)	8 (2%)
UDW	33 (9%)	21 (5%)	14 (4%)	0
DIT	24 (6%)	94 (24%)	78 (20%)	21 (5%)
MT	5 (1%)	11 (3%)	12 (3%)	9 (2%)
Total	67 (17%)	146 (38%)	136 (35%)	38 (10%)

The overall response shows that 146 (38%) concluded that the library staff is supportive, 136 (35%) said that the library staff is friendly and 67 (17%) were of the opinion that the library staff is unfriendly while 38 (10%) said that the library staff is very friendly. It is clear that the respondents feel that the library staff is supportive.

4.2.2.16 Adequacy of information resources

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the library had adequate information resources to meet their needs. This question was meant to give a lead to a question that was on the currency of the library information resources for user needs. Table 11 below summarizes the results.

Table 11: Adequacy of information resources for user needs
(N=386)

Tertiary Institutions	Adequacy of information resources for user needs		
	No	Not Always	Yes
UNIZUL	28 (7%)	13 (3%)	23 (6%)
DIT	49 (13%)	65 (17%)	103 (27%)
UDW	47 (12%)	21 (5%)	0
MT	5 (1%)	16 (4%)	15 (4%)
Total	130 (34%)	115 (30%)	141 (37%)

The table above reveals that most of the 141 (37%) respondents were of the opinion that the library has adequate information resources for user needs. One hundred and thirty (33.5%) said that the library has got no adequate information resources for user needs. One hundred and fifteen (29.5%) revealed that the library does not always have adequate information resources for user needs. This suggests that there is adequacy of information resources for user needs in some academic libraries. The study found that at the University of Durban Westville there is no adequacy of information resources for user needs.

4.2.2.17 Currency of information in the library

The study sought to find out the currency of information in the library. Therefore respondents were required to indicate the currency of the library information resources for information needs of users. It was important to find out whether information products and services offered by the library were current. Table 12 below shows the summary of findings.

Table 12: Currency of information in the library

(N=386)

Tertiary institutions	Currency of information			
	Very current	Current (5-10 yrs old)	Not current (10-20 yrs old)	Outdated (20 yrs old)
UNIZUL	20 (5%)	17 (4%)	12 (3%)	15 (4%)
DIT	63 (16%)	119 (31%)	26 (7%)	8 (2%)
UDW	0	21 (6%)	24 (6%)	23 (6%)
MT	15 (4%)	16 (4%)	3 (.8%)	3 (.8%)
Total	98 (25%)	173 (45%)	65 (17%)	49 (13%)

The results as displayed in the table above shows an overall response rate that 173 (45%) of respondents are of the opinion that information in the library is current (5-10 years old). While 98 (25%) said that it is very current and 63 (17%) revealed that it is not current (10-20 years old) while 49 (13%) said that the information is out dated. This suggests that information is current in some academic libraries. It must be noted that at the University of Durban Westville library, information is not current as indicated by the majority of users.

4.2.2.18 Information products and services to be added in the library

The study also sought to identify the types of information products and services that library customers wish to add in the library. In order to secure answers, views from respondents were required. This was done with the aim of identifying those information products and services that need to be added, in the future. The following responses emanated from the respondents;

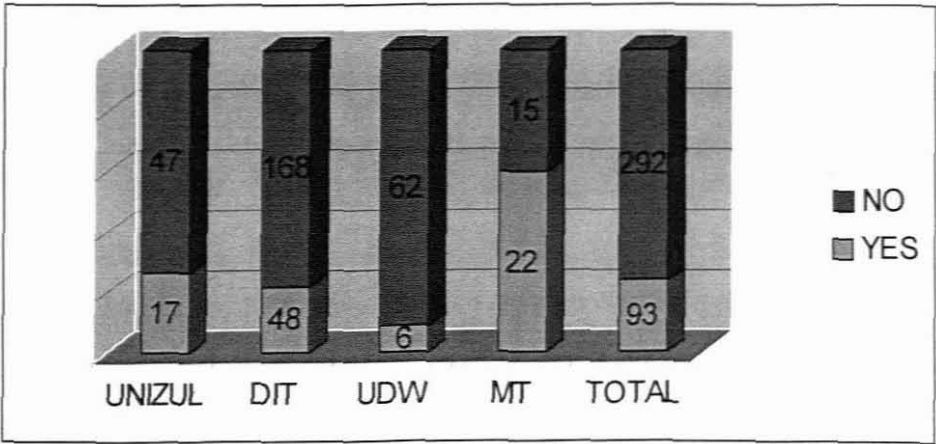
- Latest journals and magazines 100 (26%)

- Assistance in searching electronic sources 24 (6%)
- Internet access 46 (12%)
- Zulu books 39 (10%)
- Books on sign language 40 (10%)
- Research papers and reports 32 (8%)
- Translation books 18 (6%)
- Xhosa dictionaries 14 (4%)
- Video cassettes on South African stories 15 (4%)
- Statutes of South Africa 10 (3%)
- Current law 10 (3%)

4.2.2.19 Awareness of customer care research methods

Respondents were required to indicate whether they were aware if the library conducted customer care research, by answering with a "yes" or "no". The purpose of this item was to observe if respondents were aware and have been involved in customer care. In addition this question was meant to give a lead to a question that required respondents to choose among the methods that they had participated in within the library. The results are summarized on the bar chart below.

Bar Chart 9: Awareness of customer care research methods
(N=386)



As revealed by the bar chart above, the overall response states that the majority 292 (76%) of the respondents are unaware of the methods of conducting customer care in academic libraries. Only 92 (24%) said they are aware of the methods of conducting customer care. It is found that from the total number of 37 respondents at Mangosuthu Technikon, 22 (6%) said they are aware of the methods of conducting customer care within their library. This suggests that methods of conducting customer care are unknown by library customers.

4.2.2.20 Methods of conducting customer care

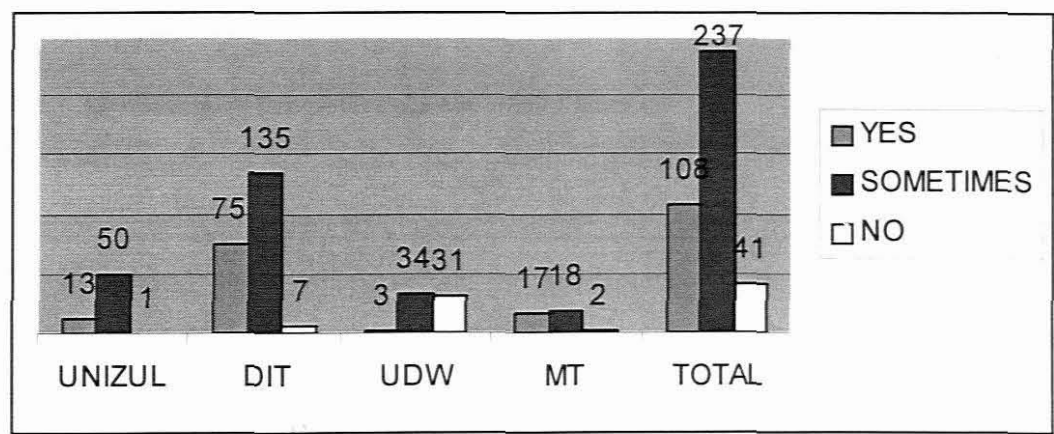
All respondents were required to tick those methods of conducting customer care that they are familiar with in the library. They were to choose between a "yes" or "no" in order to answer this item. Respondents from all tertiary institutions have indicated the following methods;

- Opinion polls (e.g. suggestion box) 59 (15%)
- Customer surveys (e.g. use of interviews and questionnaires) 26 (7%)
- Direct democracy (e.g. customers are free to say anything) 20 (5%)
- Joint customer/employee committee 12 (3%)

4.2.2.21 Satisfaction of customers in the library

Respondents were required to indicate whether their needs are satisfied by the library services by answering with a "yes", "sometimes" or a "no". The purpose of this question was to measure the satisfaction rate among respondents on library products and services. The bar chart below summarizes the findings.

Bar Chart 10: Customer satisfaction
(N=386)



The results as displayed in bar chart 10, shows that the majority 237 (61%) of the respondents are sometimes satisfied with information products and services offered, 108 (28%) are satisfied while 41 (11%) were not satisfied at all. This tends to suggest that library customers are satisfied with information products and services offered by their libraries.

4.2.2.22 Reasons for dissatisfaction

The purpose behind this question was to identify a problem area to guide in the finding of a solution on what the library could do to eradicate its services' failure towards user's satisfaction. The following answers emanated from the respondents;

- The library has got out dated information sources 24 (6%)
- The library staff is reluctant to assist users when looking for help 26 (6%)

This suggests that library customers are happy with information products and services offered to them. This has been shown on their responses on dissatisfaction above. They could not prove their dissatisfaction over information resources for their needs satisfaction.

