A TOTAL QUALITY SERVICE FRAMEWORK FOR PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

by

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DECLARATION

Student number: 32142331

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis, "A total quality service framework for private higher education in South Africa", is my own work, and that all the sources I have used or cited have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Riaan Dirkse van Schalkwyk July 2018

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to develop an industry-specific total quality service framework (as a potential basis for an established total quality service model) for private higher education institutions in South Africa. The framework (as a tool) will contribute to the need to manage service quality of these institutions on a holistic and strategic basis. Service quality is a challenge for any enterprise, especially for those in the service industry. It is of particular concern for private higher education institutions and one of their key challenges due to the increasingly competitive, marketing-oriented and highly regulated environment. In this environment, these institutions have to function, survive and compete, not only with one another, but also with public institutions of higher education. Competition is on the increase, and private higher education institutions need to find new ways to compete if they wish to survive in this dynamic service industry environment. The offering of excellent service quality could add to the long-term sustainability of private institutions and it could therefore also be the differentiating factor for success.

The literature review for this study suggested that service quality can only be improved by identifying industry-specific service quality dimensions as a basis for the development of industry-specific frameworks and models. Using a mixed methods research approach (exploratory sequential mixed methods research design), this research was conducted on six private higher education institutes with 13 sites of delivery. Stage 1 of the study consisted of the qualitative exploration of total quality service dimensions from a top management perspective by means of semi-structured in-depth interviews following a conversational mode. A thematic analysis approach was applied during the data analysis. The validity and reliability of the data were tested via different strategies of trustworthiness. The instrument development stage was added as an intermediate stage of the research study. The developed instrument was informed and complemented by literature as well as the qualitative findings. Stage 2 of the research study consisted of the quantitative exploration of the importance of total quality service dimensions from the perspective of the internal (lecturers) and external (students) customers. The questionnaire was distributed via e-mail to all specified students and lecturers of selected private higher education institutions in the sampling frame. Data analysis included an exploratory factor analysis approach, which was followed by a confirmatory factor analysis. A conceptual

measurement model was presented consisting of five 26 dimensions (variables) represented by five primary constructs. Both the internal and composite reliability scores were strong and the confirmatory factor analysis yielded a model with good fit. The modified conceptual model demonstrated evidence of unidimensionality and construct validity. The final step in the data analysis process represented thematic analysis of responses to the only open-ended question in the questionnaire, which yielded additional service quality dimensions.

The application of the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design thus culminated in the final total quality service framework, which consists of selected top management perspectives (qualitative stage), the conceptual measurement model (quantitative stage) and the additional service quality dimensions identified from the open-ended question analysis. The current study was a pioneering effort that bridged a significant gap with the development of the first total quality service framework for private higher education institutions in South Africa. The framework provides the first building blocks towards a comprehensive total quality service model for measuring, managing and continuous improvement of total quality service in private higher education in South Africa.

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DEDICATION

To my Lord and Saviour, all the honour and glory

To my wife, Elouise, for all her love, support and encouragement

To my children, Hein and Elri, for their love

To my parents, for their support

To the late Dr C Freysen, for his encouragement and contribution to private higher education in South Africa

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

LIST OF TABLES

PAGE

LIST OF FIGURES

PAGE

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGFI	-	adjusted goodness-of-fit index
ANSI	-	American National Standards Institute
ASQ	-	American Society for Quality
AU	-	African Union
AVE	-	average variance extracted
C.R.	-	critical ratio
CCC	-	customer-centred culture
CEO	-	chief executive officer
CFA	-	confirmatory factor analysis
CFI	-	comparative fit index
CHE	-	Council on Higher Education
CMIN/Df	-	normed chi-square
CR	-	composite reliability
DHET	-	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	-	Department of Education
EAE	-	engagement and employability
EFA	-	exploratory factor analysis
EPU	-	Education Policy Unit
FAF	-	faculty and facilities
FMEA	-	failure mode and effects analysis
FRaIM	-	Frameworks for Integrated Methodology
GDP	-	gross domestic product
GFI	-	goodness-of-fit index
GOF	-	goodness-of-fit
HE	-	higher education
HEIs	-	higher education institutions
HEQC	-	Higher Education Quality Committee
HEQSF	-	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
HSRC	-	Human Sciences Research Council
HWI	-	historically white institutions
ICT	-	information and communication technologies
IEASA	-	International Education Association of South Africa
IFI	-	incremental fit index

IGAD	-	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IT	-	information technology
JSE	-	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
KMO	-	Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin
MBA	-	Master in Business Administration
NCHE	-	National Commission on Higher Education
NDP	-	National Development Plan
NFI	-	normed fit index
NQF	-	National Qualifications Framework
NRF	-	National Research Foundation
PCLOSE	-	p-value of close fit
PHE	-	private higher education
PHEIG	-	private higher education interest group
PHEIs	-	private higher education institutions
PHEQA	-	private higher education quality association
PPPs	-	public–private partnerships
RFA	-	research focus and association
RFI	-	relative fit index
RMR	-	root-mean-square residual index
RMSEA	-	root-mean-square error of approximation
SADC	-	Southern African Development Community
SAQA	-	South African Qualifications Authority
SCQM	-	supply chain quality management
SLO	-	reputational service leadership and operations excellence
SLR	-	systematic literature review
SPC	-	statistical process control
TLI	-	Tucker–Lewis index
TQ	-	total quality
TQC	-	total quality control
TQM	-	total quality management
TQS	-	total quality service
TVET	-	Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutes
Unisa	-	University of South Africa
UoA	-	University of Africa

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION – OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT PLAN

"Identifying the underlying dimensions of service quality is the first step in the definition and provision of quality service and instilling of a customer-service culture" (Choudhury, 2015:208).

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter presents an overview of the research project. The first section provides the background to the study and offers a summary of the general importance of service quality. The focus then shifts to the importance of service quality in higher education (HE) and private higher education (PHE). Attention is also given to the monumental challenge in the measurement of service quality and the importance of the development of industry-specific service quality frameworks and models. Moreover, the research gap is identified and the problem statement, research objectives and the research framework are provided. From there, the research approach and design (specifically the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design), delimitations and research ethics are discussed. The chapter concludes with a detailed summative illustration and presentation of the project plan, process and the chapter outline of the research study, followed by the chapter conclusion.

Figure 1.1 offers a diagrammatic depiction of the structure of Chapter 1.

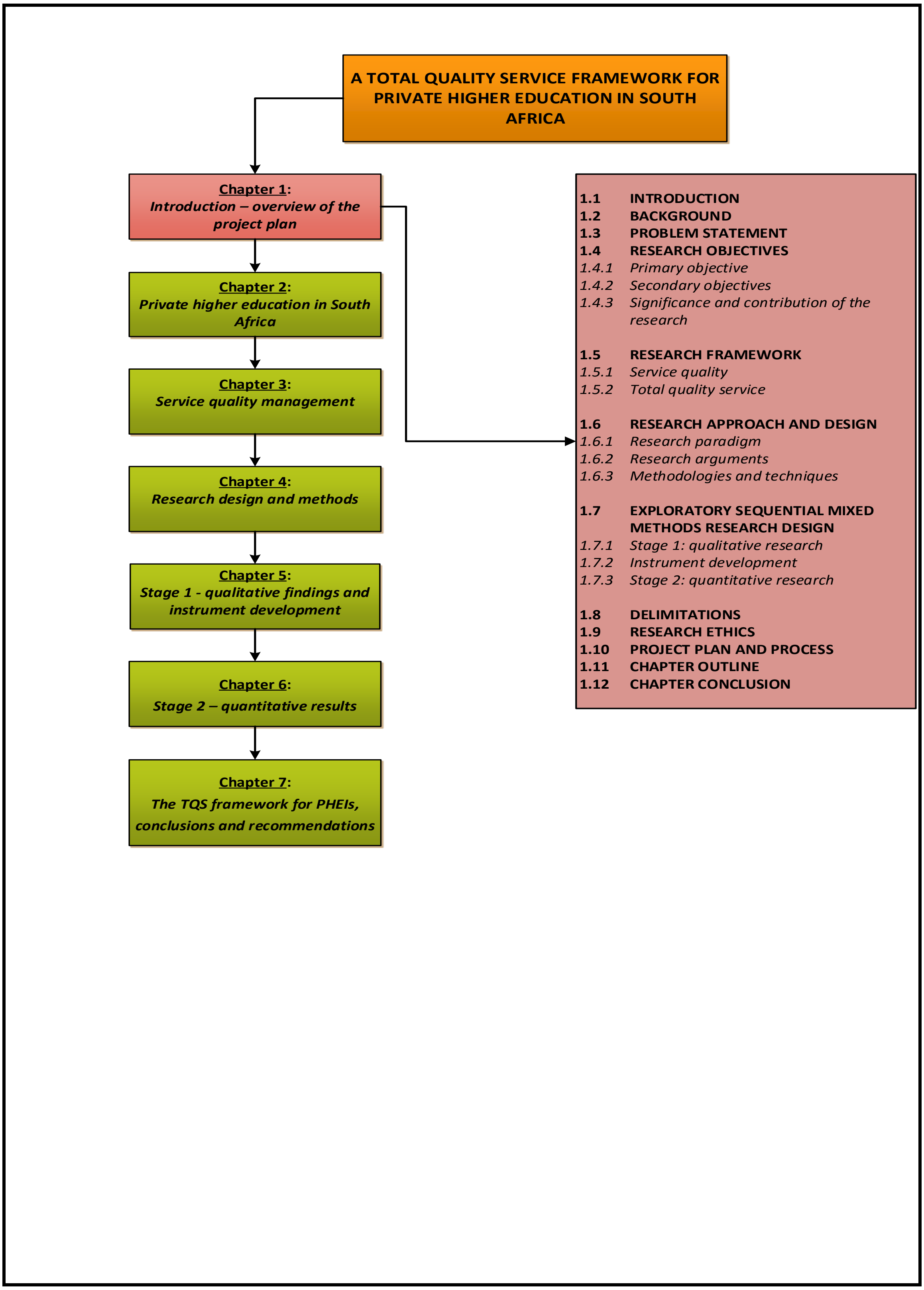

Figure 1.1: Layout of Chapter 1

Source: Author's own compilation

1.2 BACKGROUND

In decades to come, the service economy will be the largest contributor to the global gross domestic product (GDP).

> Higher education is the fastest growing service industry on the globe which needs appropriate methods and strategies to meet the current students' needs, keep them happy, and attract more recruitments. Recent research emphasizes how to improve service quality for student satisfaction, however, there is still no consensus on how best to measure and manage quality in higher education institutions (Hussain & Birol, 2011:95).

Improved service quality could lead to customer loyalty (Mantey & Naidoo, 2017). Supporting this, Sun and Pang (2017) assert that the importance of service quality has been widely acknowledged in various industries. Not only is service quality a key driver for competitiveness and improved market positioning; it is also one of the most valuable assets of a company, and lays the foundation for customer loyalty. The service sector plays an increasingly important role in the economic growth of both developed and developing countries. As the number of service organisations increase, customers become more demanding resulting in pressure on these organisations to ensure service quality in order to remain competitive (Alzaydi, Al-Hajla, Nguyen & Jayawardhena, 2018). In addition, service quality contributes to market share and returns on investments, maintaining a competitive advantage, improved profitability, cost reduction business success, and it is also a core business strategy for survival (Akdere, Top & Tekingündüz, 2018; Chen, Chen & Su, 2018; Monica & Ramanaiah, 2018; Pai, Yeh & Tang, 2018).

Dale, Bamford and Van der Wiele (2016) argue that the measurement of service quality has also been the focus of various research studies and debate over the last 20 years. Many of these studies have used the SERVQUAL (or similar) instruments to assess the dimensions of service quality. The SERVQUAL instrument and related methodologies have been the objects of criticism and debate relating to the applicability of 'generic' instruments in all industries. Areas of concern raised were related to conceptual, operational and interpretative issues. One of the main concerns (criticisms) of generic instruments were the fact that service quality is multidimensional and that these instruments cannot be applicable to all service industries and situations. More recent research also suggests that culture can have a major influence on the dimensionality of service quality. There is thus a considerable challenge to refine and improve the methods used to identify and measure appropriate service quality dimensions in various industries. Lee and Severt (2018) agree by declaring that even though there seems to be consensus among researchers that service quality differs among different settings and target populations, there is no agreement on the nature of the dimensions or how it should be measured. Various industries have different standards and it is important to measure industry-specific service quality dimensions in order to customise the service offering for specific markets.

HE is considered as part of the bigger service industry due to its inclination towards customer (student) service in an ever-increasing competitive environment. Each service industry is unique with its own unique dimensions and it is crucial to develop industry-specific frameworks and models to fit each unique context (Mokoena & Dhurup, 2017). This notion is supported by Menon (2015) who proposes that competition in HE is increasing in public, private and online providers. The focus on improving of quality services is becoming an important issue for providers of HE. These providers should consider themselves as profit-orientated organisations operating in a highly competitive environment continuously looking for ways to obtain competitive advantages.

HE institutions have begun to adapt corporate management approaches in the provision of their educational services. Operations management and production quality principles have entered the sphere of HE in relation to the delivery of quality services (Giannakis & Bullivant, 2016). This is even more so for PHEIs because these institutions are faced with additional financial difficulties compared to their public counterparts. They do not have the benefit of receiving government subsidy and have to find alternative ways of obtaining funds, mainly through student fees (Hashim & Mahmood, 2011).

According to Teeroovengadum, Kamalanabhan and Seebaluck (2016), the most important issue in the development of a service quality framework is the identification of appropriate service quality dimensions. In addition, Subrahmanyam (2017) argues that although many studies have identified the importance of service quality, there is still no consensus on what constitutes service quality in HE and what the best way of measuring it is due to its unique characteristics and dimensions. In addition, Subrahmanyam (2017) agrees with Teeroovengadum *et al.* (2016) by reiterating that the application of generic frameworks and models of service quality have been criticised in terms of their applicability across different industries.

In summary, the HE landscape is dynamic and becoming increasingly competitive where HEIs need to constantly improve the service quality offerings (Bhuian, 2016). Factors contributing to this include the internationalisation of HE, decrease of state funding as well as the increase in the number of PHEIs. It is thus crucial for HEIs, to constantly measure and improve their level of service quality offered to their students (customers). However, it remains a major challenge in HE to develop a framework or model to measure and improve service quality. Many previous studies opted for the conventional SERVQUAL model while others went a step further attempting to identify service quality from a student perspective only (Teeroovengadum *et al.*, 2016). It can be argued that very few previous studies have followed a holistic approach in an attempt to develop service quality models.

The future of PHE in South Africa will largely depend on strategic priorities such as the quality of service rendered to the customers or students. A gap currently exists as there are no industry-specific frameworks for service quality in South African PHEIs, which therefore presents a research opportunity. This study consequently sought to bridge this gap by following a holistic approach in the development of a total quality service (TQS) framework from a top management, internal customer (lecturer) and external customer (student) perspective; thus, seeking to make a useful contribution in the quest for a comprehensive TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Service quality is a challenge for any enterprise, but it is of particular concern for PHEIs and one of their key challenges due to the increasingly competitive, marketing-oriented and highly regulated environment. In this environment, these institutions have to function, survive and compete, not only with one another, but also with public institutions of HE; hence, the problem – competition is on the increase and PHEIs need to find new ways to compete if they wish to survive in this dynamic service industry environment. Further to this, PHEIs focus on service quality at a strategic level but not necessarily on structure or a service quality management system. As a result, the problem is the lack of a scientifically sound and holistic system to manage, improve and maintain service quality by means of a broad TQS framework. The need to develop a TQS framework for implementation and application could therefore be the differentiating factor for success.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Attempting to identify TQS dimensions in PHE is an important topic for both academics and top management. Literature regarding the above-mentioned is not conclusive and there is currently no agreement among researchers on what constitutes service quality in PHE. This research study created a framework depicting the dimensions determining TQS in PHE in South Africa.

1.4.1 Primary objective

The primary purpose of this study was to address the problem regarding service quality in PHE by developing an industry-specific TQS framework (as a potential basis for an established TQS model) for PHEIs in South Africa. The framework (as a tool) will contribute to the need to manage service quality of PHEIs on a holistic and strategic basis.

1.4.2 Secondary objectives

The following secondary objectives were formulated in support of the primary objective:

- to provide a conceptual analysis of TQS within the context of organisational theory;
- to identify broad TQS dimensions based on a literature study to be incorporated in a conceptual framework for TQS in PHEIs in South Africa;
- to analyse PHEI stakeholders' perceptions of service quality and service quality dimensions;
- to make a significant contribution to PHE literature and sustainability in South Africa; and
- to make a significant contribution to service quality for all stakeholders of PHEIs.

1.4.3 Significance and contribution of the research

With regard to the primary and secondary objectives, the significance of this research study is fivefold. **Firstly**, the research foresaw filling the areas that have not been addressed by literature. As such, this research study was a pioneering effort in the development of a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa. **Secondly**, the research will add to the current paucity of literature on PHE in South Africa. To date, the PHE sector has received little attention nationally. Bezuidenhout and De Jager (2014) confirm the notion of a very limited body of knowledge regarding PHEIs in South Africa. Dirkse van Schalkwyk and Steenkamp (2014a) support the statement by Bezuidenhout and De Jager (2014) and declare that research on PHEIs in South Africa is extremely limited. **Thirdly**, while previous studies on service quality mainly focussed on the perception of the external customer, this research study provided a holistic and integrated analysis of service quality from the perspective of the internal customer, external customer and top management. **Fourthly**, this research identified unique dimensions of service quality in the organisational context of PHE in South Africa. **Finally**, the entire study with the TQS framework at the core will contribute to service quality and the eventual sustainability of PHEIs.

Note: when this research study was conceptualised, no previous research existed with a focus on TQS dimensions of PHEIs in South Africa.

1.5 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The research was conducted within the domain of service quality, TQS and PHE. The following two sections briefly epitomise the definitions of service quality and TQS that were formulated for this study. Detailed explanations of how these definitions were derived are provided in Chapter 3 (sections 3.3.1 and 3.4.1).

1.5.1 Service quality

For the purpose of this study, service quality in PHE was defined as:

> [M]eeting and exceeding students' expectations and perceptions by constantly rendering a reliable service that conforms to pre-determined requirements for which the student is willing to pay, resulting in tangible and intangible benefits.

1.5.2 Total quality service

In the current study, the researcher formulated this definition of TQS:

> [A] holistic comprehensive methodology that incorporates TQM principles for improving service quality, achieving internal and external customer satisfaction and exceeding customer expectations. It is also a service strategy and system that takes a holistic approach by fostering total commitment towards improvement that could lead to the achievement of financial goals, increased market share as well as the creation of a viable competitive advantage.

1.6 RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), a research design offers the structure or plan used to collect and analyse data. In addition, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) assert that the research design is the general plan for the research. It contains clear objectives, identifies the sources from which data will be collected, and explains the research constraints and ethical issues. The selection of the research approach and design was guided by the research objectives and philosophical foundation of this study.

