

Service Quality in Academia: A South African Experience

Kem Ramdass

Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

Abstract--As competition intensifies and environmental factors become more hostile, the concern for service quality grows. Student numbers have become a focal point in the offering of programmes. With regular quality audits, academia prioritises the fulfillment of the HEQC criteria, but lacks the provision of service quality to the student. If service quality is to become the cornerstone of marketing strategy, the marketer must have the means that differentiates the different academic institutions in SA.

Service quality is considered a critical determinant of competitiveness. Attention to "service quality" can help an organisation to differentiate itself from other organisations and through it gain a lasting competitive advantage. High quality of service is considered an essential determinant of the long-term profitability not only of service organisations, but also of manufacturing organisations. In some manufacturing industries "service quality" is considered a more important order winner than "product quality". Superior "service quality" is a key to improved profitability, and not the cost of doing business. Exemplary service is the next sale in the making. The methodology of the research comprises a qualitative, exploratory and descriptive design. Relevant literature in conjunction with national and international trends was used to understand how best practices could be employed.

I. BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

South Africa is a multicultural democracy of approximately 44 million people, and is geographically located at the southern tip of Africa. Until 1994, the apartheid ideology created a scenario of inferior educational opportunities to people of colour. Education was often highlighted by protest action by the disadvantaged population. In particular, the teaching of the Afrikaans language was rejected by generations of secondary students. Tertiary education reinforced race and class differences under apartheid. Disparities in resource distribution and the curricula offered maintained the apartheid mentality.

Higher education in the developing countries of Africa is a force in the national socio-economic development of countries against a backdrop of oppression, ignorance and eternal dependence. Therefore, attention should be paid to a curriculum that would be able to develop the needs of the skills demand in the country. In South Africa, development strategies from an educational perspective, which stress issues such as social equality, rural development and the eradication of poverty and diseases, are most applicable. As such, this looks at a distinctive view of the nature of quality and its implementation, thus embedding appropriate ways in the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) takes a holistic view of the personal, social, and economic needs of the South African society in view of skills over

formal knowledge. The NQF endorses an outcomes-based approach due to the growing concern about the effectiveness of traditional methods of teaching and training, which is content-based [6]. The purpose of the change is to promote overall improvement in the level of skills of the workforce, thus contributing to the productivity level in South Africa. The methodology of the research comprises a qualitative, exploratory and descriptive design. A questionnaire was used to gain insight into the experiences of first year students. Relevant literature in conjunction with national and international trends was used to understand how best practices could be employed.

II. INTRODUCTION

The business of education can be described as a service, a service which is directly impacted on by the provider of education. Higher education institutions are placing greater emphasis on meeting students' expectations and needs. As universities continue to become more student oriented, student perceptions of higher educational facilities and services are becoming more important. Educational service quality, emphasizing student satisfaction, is a newly emerging field of concern both nationally and internationally.

Interest in the measurement of service quality is high, however, as highlighted by several researchers, service quality is an elusive and abstract concept that is difficult to define and measure [1]. This is because of the fact that once a service is delivered it cannot be returned, reworked or prevented from reaching the customer. A service delivered cannot be taken back and because of this reason it is critical to provide a service correctly, meeting customer needs, the first time around. Failure to do so may well result in an unsatisfied customer who may not only want to do business with the organization again, but may influence the decision of potential customers [2]. Also given the intangible nature of a service in comparison to a product, measuring conformance is difficult and may only be done after the fact. Yet again this demonstrates the necessity to "get it right the first time around."

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Education has become a primary focus for the SA government as the country grapples with skill shortages. Government policy since 1994 has strongly focused on repositioning higher education in terms of global technological and economic competitiveness. However there has been tension in terms of sector prioritization. The dual challenge that higher education institutions face is firstly to

contribute to economic growth of the country and secondly to improve the quality of life of its citizens. A number of institutions have been merged to form Comprehensive Universities and UOTs. The merger process had an impact on quality in higher education to the extent that the concept of mergers was totally alien to South Africa [3].

The output of service systems is generally intangible, while manufacturing systems produce tangible and visible products; therefore, the behavioural aspects of management, such as motivation, are critical to quality control and enhancement in the service sector. Service organisations handle a large volume of transactions, which increases the opportunity for error. Inspection cannot be used as a means of quality control in services, since they are consumed as they are created and cannot be inventoried, as is the case with manufactured goods. Manufacturing is more capital intensive, whereas services are generally more labour intensive; hence, quality can more frequently be automated into the manufacturing process. The service delivery system is often very time sensitive, and customers and service workers must often interact for delivery of quality service [4].