4.2.2.23 Assessing the performance of the library

Respondents were asked to choose between "strongly agree", "agree", "partly agree", "disagree" and "totally disagree" on the performance of the library on user satisfaction. The purpose of this item was to get users views on the library performance over their satisfaction. Table 13 summarizes the findings; based on the following views:

a) I am happy with the service provided by the library staff to the library customers

In attempting the statement above, 147 (38%) of the respondents agreed with the statement while 58 (15%) strongly agree. This means that the majority of the respondents 205 (53%), were happy with the statement above as indicated in table 14. On the other hand, 109 (28%) were neither here nor there and rated the performance as fair.

b) I am happy with information products and services provided by the library

The results also shows that 118 (31%) of the respondents partly agree and 66 (17%) agree with the statement above. It can be deduced that 184 (48%) respondents had an average view towards products and services offered by the library. One hundred and eighteen (31%) respondents moderately supported the statement on products and services.

c) I always get up-to-date information in the library

The findings also indicate that 140 (36%) respondents said they partly agree with the statement above. Sixty-seven (17%) said they totally disagree and 65 (17%) disagree with the view that they get up-to-date information. This shows that the majority that is 140 (36%) partly agree that they do not get up-to-date information in the library. The results proved the fact that much more still needs to be done in this area, as 132 (34%) respondents are not happy at all with the statement above.

d) The speed of response to my requests is excellent

A larger number of the respondents rated the statement above as " partly agree" 123 (32%). One hundred and thirteen (29%) said they agree while 49 (13%) strongly agree. These results therefore suggest that respondents are generally positive towards the statement above. Some improvements need to be done to ensure that the speed of request is faster.

e) I am fulfilled with the attention I get from the library staff

The results also portray that the total number 117 (30%) revealed that respondents agree while 60 (16%) strongly agree towards the statement above. This means that most 177 (46%) of the respondents recognize the attention they get from the library. On the other hand, it is also important to observe here that 114 (30%) were neither here nor there and rated the view above as fair.

g) The facilities provided by the library for information accessibility are adequate

The findings also show that the total number of respondents 131 (34%) said they partly agree with the view above. This was followed by 112 (29%) respondents who said they

agree and 42 (11%) said they partly agree. Most of respondents 154 (40%) are generally neutral towards the statement above.

h) The library always informs them of new information products and services

Ninety (23%) respondents revealed that they partly agree with the view above. Eighty-seven (23%) said they agree and 50 (13%) strongly agreed. One third of the respondents 137 (33%) are neutral on the performance of the library above, particularly as 90 (23%) respondents moderately supported the statement on informing users on information products and services.

i) I am satisfied with the library customer care policy

One hundred and eight (28%) respondents said they partly agreed with the view above. One hundred and six (27%) said they agreed and 51 (13%) strongly agreed with the statement above.

j) I think that the library is well managed

One hundred and twenty one (31%) respondents agreed with the statement while 56 (15%) strongly agreed. This means that almost half of the respondents 177 (46%) are neutral on the above view. The findings, therefore, tend to suggest that much more still needs to be done in this area, particularly as 98 (25%) respondents are neither here or there and rated the performance as fair.

**Table 13: Rating the performance of the library towards customer satisfaction
(N=386)**

Performance of the library	Rating of the performance				
	1. Totally disagree	2. Disagree	3. Partly agree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
I am happy with the service provided by the library staff to the library customers	35 (9%)	37 (10%)	109 (28%)	147 (38%)	58 (15%)
I am happy with information products and services provided by the library	27 (7%)	57 (15%)	118 (31%)	118 (31%)	66 (17%)
I always get up-to-date information in the library	67 (17%)	65 (17%)	140 (36%)	77 (20%)	37 (10%)
The speed of response to my requests is excellent	41 (11%)	60 (16%)	123 (32%)	113 (29%)	49 (13%)
I am fulfilled with the attention I get from the library	38 (10%)	57 (15%)	114 (30%)	117 (30%)	60 (16%)
The facilities provided by the library for information accessibility are adequate	47 (12%)	54 (14%)	131 (34%)	112 (29%)	42 (11%)
The library always informs me of new information products and services	87 (23%)	72 (19%)	90 (23%)	87 (23%)	50 (13%)
I am satisfied with the library customer care policy	53 (14%)	68 (18%)	108 (28%)	106 (27%)	51 (13%)
I think that this library is well managed	57 (15%)	54 (14%)	98 (25%)	121 (31%)	56 (15%)

4.2.2.24 Assessing the facilities of the library on the knowledge and skills acquired by library users

The respondents were required to assess themselves by using a list of statements to rate skills they have gained in the library. Table 14 below shows the findings.

Table 14: Assessing the facilities of the library on the knowledge and skills acquired by library users through the library
(N=386)

Assessing the library facilities	Views of users			
	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
I abide by the library customer care rules and regulations	323	(84%)	62	(16%)
I receive library orientation so I am familiar with the library	286	(74%)	100	(26%)
I know how to search OPAC and retrieve books on shelves	200	(52%)	186	(48%)
I am happy with opening and closing hours	281	(73%)	105	(23%)
I search and find information on the internet through the library	219	(57%)	167	(43%)
I know how to access and use periodicals	179	(47%)	205	(53%)
I know and use on-line journals through the library	152	(39%)	234	(61%)
I provide the library with feedback on its customer care performance direct to the library	136	(35%)	250	(65%)
• Through friends	128	(33%)	258	(67%)
• At meetings	106	(27%)	280	(73%)
• Through lecturers	104	(27%)	282	(73%)
• Through internet	98	(25%)	288	(75%)
• Through suggestion box	93	(24%)	293	(76%)
• Through SRC	86	(23%)	297	(77%)

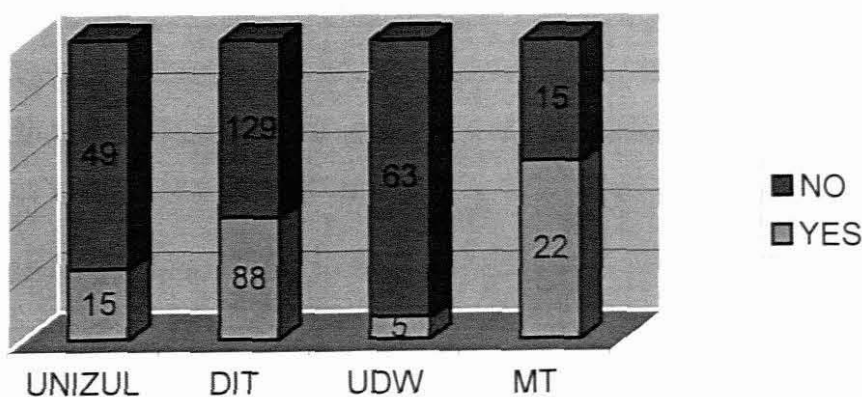
Table 14 above reveals high scores in assessing the facilities of the library on knowledge and skills acquired by library users through the library. Fifteen statements were listed for library customers to choose from. They were to choose between "yes or "no". Their views in assessing the library facilities were generally negative. Out of fifteen statements listed,

only five were considered to be true and recorded more than 50%. The rest, were considered to be not true and recorded high ratings, which shows that they were negative. This suggests that the majority of the respondents indicated that the statements listed were not reflecting the true image of the library.

4.2.2.25 Awareness of strategies of customer care

This item required respondents to indicate if they were aware of any customer care strategies in the library. The purpose of asking this question was to get an idea from the respondents if the library has strategies for customer care. Results are summarized on the bar chart below.

Bar Chart 11: Awareness of strategies of customer care
(N=386)



The bar chart above shows that 15 (23%) respondents from the University of Zululand said that they were aware of customer care strategies while 49 (77%) were not aware of any customer care strategies in the library. Eighty eight (41%) of the respondents from the Durban Institute of Technology revealed that they were aware of customer care strategies and 129 (59%) were of the opinion that they were not aware of customer care

strategies. In addition 5 (7%) of the respondents from the University of Durban Westville were of the idea that they were aware of customer care strategies in the library while 63 (93%) said that they were not aware. Furthermore, 22 (59%) were respondents from Mangosuthu Technikon who were of the opinion that they are aware of customer care strategies in the library while 15 (41%) were not aware of the strategies. The results show that strategies of customer care are unknown by the majority of the respondents.

4.2.2.26 Strategies of customer care

After stating their awareness of customer care strategies, the respondents were requested to choose those strategies familiar to them in the library. As listed in table 15, the highest number of 158 (43%) of the respondents revealed customer care technology higher than other strategies. This was closely followed as 144 (39%) of the "librarians' work closely with customers" while 138 (38%) revealed that the library uses call centers. Ninety one (25%) identified Sales and Marketing while 80 (22%) reported tactics (intranet) as the least tool. It was noted that all the strategies listed recorded less than 50%. This suggests that strategies of customer care are unknown among library customers. This therefore means that there is a need to promote and publicize strategies of customer care by academic libraries to its users/customers.