1.6.1 Research paradigm

The broad approach, frame of reference and body of thought are fundamental to the research process followed. According to Ponterotto (2005) and Saunders *et al*. (2016), 'research philosophy' and 'research paradigm' are broad terms referring to a view on the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge. This study was grounded within the pragmatic philosophical assumption or research paradigm. Pragmatism as a worldview is concerned with applications and solutions to problems. It is angled toward 'what works'. Multiple methods or pluralistic approaches are often highly possible and appropriate within one study, and one single point of view can never give the entire picture as multiple realities may exist (Creswell, 2014; Saunders *et al*., 2016). The researcher emphasises the problem and uses all available approaches to understand the problem, thus supporting the mixed method approach adopted in this study (see section 1.6.3).

1.6.2 Research argument

A deductive process was followed in this study, which is “a form of argument that purports to be conclusive – the conclusion must necessarily flow from the reasons given. These reasons are said to imply the conclusion and represent a proof” (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:66). In the deductive approach, literature is used to identify ideas or theories that will be tested by means of data (Saunders *et al*., 2016). Following this, a theoretical framework can be developed and tested with data.

1.6.3 Methodologies and techniques

In line with the pragmatic paradigm, a mixed methods research approach was selected for this study, adopting a highly structured approach using qualitative and quantitative methods. This involved collecting, analysing and interpreting both qualitative and quantitative data and espousing conclusions from the data. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) argue that a mixed methods research approach might produce a more significant contribution to the field of research than a limited investigation could possibly do. Moreover, Saunders *et al*. (2016) mention that the use of mixed methods could enhance the credibility of a study and produce more complete knowledge thus leading to greater confidence in the conclusions. There are numerous ways in which quantitative and qualitative methods can be combined. The exploratory sequential mixed methods research design was applied in this study and will be elaborated on in the next section.

1.7 EXPLORATORY SEQUENTIAL MIXED METHODS RESEARCH DESIGN

As indicated in the previous section, the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design was selected for this study. A two-stage approach was followed. Stage 1 consisted of a qualitative approach, followed by Stage 2, which encompassed the quantitative stage. The first qualitative stage informed or directed the following quantitative stage.

1.7.1 Stage 1: qualitative research

The first stage of the study comprised a qualitative exploration of TQS dimensions for PHEIs in South Africa from a top management perspective. The goal of this stage was to generate critical TQS dimensions to inform and contribute to the development of a quantitative instrument to be applied in Stage 2 of the research process. The target population consisted of six prominent PHEIs with 13 campuses or PHEI sites. From this population, a non-probability, homogeneous, purposive sample was drawn consisting of 15 top managers or principals. Data were collected by means of semi-structured in-depth interviews following a conversational mode and a thematic analysis approach applied in the data analysis. The validity and reliability of the data were tested via different strategies of trustworthiness.

1.7.1.1 Instrument development

The instrument development stage was added as an intermediate stage of the research study. The developed instrument was informed and complemented by literature (Chapter 3) as well as the qualitative findings as explained in Chapter 4 (section 4.7). The instrument development process encompassed combining TQS and service quality dimensions identified in literature with the identified dimensions from the 15 qualitative interviews. The final instrument (questionnaire) consisted of 37 dimensions (items or constructs) where respondents had to indicate the importance of these dimensions in terms of measuring, managing and improvement of service quality on a continuous basis as part of a TQS framework (see Appendix F).

1.7.3 Stage 2: quantitative research

The second stage of the research study consisted of a quantitative exploration of the importance of TQS dimensions from the perspective of the internal customers (lecturers) and external customers (students). This stage included recruiting a larger sample of different participants than for the qualitative strand in Stage 1. The goal was to identify TQS dimensions to be incorporated into the holistic TQS framework. The questionnaires were distributed via e-mail to all specified students and lecturers of selected PHEIs in the sampling frame. The specified respondents (i.e. the sampling frame) consisted of students (second year and beyond) and lecturers (employed by the PHEI for more than one year). Data analysis included an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) approach. This was followed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in order to assess and inform the underlying structure of the set of variables, as obtained from the EFA. The tests to validate the results included the achievement of unidimensionality and construct validity.

Figure 1.2 (which is also presented in Chapter 4) provides a visual presentation (summary) of the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design utilised in the development of the TQS framework. A detailed description of this process is provided in Chapter 4.

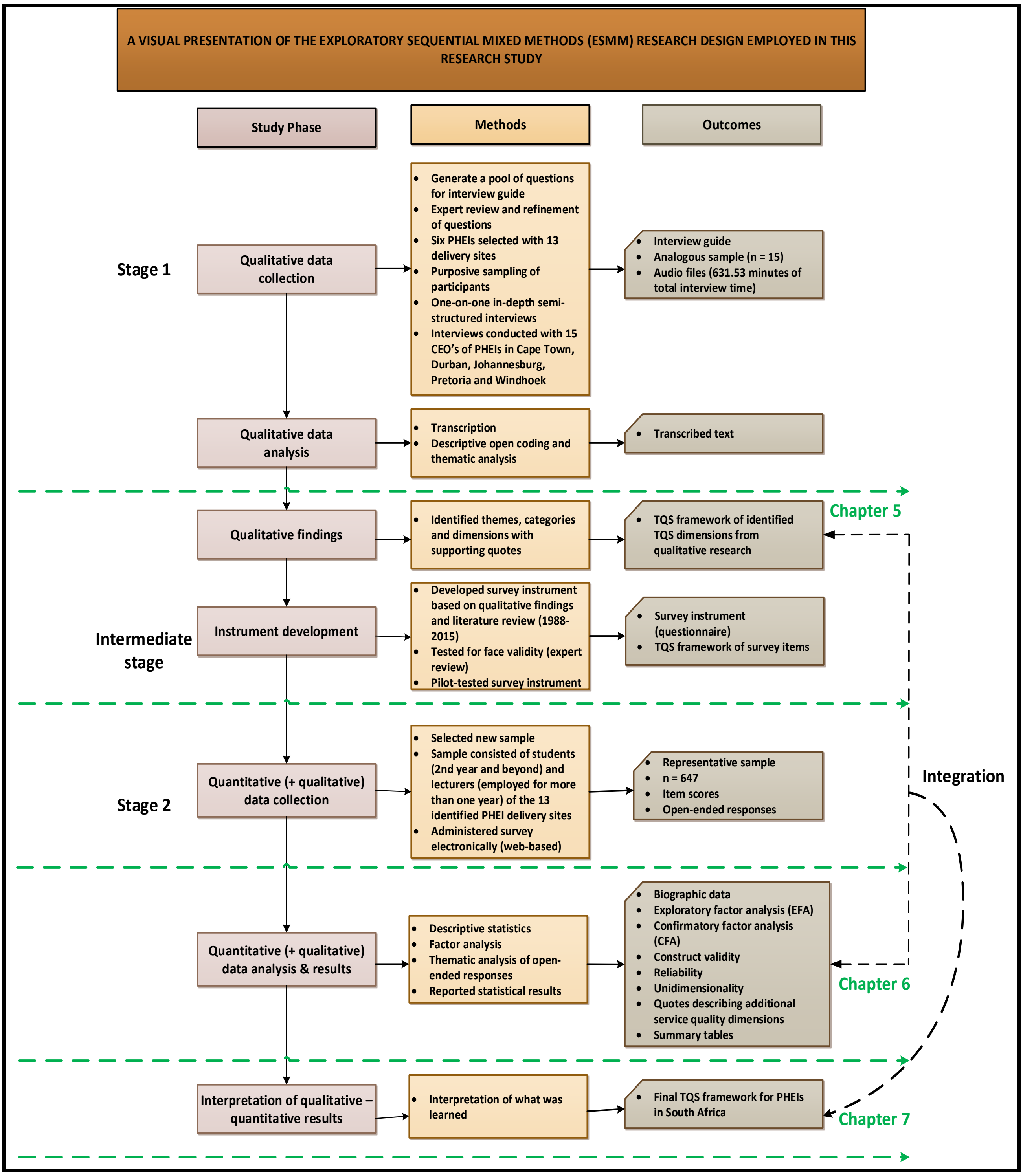

Figure 1.2: A visual presentation of the research process

Source: Author's compilation

In the sections that follow, the delimitations of the study, the research ethics and the project plan and process will be addressed.

1.8 DELIMITATIONS

Leedy and Ormrod (2015) argue that delimitations reflect that what the researcher did not do or did not plan to do. The core focus of this research study was to develop a TQS framework for PHE in South Africa. Respondents included top management, lecturers and students. Other stakeholders, such as parents, industry and administrative workers, did not from part of the sampling frame. Public institutions were also excluded from the study.

In addition, despite the fact that this was a lengthy research project, the data were obtained in a relatively short period and represented a ‘snapshot’ as opposed to a trend. Consequently, only the ‘depth’ (not the ‘width’) of the data was examined. Further details on the delimitations of this study are provided in Chapter 4.

1.9 RESEARCH ETHICS

Integrity and sound ethical conduct were integral to this project. Research ethics, according to Saunders *et al*. (2016:726), can be defined as “the standards of the researcher’s behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of the research project, or who are affected by it”. Ethical compliance was regarded with the utmost importance in this research study. With the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design, ethical issues had to be considered for both the qualitative and qualitative stages of the research study. Therefore, permission and ethical clearance to conduct the research were granted by Unisa’s College of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) declare that most ethical issues in research fall into one of the following four categories: protection from harm, voluntary and informed participation, the right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues. Every effort was made to adhere to the above four categories during the duration of this research study.

More information regarding the ethics of this research study is presented in Chapter 4 (section 4.12).

1.10 PROJECT PLAN AND PROCESS

The project plan for this research study included a five-step process for the development of a TQS framework for PHE in South Africa. The five steps involved a two-stage mixed methods (Stage 1 qualitative and Stage 2 quantitative) research approach. The TQS framework evolved from an initial literature review (TQS framework version one) to the final TQS framework (TQS framework version four).

The first version of the TQS framework was based on an intensive literature study spanning the time period 1988–2015 (Chapter 3). Version two of the framework encompassed the qualitative findings (Stage 1 presented in Chapter 5). From there, the third version was based on a combination of versions one and two, which represented the construction of the quantitative questionnaire of Stage 2 (see Chapter 5). Based on the results of Stage 2 (see Chapter 6), the final proposed TQS framework is presented in Chapter 7 of this thesis. The final framework also included the 'voice' of top management as well as the 'voice' of the internal and external customers as additional components to the framework. Figure 1.3 below depicts the project plan and the five-step developmental process of the TQS framework.

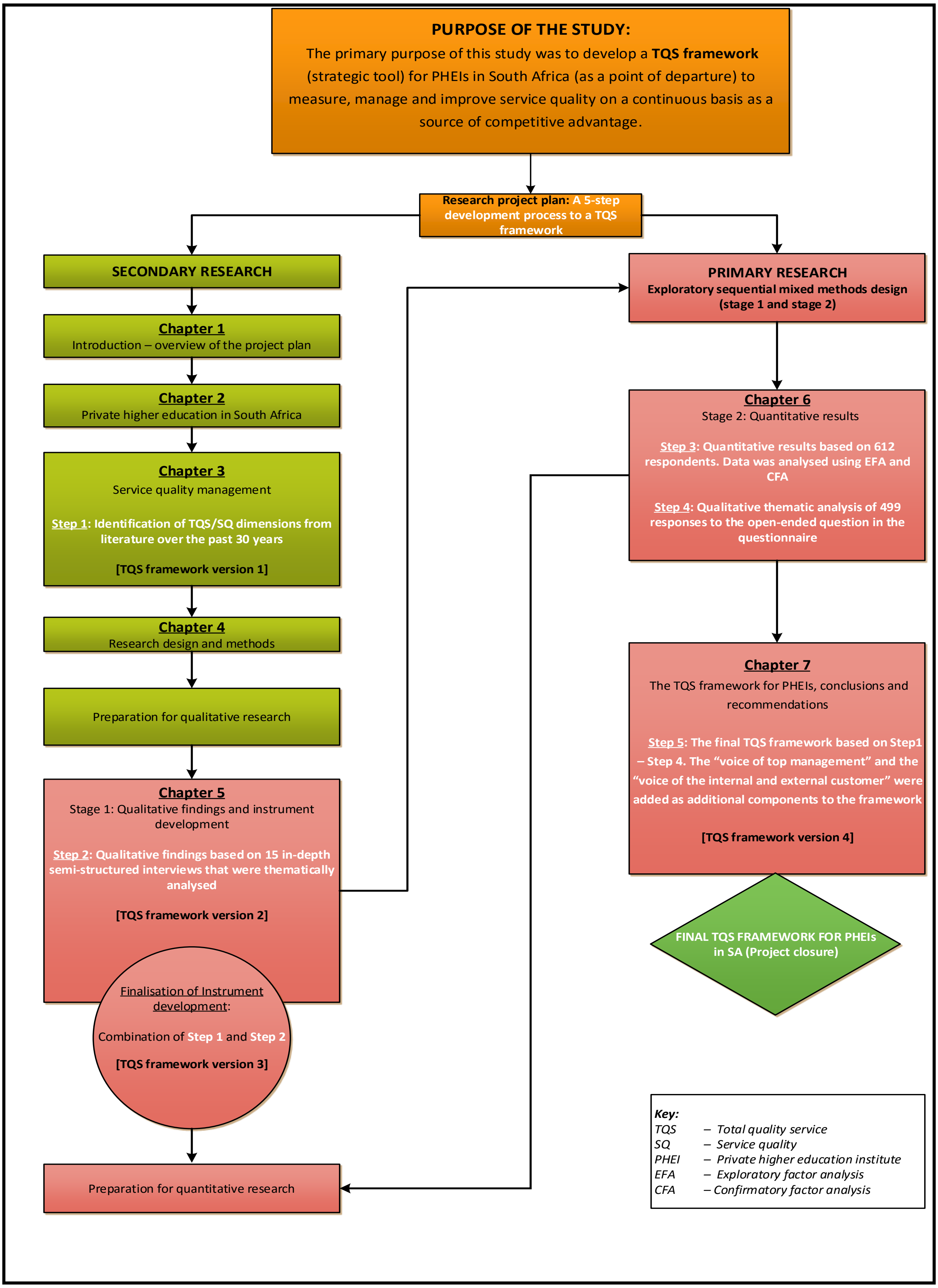

Figure 1.3: Project plan and process

Source: Author's compilation

1.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The chapter outline for this research project is as follows:

Chapter 1 provided a brief overview and background of the research study. It outlined the problem statement, research objectives as well as the significance and contribution of the research. It also described the research framework and design. Delimitations, research ethics and the project plan and process were also provided.

Chapter 2 and 3 highlight the theoretical and empirical literature applicable to the research study. Chapter 2 reviews the PHE environment in South Africa. PHE practices in other countries are also considered and compared to the practices in South Africa. The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive background to the research problem.

Chapter 3 offers the theoretical background to the study in terms of a literature review on quality, service quality and TQS. Quality management terminology and concepts related to service quality are discussed. The chapter continues with a focus shift to service quality and TQS, its meaning and importance as well as the identification of various dimensions spanning a worldwide literature study over the last 27 years. The chapter concludes with a presentation of a proposed theoretical TQS framework.

In Chapter 4, the research design and methods are explained. The focus is on the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design with dedicated attention to the two stages (qualitative Stage 1 and quantitative Stage 2) by focussing on the sampling procedure, data collection, data analysis and the validity and reliability of the data for each stage. The chapter concludes with a discussion of research ethics.

The purpose of Chapter 5 is to explain Stage 1 of the research study, namely the identification of TQS dimensions from a PHEI top management perspective for the development of a TQS framework. Rich descriptions, substantiated by verbatim quotes, are provided and thematically analysed to derive at the identified dimensions. The final instrument development process is also elucidated by means of a joint data display.

Chapter 6 represents the results of Stage 2 of the research study. The first part of the chapter reports on the biographic and demographic data of the respondents. The second part focusses on the analyses of the quantitative data through EFA followed by CFA process. The chapter concludes with the thematic analysis of the open-ended question in section C of the questionnaire.

Chapter 7 provides a concluding overview on the research project in terms of the integration and discussion of results. The findings in Chapter 7 are discussed in relation to the research problem and objectives, and the final proposed TQS framework for

PHEIs in South Africa (project closure) is presented. The chapter concludes with the contribution of the study and makes recommendations for future research.

1.12 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an overview of the study including the background, research objectives and reference to the research framework. It further offered an analysis of the research approach and design, delimitations, research ethics as well as a presentation on the project plan and process. The foundation of the study was laid through a review of the importance of service quality as a competitive weapon for the sustainability and survival of PHEIs in a dynamic service industry environment.

The study aimed not only to explore TQS dimensions of PHE in South Africa, but also to develop a TQS framework to contribute to the need to manage service quality of PHEIs on a holistic and strategic basis. An exploratory sequential mixed methods research design was followed to achieve the primary objective in an attempt to make a contribution to service quality improvement and the eventual sustainability of PHEIs. It was concluded that this study comprised a pioneering effort in the development of a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

Building on this, the next chapter provides a literature review on HE and PHE in the South African context.

CHAPTER 2

PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

"The future of the university depends on the quality, commitment, and stability of its leadership" (Altbach, 2011:7).

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 indicated that the primary objective of this study was to develop a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa. The purpose of the framework will be to serve as a point of departure for PHEIs to measure, manage and improve TQS on a continuous basis as a source of competitive advantage.

In support of this objective, the purpose of this chapter is threefold:

- to introduce the HE environment in South Africa;
- to present a brief report on PHE in selected countries; and
- to provide an overview of the PHE environment in South Africa, past and present, as the background to this study.

Since this chapter provides the context for this study, it should be noted that only an overview of the PHE environment is provided so as not to deviate from the main purpose of the study. The main themes of this chapter are depicted in Figure 2.1 below.