Bradley [6] also discusses quality as transformation. This concept focuses firmly on the learners: the better the higher education institution, the more it achieves the goal of empowering students with specific skills, knowledge, and attitudes which enable them to live and work in the knowledge society. This notion of quality may be particularly appropriate when there have been significant changes in the profile of learners, for example, when changes in society or politics have enhanced access to higher education for large numbers of disadvantaged learners. Such is the case in South Africa where transformational processes are necessary to re-establish balance in the education sector considering all stakeholders involved in the process of education provision [5].

Carl [8] argues that the delivery of a transformational quality approach involves five key elements namely:

1. envisioning quality as a transformational process designed to enhance the experience of students;
2. a bottom-up approach to continuous improvement;
3. responsiveness and openness as the means of gaining greater trust;
4. an emphasis on effective action;
5. external monitoring which is sensitive to internal procedures (and values).

In the South African context, transformation relates to societal change, not just overcoming apartheid but addressing technological change.

As the Green paper proposed that transition and transformation in relation to higher education policy in South Africa confronts two sets of challenges simultaneously. In order to meet these two challenges relating to policy the proposition made suggests that firstly:

1. successful policy will have to overcome a historically determined pattern of fragmentation, inequality and

inefficiency; it will have to increase access for black students and for women; and it will have to generate new models of learning and teaching to accommodate a larger student population; and secondly

2. successful policy must restructure the higher education system and its institutions to meet the needs of an increasingly technologically oriented economy; and it must deliver the requisite research, the highly trained people and the useful knowledge to equip a developing society with the capacity to participate competitively in a rapidly changing global context.

The transformation of higher education intended by the government has three central features namely increased participation; greater responsiveness; and increased cooperation and partnerships.

In terms of increased participation greater numbers of students will have to be accommodated, and these students will be recruited from a broader distribution of social groups and classes. Such 'massification' of South African higher education will necessarily involve different patterns of teaching and learning, new curriculum and more varied modes of delivery. In a situation of financial constraints, planning and negotiations will have to ensure that wider participation is affordable and sustainable [7].

In terms of greater responsiveness heightened responsiveness and accountability express the greater impact of the market and civil society on higher education and the consequent need for appropriate forms of regulation.

In terms of increased cooperation and partnerships the new system must emphasise cooperation and partnerships in governance structures and operations of higher education. The model of cooperative governance, proposed by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and endorsed by the government, repositions the directive role of the state with a steering and coordinating role. Relations between higher learning institutions and stakeholders will be strengthened where new partnerships and cooperative ventures may be forged and where scarce resources may be optimised [22].

Ramsden [21] argues that higher education must itself be transformed if it is to be successful as a transformative process. In brief, such transformation requires the following:

- shifting from teaching to learning;
- developing explicit skills, attitudes, and abilities as well as knowledge;
- developing appropriate assessment procedures;
- rewarding transformative teaching;
- encouraging discussion of pedagogy;
- providing transformative learning for academics;
- fostering new collegiality;
- linking quality improvement to learning;
- auditing improvement.

This view on transformation in education in South Africa is critical to ensure the integration of fundamental quality management principles in higher education. Further, such transformation creates the right environment conducive to ensure that quality service delivery is maintained as the environment serves as a pre-requisite for quality management at higher learning institutions given the background of South Africa [20].

IV. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The challenge is to improve the quality of education across the entire value chain. It is important to remember that quality stems from the quality of life experienced by individuals, whereby society instills morals, value, ethical conduct, honesty, integrity, to name but a few positive characteristics. The development of quality principles in the early years of the child, continued in primary, secondary, tertiary education, leads to individual practicing quality principles throughout the work life. The schools are deprived of resources, facilities and qualified teachers. It is extremely unimaginable to have efficiency, effectiveness and quality in education under these circumstances [19].

The quality of education therefore needs to be increased at the primary and secondary level so that it prepares individuals for the tasks which they will receive in higher education. There seems to be a gap between secondary and higher education and the University of Johannesburg is addressing this issue through bridging programmes. If this increase in quality in education occurs, South Africa will produce professional individuals who can contribute to society in positive ways and therefore directly impact on the economy as well as international relations[17].