**Table 15: Strategies of customer care
(N=386)**

Strategies of customer care	Tertiary Institutions									
	UNIZUL		DIT		UDW		MT		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Customer care technology (e.g. internet)	18	(5%)	107	(28%)	18	(5%)	19	(5%)	158	(43%)
Utility call centers (e.g. suggestion box)	17	(5%)	86	(21%)	26	(7%)	19	(5%)	138	(38%)
Sales and marketing (e.g. advertising)	15	(4%)	64	(15%)	8	(2%)	13	(4%)	91	(25%)
Tactics (e.g. intranet)	8	(2%)	48	(13%)	13	(4%)	12	(3%)	80	(22%)
Librarians work closely with customers	22	(6%)	106	(27%)	4	(1%)	12	(3%)	144	(39%)

Table 16: Methods used to inform users on new information products and services
(N=386)

Methods used to inform users on new information products and services	Tertiary Institutions									
	UNIZU		DIT		UDW		MT		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Displays	37	(10%)	129	(33%)	44	(11%)	31	(8%)	241	(62%)
Personal communication	25	(6%)	67	(17%)	51	(13%)	8	(2%)	151	(39%)
Library web page	19	(5%)	33	(9%)	25	(6%)	2	(.5%)	79	(20%)
Orientation	9	(2%)	74	(19%)	8	(2%)	8	(2%)	99	(26%)
Library newsletter	24	(6%)	52	(13%)	7	(2%)	6	(2%)	89	(23%)
Notices	31	(8%)	109	(28%)	7	(2%)	18	(5%)	165	(43%)
Emails	18	(5%)	67	(17%)	13	(3%)	11	(3%)	109	(28%)
On campus TV	6	(2%)	5	(2%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	11	(3%)

4.2.2.27 Methods used to inform customers on new information products and services

The respondents were asked to indicate from the methods given on table 16 those that are used by their libraries to inform them on new information products and services available. The highest ratings 241 (62%) was given to displays, closely followed by notices 165 (43%), while those who recognized e-mails followed with 109 (28%). In addition 99 (26%) selected library orientation, followed by library newsletter with 89 (23%) and WebPages 79 (20%). Lastly 11 (3%) preferred the use of on campus television. These findings tend to suggest that most of the respondents do not recognize most effective methods, except for the displays, which recorded more than 62%.

4.2.2.28 Ways of improving customer care within the library

This item required respondents to give their suggestion / recommendations on how to improve customer care services and strategies. This question on improvement of customer care services and strategies drew a lot of responses and comments from the respondents, which are summarized below.

- **Extension of library closing hours**

This was a major concern coming from the University of Zululand and the Durban Institute of technology and a few from other two tertiary institutions as well. The library closing hours was considered to be closing very early and it affected students who are not staying on campus in coping with their academic work.

- **Male librarians must wear identification tags**

Respondents from the University of Zululand and the Durban Institute of Technology raised this concern. It was reported that it is very difficult to identify a male librarian from the users, because they wear ordinary clothes, whereas female librarians wear

identifiable ones. At times users fail to consult with a male librarian unaware that he is a staff member.

- **Provision of assistance to library users**

Respondents from the University of Zululand and the Durban Institute of technology were concerned with the lack of assistance from the library staff when users seek help. According to the majority of the respondents from the two tertiary institutions, at times librarians are not found in their respective office service points when looking for help which makes it difficult to get assistance that the user might be looking for.

- **Use of on campus television**

This issue was raised by more than 90% of the students from the University of Westville and the University of Zululand. They were more concerned about the use of campus television station to advertise information products and services offered by the library and that new information products and services be advertised timeously.

- **Suggestion box**

The respondents strongly suggest that a suggestion box should be used effectively to accommodate comments and complains raised by library users. This would in turn help the library staff assess if it delivers reliable and accurate customer care services and strategies

- **Workshop**

Again this concern came from all tertiary institution's respondents. It is urgently requested that the library staff organize workshops and take a sample of users from all departments to find out if their customer care services and strategies meet the

expectations of users. Furthermore, the same respondents hinted out that the library staff attend workshops on customer care in order to improve on their knowledge on customer.

- **Mutual understanding between library customers and the library staff**

Some of the respondents from the University of Durban Westville complained that there is no mutual understanding among the library staff and customers, as a result of that they are afraid to make enquiries pertaining to new information products and services.

- **Assist disabled users**

The majority of the respondents were very concerned with disabled users in the library. They lamented that they should be welcomed from the entrance of the library by securities to the elevators to wherever they may meet their information needs.

- **Maintaining of library equipment (like photocopying machines)**

Respondents from all tertiary institutions were more concerned about the library equipment especially the photocopying machines. It is suggested that the machines be maintained and kept in working conditions at all times.

- **New Library management**

The respondents from the University of Durban Westville strongly suggested that a new library management is needed in the library that will take their complaints into consideration.

- **Library newsletter**

It was also noted that the University of Durban Westville and the Durban Institute of Technology should provide the library users with the library newsletter to inform them of new developments within the library.

- **Orientation**

There was a call by all the respondents that familiarizing library users every term, especially new users with accessing and using the library material should be done. Secondly, there is a need to orient library users on using the audiovisual section and how to use electronic sources of information.

- **Customer care policy**

The respondents from all the tertiary institutions strongly suggested that there is an urgent need for the library to provide a library policy document to ensure that it is placed in an accessible place in order for users to know the rules and regulations of the library.

SECTION TWO

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA-LIBRARY STAFF

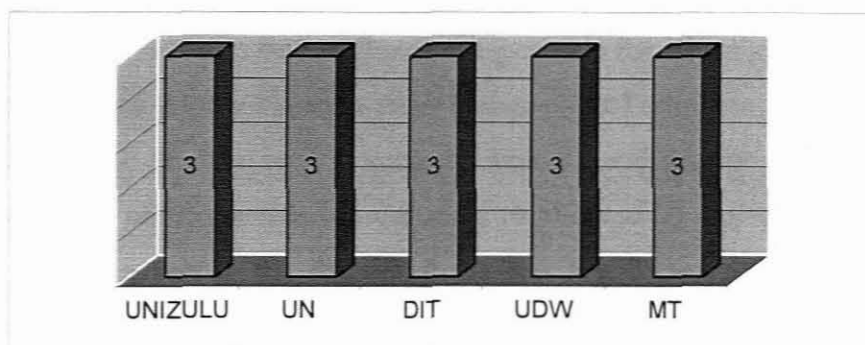
4.3 Introduction

This section reports on the interviews conducted with the library management staff and or a committee responsible for customer care in the three Universities and two Technikons in Kwa-Zulu-Natal. The study targeted 15 professional librarians in all academic libraries. This meant a chief librarian or a deputy librarian as well as two subject librarians or a committee responsible for customer care. Furthermore, three professional librarians were selected from each institution. This was done because the researcher learned through a pilot study conducted within the University of Zululand library that the library staff were reporting one and the same thing. Thus the researcher felt that it would be a waste of time to interview the whole staff. This section consists of section two (A), which deals with detailed personal information of respondents. While section two (B) looks at customer care in academic libraries.

4.3.1 Section Two (A) Institutional affiliation

It was important to obtain information on this item to indicate which institution the professional librarians belonged to and for the purpose of helping separate responses by institutional affiliation. The bar chart below summarizes the findings.

Bar Chart 12: Institutional affiliation
(N=19)



Three (20%) were librarians from the University of Zululand, 3 (20%) from the University of Natal, 3 (20%) at the University of Durban Westville, 3 (20%) from the Durban Institute of Technology and 3 (20%) from Mangosuthu Technikon. The findings tend to show that the librarians represent all tertiary institutions.

4.3.2 Positions and level of responsibility

This item required librarians to indicate the positions they occupied at the library and their level of responsibility. It was important to obtain information on this item in order to indicate positions occupied by the library staff in the organizational structure and to show their responsibility at work. Findings are shown on the table below.

Table 17: Position occupied by the library staff
(N=19)

Professional Librarians	Institutional affiliation				
	UNIZUL	DIT	UDW	MT	UN
Chief Librarian	1 (6.6%)	0	0	0	0
Deputy Librarian	1 (6.6%)	1 (6.6%)	0	1 (6.6%)	0
Senior Librarian	1 (6.6%)	0	0	0	2 (13%)
Subject Librarian	0	2 (13%)	3 (20%)	1 (6.6%)	1 (6.6%)
Project Librarian	0	0	0	1 (6.6%)	0
Total	3 (20%)	3 (20%)	3 (20%)	3 (20%)	3 (20%)

This question targeted 15 librarians 1 (6.6%) was a University Librarian from the University of Zululand, 1 (6.6%) deputy librarian, both responsible management in the library, 1 (6.6%) was a senior librarian responsible for all subject librarians. Furthermore 1 (6.6%) was a deputy librarian from Mangosuthu Technikon responsible for managing the library, 1 (6.6%) was a subject librarian responsible for the cataloguing and classification of information sources and 1 (6.6%) special project librarian responsible for customer care within the library. From the Natal University 2 (13%) were senior librarians responsible for supervision of both subject librarians and heading circulation desk and were in the customer care committee. 1 (6.6%) was a subject librarian responsible for searching and retrieving information for customers. In addition, 1 (6.6%) was a deputy librarian from the Durban Institute of Technology responsible for the smooth operation of the librarian and 2 (13%) subject librarians responsible for searching and retrieving information for customers as well as cataloguing and classifying information sources. Lastly, 3 (20%) were subject librarians from the University of Durban Westville, responsible for searching and retrieving information for users as well as cataloguing and classifying the library material.

4.3.3 Section Two (B) customers served by academic libraries

Respondents were required to indicate customers served by their libraries. The purpose of obtaining this information was to identify customers/library users served by the library. It was found that all academic libraries serve largely similar customers who consist of students, academic and administrative staff, researchers and external students from other institutions and other University staff or Technikon staff as well as library colleagues and business services.

4.3.3.1 Knowledge of the library customers

It was important to obtain information based on the views from the library staff if they really know their customers. The following answers were given by the library staff respondents and they were similar again.

They have membership cards

They borrow books and other library material

Students have to register for the current year to borrow books from the library

They always ask for information from the library

Academics always phone asking for some information.