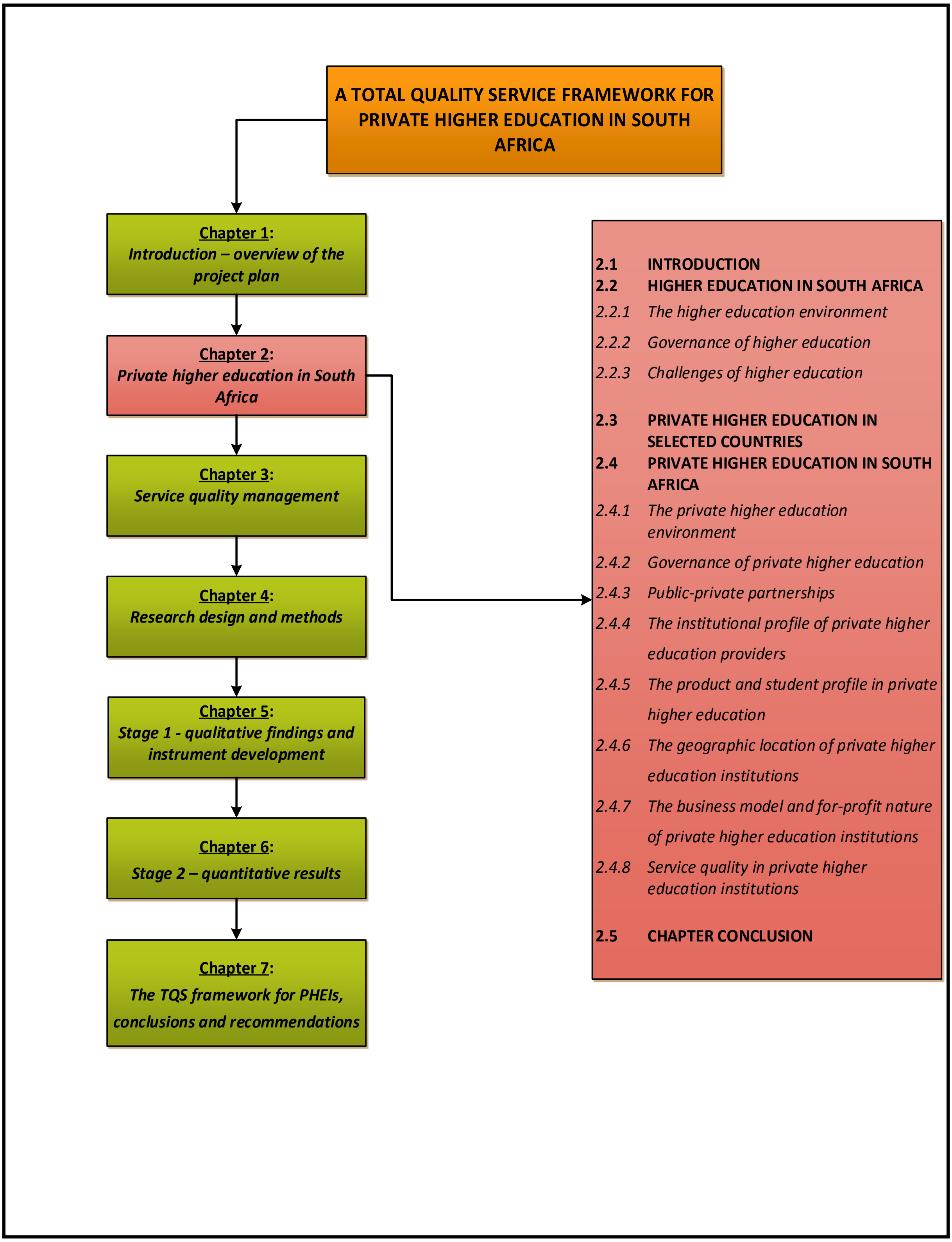

Figure 2.1: Layout of Chapter 2

Source: Author's own compilation

2.2 HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

This section will focus on the HE environment, HE governance and the challenges of HE within the South African context.

2.2.1 The higher education environment

In 2015, the public HE environment in South Africa consisted of 26 public institutions in South Africa (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2017b). These institutions comprised 11 universities, nine comprehensive universities and six universities of technology with a total student population of 985 212 students. This represented 87% of the total HE student population in the country (the remaining 13% represented PHE student registrations). The enrolment in public HE increased from 2014 to 2015 by 16 000 students. The majority of students (604 480) were enrolled in contact-mode learning, while 379 732 students were registered for distance learning (DHET, 2017b).

The problem statement in Chapter 1 stipulated that PHE is increasingly competitive, marketing-oriented and highly regulated. These institutions have to function, survive and compete in this dynamic environment. Hay and Monnapula-Mapesela (2009) argue that this is also true of public HE, and they appeal to modern-day universities to become more service-oriented and efficient to ensure their sustainability. Fourie (2009) adds that academic leaders are compelled to become more entrepreneurial due to the competition between universities for students, development contracts and research grants. Thian, Alam and Idris (2016) concur with these sentiments and report that HEIs must behave like companies and they increasingly have to adopt practices, such as accountability and efficiency, which until recently, were only evident in private corporations.

According to Levy (2002), commercial PHE, much like other organisations, is business-oriented. However, Fourie (2009) identifies the following three characteristics that differentiate universities from other organisations:

- The missions and goals of universities are often vague and, although they are traditionally non-profit organisations, they are forced to become more entrepreneurial.
- Universities are systems that are joined loosely with different divisions, with weak links between them and with the larger organisation.

- Universities are sometimes referred to as ‘professional bureaucracies’ where senior academics are independent to a certain extent and quite often have a stronger commitment to their field of study than to the university.

Hay and Monnapula-Mapesela (2009) further stipulate that universities are mainly dependent on government subsidies as their primary stream of income and are involved in a variety of social and economic activities.

As can be seen from the above, the contemporary HE environment is characterised by unique features and challenges.

2.2.2 Governance of higher education

After the ending of apartheid and South Africa’s first democratic election in 1994, policy development in South African HE commenced with the appointment of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE). The main purpose of the NCHE was to create a policy for the transformation of South Africa’s HE sector. This process eventually led to the proclamation of the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997).

The principal recommendations made by the NCHE in its attempt to transform the system, were as follows (Hay & Monnapula-Mapesela, 2009:13):

- an expansion of student enrolment and broader access to reach a wider distribution of social groups and classes, including adult learners;
- greater responsiveness to societal needs and interests;
- increased cooperation and partnership in structures of governance, both at system and institutional level;
- an HE system designed, planned, managed and funded as a single coordination system comprising universities, technikons and colleges;
- alignment of qualifications with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) allowing adequate channels, flexible entry and exit points, and horizontal and vertical mobility;
- a strategic public funding framework, taking into account the number of students in different fields and levels of study, and addressing the special needs of institutions, such as equity, redress and research infrastructure;
- the establishment of an HE quality committee responsible for programme accreditation, institutional auditing and quality promotion; and
- distance education and resource-based learning.

HE in South Africa is highly regulated, and almost all plans formulated and decisions made are according to set policies. Several years into the transformation of the HE process, Hay and Monnapula-Mapesela (2009) indicate that a number of challenges still exist in South African HE regarding policy analysis, such as misunderstandings regarding the value of policy as well as the denial of some stakeholders to make hard choices in the progressive implementation of transformation. The potential advantages of sound policy practices and good governance are counteracted in instances where there are a misdirection of funds, resistance to policy and poor policy planning.

Regulatory measures by government have increased over the last ten years. These measures include holding academics more accountable for the quality and accreditation of programmes, the improvement of curricula and the restructuring of the academic system (Botha, 2009). All HE programmes must be registered with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), accredited by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) and approved by the Department of Education (DoE) (Botha, 2009).

2.2.3 Challenges of higher education

Since the 1990s, HE worldwide has experienced intense changes. These include a prominent focus on efficient and effective management, an increase in the size and diversity of the student population, a greater demand for quality by all stakeholders in HE, and an increased focus on research output and teaching (Koen & Bester, 2009). The worldwide massification and privatisation of HE have also increased the challenges for HE. The increased cost per student, more competition, and a decrease in student funding have contributed to these challenges (Thian *et al*., 2016).

Subotzky (2003a:354–355) reports that the South African HE system is characterised by the following:

- marked race and gender inequalities, manifesting in three ways:
  - skewed enrolments in various fields of study and qualification levels;
  - unrepresentative staff complements, especially in senior ranks; and
  - disproportionate research output by race, gender, institution type and field of study;
- low participation, graduation and success rates;
- uneven quality of teaching and learning;

- a strict binary divide with a skewed academic–vocational mix and a separate qualifications structure that restricts mobility across the system;
- insufficient alignment between programmes and changing labour market needs;
- low levels of overall research output;
- insufficient managerial and administrative capacity in institutions and government; and
- anomalous programme duplication in apartheid-created institutions.

To link with the challenges mentioned by Subotzky (2003a) in the previous section, Macgregor (2009) states that a study conducted on HE in 15 Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries identified 20 leadership challenges facing HEIs (including PHEIs). The 20 HE leadership challenges identified are:

- leadership;
- service quality;
- data collection and availability;
- access (of the just over one million students in HE in SADC countries, over 70% are in South Africa;
- postgraduate registrations;
- student success;
- staffing;
- funding;
- planning capability;
- infrastructure and space;
- quality of private provision;
- commercialisation and entrepreneurism;
- research development;
- mobility;
- qualification frameworks;
- curricula;
- information technologies;
- policy and planning;
- community engagement; and
- regional cooperation.

Fourie (2009) identifies the major challenges in South African HE as declining government subsidies, outstanding student fees, and the new concern of the obsession with money and management shares (see section 2.4.7), with which quality has to compete. In support of the challenges identified by Fourie (2009), Nzimande (2009) adds that the end of the apartheid system spelt political freedom, which has led to the marketisation of many public HEIs. The focus of many institutions is on generating income and cutting costs. In a sense, institutional leadership is obligated to focus increasingly on administrative and economic matters instead of academic issues. Louw (2017) agrees, and confirms that HE in South Africa faces various challenges. One of these key challenges is presenting education as a commodity where the HE institution (HEI) is operationally managed as a for-profit business. These institutions are often influenced by the profit motive to offer programmes with the greatest commercial promise. This approach is neither acceptable nor advisable. The knowledge economy of today is looking for graduates with intellectual capital, emotional intelligence and the ability to understand and apply technology. HEIs need to be responsive to this new paradigm and the required skill set of graduates to keep up with global emerging trends. The time has come to reject commoditised programmes and focus on partnerships with industry that will lead to graduate opportunities. It is time to embrace the global view and platform of education and not merely to produce graduates. Another challenge facing South African HE is prospective students who are not able to enrol in public institutions of HE due to a lack of space. It is unlikely that this situation will change soon, and public universities will still only be able to enrol a fraction of the applicants (Vega School, 2017). The following table presents some alarming statistics with regard to 2015 enrolments in certain public universities. In Table 2.1, a comparison is reflected between available space for first-year students and first-time applications received in 2015.

Table 2.1: 2015 available space for first-year students in selected HE institutions

University	2015 available space for first-year students	2015 first-year applications
University of Johannesburg	10 500	111 200
University of Pretoria	10 250	42 000 +
University of the Witwatersrand	6 255	51 000 +
University of Stellenbosch	5 000	22 500
University of the Western Cape	4 000	25 820

Sources: Nel (2015) and Marais (2014)

This bleak picture for hopeful students with career dreams remains to be a reality in South Africa.

The #FeesMustFall campaign, another symptom of the HE problems that manifested in the 2015 and 2016 academic years, almost brought HE in South Africa to a complete standstill. According to Hoffman (2016), the #FeesMustFall movement is legitimate at its core. However, the accompanying thuggery linked to his movement should be dealt with by the criminal justice system. If not, it has the potential to destroy HE in South Africa completely. Hoffman (2016) further reports that the National Development Plan (NDP), which was accepted as policy by the ANC government in 2012, has a chapter called "Improving education, training and innovation". In this chapter, it is stated that enrolments in HE have almost doubled in the last 18 years, yet funding has not kept up. This resulted in the slow growth in the number of university lecturers, poor university infrastructure, equipment shortages and insufficient student accommodation. Government should rethink spending on HE, and additional taxation to fund HE should only be considered once the pandemic of corruption has been addressed.

Mouton, Louw and Strydom (2015) identify amongst others the following present-day dilemmas and challenges of the South African tertiary system:

- the influence of the school system on tertiary education and the admission of first-year students to tertiary education;
- the quality of education;
- management of public HEIs;
- improvement of pass and graduation rates;
- funding of HEIs;

- the benefits of distance education that have not reached their full potential; and
- the establishment of more universities in South Africa.

Singh (2015) adds to the list of challenges identified by Mouton *et al*. (2015), and puts forward challenges such as Africanisation of the HE curriculum, the effective use of information and communication technologies (ICT), as well as academic support to students coupled with postgraduate support and development. In line with the previous challenges mentioned, Mabelebele (2015) refers to HE challenges, such as the massification of HE, the decline in state funding and return on investment discourse, fluid state–higher education relations, building the next generation of academics, onset of ICTs and the implications for universities, internationalisation and transformation.

It would appear that South African HE is not unique in terms of challenges that have to be faced and difficulties that have to be overcome. There are much communality between the various challenges identified between 2003 and 2017 and it seems as if very little progress has been made in addressing these issues. There are more challenges and questions than solutions and answers in HE in South Africa. A paradigm shift is needed in South African HE where the focus should be realigned to PHEIs that have the capacity, infrastructure and expertise to alleviate some of the pressures on public HE.

According to the DHET's strategic plan (2015/2016-2019/2020), some of the challenges that the Department is facing cannot be addressed within the limited time frame of five years. These challenges will be rigorously examined and solved as part of a longer-term strategic plan (DHET, 2015).

2.3 PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SELECTED COUNTRIES

Worldwide, HE is under increasing pressure due to a dynamic environment that is characterised by an increasing demand for HE accompanied by swift technological change. Like all other sectors, HE needs to adapt, develop and respond to the increasing demand in global HE (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2016). Since the early 2000s, the PHE sector has been growing worldwide, especially in countries where it was previously non-existent. In some countries such as the United States, Japan, Mexico and Brazil, PHE has a long history. It is often well developed in these countries and sometimes perceived to be superior to public institutions. In countries such as Japan and Brazil, more than 80% of the enrolments in HE are in the PHE sector (Asmal, 2002). Sampaio (2015) concurs with Asmal (2002), and states that PHE in Brazil accounts for about 85% of institutions and 75% of enrolments – there are about seven million students in HE and five million are enrolled in PHE. In Brazil, public HE is free while PHE is not. The recent growth and expansion in for-profit PHEIs can be attributed to various factors, such as the stabilisation of the currency, improvement in employment and income rates, an increase in the number of school-leavers and the availability of public financing for students attending PHEIs.

Ahmed (2016) argues that the worldwide growth in higher education is a modern occurrence and that PHE offers an additional route for HE. This worldwide growth could be attributed to the democratisation of education, globalisation and the emergence of the knowledge economy. The marketisation phenomenon is a characteristic of the twenty-first century and can be traced back to the late nineteenth century to the birth of capitalism and the paradigm shift of thinking in terms of profit and loss. The recent marketisation of HE implies the introduction of market mechanisms into HE through privatisation (PHE).

There are also growing numbers in PHE enrolments in countries such as China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Ukraine and India. In other countries, such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, the private sector dominates with 80% of student enrolments in PHE (Nurunnabi, 2016; Tilak, 2006). For example, in 2013, there were 34 million students enrolled in HE in China, making it the largest HE sector in the world. PHE accounted for 1 000 institutions of the total HE market. The growth in PHE can be attributed to rising incomes, an increase in foreign investment, the growing complexity of economic activity, an increase in secondary school-leavers and the fact that it relies on the demand for HE, which is not met by the public sector (Ma & Abbot, 2016).

The Malaysian PHE sector experienced a ‘drastic’ growth after 1996, mainly due to the inability of the public HE sector to meet the growing demand. This growth in the sector also intensified competition in attracting students and competent lecturers to these institutions. PHE in Malaysia plays an important part in contributing to the country’s foreign currency earnings by attracting international students. According to the Malaysian Qualifications Authority, there are currently 160 public HEIs and 463 PHEIs (Chuia, Ahmad, Bassim & Zaimi, 2016; Thian *et al*., 2016).

PHE is also the fastest growing sector in India. One of the reasons for this growth is the offering of job-orientated courses by private universities. The establishing of PHEIs has been a new trend in country during the twenty-first century and during the last five years, the growth rate of private universities has been much higher than that of public institutes. By January 2014, there were 171 private universities in India, and in Bangladesh, PHEIs has increased from two in 1992 to 91 institutions in 2016 (Angom, 2015; Nurunnabi, 2016).

By contrast, Tilak (2006) reports that in some countries, such as Germany, Greece, Austria, Canada and Australia, the HE sector is dominated by public institutions and PHE providers are almost non-existent. In some of these developed countries, enrolments in public HE are as high as 90–95% of all enrolments. For example, PHE enrolments in Germany equate to only 2.16% and in Austria, to 4.5% of the total HE enrolments. HE in Europe is mostly supported by government with a limited PHE sector (Nurunnabi, 2016; Sîrbu, Mărginean & Pipaş, 2015).

HE systems in developing countries tend to be more privatised than those in developed countries (Tilak, 2006). According to Tsegaye (2015), 25% of all college intakes in Africa are in PHE. It provides access for those students left out by the public sector due to capacity limitations, and produces and employs a large portion of the workforce on the continent. Prior to the mid-1990s, PHE was a mostly unfamiliar phenomenon in Africa. However, since the 2000s, Africa experienced a shift from predominately public HE to the expansion and growth of the PHE sector. The reasons for this growth were, amongst others are the:

- inability of the public sector to meet educational demands;
- perceived (or actual) inefficiency of the public sector; and
- demand for HE programmes that were not available in public universities.

Organisations such as the African Union (AU) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) play a significant role in in social development and access to education on the African continent. Given the growth and importance of PHE in Africa, these organisations should consider the following:

- the coverage and possibilities of PHE should be assessed at a continental level;
- the role of PHE in the development of human resources for growth and transformation should be established;
- the opportunities and challenges of the sector should be identified, especially studies on the dimensions of quality and relevance are of the utmost importance;
- a framework or organisational structure should be created by the AU and IGAD to assist the development of PHE in Africa; and

- financial and technical support should be provided by the international community to build capacity and to enhance the quality of PHE in Africa (Tsegaye, 2015).

Ethiopia is an example of an African country that has experienced the surge in PHE growth. Yirdaw (2016) reports that prior to 1991, PHE did not exist in Ethiopia. Since 1992, 76 for-profit PHEIs have been established. Zimbabwe has also experienced the worldwide growth in PHE, not only in enrolments but also in the number of registered institutions. The HE sector in Zimbabwe consists of six private institutions, of which the first one was established in 1992, as well as nine public HEIs. The increase in PHE enrolments can be attributed to the increase in the number of academic programmes offered (Garwe, 2016).

As mentioned previously, PHE in African countries is increasing rapidly. The monopoly of public HE providers is disappearing due to deregulation and policies that encourage PHE. Public HEIs in developing countries, especially on the African continent, are struggling with challenges such as extremely high enrolment figures, student protests, a shortage of financial support, quality assurance problems and a 'brain drain' due to competent academics seeking refuge elsewhere. In contrast, PHEIs have more freedom in enrolling students. They charge market-related tuition fees and employ contractual lecturers by providing a decent remuneration package. Garwe (2016:234) continues by identifying certain attributes for which PHEIs are applauded:

- being learner-friendly;
- displaying cultural diversity;
- being less prone to political interference or activism;
- improving access;
- being more responsive to national economic priorities;
- being accommodative to societal HE needs;
- providing demand-driven and labour market-friendly programmes; and
- providing graduate employability.

Similarly, Setswe (2013) argues that in comparison to public universities, PHEIs in Africa have succeeded in four areas but failed in two. Successes were broader access to HE on the continent, improved quality of education, improved student experiences, and increased recognition of HE qualifications. Conversely, failures comprised the inability to reduce the cost of PHE on the continent, and not being able to retain a skilled labour force in African countries. Of the estimated 300 HE universities operating in sub-Saharan Africa, almost one third are PHEIs. These institutions could be the catalysts for retaining skilled human capital on the continent. The increased recognition of PHE qualifications coupled with the probability of completing a degree without the fear of disruption due to student crises and protests, has led to PHE qualifications becoming increasingly popular (Setswe, 2013). Furthermore, according to the QS World University Rankings 2016–2017, there are only four African universities (three from South Africa and one from Egypt) in the top 500 universities in the world (QS World University Rankings, 2017).