V. IMPACT OF MERGERS ON HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The mergers of particularly universities and technikons have caused problems in higher education. The first and most important impact is on employees (academics and administrative staff) who have been treated in an inferior manner. There is belief that the university has totally taken over the technikon and the morale has diminished to a level of being non-existent. This affects the entire teaching and learning process and service delivery in organisations. This has led to valuable academics (approximately 60%) leaving the department of economic and management sciences of Technikon SA – moving to the UJ and industry, as well as academics taking early retirement. The university has implemented its processes in the technikon environment. Programmes are phased out due to a lack of lecturers. Service delivery is a matter of concern in HEI's as they have become much larger to handle and communication through the levels of hierarchy has become difficult. There seems to be an inequitable allocation of work within academic departments, thus causing further frustration.

It is important to acknowledge that universities do not exist in isolation. The most important stakeholders are industry, the government and civil society. Industry is the primary consumer of talent and technological innovation. The government provides a regulatory environment through which HEI's operate while are also funding HEI's. Civil society supports HEI's through students attending universities. Thus there should be a close collaboration between these stakeholders through a virtuous spiral of a sense of shared purpose. However, the dialogue between the state, industry and HEI's are patchy and uneven, thus characterized by a weak understanding of each other [14].

Talent is attracted and retained through appropriate incentives and rewards and this applies aptly to academia. The challenge of attracting and retaining the best academic talent is a national priority. There is grave concern about the working conditions and the issue of salaries of academics which should be debated nationally and even internationally. It is acknowledged that the remuneration level in academia has not kept pace with other sectors of society. Many academics have migrated to the private sector and sometimes overseas. If this attrition of academics continues because of poor working conditions and salaries, HEI's face another major challenge. Academia needs to reclaim its status as an attractive, esteemed, prestigious and rewarding career, so that the best talent could be retained [13].

The acknowledgement that universities do not exist in isolation is important as such institutions do not provide a service that is solely based on standards of delivery it may set or legally comply with as in the case of programme quality assurance. This is only an aspect of quality management that higher learning institutions need to consider. Another important aspect is of course the quality of the service rendered to the customer. It is important to differentiate between the customer and stakeholders relevant to higher learning institutions because in order to satisfy a customer they must firstly be clearly defined [10].

The customer of a higher learning institution is its learners and potential learners. The important stakeholders of higher learning institutions include industry, the government and civil society. Industry is the primary consumer of talent and technological innovation. The government provides a regulatory environment through which HEI's operate while are also funding HEI's. Civil society supports HEI's through students attending universities. Thus there should be a close collaboration between these stakeholders through a virtuous spiral of a sense of shared purpose. However, the communication between the state, industry and HEI's are not clear at this stage. This paper is based on the experiences of the researcher in higher education. The paper presents inherent concerns relevant to higher learning institutions that lead to the undermining of quality service delivery. Reference is made to a study conducted by the University of Johannesburg on first level student in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture [14].

In the discussion that follows, experiences regarding quality related problems from contact with students as well as the quality related concerns procedures and management at the university. There is ongoing research at the university into learner satisfaction regarding service delivery. This follows with a discussion on recommendations for improvement. Thereafter I return to my original aim in this paper where I discuss quality related problems and suggest an improvement approach where we need to return back to basics regarding quality service delivery.

VI. SUMMARY OF THE REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY RESEARCH AT THE UJ

There are currently plans to maintain research at the UJ into student satisfaction regarding service delivery quality. The initiative taken in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA) continued in 2009 with a survey of first year students in the Faculty. Preliminary findings regarding the experiences of first year students are discussed.

A. Programme

Firstly 73% of the respondents (380 respondents out of a total complement of 1260 – response rate 30%) felt that the programme they enrolled for met their expectations. The reasons given for the programme not meeting expectations were grouped as content and assessment (53%), workload (21%), lack of organisation of classes and assignments (13%) and various reasons (13%). These various reasons were cited as personal underestimation of the course workload. Most of the respondents (77%) indicated that they would recommend the programme they are enrolled for to others and even more (85%) indicated that they would recommend a FADA programme to others.

B. Administration

Respondents (67%) were of the opinion that the departmental secretary was helpful in the provision of information that was required.