4.3.3.2 Library policy

This item required respondents to indicate and provide a library policy document which indicates that the library has a library policy. The purpose of asking this question was to get a road map to a question, which required respondents to indicate what the policy contains and a person responsible for customer care. The following emanated from the respondents: 13 (68%) of the respondents from the University of Zululand, the Durban Institute of Technology and the University of Durban Westville indicated that there was no policy in place in their libraries. 6 (32%) respondents from Mangosuthu Technikon and the University of Natal reported that there is a library policy in place in the library. The library staff respondents were asked to provide a customer care policy document and only three libraries managed to provide a library guide document which carried a written policy on the use of the library material. These were the Universities of Zululand and Natal as well as Mangosuthu Technikon. The other two academic libraries wrote the policies on the questionnaires. Rules and regulations of the library were similar and were recorded as follows.

- Treat customers with a smile;
- Students and staff using the library must produce their registration (user) cards for any transaction in the library;
- Students and researchers should work in peace and quiet in the library;
- Group discussions are allowed in seminar rooms;
- Furniture (desks and chairs, etc) must not be removed or moved from their places;
- Personal bags, food, drinks, etc. are not allowed in the library;
- Library material are there for all users;
- Smoking is not allowed in the library;
- Use of cell phones is prohibited;
- Users must return books before or on the due date;
- No person is allowed to borrow a book on another person's name;
- Books from restricted collections like reference books, theses, some law collection, periodicals, Uzulu and Audiovisual collection may not be taken out on loan, they can only be used within the library,
- Short loans may only be used in the area designated for short loans and may not be removed from the short loans area,
- Any library material, which has been lost or not returned by the borrower, will result in the borrower's results being withheld until the item (s) has/have returned or the replacement value has been placed.

4.3.3.3 Unit/person responsible for customer care

Respondents were required to indicate if there is a unit/person responsible for customer care/services in the library. This question targeted 15 professional librarians. All 9 (60%) respondents from the Universities of Zululand and Durban Westville as well as the Durban Institute of Technology reported that there is no unit/person responsible for customer care in the library, but that all librarians are responsible. Furthermore, at Mangosuthu Technikon and the University of Natal, all 6 (40%) of the respondents reported that there is a unit/committee responsible for customer care within their libraries

which includes the head of circulation desk and special projects librarian which uses user education, information literacy and customer services.

4.3.3.4 Function of customer care/service or department

The respondents were required to indicate the functions of the unit/person responsible for customer care in the library. This question was supposed to be attended to by the respondents who said there was a unit or person responsible for customer care, but all respondents from academic libraries addressed the question. The purpose of this question was to help determine and enlist those functions performed by the unit or person responsible for customer care. The responses from all library staff respondents were similar and were stated as follows:

- Issue customer orientation program;
- Marketing of information products and services;
- Organize workshops;
- Conduct customer care survey;
- Effective use of systems by librarians to assist customers;
- Circulation desk receives customers
- Subject librarians always search and retrieve information for customers
- They make information accessed easily and quick

4.3.3.5 Duties of the customer services librarian/consultant

The question required respondents to indicate the duties of the customer services librarian/consultant. The purpose of this question was to determine whether the customer care librarian/consultant knows his/her duties within the library. All the respondents from all the academic libraries have similar duties of customer services librarian. They depict the following:

- Ensure access to internal sources of information;
- Promote library services;
- Quality control of library material;
- Orientation/user education/OPAC training;
- Copyright (protect library material);
- Development of programmes to up-date the services in the library and
- Address concerns that are raised by users.
- Collection development, for example, take orders from academics of new books needed.

4.3.3.6 Information products and services

Furthermore respondents were asked to indicate information products and services offered by their library to its customers. The question was meant to find views from the library staff if they were rendering the same information products and services to library users/customers. Similarly the respondents indicated almost the same information products and services they are offering. The following answers emanated from the respondents as information products and services; books; newspapers; reference sources; magazines; video cassettes; radio cassettes; microfilm; electronic databases; government publications; and reports, theses, books on CD ROM's and electronic books as well as library newsletter. Information services include the following; reprographic/photocopier; renewals of user cards; user education; orientation; displays and exhibitions; serial librarian services and subject librarian services as well as binding. Mangosuthu Technikon was found to have more information services than other academic libraries which depict the following; graphic and design; media services; lend out equipment like (cameras, video cameras, OHP, and teaching masters).

4.3.3.7 Awareness of the availability of the information products and services

The question required respondents to indicate the methods used by their libraries to create awareness of the availability of information products and services. The aim behind this question was to determine whether the library uses any method to create the awareness of the availability of information products and services to library customers. It was found that respondents from all the academic libraries use similar methods, which are as follows;

- Displays and exhibitions;
- Personal communication;
- Library news letter;
- Departmental visit;
- Send e-mails;
- Library guide;
- library website;
- Current awareness;
- Profiles for staff and researchers.

4.3.3.8 Ways of conducting customer care studies

Respondents were asked to indicate methods of conducting customer care within their libraries. The aim behind this question was to find out if there were methods used by academic libraries to conduct customer care/services within libraries. This question secured almost similar answers from the respondents within the Universities of Zululand, Natal, Durban Westville, Mangosuthu Technikon and the Durban Institute of Technology, which depict;

- opinion polls (suggestion box)
- customer care surveys; user education

- conducting of interviews,
- Orientation and focus group method to evaluate the effectiveness of user education and orientation.

Mangosuthu Technikon further includes the use of; SRC representatives, which are consulted on student issues, and in-service training students are invited to suggest improvements of the library material.

4.3.3.9 Views on satisfaction of customers with the information products and services provided by the library

The purpose of this question was to find views on user satisfaction with information products and services offered by the library. In addition this was to give a lead to the next question that required respondents to indicate how they ensure that their customers are satisfied with the information products and services offered. There were different views from the respondents. At Mangosuthu Technikon all the respondents reported that there are no graffiti in the library and that there was no mutilation of library furniture. Respondents from the Universities of Zululand, Natal and the Durban Westville as well as Durban Institute of Technology library reported that customers usually come back to say thank you very much for the support; while other customers use suggestion box to lay their comments.

4.3.3.10 Ensuring satisfaction of customers with the information products and services

Respondents were asked to indicate how they ensure that customers are satisfied with information products and services offered. Again respondents from all the academic libraries had approximately the same perception on this issue. They reported the following: most staff work through lunch and tea time; staff come to work even during vacation to put everything in place; give all options to customers like for instance offer training if needed; and give contact to customers to ensure that they always communicate

if necessary. Furthermore respondents from the Universities of Zululand and Natal were more ahead of other libraries in satisfying of library customers. They mentioned that they also use resource sharing, searching and retrieving information for customers as well as printing for them.

4.3.3.11 Attitude of library staff towards library customers

This question was meant to find out more about the attitude displayed by the library staff towards library customers. This question was difficult to be attended by the respondents, but their responses were the same. They reported that most of the staff have a good attitude like for instance being supportive and helpful towards library customers, but some of them need to have a better approach especially towards students.

4.3.3.12 Views on satisfaction of customers through their services

This question was meant to find views from the library staff respondents whether library customers are satisfied with services they normally provide. In this question respondents from all academic libraries reported that users are satisfied to a certain extent only, because there are negative comments that are heard for example;

- Few journals,
- No enough library space and
- Few photocopying machines
- Outdated information sources.

4.3.3.13 State how you know they are satisfied

Having mentioned whether users are satisfied with services, the answer to this differed in many ways. Respondents from the University of Zululand were of the opinion that the

library lack internet access; lack of budget and lack of commitment among the library staff. While respondents from Mangosuthu Technikon reported that they were aware of this through comments from the suggestion box and by hear-say. In addition respondents from the Universities of Natal and Durban Westville as well as the Durban Institute of Technology were of the opinion that their knowledge on customer satisfaction usually comes through positive comments from library customers.

4.3.3.14 Customer care/services and strategies

This item was to find out whether respondents had customer care/services and strategies in place within the library. The purpose of this question was to provide a road map to the next question that required respondents to indicate whether they are satisfied with the existing strategies. It was found that all the respondents from all the academic libraries have customer care strategies which are as follows; sales and marketing (for example displays and exhibitions); user education; training; library guide; profiles to current awareness and the library news letter. Respondents from Mangosuthu Technikon went on to add that they have competition (e.g. poetry, speed-reading and design signage). The University of Natal also mentioned that seminars are used for academic staff and new staff on how to use the library.

4.3.3.15 New strategies

Having mentioned their satisfaction with the existing strategies in 5.2.14 above, respondents were asked to indicate new strategies they wish to add and the reasons supporting their views. It was gathered that respondents had similar perception in this question,

- Improve the existing strategies;
- User education must be a module on its own especially at the University of Zululand;
- Improve the level of liaison between the library staff, students and academics.

The reason behind their wish was that new ideas are needed every year to attract new customers in using library material.

4.4 Recommendations

The item required respondents to give their recommendations on the improvement of customer care within their libraries. This question on improvement of customer care drew a lot of responses and comments from respondents, which are summarized below:

- **Staff training on customer care**

Respondents strongly recommended that there should be more training on customer care for all staff members especially the committee responsible for customer care.

- **Feedback from customers about their needs**

The issue was of great concern to all the respondents. There was a request to have comments from customers on the library performance based on the needs and wants of users.

- **Communication between the library and the SRC**

Some respondents felt that the library should invite the students representative council to find out if needs and wants of users are met accurately and to be notified if the library lacks in a certain service.

- **Increase of the library budget**

There is need to have enough budget to cover all the activities of customer care. The majority of the respondents made a significant recommendation that if the budget could be increased all activities related to customer care could be covered extensively.