Tilak (2006) adds to this that the growth rate of PHE in some countries is so high that there is a possibility that it could eventually replace the public HE system in the near future. Furthermore, he provides two reasons why PHE is the ideal model for HE:

- governments do not always have the necessary resources to fund HE adequately; and
- PHE promotes competition and thus improves the HE system as a whole.

PHEIs operate like businesses and apply the fundamentals of business management in their day-to-day operations. These private institutions can be found in all societies of the world and are regarded as entrepreneurial entities. PHEIs provide products and services to the benefit of the three stakeholders in a PHEI: consumers, clients and owners. It is noteworthy to mention that it was predicted as far back as 1918 (see Veblen, 1918, cited in Tilak, 2006) that universities would eventually evolve from a philanthropic state to a focus on profit and entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, since 2002, it was proclaimed that South Africa was not a world leader in terms of PHE, but it was near the forefront of global trends in terms of a for-profit focus with commercialised and market-related products and services (Levy, 2002). As indicated previously, the research in this study was conducted in the context of the PHE environment in South Africa. The following section will explore the PHE sector in terms of the PHE environment, governance of the sector, public–private partnerships (PPPs), institutional, product and student profiles, geographic locations of PHEIs, the for-profit nature of PHEIs and a brief look at service quality in the sector.

2.4 PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

This section will provide an overview of the PHE environment in South Africa, past and present, as the background to this study.

2.4.1 The private higher education environment

According to Mabizela (2006), PHE in South Africa dates back as far as the nineteenth century, to the early years of the HE system. PHEIs at that time were later taken over by government to become state entities and did not remain private. Fehnel (2007) explains that the first PHEI, the South African College, was established in Cape Town in 1829 by prominent members of society who desired better education for their children. In 1918, this college was granted university status, and is today known as the University of Cape Town. In addition, Tladi (2010) notes that following the formation of the South African College, the Kimberley School of Mines was established in the late nineteenth century and later split in two and became the University of the Witwatersrand in 1921 and the University of Pretoria in 1930. Others followed, such as South African Native College in 1916, which later became the University of Fort Hare, as well as a technical college for Indian workers founded in 1929, which later became ML Sultan Technikon. Furthermore, Bezuidenhout, De Jager and Naidoo (2013) add to the list of earlier established PHEIs, some of which still exist today, such as Lyceum College (1917), Rapid Results College (1928), Success College (1940) and Damelin College (1945). These colleges were originally founded to cater for the demand for technical and vocational education for black students. The Correspondence Act (No. 59 of 1965) was the first piece of legislation by government to regulate private provision of postsecondary education in South Africa (Mabizela, 2006).

Attempts to quantify the PHE sector in South Africa only started much later. The first attempt was undertaken by the Education Policy Unit (EPU) at the University of the Western Cape in 1990. The study focussed on 145 PHEIs and the results indicated that during 1998–2000, there were 108 700 students enrolled in PHE. This was followed by another study by the EPU commissioned by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). A total of 60 PHEIs (about 50% of the registered institutions in 2001) participated in the study. In 2003, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) also attempted to quantify the sector. Data from 58 PHEIs (again only about 50% of the registered institutions) were used in this study (Thladi, 2010). A study undertaken by Thladi (2010) to quantify the sector, although thorough and informative, only included 82 of 105 institutions that had submitted their annual reporting forms to the DHET.

It is evident that all these attempts to quantify the sector had considerable limitations due to omission of certain PHEIs from the studies. The recent release of the March 2017 "Annual Monitoring Report on the Compliance of Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs)" by the DHET, probably encapsulates the most comprehensive dataset on PHEIs in South Africa from 2010–2015.

As in other developing countries, South Africa has also, since the end of apartheid in 1994, experienced a rapid growth in PHE. The majority of for-profit PHEIs were established in the 1990s. The surge of private institutions during this period can be attributed to the growing demand in flexible, postsecondary education, especially for market-related short courses and distance education as well as the limited number of places available in public HEIs. The perception also existed of instability and declining quality in public institutions owing to post-apartheid transformation (International Education Association of South Africa [IEASA], 2007; Sehoole, 2012). The regulations for the registration of PHEIs were passed in 2002 and implemented in 2003. These regulations made it compulsory for PHEIs to register their programmes with SAQA, and these programmes should also be quality assured and accredited by the HEQC (Sehoole, 2012).

The purpose of registering PHEIs is to ensure that:

- they offer an acceptable quality of education;
- students receive higher education from institutions that have the resources, capacity and/or expertise to deliver quality programmes;
- students enrolled with these institutions obtain qualifications that are aligned with the NQF; and
- the education system continues on a path of transformation in accordance with government policy (Sehoole, 2012:2).

The PHE sector in South Africa is relatively small compared with the public HE sector in terms of student numbers. However, as noted earlier, the public HE sector comprises 26 institutions, while the PHE sector consists of more than 100 providers. There is currently relative stability in the PHE sector in South Africa, with 93 registered institutions and 32 provisionally registered institutions. The 32 provisionally registered institutions did not fulfil the requirements for registration but the Registrar of PHEIs has reason to believe that the applicants will comply with the requirements within a reasonable time (DHET, 2017c). This implies that in 2017, 125 PHEIs in South Africa were competing for the same market segment. This ties in with the problem statement in Chapter 1, which describes the PHE environment as dynamic and highly competitive (see Chapter 1, section 1.3).

PHEIs are mostly situated in urban areas, and offer a wide range of product offerings. The majority are local institutions because many foreign institutions withdrew their campuses from South Africa after the registration process of PHEIs became compulsory (see also section 2.4.2). Most of the institutions cater for middle-class students and offer products of quality that, in many instances, are well rated by employers. The product offerings of these institutions range from traditional degrees to diplomas and certificates in fields such as agriculture, arts, business and management studies, communication studies, education and training, engineering and technology, human and social studies, law, security, health sciences and social services, computer sciences, and construction (DHET, 2017a). Some PHEIs also offer contact sessions for the University of South Africa (Unisa), a mega university offering open distance learning.

According to Subotzky (2003b), the PHE sector can contribute meaningfully to the human resource and other developmental goals in South Africa. Mabizela (2006) agrees and states that the NCHE recognised the existence of PHE and the potential advantage this sector has to improve access to HE. The sentiment by Mabizela (2006) is mirrored by the following statement in the 2015–2020 strategic plan of the DHET (2015:19):

> The private higher education sector has established a set of programmes and qualifications in specific niche areas with strong links to industry and vocational occupations, mainly at levels 5 to 7 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The sector has the potential for fulfilling the need for some mid-level scarce and critical skills. In this regard, strengthening oversight and refocussing the sector through enhanced policy and regulatory frameworks is essential.

The absence of regulation contributed to the rapid growth of the PHE sector. The DHET became concerned due to many ‘fly-by-night colleges’ in operation, which provided substandard product offerings and lacked suitable facilities and qualified personnel. This led to the establishment of quality assurance and accreditation processes to regulate the sector. This responsibility was assigned to the HEQC of the CHE. Consequently, all PHEIs are required to take part in the processes of quality assurance and accreditation. PHEIs can only offer courses if they are registered with the DHET (DHET, 2017a; 2017b; IEASA, 2007). Equally important, Bezuidenhout *et al*. (2013)

acknowledge that both public and private providers of HE follow the same procedures for the registration and accreditation of their programmes and institutions.

To date, the PHE sector has received little attention nationally. Bezuidenhout and De Jager (2014) confirm the notion of a very limited body of knowledge regarding PHEIs in South Africa. Dirkse van Schalkwyk and Steenkamp (2014a) support the statement by Bezuidenhout and De Jager (2014) and declare that research on PHEIs in South Africa is extremely limited. Owing to demands from learners and the high skills shortage in South Africa, the PHE sector can no longer be ignored because of the limited capacity of public HE. There is potential for PHE to play an increasingly significant role in providing tertiary education and niche market skills to students.

2.4.2 Governance of private higher education

The 1997 White Paper on Higher Education recognises funding, planning and quality assurance as the three key factors in transforming HE in South Africa. It further states that these three factors will contribute to high-quality institutions that are sustainable, well managed and equitable. These institutions will also address the needs of economic growth and social development in a new democracy (CHE, 2003).

As mentioned in 2.4.1 PHE can play an increasingly significant role in giving students more access to HE, particularly in niche areas where considerable skills shortages exist.

The CHE is responsible for quality assurance in HE and has one permanent sub-committee, the HEQC. The responsibility of the CHE for quality assurance is carried out by the HEQC. The CHE programme accreditation is the first step in the approval process for an institution to be permitted to offer HE programmes. After provisional accreditation has been granted by the CHE, the institution must apply to have the qualification registered on the NQF by SAQA. Once this registration by SAQA is complete, the institution is registered as a PHEI by the DHET (Bezuidenhout, 2010).

The most accurate data to date on PHEIs in South Africa were found in the “Annual Monitoring Report on the Compliance of Private Higher Education Institutions of 2017” which encapsulates a comprehensive dataset ranging from 2010 to 2015. The annual reports submitted by PHEIs to the DHET revealed a 96.7% compliance rate with only four institutions having failed to comply fully with maintaining their responsibilities as PHEIs (DHET, 2017a). A total of 123 PHEIs submitted completed reports. The responsibilities for compliance of PHEIs are defined in Chapter 6 of the “Regulations for the Registration of Private Higher Education Institutions, 2016" ('the Regulations') and section 57 of the Higher Education Act of 1997) ('the Act'). PHEIs must register with the DHET (registration by the Department assumes accreditation by the CHE). This requirement is binding for both local and foreign institutions. The role of the DHET role in monitoring PHEIs is to ensure that institutions continue to operate within the established legal framework and that these institutions continue to meet the strategic goals envisioned in the transformation of HE. The Department further evaluates and monitors PHEIs according to section 57 of the Act, which compels PHEIs to report annually on their operations in the manner determined by the Registrar (DHET, 2017a).

The Department utilises the information submitted in an annual report to attain the following objectives:

- to monitor and evaluate the performance of each institution on an annual basis;
- to develop profiles of the PHE sector as a whole, through analysis of data such as participation rates, throughput rates and staff and student profiles, in a manner and for reasons similar to the manner and reasons in and for which the public HE system is profiled; and
- to foster accountability in the PHE sector.

Chapter 6 of the Regulations defines further responsibilities that must be fulfilled by an institution in order to remain registered as a PHEI. These are:

- reporting changes in institutional operations;
- displaying the registration status;
- responsibilities relating to:
  - the offering of HE programmes;
  - the placing and re-imbursement of students in the case of the discontinuation of a programme; and
  - the addition, withdrawal or suspension of a programme or site;
- publishing a prospectus, calendar or brochure annually for the information of students and the public;
- maintaining academic records;
- responsibilities relating to marketing and advertising;
- submitting a financial audit as part of the annual report and any other information as specified by the registrar; and
- responsibilities relating to the lapsing or cancellation of registration.

Hence, the maintenance of registration as a PHEI is dependent on:

- honouring their responsibilities as an institution as defined in Chapter 6 of the Regulations;
- continued fulfilment of the requirements for registration as defined in Chapter 2 of the Regulations; and
- compliance with conditions of registration as determined by the Registrar in terms of section 60 of the Act (DHET, 2017a:10).

Apart from the responsibilities which a PHEI must fulfil in order to remain registered (mentioned above), an institution must also continue to fulfil the following requirements to ensure continued registration as stipulated in sections 51 and 53 of the Act and Chapter 3 of the Regulations:

- registration as a company in terms of the Companies Act (No. 71 of 2008);
- non-discrimination on the basis of race;
- registered programmes must lead to qualifications that are registered on levels five to eight of the NQF;
- compliance with requirements of the HEQC;
- compliance with regulations relating to health and safety of persons on its premises;
- financial stability and maintenance of the financial surety or guarantee;
- foreign institutions must prove that:
  - the parent institution operates lawfully in its country of origin;
  - the parent institution recognises qualifications awarded in its name; and
  - awardees will not suffer disadvantage if they wish to enrol at the parent institution;
- compliance with the periodic evaluation by the Registrar, at intervals determined by the Registrar; and
- compliance with any other reasonable process arranged by the Registrar for the purpose of monitoring compliance with the requirements of the Act and the conditions of registration as imposed by the Registrar in terms of section 60 of the Act (DHET, 2017a:24).

Failure to comply with the above requirements could result in the cancellation of registration in terms of section 60 of the Act.

It is evident from the above-mentioned facts that the PHE environment is highly regulated. However, Cosser (2002) contends that accreditation and registration by no means ensure quality, but that a quality culture should be fostered in institutions to be accountable to students and to serve the broader society.

2.4.3 Public–private partnerships

According to Mabizela (2005), partnerships between public and private institutions are not a new practice and have existed throughout the history of HE in South Africa. In the early 1990s, there was a dramatic increase in these partnerships and they were a means whereby foreign HEIs could gain access to the South African HE market. This phenomenon escalated even more when face-to-face public institutions became involved in distance education. From the mid-1990s, there was pressure on historically white institutions (HWIs) to conform to the transformation process in South African HE. One of the goals of this transformation process was to increase the enrolments of black students. In response to this new challenge, many HWIs started offering distance education mainly through partnerships with private institutions.

According to Mabizela (2005), the public–private partnership (PPP) concept grew because of increased competition in both the public and private sectors. He suggests the following reasons for establishing partnerships, from the perspective of both the private and public sectors:

- private providers had to build their reputations and credibility as HE providers;
- public institutions had to show compliance with the transformation agenda of HE, such as increasing registrations of previously disadvantaged students;
- students in remote areas had (and still have) limited access to public institutions. A partnership with a PHE provider was a means to reach out to those students;
- being in a partnership with a reputable public provider would give credibility to the PHEI's own programmes; and
- there was a need for public distance education students to receive face-to-face tuition by a PHEI.

The South African government is in favour of increasing access to HE through PPPs with the precondition, according to the CHE, that PPPs must be responsible partnerships. The National Plan for Higher Education also stipulates that PHE provision could complement public provision. The primary goal of PPPs was to take HE to the people and create a sound HE academic culture. However, it seems as if these partnerships were purely profit-driven and that they neglected to address social development. Taking the above into consideration, some might argue that these partnerships failed in achieving their main goal (Mabizela, 2005).

Karodia, Saikh and Soni (2015) emphasise the importance of PPPs in South African HE. Universities are ‘bursting at their seams’ and school-leavers have a one in eight chance of access to a public university. PPPs also recognise the existence of an alternative option in tertiary education. Governments throughout the world are admitting that they cannot provide HE on their own and that they are looking towards the PHE sector to alleviate some of the pressure. PPPs could be the answer to the dramatic growth in student demands for access to HE in South Africa. This notion is supported by Professor Piet Naude, director of the University of Stellenbosch Business School, who argues that the establishment of PPPs is also the answer to South African HE funding problems. Universities and colleges are struggling to fund themselves and partnerships with the private sector could present a solution (Peyper, 2017).

However, in contrast to the claim by Mabileza (2005), which indicates government support for partnerships, the novel idea of PPPs in the South African HE environment might – for the moment, at least – not reach its full potential. According to the DHET 2015/2016–2019/2020 strategic plan (DHET, 2015) “Part C: Links to other plans”, establishing PPPs is not part of the DHET’s vision up until 2020. Although PHEIs are mentioned as role players in the HE and could add value, they are not considered possible partners of public HEIs in the near future. It seems that political will and hidden agendas could be to the disadvantage of all stakeholders in South African HE.

2.4.4 The institutional profile of private higher education providers

The general perception of HE is still only related to university education, despite of the worldwide growth in PHE and the fact that most non-university HE is privately owned (Levy, 2002). Kruss (CHE, 2009) identifies two subsectors in the South African PHE environment. The first subsector consists of institutions that provide the promise of mobility or ‘better’ education, and the second, those that offer specialised credentials or ‘different’ education.

Institutions that hold out the promise of mobility or, according to Kruss, ‘better’ education, usually target privileged students. Students often choose these institutions because they are linked to the workplace, are internationally recognised and the perception of better qualifications is created. Some of these institutions are owned by large holding companies, some of which are listed on the JSE and offer market-related products (mostly business and management) to prepare students for employment (Kruss, 2004a). The entrance requirements of these institutions follow the same rules as public providers, and matriculation exemption is needed to access undergraduate degrees. A bachelor's degree with relevant experience is required for access to a Master in Business Administration (MBA). Fees are usually higher than those in public institutions. Returns for shareholders are mainly dependent on the income from student fees (Kruss, 2004b).

Kruss (CHE, 2009) claims that institutions that offer specialised credentials or 'different' education, commonly focus on non-traditional students who would not normally enrol in HE. Students prefer these institutions based on the promise of employability, flexibility in the learning process, and lower fees. Qualification offerings of these institutions include new occupational fields such as tourism, leisure, entertainment and media that are recognised and directly linked to employability in niche markets (Kruss, 2004a). These institutions normally cater for the previously disadvantaged market and charge lower fees. The individuals who own these institutions are also profit-driven with the aim to survive as a small business, relying on student fees as their main source of income (Kruss, 2004b). Figure 2.2 below depicts the two subsectors of PHE in South Africa.