C. Learning material

Most of the respondents (93%) received learning guides while only 38% thought that the guide was always useful. It is important to note that the 38% actually used the guide for learning purposes.

D. Contact with lecturers

Learners (50%) indicated that the process of consultation with lecturers was not adequate in that lecturers were unapproachable or that they had no time. Some learners indicated that due to transport issues they could not comply with the times given by lecturers as consulting hours. Learners also indicated that there are too many procedures to see the lecturer.

E. Feedback on assessment

Respondents (27%) indicated that they always received their assessment results within a reasonable time. It is important to note that the majority (73%) did not receive their assessment feedback on time and were disgruntled.

F. Student Portal

In this section the students were asked about the online student portal 1) how often they made use of it, and 2) whether they used the portal to obtain an examination timetable/financial statements and/or to make electronic payments.

About half of the respondents (52%) used the portal between 1 and 5 times. According to the respondents, the most popular use of the Student Portal is to obtain their financial statements (63%). Only 7% used the portal to access the examination timetable and 29% to make electronic payments.

G. UJ facilities

In this section the students were asked 1) how often they used the Design Café, the Library and the Con Cowan labs 2) about the improvements made to student parking, 3) how often they used other UJ facilities such as PsyCad, the clinic, SRC, Development Centre, and 4) how often they participated in activities of the Sports Bureau and the Arts and Culture.

Most of the respondents (66%) indicated that they visit the Design café on a regular basis, their attendance being an even spread between 1 and 5 times, between 5 and 10 times and more than 10 times a month. One third of the respondents indicated that they never go to the Design Café. Most of the respondents (68%) visited the library more than 10 times per month. Only 1 respondent never visited the library (Multimedia). Almost half of the respondents (47%) indicated that they never made use of the Con Cowan labs and 38% indicated that they use the labs less than 5 times per month. Less than 5% of the respondents indicated that they participated in activities with the UJ Sports Bureau. About 17% of the respondents indicated that they participated in the UJ Arts and Culture, most of them (12.5%) 5 times or less per month. Only 7% of the respondents indicated that they made use of PsyCad this year, most of them (5%) 5 times or less. Two thirds of the respondents thought that the improvements made to the parking area were not effective.

H. Profile for marketing purposes

In this section the students were asked about 1) the social networking applications they access, 2) the print media they read, 3) the online media they access, and 4) the radio stations they listen to.

More than half of the respondents (58%) indicated that they use a social networking application more than 10 times a month of which Facebook is the most popular application. Half of the respondents (50%) read printed publications 5 times or less in a month, the most popular print media is a tie

between Sunday Times and The Star. Most respondents did not interpret the question about the online media the student reads or listens to correctly and as a result the responses received had no bearing on the question asked.

Most of the respondents indicated that they read online publications, of which 42% of them between 1 and 5 times a month. The three most popular online “print media” listed by the respondents were Facebook, Google and Yahoo.

I. Conclusion

The summary of the results and the findings pertaining to the strengths as well as potential areas for improvement in 1) the customer service in a departmental level, 2) the customer service in on faculty level and 3) the success of the student portal, based on the results of this survey, are discussed below:

J. The programme

Most of the respondents felt that the programme they enrolled for met their expectations. The reasons given for the programme not meeting expectations evolved around the content and assessment of the programme, the workload and the lack of organisation of classes and assignments. Most of the respondents indicated that they would recommend the programme they are enrolled for to others (77%) and even more (85%) indicated that they would recommend the FADA programmes to others.

K. Departmental customer service

The role the departmental secretary plays in the customer service on departmental level can be considered to be a strength as most of the respondents were of the opinion that the departmental secretary is always helpful (73%) and always provides useful information (67%).

Most of the respondents received Learning Guides (93%). The presentation of the content or the content itself could possibly be revisited as most respondents did not find the Learning Guide to be useful at all times.

Although the consultation time offered by the Department seems to be popular (most of the respondents (73%) indicated that they did consult the lecturer/tutor outside lecture time) the outcome of the consultation was not always satisfactory to the student (only 44% were always satisfied with the outcome).

Only 27% of the respondents indicated they always received their assessment results within a reasonable time, less than half of the respondents (44%) indicated that they always received feedback on their assessments. The assessment process could be considered to be a possible area that could be improved on in future.