- **The library must sell their services to users**

In order for a library to function well and effectively, it is important to sell its information products and services to library users. It is advisable that librarians must not sit and expect users to predict what the library is offering, but it must have a business attitude.

- **Customer care librarian**

It is of great concern among all the respondents that a library should have an office or a customer care librarian responsible for managing customer services.

- **Warm welcome from the security**

Respondents felt very concerned that at the entrance of the library, users must be received warmly in order for the library to be user friendly. Security must be taught that they must treat library users with respect especially at the University of Durban westville.

- **Orientation**

The majority of the respondents felt that a library should run a thorough orientation to ensure that all users especially newly enrolled ones are introduced in the world of searching and retrieving information products and services within the library.

4.5 Summary

This study has shown the picture of customer care services and strategies in academic libraries. The study began with personal information, which was taken as general information from the respondents. It then looked at the problem areas of the study which were the main focus of the study, like for instance customer care policy and structures in the library, information products and services offered by the library, methods of conducting customer care, customer satisfaction with information resources and customer care strategies offered by the library.

The study revealed that the majority of users are unaware of customer care policy within the library. The study has shown that libraries lack a concrete document based on the rules and regulations of the library. It has also been revealed that some academic libraries do not have a customer care unit/person responsible for customers. In addition the study has shown that users are more aware of information products and services offered by the library. Furthermore, the study has found that library users are satisfied with information products and services offered by the library. It was observed that methods of conducting customer care are unknown by library customers. It was seen from the strategies used by the library that users are not aware of them.

The following chapter shall be chapter 5 based on the discussion of findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter collates and discusses the results, which emerged from the analysis of research findings presented in chapter four section one and section two and also analyses role findings in relation to the reviewed studies in chapter two. The objectives of the study have been used for organizing the chapter. While section one of the study looks at the personal details of the respondents, section two looks at the discussion, based on the research problem. This chapter focuses mainly on problem areas, such as customer care policy of the library, information products and services offered by the library, satisfaction of users with information resources, methods of conducting customer care and strategies of customer care used by academic libraries.

5.2 Section One Personal Information

5.2.1 Personal information of the respondents

Questionnaires were distributed to academics and students while interviews were conducted among the library staff respondents. While academic staff, students and the library staff were required to indicate tertiary institutions they belonged to, academics and students were required to indicate their faculties, status of academics, level of study and gender. The library staff respondents were also required to indicate positions they occupied and their responsibilities within the library.

All faculties, in the main campuses from the Universities and Technikons were represented as presented in bar chart one in chapter four. However, there were no faculties of law and education from the Durban Institute of Technology and Mangosuthu Technikon.

Regarding the academic status and the level of study for students, all the academic categories were represented, from junior lecturer to professor. In the student's category, there was a high response rate from the undergraduate respondents, as compared to postgraduates. The high response rate among undergraduates was a result of the high enrolment rate as opposed to postgraduates. It was not possible to get doctoral students from the University of Durban Westville. Both Mangosuthu Technikon and the Durban Institute of Technology do not have postgraduate students. In addition all levels of study were represented at the University of Zululand as shown in table 2 chapter 4.

On gender composition, there were 226 (58.5%) females compared to 160 (41.5%) males among academics and students. This then might suggest that women as compared to men dominate tertiary institutions or faculties. The study has found that professional librarians have slightly similar responsibilities to perform for their users especially subject librarians. For example, subject librarians from all academic libraries have shown that they are responsible for searching, retrieving and printing information for users on the Internet. In addition at Mangosuthu Technikon a special project librarian is responsible for customer care. While at the University of Natal there is a committee responsible for customer care.

It must be noted that it was only the University of Zululand, Mangosuthu Technikon and the Durban Institute of Technology, which were represented by a University Librarian or a Deputy University Librarian in this study. It is also noted that three subject librarians represented the University of Durban Westville.

5.3 Section Two-Customer Care

5.3.1 Academic library customer and customer care policy

The study considered this item to be highly crucial. Firstly, respondents were required to indicate whether they were customers of the library. Secondly, whether they were aware of customer care policies in their libraries. Thirdly, whether they were aware of a customer care unit/person responsible for customers in the library. It was found that the majority of customer's 257 (66.5%) felt that they were customers of the academic library. The information obtained from the library users/customers of academic libraries concur with results found from the library staff that students, academics, researchers, administrative staff, the neighboring community and the library staff itself are the customers of the academic library. Again, information gathered from library staff and users on customers of academic libraries concurs with DoE/ Europeans Higher Education-Libraries programme (2002), in which it is observed that it is *"almost a universal acknowledgement that academic libraries are the hearts of the institutions. This is because who ever works, learns or visits the institution depends heavily on the library to get relevant information"*.

According to the Empowerment International Customer Care Policy (2001), *"customer care policy is all about solving problems and delivering quality services and products to users"*. Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (2002), *"clarify that library policy covers all aspects of accessibility to library services including location, opening hours, physical access, furniture and equipment, stock and services, access to staff and adequate space"*. The policy sets the standards against which individual users and communities can measure their needs, rights and expectations.

The results obtained from the academic staff and students concur with the clarity made by the two authors above in the following manner. It was revealed that 202 (52%) of the respondents were aware of customer care policy within their libraries. In addition respondents were able to indicate rules and regulations they are familiar with in the library (see table 6 in chapter 4). More rules and regulations scored high ratings, which were above 50% while only a few scored low ratings, which were less than 50%. From the Universities of Zululand and Westville, as well as the Durban Institute of Technology, it was found that there was no policy in place. However, there are rules and regulations in the library guide. This therefore means that the aforementioned three academic libraries do have a customer care policy, which is unknown to the librarians.

On the other hand, it was noted that from the 68 students from the University of Durban Westville, the majority 54 (79%) said that they were unaware of customer care policy. The results gathered from users at the University of Durban Westville library concur with the results found from their library staff that there is no customer care policy in place in the library.

Coming to the issue of the unit/person responsible for customer care in the library, it was found that 214 (55%), of the student and academic staff respondents were unaware of a unit/person responsible for customer care in the library. This information concurs with the information gathered from the library staff respondents, since they revealed that there was no unit/person responsible for customer care in the library. It must be noted that from the total number of 37 respondents from Mangosuthu Technikon, the majority, 25 (68%), revealed that they were aware of customer care unit/person within the library.

Results obtained from library users/customers at Mangosuthu Technikon concur with that of their library staff, which reported that there is a special project librarian and a committee responsible for customer care. The results found from all library users proved to be negative. They could not identify a unit/person, responsible for customer care in their libraries. The study observes that even if users can be oriented in the library, it

would be futile unless a proper unit/person responsible for customer care is put in place within libraries, and made known to library users.

5.3.2 Information products and services

In order to understand if users are aware of information products and services offered by the library, this discussion, looks at how frequently library users visit the library. Secondly, it also looks at whether library users are aware of information products and services offered. Lastly, the discussion identifies information products and services familiar to users in the library. The study found that 232 (60%) of the respondents sometimes visit the library while 143 (37%), always visit the library. This means that academic libraries are highly visited by their users. As to whether respondents were aware of information products and services, it was established that the majority 220 (57%) of the respondents are aware of information products and services offered by the library. The awareness of information products and services among library users, concur with the information gathered from the library staff respondents. On information products and services familiar to academic staff and students, the study found that in the category of undergraduates and postgraduate students, high ratings were scored in identifying information products and services familiar to them, (see table 9 in chapter 4). The majority of the information products and services scored high ratings, which were above 50%. Coming to the academics category, the majority of information products and services received low ratings. This suggest that academic staff respondents visit the library occasionally. The study observes that familiarity of information products and services is triggered by the currency of information resources for user needs. It is noted that currency of information brings stability and use of information resources as it makes the library user-friendly to the library customers. Respondents were required to indicate the currency of the library information resources for their information needs and wants. The study noted that 271 (70%) of the respondents said information resources is current (5-10 years old). However, at the University of Durban Westville library, 47 (69%) of respondents were of the opinion that information resources were not current or out dated

(10-20 years old). This suggests that the library resources at the University of Durban Westville are not current

5.3.3 Ways of conducting customer care

Academic staff and student respondents were required to indicate whether they were aware of ways of conducting customer care in their libraries. They were also to point out those methods of conducting customer care familiar to them. According to Gerkes (2000), *"libraries need to focus on the requirements and expectations of end-users, in order to determine their needs and their wants"*. He further points out that conducting customer care is important to maintain an up-to-date understanding of user needs and expectations.

A total of 293 (76%) academic staff and student respondents were unaware of the methods of conducting customer care within their libraries. At Mangosuthu Technikon, for example from the total number of 37 respondents, 22 (59%) indicated that they were aware of the methods of conducting customer care within the library. Respondents were then required to indicate those methods of conducting customer care they are familiar with in the library. Low ratings in all the methods of conducting customer care were noted. The study found that all the methods of conducting customer care scored less than 50%.

In addition the methods of conducting customer care mentioned by the library staff concur with the theories by Customer Care (1989) and Gerbes (2000) in chapter two- as elaborated in the thesis. The study then observes that academic libraries have methods of conducting customer care in place even though they are unknown to library customers.

5.3.4 Satisfaction of customers with the information products and services

Satisfaction of library users is normally difficult, especially if library staff are unaware of information products and services relevant to its users. In other words, it is important for libraries to solicit views from users on their information requirements. Respondents were asked whether they were satisfied with information products and services offered by the library. The majority that is 237 (61%) of the respondents were sometimes satisfied with information products and services. This means that library users are generally satisfied with information products and services offered (see bar chart 10 in chapter 4).