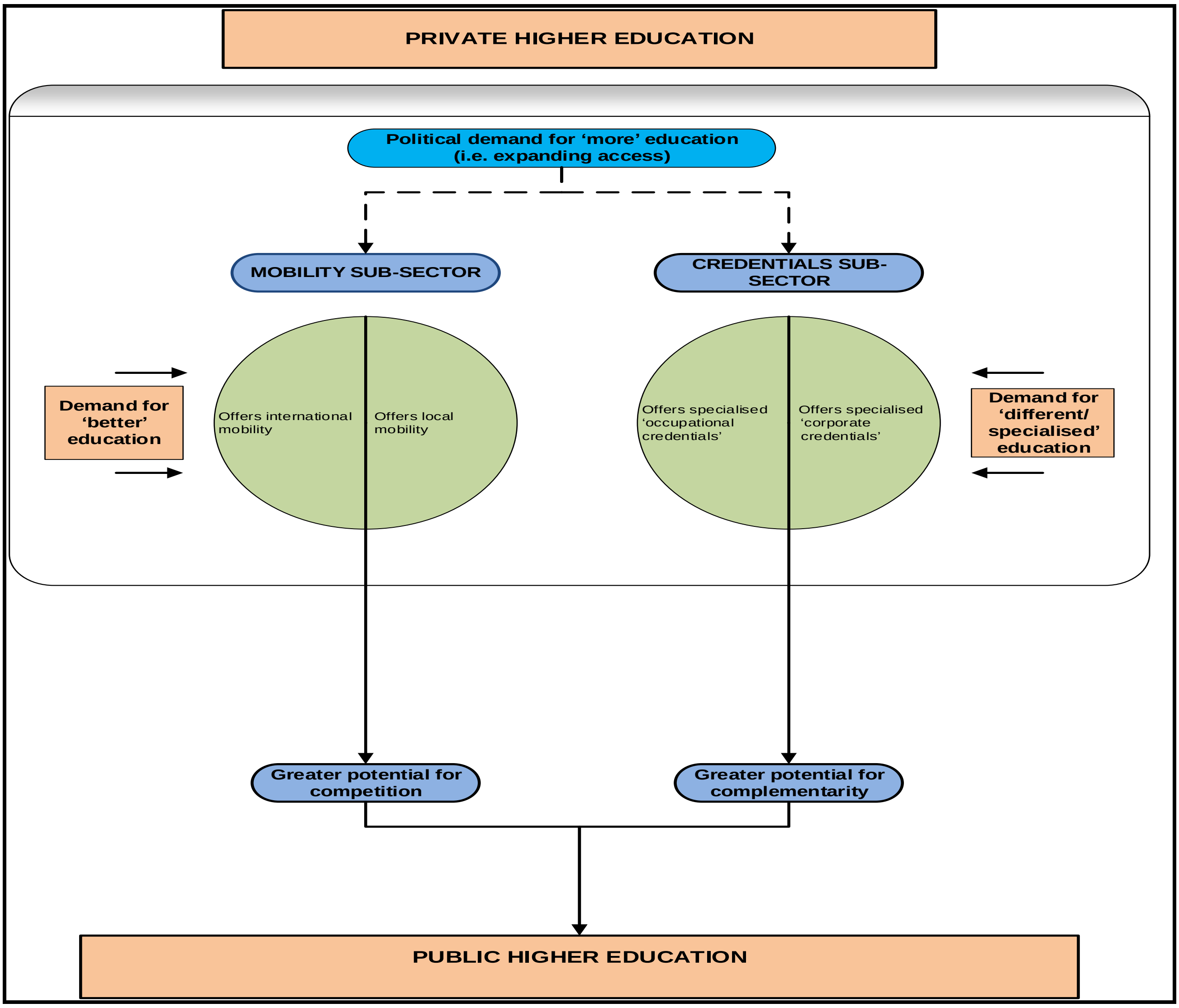

Figure 1.2: PHE subsectors in South Africa

Source: Kruss (2004b:7)

In the two subsectors discussed in the previous section, Levy (2003) identifies the following categories of PHEIs in South Africa: transnational institutions, agency or franchise institutions, technical and vocational education and training institutes (TVET), and corporate classrooms. These can be briefly described as follows:

- **Transnational institutions** – this category includes international PHEIs based in South Africa.
- **Agency or franchise institutions** – these are local organisations that provide HE with a strong profit orientation. Many of the PHEIs are owned by company groups listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE). This category is far larger than the transnational category, both in terms of campuses and student numbers.

- **TVET** – most of the PHEIs in South Africa form part of this category. It includes mostly of small institutions offering qualifications at NQF level 5. Most of the qualifications offered are also not regarded traditional HE qualifications but are included in the official South African HE listings.
- **Corporate classrooms** – the corporate classroom forms part of larger corporations, which prefer to train and retrain their own employees. This is HE for immediate and practical use.

Related to the previous section on categories of PHEIs in South Africa, Kruss (2002) confirms that a profit-orientated business approach drives PHE in South Africa, and that three forms of ownership are identified.

Firstly, the larger PHEIs in South Africa are owned by publicly listed companies, some of which are extremely successful on the JSE. These institutions operate like traditional universities. The main difference is their highly profit-driven approach with student fees as their main source of income. The listed holding company usually grants the initial funding and typically absorbs the profit generated by the institution.

Secondly, most of the private institutions are owned by individuals and are legally registered as a proprietary limited. The owners of these institutions bear the financial risks and student fees tend to be lower, depending on the student target market.

The **third** form of ownership exists in larger corporations that meet the training needs of the organisation (and sometimes the industry).

With reference to the first form of ownership, ADvTECH (a listed PHE provider), acquired 51% of the University of Africa (UoA) in Zambia in 2017. This represents the group's first PHE partnership outside South Africa. The UoA is a distance learning university with an expanding portfolio of programmes and a rapidly growing student base across the continent (BusinessTech, 2017). According to Dr Felicity Coughlan, director of the Independent Institute of Education (also part of the ADvTECH group), public HEIs are not the only way to obtain an accredited degree. PHE in South Africa has been growing consistently over the past five years providing prospective students with a wide range of degree options to choose from. The rapid growth in this sector could be ascribed to current challenges of HE in South Africa. However, PHEIs have certain unique features that contribute to their popularity:

- PHEIs have small campuses and classes with accompanying improved student support that contributes to better success rates.

- Industry exposure. Many lecturers are still actively working in industry bridging the gap between theory and practice.
- Because PHEIs receive no government subsidy and are reliant on student fees for growth and survival, students are treated like customers and generally receive good quality service.
- Many PHEIs provide niche qualifications that are not available in public HEIs (Parent24, 2017).

Other JSE-listed companies have also recently entered the PHE market. PSG, a leading independent financial services group, currently have a 58% share in the Curro holdings, South Africa's largest private education provider. Curro holdings are in the process of establishing PHEIs in Gauteng and the Western Cape with the capacity to accommodate more than 5 000 students. There are currently more than 50 000 eligible students in the country that cannot be accommodated by public institutions (Lindeque, 2016).

The PHEIs selected for this study form part of both subsectors of the PHE environment previously explained, namely the mobility (so-called 'better' education) and the credentials (so-called 'different' or 'specialised') sector. The selected providers form part of the second category as identified by Levy (2003) above, which is the agency or franchise institution, which is exclusively profit-driven.

Kruss (2002) proposes that most of these for-profit-oriented PHEIs have the following five common values embedded in their vision and mission statements, namely they:

- promise international recognition of qualifications;
- aim to prepare students for the workplace;
- are devoted to academic quality;
- give the assurance of a safe study environment'; and
- promise flexible tuition models to fit work and family commitments.

2.4.5 The product and student profile in private higher education

As mentioned in section 2.4.4 above, PHEIs mostly consist of small providers specialising in various programme offerings. Mabizela (2006) confirms that most PHEIs offer mainly business and management studies. In addition, Subotzky (2003b) reports that the much-needed scarce skills fields, such as science, engineering, health and social services, are addressed by only a few PHEIs. South Africa follows the same trend as in other countries with almost 50% of all PHE enrolments in the commerce and management fields (Levy, 2002). According to the DHET, 16 PHEIs offer up to a master's degree, 12 of whom can be classified as business schools (three are theological and one an arts college) and only four up to a PhD, two of whom are theological colleges (DHET, 2017c).

The following section provides an overview of the current PHE product profile in South Africa. The NQF levels of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) are indicated in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: NQF levels of the HEQSF

NQF Level	Qualification Type
5	Higher certificate/Advanced certificate (old NQF level)
6	Diploma/Advanced certificate
7	Bachelor's degree/Advanced diploma
8	Honours degree and/or Postgraduate diploma
9	Master's degree
10	Doctoral degree

Source: Adapted from DHET (2017a:16)

There are currently 10 NQF levels. This changed from eight levels in 2009 with the promulgation of the National Qualifications Framework Act (No. 67 of 2008). As indicated in Table 2.2, the HEQSF varies between levels five to 10. Level five represents the entry level into HE with level 10 culminating in a PhD.

Figure 2.3 below provides a breakdown of 745 HE programmes offered by PHEIs in South Africa.

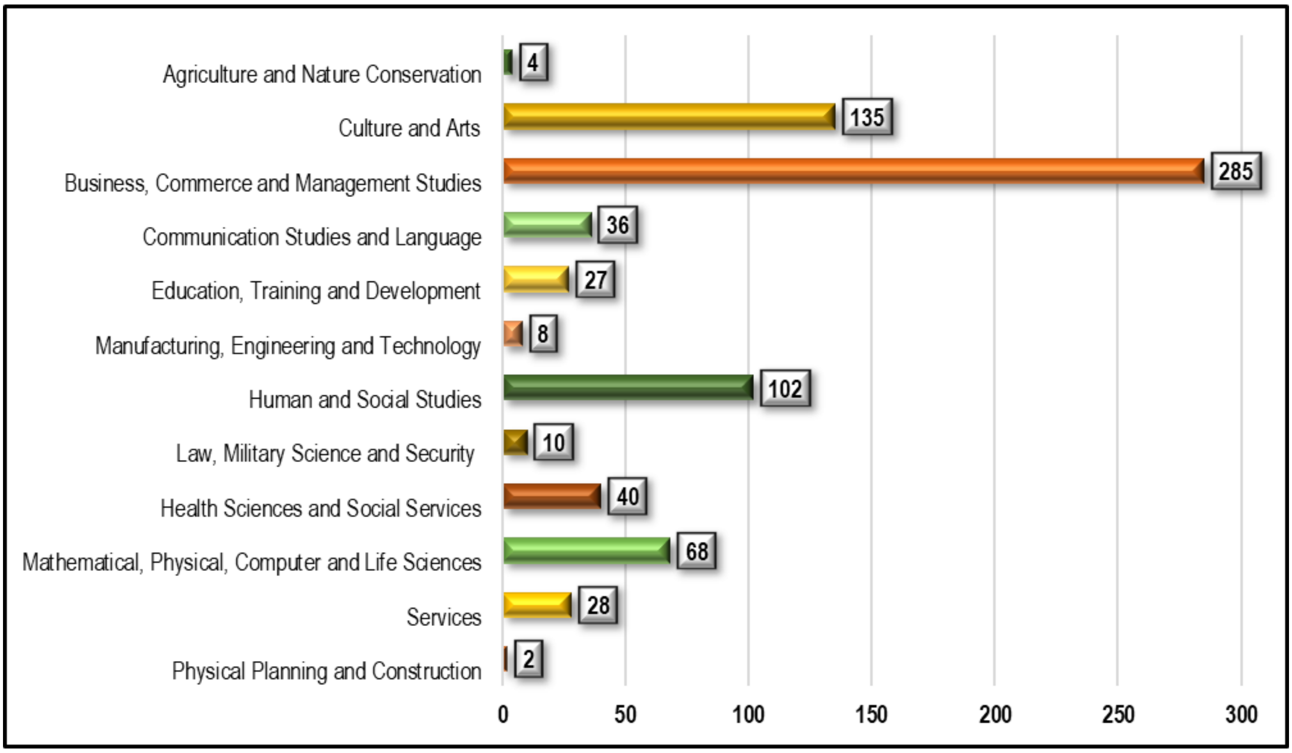

Figure 2.3: Programmes offered by PHEIs on NQF levels 5 to 10

Source: Adapted from DHET (2017a:17)

It is evident from Figure 2.3 above that the majority of programme registrations are for bachelor's degree, higher certificates and diploma programmes. These constitute almost 63% of the total programme offerings of PHEIs. Moreover, the high offering of the higher certificate represents a strength in the HE system where PHEIs bridge the gap between secondary schooling and HE. It is also noteworthy that the lowest number recorded by the 123 PHEIs is for the PhD/DPhil level.

The NQF also divides all education and training into 12 organising fields as follows:

01. Agriculture and Nature Conservation;
02. Culture and Arts;
03. Business, Commerce and Management studies;
04. Communication Studies and Language;
05. Education, Training and Development;
06. Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology;
07. Human and Social Studies;
08. Law, Military Science and Security;
09. Health Sciences and Social Services;
10. Mathematical, Physical, Computer and Life Sciences;
11. Services; and

12. Physical Planning and Construction (DHET, 2017a).

Figure 2.4 below provides a visual representation of the number of PHE programmes offered per NQF field.

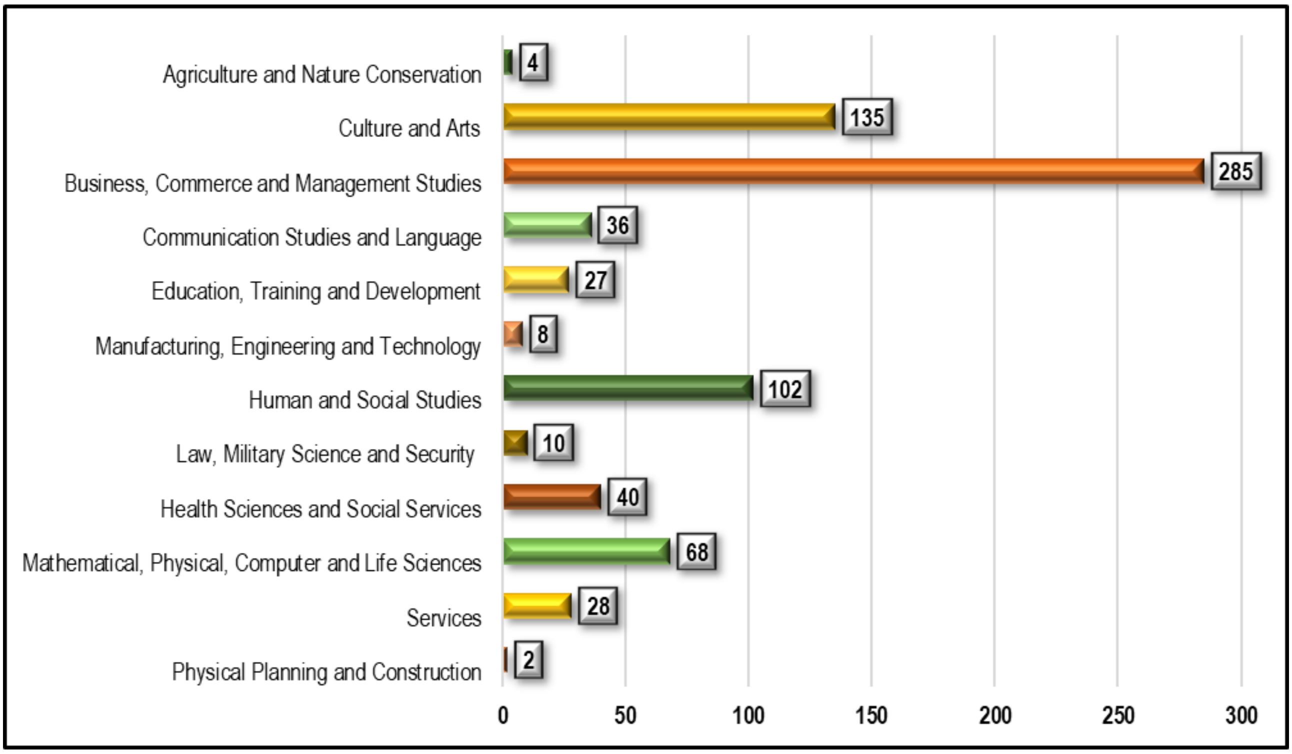

Figure 2.4: PHE programme offering per general NQF field

Source: Adapted from DHET (2017a:19)

Figure 2.4 indicates that the majority of the programmes offered by the 123 PHEIs reside within the field Business, Commerce and Management, with 285 of the 745 programmes presented in business, commerce and management. This represents 38% of all programme offerings by PHEIs.

This is followed by the fields Culture and Arts and Human and Social Studies with 135 and 102 programmes respectively. These latter three fields account for 70% of all PHE programmes on offer. The field of Mathematical, Physical, Computer and Life Sciences represents only 68 programmes (9%), which is not a good reflection in terms of one of the country's identified scare skills. Only two programmes are offered in the field Physical Planning and Construction. This area is of critical importance in ensuring a skilled labour force towards the advancement of the NDP. Related to this is the field of Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology representing eight programmes on offer. Collectively, these two fields represent 1% of PHE programmes. Agriculture, which is one of the economic drivers of the country, is represented by only four PHE programmes. The next paragraph reports on the student profile of PHEIs in South Africa.

Levy (2002) argues that students who cannot gain access to public HEIs or the public HEI of their choice, could gain access through the private sector. In addition, Mabizela (2000, cited in Levy, 2003) states that PHEIs attract traditionally disadvantaged students who had failed to gain access to public institutions. These students often enrol at PHEIs because of the convenience or sometimes the perception that a diploma or degree is easily obtainable. Previously, distance education provided mainly for non-traditional students or working adults (Mabizela, 2005). Today, many school-leavers who have completed the National Senior Certificate, enter HE through the distance education model provided by PHEIs.

As indicated previously, the most accurate data to date on PHEIs in South Africa was found in the "Annual Monitoring Report on the Compliance of Private Higher Education Institutions" of 2017 (see DHET, 2017a), which encapsulates a comprehensive dataset ranging from 2010 to 2015. However, it must be noted that the data on student figures had not been not audited, but it still represents the most reliable information available to date.

Table 2.3 reflects the number of students enrolled in PHEIs by gender from 2010 to 2015.

Table 2.3: Number of students enrolled in PHEIs by gender from 2010 to 2015

Year	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total
2010	44 121 (48.0%)	46 646 (52.0%)	n/a	90 767 (100%)
2011	48 876 (47.0%)	54 160 (53.0%)	n/a	103 036 (100%)
2012	43 704 (49.0%)	53 774 (51.0%)	n/a	97 476 (100%)
2013	55 606 (46.0%)	64 335 (54.0%)	n/a	119 941 (100%)
2014	65 431 (46.5%)	73 776 (52.0%)	3 350 (2.0%)	142 557 (100%)
2015	66 503 (45.2%)	80 487 (54.7%)	163 (0.1%)	147 153 (100%)

Source: Adapted from DHET (2017a:20; 2017b:25)

The figures presented in Table 2.3 indicate a steady growth in PHE student enrolments between 2012 and 2015. There was a slight increase in 2015 of 4 595 students in comparison to 2014 enrolments. Female enrolments were also consistently higher than male enrolments (as was also the case in public HE). In 2015, female enrolments accounted for almost 55% of the total enrolments in PHE.

Table 2.4 reflects the number of students enrolled in PHE by population group and nationality from 2010 to 2015.

Table 2.4: The number of students enrolled in PHE by population group and nationality from 2010 to 2015

Year	African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Total number of South African students	Non-South African students	Unspecified	Total number of students
2010	51 720 (57%)	7 516 (8%)	5 644 (6%)	18 334 (20%)	83 214 (92%)	7 553 (8%)	n/a	90 767 (100%)
2011	56 988 (55%)	7 526 (7%)	5 913 (6%)	23 311 (23%)	93 738 (91%)	9 298 (9%)	n/a	103 036 (100%)
2012	56 813 (58%)	6 876 (8%)	5 222 (5%)	18 500 (19%)	87 411 (90%)	10 067 (10%)	n/a	97 478 (100%)
2013	64 933 (54%)	8 183 (7%)	6 649 (6%)	26 664 (22%)	106 429 (89%)	13 512 (11%)	n/a	119 941 (100%)
2014	80 983 (57%)	12 716 (9%)	10 396 (8%)	22 191 (15%)	126 286 (89%)	12 921 (9%)	3 350 (2%)	142 557 (100%)
2015	83 968 (57%)	11 120 (8%)	9 449 (6%)	25 726 (18%)	130 263 (88%)	15 670 (11%)	1 220 (1%)	147 153 (100%)

Source: Adapted from DHET (2017a:21; 2017b:26)

According to the information depicted in Table 2.4, the percentage of students enrolled in PHEIs per nationality and population group has remained relatively constant from 2010 to 2015. The total number of students that had enrolled in PHE in 2015 was estimated in the region of 147 153. In March 2015, the total number of students enrolled at public universities were 985 212 (DHET, 2017b). Therefore, the number of students enrolled in PHE in 2015 was approximately 13% of the total HE student population.