L. Faculty Administration/Marketing Office customer service

Most respondents did not deal with Faculty Administration or the Marketing Office after registration. Those that did indicated that the staff were always helpful and always provided useful information. About half of the

respondents (54%) indicated that they found the class representative/student forum to be an effective communication channel between them and Faculty staff/management. Half of the respondents (50%) indicated that they were aware of the procedure to be followed to enter the FADA building after hours, 40% of the respondents never accessed the building after hours. Possible areas of improvement, although it could not be perceived as weaknesses, rather a lack of awareness, could be the communication channel between students and management and the awareness of the procedure to enter the building after hours.

M. The Student Portal

The use of the Student Portal can be considered as a weakness (only half of the respondents indicated that they made use of it). The use of the portal could be improved in especially the areas of access to the examination timetable (7%) and electronic payments (29%).

N. Suggestions to improve the first-year experience at FADA

Possible areas for improvement derived from the comments/suggestions made by the respondents are:

- The availability of printing and photocopying facilities in FADA
- The availability of a card machine in FADA

O. Recommendations

In view of the need for greater public accountability in higher education and the promotion of quality in the Faculty, it is essential to conduct a survey of this nature on a regular basis.

The above results are indicative of the fact that inherent processes of service delivery do not yield a satisfied customer e.g. assessment feedback and learning material. In the discussion the focus is on the eight quality management principles suggested by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) adopted in its ISO 9000 series which is an internationally accepted and recognized quality management standard. Within this discussion I related how these principles are violated based on my experience.

VII. ADOPTING FUNDAMENTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

The ISO 9000 series is a well known quality management standard. The standard is based on eight quality management principles namely, customer focus, leadership, involvement of people, process approach, system approach to management, continual improvement, factual approach to decision making and mutually beneficial supplier relationships. A discussion on quality related problems in higher education based on experiences and the literature review within these fundamental principles. There is a provision of a brief description of these principles [11].

A. Customer focus

Organisations in general depend on their customers and therefore should understand current and future customer needs, meet customer requirements and strive to exceed customer expectations. This is done in order to increase customer loyalty which may lead to repeat business consequently resulting in increased revenue and market share. Application of this principle requires a strategic approach where the objectives of the organisation are linked to customer needs and expectations. This is currently not the case in higher learning institutions where service delivery is not strategically planned for. Other important implementation goals of this principle include measuring customer satisfaction by gaining regular feedback from customer and acting on the results. Customer satisfaction surveys are not regularly planned, budgeted for and implemented in higher learning institutions [4].

B. Leadership

Leaders establish unity of purpose and direction of the organisation. They create and maintain the internal environment in which people can become fully involved in achieving the organisation's objectives.

As a result people understand and are motivated towards the organisation's goals and objectives which include delivering quality services. In addition miscommunication that often leads to poor service delivery between levels of an organisation will be minimised. Application of this principle entails consideration of the needs of all interested parties including customers, owners, employees, suppliers, financiers, local communities and society as a whole. In addition the establishment of a clear vision of the organisation's future related to setting challenging goals and targets is critical. Creating and sustaining shared values, fairness and ethical role models at all levels of the organization, establishing trust and eliminating fear and inspiring, encouraging and recognising people's contributions are more challenging goals given the background of mergers of South African higher learning institutions [9].

C. Involvement of people

People at all levels in the organisation are the essence of an organisation and their full involvement enables their abilities to be used for the organisation's benefit. Lack of involvement leaves employees almost marginalized and omission of this principle may render even the best plans useless. Application of this principle makes people accountable for their own performance and allows for motivated, committed and involved people within the organisation who achieve goals set. Again given the dull climate brought on by mergers people are not freely sharing knowledge and experience or openly discussing problems and issues that arise that ultimately negatively impact on service delivery [12].

D. Process approach

A desired result is achieved more efficiently when activities and related resources are managed as a process. This may lower costs and shorter cycle times through effective use of resources, improved and consistent and predictable results. Systematically defining the activities necessary to obtain a desired result through process flow mapping and interfacing is not common practice at higher learning institutions. Critical activities such as analysing and measuring the capability of key activities, identifying the interfaces of key activities within and between the functions of the organisation and evaluating risks, consequences and impacts of activities on customers, suppliers and other interested parties are not incorporated into the strategic plans at higher learning institutions. As a result when poor quality services are delivered and when customers do complain it makes it difficult to identify the root causes of problems [13].