Results from library staff respondents on information products and services offered by the library concur with that mentioned by students and academic staff. The majority of library users fully appreciate the services offered to them. Furthermore, training is offered if needed by library users, (see 4.3.3.10 in chapter 4). The above information gathered from the library staff respondents concur with Marriot Library User Satisfaction Survey (1999), where it is affirmed that customers/users feel satisfied when the library staff demonstrate a genuine focus and interest in their needs and wants. Furthermore the library staff respondents from Mangosuthu Technikon mentioned that they organize reading competitions among library users, to encourage them to use the library. However, the user that finished reading within the stipulated time, would take the first prize. It might be proper if all academic libraries can adopt Mangosuthu Technikon library style.

The library staff respondents tested their knowledge on whether their customers are satisfied with their services. From the Universities of Natal and Westville as well as the Durban Institute of Technology and Mangosuthu Technikon library staff respondents indicated that they get positive comments from respondents through the suggestion box and through hear say. This information concur with studies by Marriot Library User Satisfaction Survey (1999), *that customers/users feel satisfied when the library staff demonstrate a genuine focus and interest in their needs and wants.*

It must be noted that dissatisfaction of library users also raised more concern. It was found that some academic libraries have out dated information sources. The other reason is that the library staff is reluctant to assist users when looking for help. It was noted that the majority of respondents on this question came from the University of Zululand. Information gathered from academic staff and students concur with information gathered from the library staff respondents at the University of Zululand. The library staff respondents were of the view that the library has no Internet access for users inside the library. In addition, it has insufficient budget to cater all activities of customer care. Lastly, the library staff lacks commitment towards helping library customers.

5.3.5 Strategies of customer care

A list of strategies of customer care was presented from which academic staff and students were to choose. They were asked whether they were aware of strategies of customer care. Pawling (2001), *point out that customer care strategies help an organisation realise to solve problems faced by users and increase satisfaction and empower them with self service and capabilities and access to real-time information.* Even though customer care strategies solve problems faced by users in increasing satisfaction, the majority that is 256 (66%) of the respondents indicated that they were unaware of strategies of customer care within their libraries, (see bar chart 11 in chapter 4). Respondents who were aware of strategies of customer care were required to draw from the list given those strategies they were familiar with. Among the strategies of customer care listed, it was observed that, all strategies identified by the library users scored ratings, less than 50%. In essence, the study asked the library staff to indicate strategies of customer care used by their libraries in order to compare them with those indicated by the literature.

The two authors Pawling (2001) and the University of Natal Report, (2002) mentioned; customer care technology, utility call centers, sales and marketing, customer service and tactics, as the useful strategies of customer care.

It was therefore noted that half of the strategies indicated by the library staff respondents do not concur with those mentioned by the two authors above. It is observed that academic libraries do not have proper customer care strategies in place and are unknown among the library staff members and to the clients/customers.

In addition academic libraries need to put in place the strategies mentioned by the two authors above. This in turn would eradicate the perception that academic libraries do not market its information products and services. In a nutshell, if all academic libraries can take into consideration the importance of library customers, the use of the library material may increase. Furthermore, the perception that says books lies on shelves unread can be eradicated.

5.3.6 Methods used to inform users on new information products and services

The library staff were asked to indicate methods used to inform their users on new information products and services available, in order to compare them with those identified by users. It is observed that the methods used to inform users on new information products and services normally have a significant impact on library users, in which they recognize new materials available. Library staff respondents indicated; displays, personal communication, orientation, library newsletter, notices, e-mails and library web page as the methods of informing users on new information products and services. The study found that only displays scored the highest rating (62%) compared to other methods (see table 16 in chapter 4). The rest of the methods scored low ratings, (less than 50%). It is therefore noted that, these methods are unknown among library users.

5.4 Recommendations

At the end of it all, there were recommendations on the improvement of customer care strategies and services in academic libraries. These recommendations emanated from the findings discussed in this chapter, which are as follows; firstly, customer care policy and structures, secondly, information products and services, thirdly, user satisfaction with information resources. Fourthly, methods of conducting customer care studies, fifthly, ways of informing users on new information products and services, lastly, strategies of customer care. From the problems listed above, the study had an opportunity to identify and make a decision in the following manner:

- **Customer care policy**

The study strongly suggested that there is an urgent need for the library to formulate a library policy document. It must be placed in an accessible place in order for users to be guided by the rules and regulations of the library.

- **Customer care unit/person**

There is an urgent need for those academic libraries that do not have customer care unit/person to put it in place. It is suggested that the unit/person would be responsible for customer services. It is believed that this would in turn promote and tremendously improve the use of the library resources.

- **Currency of information in the library**

Some of the academic libraries (e.g. University of Durban Westville library) have outdated information resources as the majority of respondents revealed in chapter 4. It is therefore, requested that the library management increase its budget in order to afford buying what would stimulate the use of the library by its users. This in turn would benefit

the library users in using the library resources and also raise the standard of service delivery to the level of academic libraries. The increase of the budget would help the library to conduct use studies to ensure that proper service delivery is carried out.

- **Conducting of customer care**

It was noted that the majority of student and academic staff respondents revealed that they are unaware of the methods of conducting customer care. All the listed methods of conducting customer care scored low ratings. This suggests that there is need to promote and publicize all those methods that received low ratings. This would make the library user friendly and conducive for knowledge and information acquisition.

- **Strategies of customer care**

It is noted that strategies of customer care are unknown to both library users and the library staff. Only a few library staff are aware of the strategies of customer care used in the library even though they are not the proper ones. It is observed that if academic libraries can make use of strategies mentioned by the authors in chapter two, the use of the library material may increase. In addition these strategies must be made known among library users.

- **Workshop**

It is urgently requested that the library staff should organize a workshop and take a sample of users from all departments. This would help them to find out whether their customer care services meet the expectations of users. The study therefore observes that the library staff should attend a workshop on customer care to equip themselves with basics that are important when dealing with customers.

5.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed issues based on the responses received from students and academic staff as well as those from the librarians in chapter 4. The study looked at the problem areas, which are as follows; customer care policy, information products and services, methods of customer care, users satisfaction with information products and services, ways of informing users of new information products and services and strategies of customer care. This chapter looked and compared the literature review with the views of academic staff, students and the library staff respondents, to see if they concur with each other. Personal details of the students and academic staff as well as the library staff respondents were enumerated.

It was evident from this discussion that libraries have the same customer care policy and similar methods of conducting customer care even though they are not proper. Academic staff and students respondents are aware of customer care policy, even though some of the libraries do not have them in place. Furthermore, it was evident that some of the academic libraries do not have a customer care unit/person responsible for customer services. Library users indicated that they are not aware of any unit/person responsible for customer services. Library users have showed a high degree of awareness of information products and services, which concur with information gathered from the library staff. The library staff respondents revealed that they deliver information products and services to library users at anytime.

The academic staff and student respondents also indicated that the information resources of the library satisfy them. They also revealed that they fully appreciate the services offered to them. This was evident from the library users views that the library staff is supportive and their attitude towards users is positive.

Strategies were found lacking as compared to the one's presented by the literature review. It means that more strategies and methods need to be developed and added to ensure that it improves customer care services. Respondents especially the library staff, have highlighted that strategies and methods of conducting customer care needs to be improved.

The respondents also highlighted problems they were encountering when using the library information resources. These were almost similar in the four tertiary institutions. Among the major highlights were lack of a written policy document, unit/person responsible for customer care and strategies of customer care. Recommendations were put forward which were based mostly on the problems experienced.

Chapter six provides summary, recommendations and conclusions based on the research objectives and assumptions.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary, recommendations and conclusions of the major findings as revealed by the study. Recommendations for further study on the same or similar study are provided. The aim of the study was to investigate customer care services and strategies in academic libraries in tertiary institutions in kwaZulu-Natal. In accomplishing the aim of the study, the following objectives were pursued:

To find out the composition of customers served by the academic libraries in tertiary institutions.

To find out whether there is customer care services and strategies such as policy and structures.

To evaluate information products and services offered by academic libraries

To establish how customer care is conducted in tertiary institutions

To establish levels of customer satisfaction with library services.

To compare the customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in South Africa so as to determine the appropriate approach to these services.

The study also used the following research questions on customer care strategies and services.

- Which customers does the library serve?
- Do you think the library has customer care policy?
- Are you aware of information products and services in the library?
- Do you feel that the library care for you as a customer?
- Are you satisfied with information products and services offered by the library?

- Which strategies would you suggest for the improvement of customer care in your library?

The study further sought to answer the assumptions, which are as follows:

- Academic libraries in South Africa do not have operational customer care strategies and services in place.
- There is a relationship between poor information use and customer service and lack of customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in tertiary institutions.

6.2 Summary based on research objectives

This section looks at the summary based on the five research objectives outlined in chapter of the study.

6.2.1 To find out the composition of customers served by the academic libraries in tertiary institutions.

Academic libraries are described as the "heart" of the learning community, providing a place for students and faculty to do their research and advance their knowledge. The study has found that academic libraries serve similar customers who consist of; students, academic and administrative staff, researchers and external students from other institutions and other University staff or Technikon staff as well as library colleagues and business services. The majority of the respondents considered themselves as customers of academic libraries because; they heavily rely on information products and services of libraries for their learning and research uses. It must be noted that anyone using the library resources is considered a customer.