In 2015, 88% of students enrolled in PHE were South Africans compared to the 11% who were non-South Africans (1% of students did not specify their nationality and population group). Between 2014 and 2015, the number of South African students increased by 3 977 while the number of non-South Africans increased by 2 749. Table 2.4 further shows that, in terms of South African students, the highest enrolment was in the African group (83 968) followed by the white population group (25 726). The coloured and Indian or Asian population groups recorded comparatively lower figures. The coloured population group recorded 11 120 enrolments followed by the Indian or Asian population group with only 9 449 PHE enrolments in 2015.

2.4.6 The geographic location of private higher education institutions

There are currently 125 registered PHEIs in South Africa (93 registered and 32 provisionally registered) (DHET, 2017c). Figure 2.5 below summarises the geographic location of PHEIs by province.

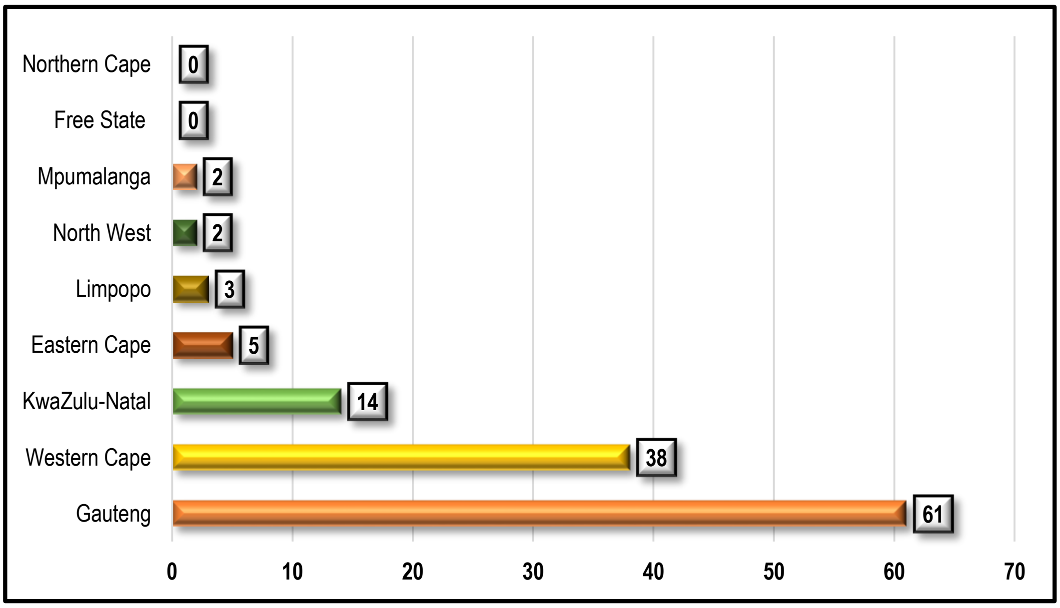

Figure 2.5: The geographic location of PHE institutions in South Africa

Source: Adapted from DHET (2017c)

Figure 2.5 illustrates the number of PHEIs across the nine provinces in South Africa. Gauteng hosts 61 of all registered PHEIs, the Western Cape 37, KwaZulu-Natal 15, the Eastern Cape five, North West two, Limpopo three and Mpumalanga two. There are no registered PHEIs in the Free State and Northern Cape.

Mabizela (2006) argues that the geographic spread of PHEIs is linked to the type of customer (student) in the PHE environment. He suggests the following three reasons for the location of these institutions: **Firstly**, there are a wide variety of various industries in these areas that utilise the skills of these institutions, for example, training programmes offered after hours for personnel. **Secondly**, PHEIs are located in urban areas with high levels of business activities. There are large numbers of employees (potential customers or students) who need higher-level skills or qualifications. **Finally**, there is a strong presence of public HE institutions in these areas. Students who had failed to gain entry to a public HEI, have the option to enrol at a PHE provider.

2.4.7 The business model and for-profit nature of private higher education

The problem statement in Chapter 1 (see section 1.3) states that PHE in South Africa is increasingly competitive and marketing-oriented. In order for PHEIs to survive in this dynamic environment, they must be profit-driven and have an entrepreneurial orientation. Commercial and for-profit PHE originates from market needs and not from government interventions and can be linked to economic forces. The primary reason for the establishment of PHEIs is indeed profit (Kruss, 2004b; Levy, 2002).

As mentioned in section 2.3, many PHEIs worldwide operate like businesses and apply the fundamentals of business management in their day-to-day operations. They can be found in most societies in the world and are regarded as entrepreneurial entities. South Africa is no exception. Most of the PHEIs are profit-driven and the products and services on offer represent the 'voice of the market' (industry) and the 'voice of the customer' (students). According to law, PHEIs in South Africa must declare themselves as for-profit or non-profit. For-profit institutions form the majority of the PHE sector (Levy, 2003).

As indicated previously in section 2.4.1, the PHE sector experienced major growth in the 1990s. Fehnel (2007) suggests the following three possible reasons for this growth:

- the expectation that government was going to invest substantially in education and training;
- the lack of regulation in the sector; and
- the conviction that this sector would become highly profitable.

The for-profit element is evident in almost all of the key aspects of South African PHE providers. These include the provider's mission, the functions of role players in HE, links to the job market and relationships with the public sector. Growth in the South African entrepreneurial PHE sector with a for-profit focus, fits the worldwide surge in PHE growth in other parts of the world. PHEIs operate like businesses, with every department treated as a so-called 'profit centre'. In other words, every single department, from admissions to the research department, has to focus on generating as much revenue as possible. PHEIs need to be efficient and service-oriented to survive in this dynamic and highly competitive environment. PHEIs are becoming increasingly popular due to their ability to adapt to market demands by offering job-related qualifications (Dirkse van Schalkwyk, 2012).

As previously mentioned by Lindeque (2016), many JSE-listed companies are entering the PHE market. These companies have identified the need for an alternative (and profitable) option for HE in South Africa. According to Bezuidenhout *et al*. (2013), PHEIs are important contributors to HE in South Africa but they receive no financial support from government, which is probably their biggest challenge. These institutions have to employ strategic management and service quality principles in order to survive in this competitive service sector. They have to remain competitive against public HEIs as well as other PHEIs to survive as sustainable businesses. This notion is supported by Dirkse van Schalkwyk, Davis and Pellissier (2013) who confirm that the PHE (and HE) environment is becoming increasingly competitive, and that these institutions have to find new ways to survive in this dynamic environment. Both private and public HEIs have faced increasing pressures in recent years, such as increased competition, emphasis on efficient and effective management, and changing technology. Students are progressively being recognised as customers and they are choosing HE providers based on superior service quality being offered to them. PHEIs in South Africa are part of the country's economic infrastructure, generating employment and output and making a dynamic contribution to the growth and improvement of society as a whole (Bezuidenhout & De Jager, 2014; Dirkse van Schalkwyk & Steenkamp, 2014a).

The discussion above confirms that the PHE sector is profit-driven and that it responds to market forces and demands from customers (students). PHEIs, like all other organisations, must be dynamic to ensure their long-term survival in the market. This means that PHEIs are just like other businesses that continually face new challenges and are often compelled to seek alternative means of growth in order to remain competitive.

2.4.8 Service quality in private higher education institutions

This section briefly discusses the importance of service quality in the PHE environment. A detailed discussion of this construct will be provided in Chapters 3 of this research report.

The recognition of the importance of service quality in HE started to gain momentum during the 1990s. Varey (1993) was one of the first pioneers to declare service quality a strategic performance objective and business tool in the HE sector. He proposed that service quality in HE comprised one or more of the following:

- a measure of high standards;
- uniformity in meeting process specifications;
- fitness for purpose (or use);
- value for money; and
- successful transformation of the educated (Varey, 1993:45).

Varey (1993) adds that value for money (amongst others) and continuous service quality improvement is essential for the long-term success and survival of organisations providing HE. The impact and importance of service quality can therefore not be overemphasised. Sultan and Wong (2010) concur with Varey's (1993) argument, and report that research on service quality in HE is new, or at least, compared to service quality research in the commercial sector. There is tremendous competition worldwide in HE to attract fee-paying students. Hence, obtaining a competitive advantage in this dynamic service delivery sector is a necessity. The HE sector is considered a marketplace and HE a marketable service. Thus, HEIs can only be successful if they offer a quality product and service for which the customer is willing to pay. Supporting this, Sultan and Wong (2013) are of the opinion that when students make the uncertain and high-risk decision of choosing a university, they look for proof of the quality of service offered by the institution. This again confirms the importance of service quality in the HE sector.

HEIs will lose market share if they ignore the importance of service quality in attracting students. HE worldwide (including PHE) has changed dramatically over the last decade. The sector has been exposed to global competitive pressures, reduced public funding and higher expectations from stakeholders. This has transformed the focus of HEIs to emphasis on service quality. As with the broad service industry, PHEIs can distinguish themselves with superior service quality and be set apart from the rest (Chong & Ahmed, 2014; Tsinidou, Gerogiannis & Fitsilis, 2010).

From a South African point of view, Levy (2002) provides evidence that in for-profit PHE, the student is the paying customer, and most of the PHE providers are totally reliant on student fees as their main source of income. Levy (2003) adds that the operational model of a PHEI is equated to that of a business since profit is the main focus. One of the core divisions of the business-oriented PHEI is that of faculty staff whose primary function is to serve students. These faculties are sometimes referred to as 'delivery centres', because they deliver to and for students. Where public providers mostly offer products and services in line with their own interests, PHEIs, by contrast, offer qualifications based on market needs. Breneman (2005) agrees and mentions that one of the characteristics of a successful PHEI is a focussed approach to treating students like customers and delivering employable graduates into the market place. In addition, a focus on quality management and a continuous improvement culture in all aspects of the business are the means of survival and sustaining a competitive advantage in the South African PHE environment (Asmal, 2012). Lovelock and Wright (2002, cited in Asmal, 2012:158) identify the following advantages of service quality: insulation of customers from competition; creation of sustainable advantage; reducing failure costs; encouraging repeat patronage; and positive promotion by word of mouth. Furthermore, service quality is one of the most important factors for a sustainable competitive advantage for both manufacturers and service providers. HE is a service provider, and this is especially the case for PHEIs. As mentioned previously, the HE landscape (both public and private) has changed considerably over the last decade, and service quality is one of the driving forces for competitive advantage in the South African PHE environment (Dirkse van Schalkwyk & Steenkamp, 2014b).

The drive (and pressure) for service quality and excellence is also becoming more evident in public HEIs. Professor Mandla Makhanya, principal and vice-chancellor of Unisa, opened the Extended Management Lekgotla (business meeting) on 10 April 2017 with the following statement:

> Distance education has morphed into a diverse agglomeration of traditional, private, and for-profit providers, the vast majority of whom purport to be able to provide open access to affordable (or free) quality education to students via a plethora of modes.

He also made reference to the importance of quality, excellence and service as custodians of a university's reputation and prestige (Farrel, 2017). It seems that private for-profit HE providers are now being acknowledged as likely role players and competitors in the HE market.

In conclusion, PHE in South Africa is still sometimes perceived as being of poor quality and not offering value for money. It seems that one way to address this negative perception is by providing service quality excellence by means of strategic tools, such as service quality systems and models. Managing and improving service quality are therefore crucial in improving PHE in South Africa, especially if they want to become the 'Harvards' of the future (Dirkse van Schalkwyk & Steenkamp, 2016).

2.5 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an overview of the HE environment in South Africa with the emphasis on the PHE environment. The first section of this chapter briefly detailed the public HE environment, also stating the governance and challenges of this sector. The next section briefly mentioned PHE in selected developed and developing countries. A discussion on the South African PHE environment followed, with emphasis on governance, partnerships with public providers, institutional and student profile, the geographic location of PHEIs and the for-profit and business-oriented nature of these institutions. Service quality, the primary focus of this study, was introduced in the PHE environment. Many authors maintain that the PHE environment is dynamic and constantly changing. This indicates the importance of continuously studying this sector in order to understand how it can be developed to support the HE system in South Africa.

The worldwide continuous growth of PHE is evident, and South Africa is no exception. PHE in South Africa is at the forefront in comparison to many other countries in terms of regulatory requirements. As mentioned previously, for registration and accreditation, PHEIs must conform to the same quality standards as public HEIs. Given the challenges of HE in South Africa, the time has perhaps come for government to put aside their political agendas and utilise the capacity and infrastructure of PHEIs to develop human resources through HE for sustainable growth and transformation in South Africa.

Chapter 3 will present a discussion of service quality and TQS. A descriptive and historical approach will be followed to review service quality models and frameworks of the last 25 to 30 years, which will serve as a foundation for the development of a theoretical TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3

SERVICE QUALITY MANAGEMENT

"Quality in a service or product is not what you put into it. It is what the client or customer gets out of it" (Drucker, cited in Nahmias & Olsen, 2015:666).

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research on quality and quality management spawned the birth of service quality research in the 1980s. It is therefore important to have a thorough understanding of quality to grasp the importance of and the need for service quality, with a specific focus on TQS as a powerful competitive weapon and catalyst of business success. Quality management research laid the foundation for a plethora of research articles on the meaning of service quality, its dimensions as well as frameworks and models attempting to measure, manage and improve the delivery of quality services. Kadampully and Solnet (2015) emphasise that service quality is an abstract and elusive concept and difficult to define and measure. Yet, it is one of the greatest differentiators and competitive weapons in the arsenal of any service company.

Chapter 2 provided an overview of the HE environment in South Africa with the emphasis on the PHE environment. The purpose of this chapter is to reflect insight into quality and more specifically service quality and TQS, and its importance as a competitive factor. In this chapter, an overview of quality is given, covering a wide spectrum inclusive of but not limited to the evolution of quality, theories, benefits and different functional perspectives on quality. The three spheres of quality, different quality variables and product and service quality dimensions are presented. The chapter goes on with a focus shift to service quality and TQS, its meaning and importance as well as the identification of various dimensions spanning a worldwide literature study of the last 27 years. The chapter concludes with a presentation of a proposed theoretical TQS framework that will build towards the final TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa presented in the last chapter.

Figure 3.1 presents a diagrammatic depiction of the structure of Chapter 3.

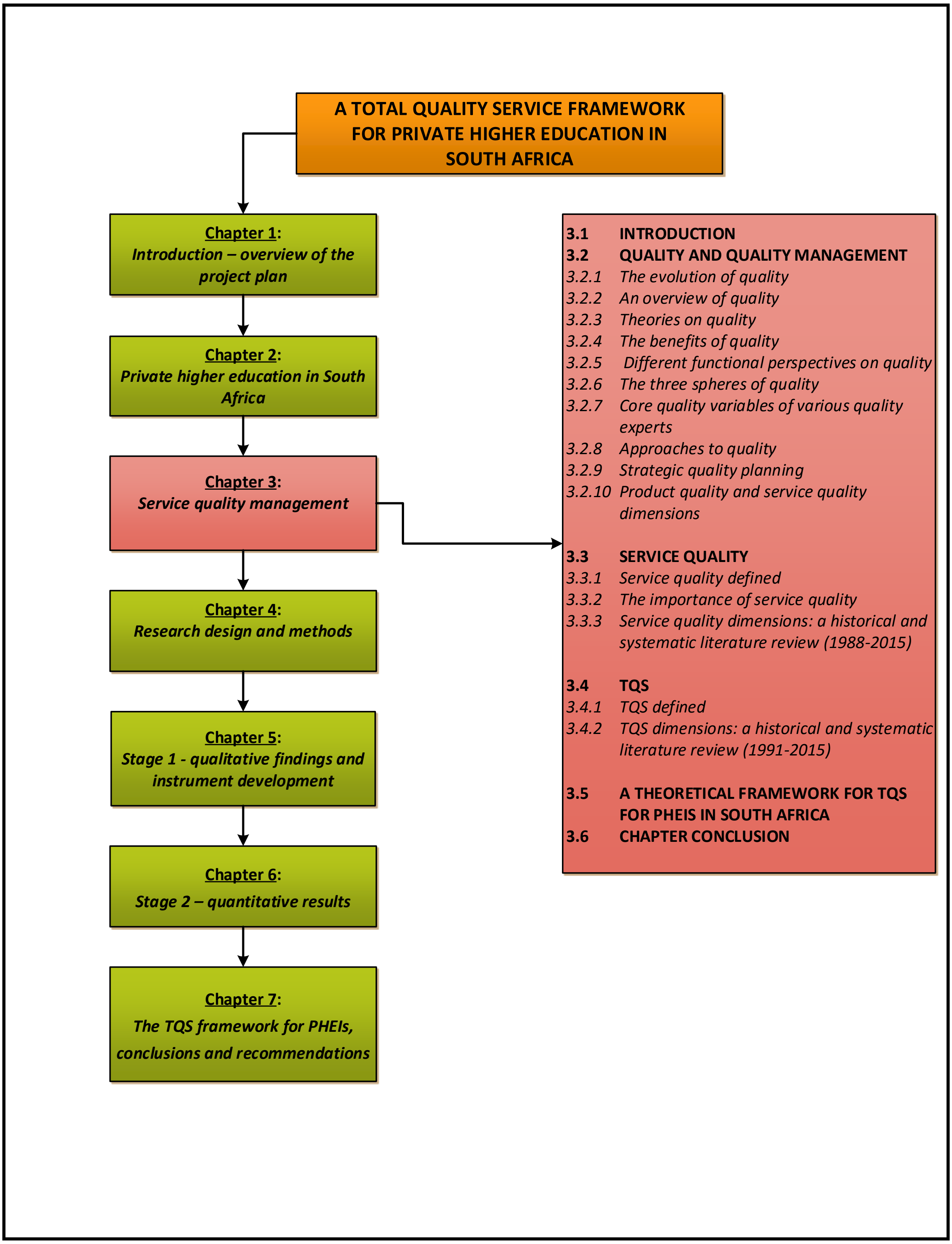

Figure 3.1: Layout of Chapter 3

Source: Author's own compilation

3.2 QUALITY AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The following subsection focusses on the evolution of quality, an overview of quality, the theories, benefits and functional perspectives on quality, the three spheres of quality, core quality variables as well as different approaches to quality. The subsection concludes with a brief explanation of strategic quality planning followed by the differentiation between product and service quality dimensions. All the aspects addressed in this section are embedded in quality management and need to be understood to grasp the complexity of this phenomenon. Quality management is the act of directing the activities and processes to achieve excellence in product and service offerings. It comprises quality planning, quality assurance, quality control and quality improvement.

3.2.1 The evolution of quality

This subsection (3.2.1) is based on the view of Evans (2017) regarding the origins and evolution of quality. According to Evans (2017), the origins of quality can be traced back to the twelfth century BC during the Zhou Dynasty in China. Throughout this period, specific government departments were created that were responsible for production and manufacturing, distribution of raw material (what we today call 'supply chain management'), formulation of quality standards and inspection. This process also included a self-governing quality organisation, which reported directly to the top government structure. During the Middle Ages, craftsmen served as inspectors and manufacturers by building quality into their products through pride in their workmanship. Even back then, customers expected the highest quality and these craftsmen understood it by exceeding customer expectations (Evans, 2017).