E. System approach to management

The process approach is important in building in service quality as mentioned above, however managing these interrelated processes as a system further contributes to the organisation's effectiveness and efficiency in achieving its objectives [16].

Higher learning institutions in South Africa often do not set specific targets regarding quality service delivery. In addition the lack of understanding regarding the roles and responsibilities necessary for achieving common objectives and targets have created silos institutions where cross-functional barriers need to be overcome through strong leadership.

F. Continual improvement

The philosophy behind this approach is that organisations that do not improve remain stagnant and are unable to adapt to changing conditions e.g. customer needs that is critical to sustainability of the business. Continual improvement of an organisational performance is best demonstrated once targets set, measurement processes are implemented and review of the system within which the service is delivered is done. It is only then that continual improvement of performance can be objectively ascertained. The establishment of goals to guide people and measures to track continual improvement is not adequate at higher learning institutions. Mergers again have created an environment that does not foster innovation which is critical to continual improvement [17].

G. Factual approach to decision making

Effective decisions are informed decisions that are based on the analysis of data and information. As discussed earlier because customer satisfaction surveys are not often conducted and as a result, decision concerning improving service delivery are based on gut feeling rather than fact at the expense of the customer [15].

H. Mutually beneficial supplier relationships

The philosophy behind this principle is that an organisation and its suppliers are interdependent and a mutually beneficial relationship enhances the ability of both to create value. In the business of higher education important relationships would be consider further up the supply chain and below. Should we premise the ultimate goal of higher learning institutions as providing an effective and efficient workforce, and if we are a segment that receives "raw material" of learners from schools processing them to meet industry needs, then one must look at quality related problems of the "raw material" and relate such problems back to the source where constraints observed in higher education may be overcome before learners enter into tertiary education. This is done to satisfy more than one stakeholder in education. It is common practice where higher learning institutions work independent of important stakeholders such as industry that may be overcome only through stronger leadership [18].

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The quality of higher education can be addressed in numerous ways. In this Paper, a handful of strategic interventions are discussed. In order to accomplish this, it is imperative that co-operation and collaboration between stakeholders be strengthened to achieve the desired results.

A. Leadership

The policies contemplated in the Green Paper on Higher Education Transformation as well as the three central features of these policies namely increased participation; greater responsiveness; and increased cooperation and partnerships must move out strategic plans into implementation. Addressing these transformational issues will foster an environment in which common values amongst people may be achieved and where an improvement in relation to organisational culture may be attained towards quality service delivery. The incorporation of service quality must feature in strategic plans and must be further implemented. Leaders should strive to ensure that the institution remains competitive and quality of services should not merely be measured in student numbers and the attainment of annual quotas.

B. Organisational culture

Higher learning institutions, much like government, has been stigmatized as being inefficient and ineffective where lecturers who "couldn't teach" and where the qualification of UOT graduates are seen as inferior to university graduates must change. This is a challenge in South Africa one that must be addressed in order to ensure higher learning institutions are effective and efficient.

C. Management commitment

Management in higher learning focus much time and effort regarding management of quality within educational programmes. Time and resources are spent ensuring that the quality of the learning programme is maintained. However little commitment is given to ensuring the quality of the service that goes hand in hand with the deliverance of the programme. It is almost assumed that a satisfied customer, namely the student, will automatically be satisfied as long as we ensure that all the checks and balances regarding qualification quality are maintained.

D. Customer focus

The primary customer namely the learner must be satisfied on two levels. The first level would entail the provision of a quality qualification that is accredited and recognized. On the second level the customer must be provided with a quality service that makes her experience with studying at a university pleasant enough to want to her to recommend the institution to others. Service delivery standards should be created, targets set and measurement processes initiated in order to manage service quality.

E. Communication

Communication is essential in order to deliver quality services. This is true regarding communication both internal and external to the institution. It is important to approach effective communication by formally planning mechanisms of communication with clear plans that are understood by all. Communication through all levels of management is critical to the success of any formal quality system. Commitment from top management must filter down to operation levels.

IX. CONCLUSION

The necessity to implement fundamental principles of quality management fosters an environment in which quality service delivery may be contemplated. It serves as an important pre-requisite without which quality endeavors may surely fail. Commitment to service quality must firstly be established through strategic planning thereafter the plans must be implemented where clear lines of responsibility and accountability need to be established.

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