6.2.6 To establish levels of customer satisfaction with library services

Studies by Cooper and Dempsey (1998) and McCarville, O' Delle and Siegenthaler (2000), point out that satisfaction represents the degree to which a library has met a user's needs and expectations. It is believed that customer satisfaction create a win/win situation in which libraries gain valuable support from their constituents. According to Rowley (1994), in the ever-more competitive world of information and document delivery channels, libraries used to focus sharply on customer satisfaction, since satisfied customers are returning customers.

In supporting the views of the six authors above, academic staff and students respondents have shown that they are satisfied with information products and services offered. Library staff respondents on the other hand have shown that users come back to say "thank you very much for the support", which in essence means that users are satisfied with information products and service offered. There is a link between currency of information resources and satisfaction of library customers.

6.2.7 To compare the customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal so as to determine the appropriate approach to these services

Pawling (2001), point out that customer care strategies help an organization realize to solve problems faced by users and increase satisfaction and empower them with self service and capabilities and access to real-time information. The study found that some strategies used by academic libraries are similar. All library staff respondents mentioned; sales and marketing (e.g. displays and exhibitions), user education, training, library guide, profiles to current awareness and the library newsletter. Library staff at Mangosuthu Technikon went on to add competitions (e.g. poetry, speed-reading and design signage). The library staff respondents at University of Natal further mentioned

that seminars are used for academic staff on how to use the library. It was noted that academic libraries do not have proper strategies of customer care in place.

6.3 Summary based on research hypothesis

6.3.1 Academic libraries in South Africa do not have operational customer care strategies and services in place.

This hypothesis was accepted. The study has found that there are no proper strategies of customer care in academic libraries. It was noted that library staff do not know strategies of customer care. Strategies indicated by the library staff respondents do not concur with those mentioned by the authors in the literature review in chapter two. In addition the strategies that are in place in the library are also unknown to the library users. Even though customer care strategies solve problems faced by users in increasing satisfaction, for instance the majority (256; 66%) indicated that they were unaware of strategies of customer care within their libraries, (see bar chart 11 in chapter 4). Among the strategies of customer care listed, it was observed that, all strategies identified by the library users score low ratings, which were less than 50%.

The study therefore observes that academic libraries do not have proper customer care strategies in place. Those strategies, which are in place, are unknown among the library staff members and to the library users/customers. It is noted that, it would be proper if academic libraries put in place those strategies mentioned by the authors in chapter two. This in turn would eradicate the perception that academic libraries do not market their information products and services. In a nutshell, if all academic libraries can take into consideration the importance of library customers, the use of the library material may increase. Furthermore, the perception that says books lies on shelves unread can be eradicated.

6.3.2 There is a relationship between poor information use and customer service and lack of customer care strategies and services in academic libraries in tertiary institutions.

The level of awareness of information products and services among students and academic staff in the library is slightly more than half. For instance (220; 57%) are aware while (143; 37%) of the respondents are sometimes aware. In addition it is noted that the awareness of information products and services make library users able to identify those information products and services they are familiar with, especially in the students' category. However, the academic staff respondents could not identify most of the information products and services. A large number of information products and services scored low ratings, in the academic staff category (see table 9 in chapter 4). Similarly, the library staff respondents do not know strategies of customer care. The strategies that they indicated do not concur with those mentioned by the authors in the literature review in chapter two. The strategies that are in place in the library are unknown to the library users. For example, this is evident in the fact that the majority (256; 66%) of the respondents indicated that they are unaware of strategies of customer care within their libraries, (see bar chart 11 in chapter 4). Among the strategies of customer care listed, it was observed that, all strategies identified by the library users scored low ratings. The hypothesis formulated above was proven correct.

6.4 Conclusions

This study has looked at customer care services and strategies in academic libraries in tertiary institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. It looked also at how library users perceive customer care services and strategies in their libraries. It focused mainly on problem areas, such as customer care policy and structures of the library, methods of conducting customer care, information products and services offered by the library, satisfaction of users with information resources, and strategies of customer care used by academic

libraries. These problem areas have resulted in the study drawing a conclusion based on the findings from the library staff and users as well as the literature review.

It was evident from the literature review and findings that academic libraries have customers, which rely heavily in the use of information products and services offered. In addition it was found that academic libraries do have customer care policies, even though some academic libraries do not have it in place. It has also shown that library users are aware of these customer care policies. This confirms the clarity by Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (2002), *"that library policy covers all aspects of accessibility to library services including location, opening hours, physical access, furniture and equipment, stock and services, access to staff and adequate space". The policy sets the standards against which individual users and communities can measure their needs, rights and expectations.*

Furthermore, the study has shown that there is sufficient information products and services offered by academic libraries. Library users are generally satisfied with information resources offered. It was observed that academic libraries fulfill information requirements for library users. This is evident in the fact that the majority of library users indicated that their information requirements are fulfilled.

It was found that academic libraries lack proper methods of conducting customer care. In addition it does not have strategies of customer care in place as indicated by the literature in chapter two. A majority of library users revealed that they are unaware of the methods and the strategies of customer care. Strategies of customer care mentioned by the library staff do not concur with those presented in the literature review in chapter two. The study observes that the unavailability of proper strategies and methods of customer care brings down the image of academic libraries. It is believed that academic libraries are the hearts of the institution where one can acquire information anytime. Customer care in academic libraries must be spear headed, because it wins the hearts of customers, since customers

are returning customers. Moreover, academic libraries require urgent attention to those strategies of customer care and must be made known to its customers. Overall, the study has shown that customer care brings stability and user-friendly in the library environment and is conducive for knowledge acquisition.

6.5 Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are based on the research objectives and the hypothesis made, as mentioned in 6.2 and 6.3 in this chapter 6. These recommendations are as follows;

6.5.1 Customer care policy

A library policy is believed to be rules and regulations that guide users on the use of the library. It also guides the library staff on how to treat customers and guides them on their duties within the library. The library staff is expected to consider customer care policy as it is presented in the literature review in chapter two. All rules and regulations must be considered as it is written in the literature review. The study found that there are tertiary institutions that have customer care policy in place but unknown to some library staff. The study recommends that there is an urgent need for the library to formulate a library policy document. It must be placed in an accessible place, in order for all library users to be guided by the rules and regulations of the library.

6.5.2 Customer care unit/person

It is recommended that those academic libraries that do not have customer care unit/person to put it in place. The unit/person would be responsible for customer services. This in turn would promote and tremendously improve the use of the library resources.

6.5.3 Currency of information in the library

Some of the academic libraries (e.g. University of Durban Westville library) have outdated information resources as the majority of respondents revealed in chapter 4. It is therefore, recommended that the library management increase its budget in order to afford buying what would stimulate the use of the library by its users. This in turn would benefit the library users in using the library resources and also raise the standard of service delivery to the level of academic libraries. The increase of the budget would help the library to conduct use studies to ensure that proper service delivery is achieved.

6.5.4 Conducting of customer care

The majority of the student and academic staff respondents revealed that they are unaware of the methods of conducting customer care. Almost all the methods of conducting customer care scored low ratings. However, only displays scored 62%. This suggests that there is need to involve the library users/customers in evaluating the services and products provided. In addition methods of obtaining customer opinion should be made known. This is easily achieved through regular customer involvement in surveys.

6.5.5 Strategies of customer care

It is noted that strategies of customer care are unknown by both library users and the library staff. Only a few library staff are aware of the strategies of customer care used in the library even though they are not proper ones. If academic libraries can make use of the strategies mentioned by the authors in chapter two, the use of the library material may increase. In addition these strategies must be made known to library users.

6.5.6 Extension of library closing hours

The library closing hours is a very sensitive issue among library users. It is felt that academic libraries should close around 12:00 midnight during examination times. This could be achieved by ensuring that there is a mutual negotiation among library users and the library management. Besides the working of the library staff after hours, students doing library and information science are considered to be the best candidates to do the job.

6.5.7 Male librarians must wear identification tags

It is believed that all library staff members are there to assist users when looking for help in the library. It is important that all library staff members wear a uniform that would make them identifiable. This therefore recommends that male librarians wear identification tags in order to be identifiable by library users.

6.5.8 Suggestion box

Suggestion boxes are used to put complaints and comments from customers of any organization. It is believed that academic libraries should use suggestion boxes effectively to find views and comments by library users pertaining to services and products offered. This would help the library staff assess if it delivers reliable and accurate customer care services and strategies to its clients/customers.

6.5.9 Maintaining of library equipment (like photocopying machines)

Library equipment especially the photocopying machines should be in good condition. It is strongly recommended that the machines be maintained with immediate effect to accommodate all users of the library. Respondents suggested that all photocopying

machines must be serviced and must be in proper condition to be used by the customers instead of queuing for only one photocopying machine.

6.5.10 Library newsletter

It is well known that a library newsletter is used to inform library users on new developments in the library. All academic libraries should have a library newsletter in place. It should be circulated among library users to ensure that they are aware of some changes within the library.

6.6 Recommendations for further study

The following recommendations are proposed;

- ◆ It is proposed that the same study be carried nationally.
- ◆ A comprehensive study on customer care be carried once a customer care policy and unit/person is put in place.
- ◆ Investigate the feasibility of rolling the study out to a wider cross section of institutions to build a database of customer satisfaction information to assist with planning and decision making.
- ◆ Further increase self-sufficiency among experienced library users, and make it easier for new students, with additional well-placed signage.
- ◆ Share best practice/experience between institutions regarding mechanisms/tactics/policies which are most effective in controlling noise and promoting a quiet study environment.
- ◆ Review current training provision for students in the use of OPAC. How can programmes be improved? Frequency and timing of training provision.
- ◆ Remember the concept of 'customer loyalty'-turning first year students into satisfied customers for remaining years on campus and the value of building loyalty beyond graduation.