Years later, the Industrial Revolution changed everything by changing the craftsmanship philosophy to a focus on productivity. Frederick W. Taylor introduced the concept of 'scientific management'. This philosophy involved dividing jobs into smaller tasks and focussing on production efficiency. The responsibility of quality inspection was allocated to one department, the quality control department. During this era, the total responsibility for quality was nested in this one department.

The term 'quality control' was most probably invented at H.J. Heinz – the only major food processing company that supported the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act. During the 1920s, pioneers such as Walter Shewhart, Harold Dodge, George Edwards (and others) conducted further research in quality control. They developed new theories and methods to maintain and improve quality. This led to the use of control charts, sampling techniques and economic analyses by incorporating statistical techniques into the functions of quality control. From here, quality became a technical discipline and the movement from quality control to statistical quality control was initiated. W. Edwards Deming and Joseph M. Juran introduced the concept 'statistical quality control' to the Japanese after the devastation of World War II. They convinced Japanese industrialists that the drive for quality improvement was a necessity for the survival of the Japanese nation. During the 1970s and 1980s, many United States (US) businesses lost substantial market share to their Japanese competitors.

In 1980, a documentary programme aired on the NBC television network titled "If Japan Can … Why Can't We?". This started the 'quality revolution' in America. Deming was invited to the United States to render assistance to improve operations and quality. In 1987, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality award was established to raise awareness of quality as well as to recognise exceptional quality efforts. This resulted in a remarkable interest in quality. The drive for quality spread from the manufacturing to other sectors of the economy, such as health care, education, government and services.

Evans (2017) argue that initially, all quality efforts focussed on reducing defects and errors in products and services through measurement and statistical problem-solving tools. Organisations soon realised that lasting improvements could only be established through significant attention to the quality of management practices on a daily basis. It became evident that the approaches organisations used to listen to customers and developed relationships, measure performance and analyse data, train and reward employees, design and deliver products and services and acted as leaders in their organisations, were the true enablers of better quality and business results. This gave birth to the philosophy of total quality management (TQM) – a holistic approach to quality management. TQM has changed the way organisations think about their customers and processes. Top management soon realised that all fundamental business activities had to be based on quality principles that needed to work as an integrated system for continuous improvement. Six Sigma, a new approach to quality improvement emerged in the late 1990s. This is a customer-focussed and results-oriented approach to business improvement that integrates traditional quality improvement tools with a strategic orientation; hence, gaining support from top management (further detail on TQM and Six Sigma will be provided in section 3.2.8).

Moreover, Dale *et al*. (2016) argue that quality management has evolved through four levels. First, the focus on quality was on inspection only. Observation and judgment were deemed appropriate measures for testing quality. The second level focussed on quality control, which included control measures, such as quality manuals, process performance data, product testing and the use of basic statistics. From there, the third level was based on quality assurance, which included, for example, comprehensive quality management systems, the application of quality control tools, statistical process control (SPC), failure mode and effects analysis (FMEA) and the use of quality costs. Finally, the previous levels culminated into TQM – the fourth level. This incorporates all quality management principles of the organisation. This is inclusive of customers and suppliers and their incorporation into key business processes. Table 3.1 below provides a brief history of quality from the 1900s to the present.

Table 3.1: History of quality

Period	History
Early 1900s	Frederick Taylor, Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, and scientific management
1920s	Walter Shewhart and statistical process control
1930s	Dodge and Romig introduce acceptance sampling
1940s	Military standards introduced
1950s	Deming and Juran introduce quality management in Japan
1960s	Taguchi method and other tools developed
1970s	Quality becomes strategic; beginning of major adoption in the United States
1980s	"If Japan Can, Why Can't We?" airs on U.S. TV; introduction of lean with Schonberger, Shingo and Hall; TQM and empowerment become watchwords in quality field; Baldrige award programme implemented
1990s	Re-engineering and Six Sigma become major movements with mixed results; wide dissemination of quality approaches
2000s	Growth of supply chain management and improvement of supplier development; lean Six Sigma becomes popular; contingency theory in quality becomes recognised as important
2010s	Supply chain quality management (SCQM) gains traction as a field

Source: Foster (2015:52)

Table 3.1 provides evidence that quality as concept has developed and evolved over many years.

Going forward, the American Society for Quality (ASQ) identified eight key forces that will influence the future of quality (Evans, 2017):

1. **Global responsibility**. Organisations should realise the global impact of their local decisions. With the planet's declining natural resources, waste is unacceptable. Global responsibility also includes human rights, consumer interests, fair operating and labour practices as well as contributions to society.

2. **Consumer awareness**. With today's technology, customers have access to a wealth of information on which purchase decisions are based. Organisations must be quick to respond to customers' changing needs and preferences.

3. **Globalisation**. This no longer just means entering new markets, and is related to increased competition and the risks associated with global supply chains.

4. **Increasing rate of change**. Technology has increased the rate of change with associated opportunities and threats. Product life cycles are getting shorter, and responding quickly to customer demand is now more important than ever before.

5. **Workforce of the future**. Organisations will have to invest in the education and training of their workforce, and should place greater emphasis on professional certifications.

6. **Aging population**. People live longer and, as a result, organisations face higher costs for medical care. This also results in a growing market share for organisations to consider.

7. **Twenty-first century quality**. Quality today is not the same as five years ago. Quality is not only centred on the organisation anymore but includes a holistic customer experience with the whole organisation and not only with the product or service being offered.

8. **Innovation**. This lies at the heart of any organisation. Innovation is the ability to anticipate the needs of the customer and produce products and services that excite customers and address their needs.

3.2.2 An overview of quality

There are multiple definitions of quality. Some experts refer to quality as meeting customers' expectations or needs every time, while others are of the opinion that the concept of quality encompasses satisfying the customer by doing the right things right the first time and always striving for improvement. Oakland (2014:4–5) provides some definitions of quality based on the research and philosophies of various leading authors on quality:

- "Fitness for purpose or use" – Juran's definition.
- "Quality should be aimed at the needs of the customer, present and future" – Deming's definition.
- "Conformance to requirements" – Crosby's definition.

- “Degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfils requirements” – ISO 9000:2000 definition.

Added to this, Summers (2009) reports on the contributions of some of the other quality experts such as Feigenbaum who followed a systematic approach to quality. Feigenbaum proposed that quality should be defined by the customer with the goal to involve everyone in the quality effort in an attempt to meet and exceed customer needs with a focus on continuous improvement. In contrast, Taguchi’s approach was more technical with a focus on customer performance requirements with the responsibility for quality residing within the engineering department. Moreover, Shewhart’s approach to quality was on the removal of variation found in repetitive processes through the application of statistical methods.

Evans (2017:5) points out that according to the ASQ, quality is a subjective term where each person determines his or her own definition for quality. The ASQ provides the following 10 most common definitions for quality as provided by respondents:

1. Efficiently providing products and services that meet or exceed customer expectations.
2. Adding customer value.
3. Continuously measuring the improvement of processes and services for customers.
4. Acting as promised, and reporting failures.
5. Doing the right thing at the right time in the right way with the right people.
6. Ensuring customers come back, and products do not.
7. Providing the best value to customers by improving everyday activities and processes.
8. Beyond delivering what the customer wants, anticipating what the customer will want when he or she knows the possibilities.
9. Delivering customer value across the organisation through best-in-class products, services and support.
10. Meeting and exceeding the expectations of clients, employees and relevant constituencies in the community.

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the ASQ defines quality as “the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy given needs" (Evans, 2017:6). Other authors such as Slack, Brandon-Jones, Johnston, Singh and Phihlela (2017) approach quality from both the operation's view as well as the customer's view. The operation's view of quality is concerned with the consistent conformance to the expectation of the customer; hence, the goal to meet customer expectations. Equally important, the customer's view of quality is how he or she perceives quality to be and is shaped by individual knowledge and past experiences. For a united view (incorporating the view of both operations and the customer), quality can be defined as "the degree of fit between customers' expectations and customer perception of the service or product" (Slack *et al*., 2017:443). Thus, customers compare their expectations of the product or service with their perception of how it performs. If the product or service experience was better than expected, then quality will be perceived to be high. The opposite is also true: if the product or service experience was less than what the customer expected, quality will be perceived as low, and this may lead to dissatisfaction. However, quality will be seen as acceptable if customer expectations are met. Figure 3.2 indicates the gap of perceived quality between customers' expectations and perceptions of the service or product.

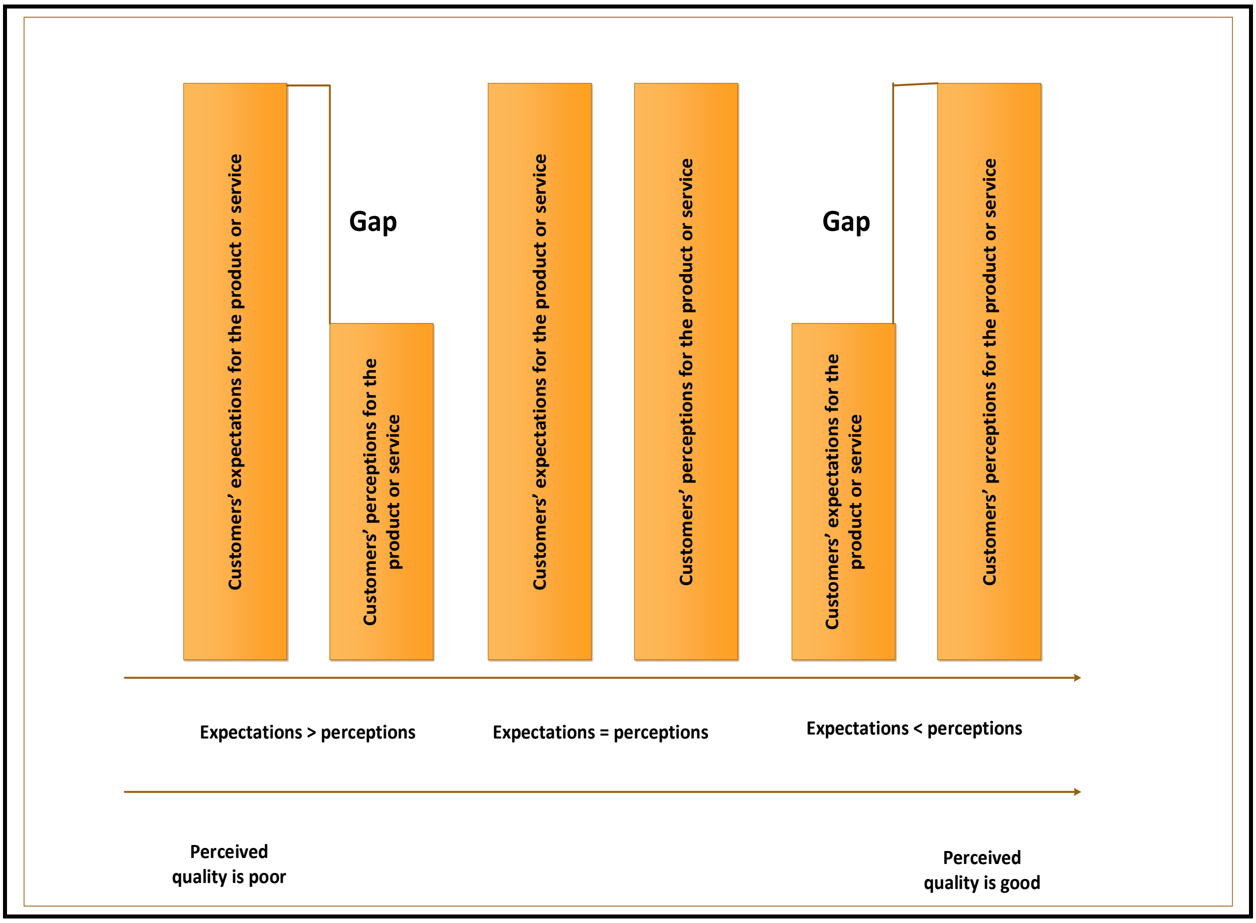

Figure 3.2: The gap between customers' expectation and perception of the service or product

Source: Slack *et al*. (2017:443)

One of the most respected collections of definitions of quality was compiled by David Garvin (Foster, 2015). According to this definition, quality is transcendent, product-based, user-based, manufacturing-based or value-based (Foster, 2015:27). The meanings of these terms are explained below:

- **Transcendent** – quality is something that is intuitively understood but nearly impossible to communicate, such as beauty or love.
- **Product-based** – quality is found in the components and attributes of a product.
- **User-based** – if the customer is satisfied, the quality of the product is acceptable.
- **Manufacturing-based** – if the product conforms to the design specifications, its quality is satisfactory.
- **Value-based** – if the product is perceived to provide good value for the price, its quality is acceptable.

It seems that there is no one common definition of quality because it is a subjective term with multidimensional meanings. Perhaps one of the most appropriate definitions is the one by Goetsch and Davis (2012:10) who incorporate various elements from quality literature in their definition: “Quality is a dynamic state associated with products, services, people, processes, and environments that meets or exceeds expectations and helps produce superior value”.

3.2.3 Theories on quality

A theory is a “coherent group of general propositions used as principles of explanation for a class of phenomena” (Foster, 2015:49). A theory must consist of four elements:

- the *what* of a theory, which comprises the variables of a theoretical model;
- the *how* of a theoretical model, which refers to the nature of the relationship among the variables;
- the *why* of the theory, which is referred to as the ‘glue’ that holds the model intact; and
- the *who, where and when* aspects, which place the theory within a determined context, for example a specific organisation or industry.

There are numerous theories of quality management. Theories can be established in one of two ways. A theory that was engendered by description and observation is developed by the process of induction. The more common theoretical approach is deduction. Using deduction, a proposed model is developed based on prior research and tests to verify the model (Foster, 2015). Many of the concepts and models in quality management have been developed through induction by quality experts such as Deming, Juran, Ishikawa, Feigenbaum, Crosby and Taguchi. These experts based their principles on years of experience in a wide variety of organisations (Ramphal, 2011).

As yet, there is no unified theory explaining quality improvement that is widely accepted by the quality community. The different approaches to quality represent different and often competing philosophies to improvement (Foster, 2015). This once again accentuates the subjectivity and multidimensionality of quality. Table 3.2 presents a summary of the theories and research of the leading quality experts.

Table 3.2: Research of the leading quality experts (1950s–1980s)

Expert	Theory summary
W. Edwards Deming	Deming placed emphasis on the management of a system for the improvement of quality. His thinking was based on the use of statistics for continual improvement. He believed that theory was important to the understanding of quality improvement which culminated into his 14 points for management: 1. Create constancy of purpose 2. Adopt a new philosophy 3. Cease mass inspection 4. End awarding business on the basis of price tag 5. Constantly improve the system 6. Institute training on the job 7. Improve leadership 8. Drive out fear 9. Break down barriers between departments 10. Eliminate slogans 11. Eliminate work standards 12. Remove barriers to pride 13. Institute education and self-help 14. Put everyone to work
Joseph M. Juran	Juran promoted the view that quality problems are mainly the result of insufficient and ineffective planning for quality. Companies must revise and master their strategic planning processes. He also identified three processes essential for managing quality improvement. These three processes are known as the “Juran Trilogy” and comprise planning, control and improvement. Other important concepts that Juran promoted were control versus breakthrough. He believed that control and breakthrough related activities should occur simultaneously. In addition, he believed that improvement in organisations was only accomplished on a project-by-project basis and ‘in no other way’. Juran’s 10 steps to quality improvement are the following: 1. Build awareness of both the need for improvement and opportunities for improvement 2. Set goals for improvement

Expert	Theory summary
	3. Organise to meet the goals that have been set 4. Provide training 5. Implement projects aimed at solving problems 6. Report progress 7. Give recognition 8. Communicate results 9. Keep score 10. Maintain momentum by building improvement into the company's regular systems
Kaoru Ishikawa	Ishikawa was a great believer in training, and he maintained that success depends on everyone in the organisation being responsible for statistical analysis and interpretation. Perhaps his greatest achievement was the development of the seven basic tools of quality, namely process maps, check sheets, histograms, scatter plots, control charts, cause and effect diagrams and Pareto analysis. His philosophy is synthesised in 11 points: 1. Quality begins with education and ends with education 2. The first step in quality is to know the requirements of the customer 3. The ideal state of quality control is when inspection is no longer necessary 4. Remove the root causes and not the symptoms 5. Quality control is the responsibility of all workers in all divisions 6. Do not confuse the means with the objectives 7. Put quality first and set your sights on long-term objectives 8. Marketing is the entrance and exit of quality 9. Top management must not show anger when facts are presented to subordinates 10. Ninety-five per cent of problems can be solved with the seven tools of quality control 11. Data without dispersion information are false data
Armand Feigenbaum	He studied quality in the context of a business organisation. His main contribution to quality thinking in America was the claim that the entire organisation should be involved in quality improvement. He proposed a three-step process to improving quality: quality leadership, quality technology and organisational commitment. He proposed 19 steps for quality improvement, which highlight organisational involvement in the improvement process: 1. Total quality control (TQC) is defined as a system of improvement 2. Company-wide commitment to TQC is more important than only local improvements to the production line 3. Control is a management tool with four steps 4. Quality control requires integration of uncoordinated activities 5. Quality increases profits 6. Quality is expected, not desired 7. Humans affect quality 8. TQC applies to all products and services 9. Quality is a total life cycle consideration 10. Control the process 11. A total quality system involves the entire company-wide operating work structure 12. There are many operational and financial benefits to quality 13. The cost of quality is a means for measuring quality control activities 14. Organise for quality control

Expert	Theory summary
	15. Managers are quality facilitators not quality policemen 16. Strive for continuous commitment 17. Use statistical tools 18. Automation is not a panacea 19. Control quality at the source
Philip Crosby	The core of Crosby's theory is that quality can be a source of profit. His approach focussed on behavioural and motivational factors rather than on statistical methods, and he adopted a human approach to the quality improvement plan. He is also known for the concept that 'quality is free'. Crosby proposed a quality improvement programme consisting of 14 steps: 1. Make it clear that management is clear about quality 2. Form quality improvement teams with representatives from each department 3. Determine how to measure where current and potential quality problems lie 4. Evaluate the cost of quality, and explain its use as a management tool 5. Raise the quality awareness and personal concern of all employees 6. Take formal actions to correct problems identified through the previous steps 7. Establish a committee for the zero defects programme 8. Train all employees to perform their part of the quality improvement programme actively 9. Hold a 'zero defects day' to let all employees know that there is a change 10. Encourage individuals to establish improvement goals for themselves and their groups 11. Encourage employees to communicate to management the obstacles they face in attaining their improvement goals 12. Recognise and appreciate those who participate 13. Establish quality councils to communicate on a regular basis 14. Do it all over again
Genichi Taguchi	'Ideal quality' refers to a reference point for determining the quality level of a product or service. This reference point is expressed as a target value. Ideal quality is delivered when a product or service performs its intended function throughout its projected life cycle under reasonable operating conditions without harmful side-effects. Because production and consumption often occur simultaneously, ideal quality in services is a function of customer perceptions and satisfaction. Service quality is measured in terms of loss to society if the service is not performed as expected. Taguchi believed that any deviation from the target value is a loss to society, and products and services should be designed in such a way that they are inherently free of any defects and of a high quality. The Taguchi method provides the following: 1. a basis for determining the functional relationship between controllable product or service design factors and the outcomes of a process; 2. a method for adjusting the mean of a process by optimising controllable variables; and 3. a procedure for examining the relationship between random noises in the process and product or service variability.