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APPENDIX 1

Questionnaires for the Academic Staff and Students

Section 1: Personal Information

1. Please indicate your institutional affiliation (use an X or tick)

University of Zululand	[]
University of Natal	[]
University of Durban Westville	[]
Durban Institute of Technology	[]
Mangosuthu Technikon	[]

2. Are you an academic staff member or student?

Academic Staff	[]
Student	[]

3. Faculty (e.g. Faculty of Arts, Science etc)

Faculty of.....

4. If Academic staff, please indicate your academic status/rank

Professor	[]
Associate Professor	[]
Senior Lecturer	[]
Lecturer	[]
Junior Lecturer	[]
Other specify.....		

5. If you are a student, please indicate the level of study

Undergraduate	[]
Honours	[]
Masters	[]
Doctorate	[]
Post Doctoral	[]

6. What is your gender?

Male	[]
Female	[]

7. Do you consider yourself a customer of the academic library?

Yes	[]
No	[]
Sometimes	[]

Section 2: Customer care strategies and services

Customer care policy and structures

8. Are you aware of any customer care policy at your library?

Yes

[]

No

[]

9. please pinpoint(*mark with an X*) any user/customer policy familiar to you from your library from the following phrases: (*You may tick more than one*)

Customer care policy in the library	
Users will be provided with a student card or staff card to borrow a book	
It is essential that good care of library materials, properties and equipment is observed	
Return the materials borrowed on time	
Treat library and fellow users with respect and courtesy	
Users are at liberty to consult with library staff whenever they need assistance	
Refrain from eating, drinking, smoking and using personal stereos in the library	
Tearing or mutilating of books is forbidden	
The library provides a service, which is friendly and helpful to customers	
The library provides the fullest possible service at all times to customers	
The library creates a pleasant and welcoming environment in which users can work	
The library makes available materials and information resources appropriate to users needs	
The library provides a quality service to customers	
The library publicizes the library range of services, library regulations and opening hours	
The library services meets and exceeds customer's expectation	
The library provides the highest-quality products, training and services at all times	
Beware of and assist users with disabilities	
Other, specify	

10. Are you aware of a customer care unit/person within the library?

Yes

[]

No

[]

11. Can you name the person responsible for customer care services at the University/Technikon library?

Customer care products and services

12. How frequently do you use the library? (Please tick below):

Regular (1-5 times a week)

[]

Sometimes (Weekly or monthly)

[]

Never

[]

13. Are you aware of the information products and services offered by the Library?

Yes []
 No []
 Sometimes []

14. Please indicate the information products and services offered by the library that you use below.(You may tick more than one)

Books	
Newspapers	
Magazines	
Journals	
Reference sources (e.g. dictionaries and encyclopedias	
Grey Literature (e.g. minutes of meetings, correspondence, annual reports etc).	
Conference proceedings	
Industrial and commercial literature (e.g. patents, designs, trademarks, utility models etc).	
Research reports (e.g. theses and dissertations)	
Official and government publications (e.g. legislations, government gazette, sessional papers, parliament proceedings etc).	
Review past exams	
Internet/email access	
Short loan services	
Interlending services	
Lending services	
Audiovisual services (e.g. use of CD-ROMS, TV, Videos, microform etc)	
Reference and referral services	
Photocopying services	
User Orientation and guidance	
Customer consultation and advisory (by the librarian) services	
Use of library reading rooms/space	
Information literacy services	
Use of special collection (Africana or Uzululu collection)	
On line searching with the help of a librarian	
On line searching without the help of a librarian	
Displays and exhibitions services	
Others	

15. Does the library fulfill your information requirements adequately?

Yes []
 No []
 Sometimes []

16. If no, please state three reasons why it does not fulfil your requirements.

- a)
- b)
- c)

17. If yes, please state three factors to express how it fulfils your requirements

- a)
- b)
- c)

18. In general terms do you feel that the library cares for you as a customer?

- | | |
|-----------|---------|
| Yes | [] |
| No | [] |
| Sometimes | [] |

19. Comment on the staff attitude to customers/library users? (Please indicate below).

- | | |
|---------------|---------|
| Very friendly | [] |
| Friendly | [] |
| Supportive | [] |
| Unfriendly | [] |
| Ambivalent | [] |

20. Do you think there are adequate information resources for your need in the library?

- | | |
|------------|---------|
| Yes | [] |
| No | [] |
| Not always | [] |

21. Comment on the currency of the library information resources for your information needs?

- | | |
|---|---------|
| Very current (less than five years old) | [] |
| Current (5-10 years old) | [] |
| Not current (10-20 years old) | [] |
| Out dated (over 20 years old) | [] |

22. Which other information products and services, currently unavailable but, you wish to obtain from the library?

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

Methods of conducting customer care by academic libraries

23. Are you aware if the library conducts customer care research?

- | | |
|-----|---------|
| Yes | [] |
| No | [] |

24. If yes, have you participated in any of the following library customer care research activities? (Please indicate below).

- Customer surveys (e.g. use interviews and questionnaires)
- Opinion Polls (e.g. suggestion box)

Joint customer/Employee committees
 Direct democracy (e.g. customers are free to say anything)
 Other, specify

Customer satisfaction with library services

25. In the process of using the library are your needs normally satisfied?

Yes	[]
No	[]
Sometimes	[]

26. If the answer above is no, please elaborate in not more than two sentences

.....

27. Please indicate how you agree with the following statements (Use the following indicators:

Strongly agree-5, Agree-4, Partly agree-3, Disagree-2, Totally disagree-1)

I am happy with the services provided by the library staff to the library customers	[]
I am happy with the information products and services provided by the library	[]
I always get up-to-date information in the library	[]
The speed of response to my requests is excellent	[]
I am satisfied with the attention I get from the library	[]
The facilities provided by the library for information accessibility are adequate	[]
The library always informs me of new information products and services	[]
I am satisfied with the library customer care policy	[]
I think that this library is well managed	[]

21. Please self assess yourself by using the following categories (use, Yes or No).

I search and find the information on the internet through the library	[]
I know how to search OPAC and retrieve books on shelves	[]
I abide by the library customer care rules and regulations	[]
I know how to access and use periodicals	[]
I know and use on line journals through the library	[]
I normally provide the library with a feedback on its customer care performance by email	[]
Through suggestion box	[]
Direct to the librarians	[]
Through friends	[]
Through SRC	[]
Through lecturers	[]
At meetings	[]
Through the intranet	[]
I receive library orientation so I am familiar with the library	[]
I am happy with the library opening and closing hours	[]

Customer care strategies in academic libraries

22. Are you aware of any customer care strategies in the library?

Yes []
No []

23. To show that the library cares for you, what strategies are used to ensure that you are well catered for? (Tick those strategies used).

Customer care technology (e.g. internet) []
Utility call centers (e.g. suggestion box) []
Sales and marketing (e.g. advertising) []
Tactics (e.g. use intranet) []
Librarians work closely with you []
Other specify []

24. How do you get informed of new information products and services? (You may tick more than one).

Displays []
Personal communication []
Library web page []
Orientation []
Library Newsletter []
Notices []
E-mail []
On Campus television []

25. What do you think needs to be done by the library to improve customer care services and strategies?

.....
.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX 2

Interview schedules/questions for the library staff

Section 1: Personal Information

1. Affiliation

University of Natal	[]
University of Zululand	[]
University of Durban Westville	[]
Durban Institute of Technology	[]
Mangosuthu Technikon	[]

2. Position.

University Librarian	[]
Deputy Librarian	[]
Senior Librarian	[]
Librarian/ Subject Librarian	[]
Assistant Librarian	[]
Other specify.....		

3. Level of responsibility (University librarian, serial librarian etc)

Section 2: Customer Care strategies and services

Customers served by academic libraries

4. Who are the library customers?

4.1

4.2

4.3

4.4

5. How do you know that they are your customers?

Policy and structures of academic libraries

6. Please comment on your library policy particularly how the policy addresses customer care services and strategies (Please provide the interviewer with a copy of the policy).
7. Please comment on the library management structure in relation to whether there is a department or unit and person responsible for customer services.
8. If customer service/care department or unit exists what is the function of the department or unit?
9. What are the duties of the customer services librarian/consultant (Please provide the interviewer with a job description if possible).

Customer care products and services

10. Please comment on the nature, type and range of the information products and services that you provide to your customers.
11. How do you create awareness of the availability of the information products and services to your customers?

Methods of conducting customer care by academic libraries

12. Please comment on whether and or how customer care/services research and audit is conducted by your library (e.g. use of surveys, suggestion boxes, focus group methods etc).

Customer satisfaction with library services

13. Comment on how you determine whether your customers are satisfied with the information services and products provided by the library.
14. How do you make sure that your customer is satisfied with the information products and services offered?
15. Comment on the attitude of staff to the library customers
16. Do you think that the customers are satisfied with their services?
17. How would you know?

Customer care strategies in academic libraries

18. What are the customer care/services and strategies in your library? (e.g. technology, policy structures, sales and marketing, service, education and training, research, information handling etc).
19. Are you satisfied with the existing strategies?
20. What new strategies would you wish to add and why?

21. What can you recommend to improve customer care in your library?