Sources: Adapted from Dirkse van Schalkwyk (2012:64), Evans (2017:54–61), Foster (2015:52–64), Goetsch and Davis (2012:16–21) and Oakland (2014:19–22)

3.2.4 The benefits of quality

Understanding the multiple benefits of quality will lead to the philosophy that 'quality is free'. Besides pride and satisfaction, Gryna, Chua and DeFeo (2007) contend that improved quality results in a higher usable output for the same amount of labour input. Quality also has benefits in terms of market-route and cost-route benefits. An increase in quality results in a decrease in reworking, scrap and customer complaints. Similarly, Summers (2009) adds that improved quality leads to improved profitability and greater market share, reduced customer complaints, improved company image as well as reduced costs. Moreover, Goetsch and Davis (2012) as well as Oakland (2014) refer to quality as a competitive weapon that allows organisations to produce world-class quality; thus, strengthening their competitiveness in the global marketplace. Customer-driven quality is also essential for high-performing organisations. Improvements in reliability and performance will differentiate the product or service from those of competitors and hence improve the reputation of the organisation as well as the perceived value of the product or service. This in turn leads to increased revenues and market share (Evans, 2017).

Figure 3.3 below demonstrates how quality improvements could affect other aspects of the performance of an organisation. Revenues can be increased by better sales and prices, and costs can be reduced through improved productivity and the use of capital (Slack *et al.*, 2017).

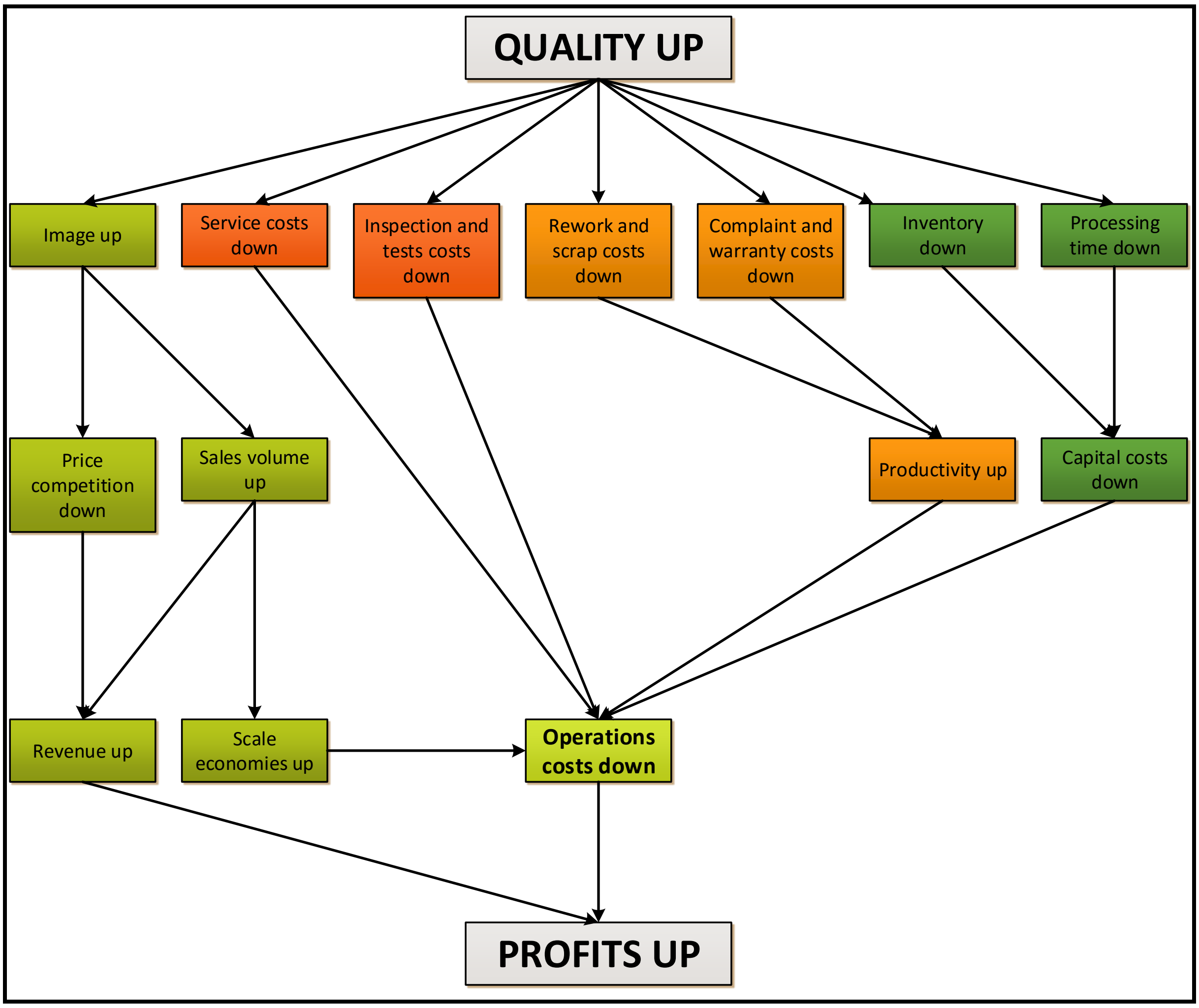

Figure 3.3: Benefits of improved quality

Source: Slack *et al*. (2017:442)

From the above section, it is evident that focus on improved quality will lead to both tangible and intangibles benefits for the organisation.

3.2.5 Different functional perspectives on quality

In order to resolve the misalliances in different quality perceptions in an organisation, it is necessary to view quality from different functional perspectives. The following subsections (3.2.5.1-3.2.5.9) explain these different functional perspectives on quality as proposed by Foster (2015).

3.2.5.1 The operations perspective

The operations perspective on quality embraces the systems view where the interaction of different variables, such as machines, labour, planning and management culminate in product or service quality. The systems view also acknowledges the system as the cause of quality problems. The needs of the customer are also considered in the operations perspective.

3.2.5.2 A supply chain perspective

The supply chain view approaches quality from a value chain perspective. The value chain comprises inbound logistics, core processes and outbound logistics. These processes are supported by other functions, such as human resources, information systems and purchasing. There are various quality-related activities that are part of supply chain management and which are referred to as upstream activities (interaction with suppliers), core processes (process improvement) and downstream activities (logistics, reliable delivery and customer support).

3.2.5.3 The engineering perspective

Engineering is an applied science with emphasis on product and process design, reliability and statistical process control. The engineering view on quality is more technically oriented, focussing on statistics and technical specifications for high-quality manufacturing.

3.2.5.4 The strategic management perspective

Strategy encompasses the planning process of an organisation to achieve its long-term goals. This planning process involves a cohesive effort in terms of goals, policies, plans and sequencing for quality improvement. Quality strategies are imbedded in the mission and core values of an organisation, which leads to business-level and functional strategies. Strategic quality planning has become essential for gaining a sustainable competitive advantage (strategic quality planning for both products and services is elaborated on in section 3.2.9).

3.2.5.5 The marketing perspective

The traditionally, the term ‘marketing’ referred to the flow of products and services from the producer to the customer. More recently, marketing has shifted its focus to customer satisfaction and added value through customer relationship management. The marketing perspective of quality focusses on perceived quality and the management of quality perceptions. In addition, the focus is on service at the time of the transaction and after-sales support. Marketing has also linked the design process with the voice of the customer; thus, making the customer the focal point of the marketing-related quality improvement process.

3.2.5.6 The financial perspective

Improved quality efforts (if implemented correctly) could lead to waste reduction, reduced cost and improved profitability. The focus of the financial perspective is on the relationship between risks and investments and the potential rewards from those investments. There is always concern about the return on the investment in quality. One way to address this concern is to identify and measure the costs of quality before investing in quality improvement-related initiatives. In addition, the law of diminishing marginal returns purports that there is a point where investments in quality will become uneconomical. The basic economic quality level-model depicted in Figure 3.4 shows that any additional investment over and above the minimum cost level would be uneconomical.

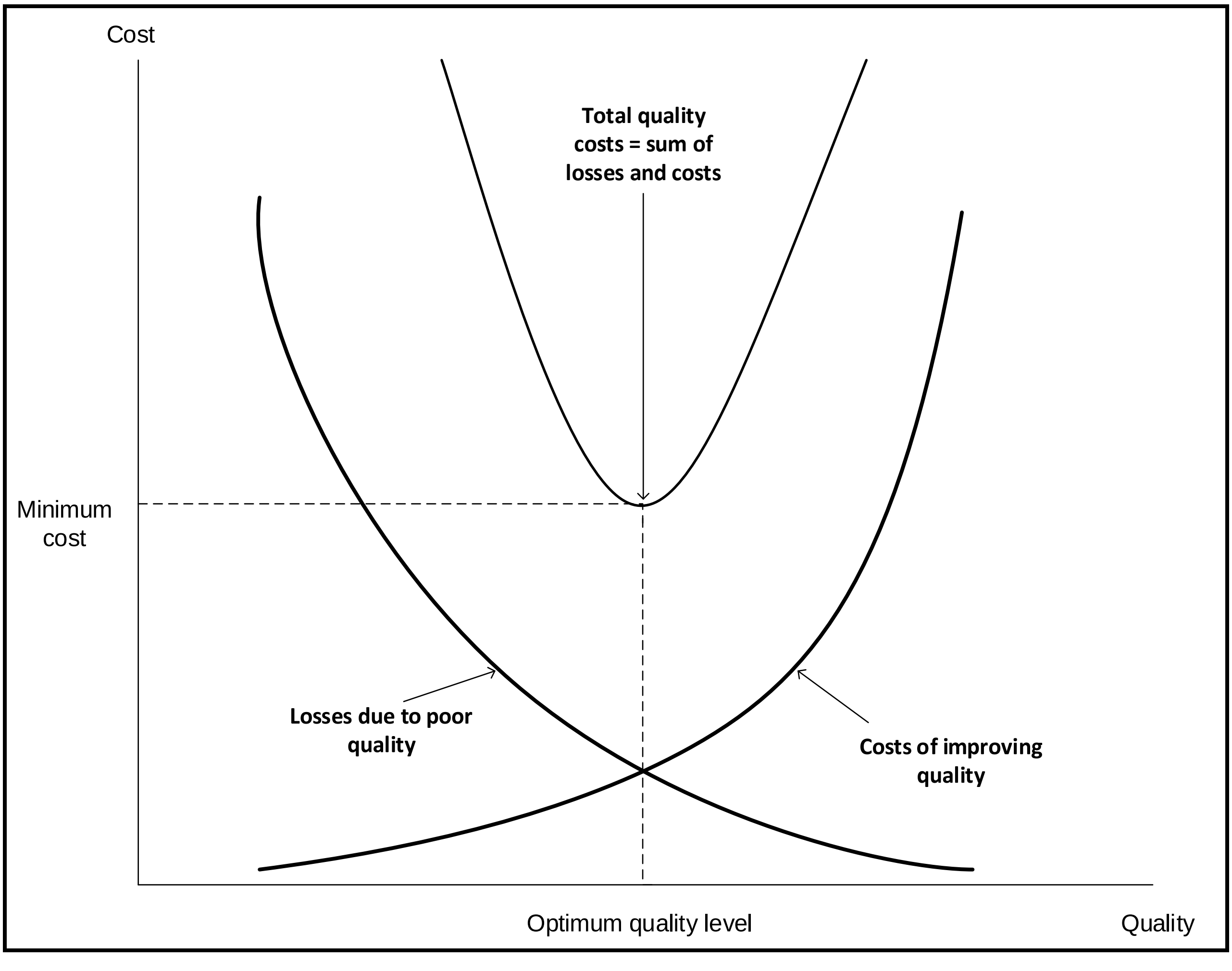

Figure 3.4: Basic economic quality-level model

Source: Foster (2015:39)

3.2.5.7 The human resources perspective

The human resources view on quality focusses on the quality commitment of all employees. Of interest to human resources are employee empowerment, organisational design, job analysis and employee selection. Even though all quality efforts must be supported by top management to be successful, the participation of all employees is just as important. The human resource perspective is centred on the interactions among people, technology, inputs, processes and systems to produce high-quality products and services.

3.2.5.8 The value-based perspective

A customer-based perspective on quality comprises the concept of value. A value-based perspective involves a subjective assessment of the effectiveness and economic value of every step of the process to the customer.

3.2.5.9 The contingency perspective

There are vast differences between the various key areas in organisations. These key areas include company missions, core competences, target markets, customer attributes, technologies, management styles, different environmental variables as well as different cultures. The contingency perspective on quality presumes that there is no standard operating method that can be applied in all organisations. By embracing the contingency philosophy, it is assumed that the definitions and dimensions applied in different organisations will and should, vary. By adopting this approach, the dimensions of quality will be dependent on the type of industry, culture and environment within which the organisation operates.

This approach provides flexibility to the organisational managers in pursuit of quality, and once again accentuates the importance of developing industry-specific quality models, such as a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

3.2.6 The three spheres of quality

Foster (2015:41–42) acknowledges that the field of quality can be explained by the interaction between the three spheres of quality, namely quality control, quality assurance and quality management. The overlapping nature of the three spheres is depicted in Figure 3.5.

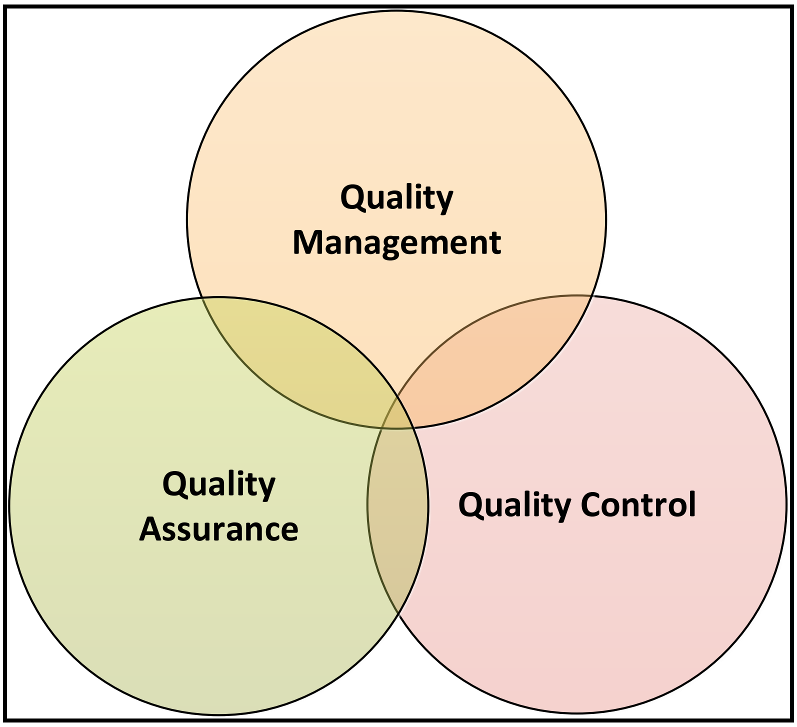

Figure 3.5: Three spheres of quality

Source: Foster (2015:42)

3.2.6.1 Quality control

The first sphere of quality control comprises the phases of analysis (a process is subdivided into its essential pieces), relation (understanding the relationships between parts) and generalisation (recognising how interrelationships apply to the larger phenomenon of quality). Quality control comprises the following activities:

- monitoring process capability and stability;
- measuring process performance;
- reducing process variability;
- optimising processes to nominal measures;
- performing acceptance sampling; and
- developing and maintaining control charts.

3.2.6.2 Quality assurance

Quality assurance is associated with activities guaranteeing the quality of the product or service. This view sees quality control as being reactive, and the only way to ensure quality is in the design of products and services. The following tasks are associated with quality assurance:

- failure mode and effect analysis;

- concurrent engineering;
- experimental design;
- process improvement;
- design team formation and management;
- off-line experimentation; and
- reliability and durability product testing.

3.2.6.3 Quality management

Quality management comprises the processes that bind and link quality assurance and control activities. The integrative philosophy of quality management supports the notion that quality is the responsibility of all managers. Quality management activities comprise the following:

- planning for quality management;
- creating a quality organisational culture;
- providing leadership and support;
- providing training and retraining;
- designing an organisational system that reinforces quality ideals;
- providing employee recognition; and
- facilitating organisational communication.

3.2.7 Core quality variables of various quality experts

Table 3.2 provided the theories of leading quality experts. Foster (2015) compiled a list of the core quality variables identified within these theories. These variables are the following:

- **Leadership**. Leaders are the critical driving force behind quality improvement and they must be willing to lead by example.
- **Employee improvement**. Employees must be empowered, developed and trained.
- **Quality assurance**. Quality can only be assured in the design phase of the production process. Quality should be proactive and investments must be made in the designing of processes, products and services.
- **Customer focus**. A crucial element of all quality management efforts is an understanding of customer needs. Service quality is also central to providing overall quality.

- **Quality philosophy**. A unique quality philosophy is vital for any organisation during its quest for sustainability and improvement.
- **Information analysis**. Information gathering and statistical analysis are central to quality improvement.
- **Strategic planning**. Strategic planning provides a framework that links the quality strategy and key business factors of an organisation.
- **Environment or infrastructure**. A quality environment should be created to support the quality management efforts.
- **Team approach**. Cross-functional or project teams can contribute to the achievement of process improvement.
- **Focus on the quality department**. The quality department should provide a coaching function and not a policing function. The message should be that the responsibility for continuous improvement lies with every employee in the organisation.
- **Breakthrough**. Organisations should strive for radical improvements through technology or organisational redesign.

3.2.8 Approaches to quality

The following sections briefly describe TQM and Six Sigma as two of the most popular broad approaches to quality.

3.2.8.1 Total quality management

TQM is a company-wide approach that can contribute meaningfully to the improvement of and external customer. After World War II, the TQM approach was developed by W. Deming and J. Duran and implemented in Japanese organisations.

Over the last few decades, TQM has become the basis for quality improvement initiatives in various types of company performance. The core focus is on delivering quality goods and services to the internal organisations. TQM is a comprehensive and holistic approach to improving effectiveness and competitiveness through planning and understanding all business activities. It is based on the mutual co-operation of everyone at every level of the organisation to produce products and services to meet and exceed the expectations of customers. TQM starts at the top where management is committed to quality improvement and pursues this ever-evolving practice of doing business in an attempt to develop processes that cannot be copied by competitors. In addition, TQM can also be viewed as a new organisational culture. This culture is concerned with a shift in the focus of control – from the outside to the inside of every employee – so that they are responsible and accountable for their own performance as part of a team effort in the pursuit of continuous business improvement (Dale *et al*., 2016; Oakland, 2014).

Similarly, Slack *et al*. (2017:451) define TQM as "an effective system for integrating the quality development, quality maintenance and quality improvement efforts of the various groups in an organisation so as to enable production and service at the most economical levels, which allow for full customer satisfaction".

3.2.8.1.1 Principles of TQM

Dale *et al*. (2016) argue that the seven principles of TQM are defined in the ISO 9001 (2015) standards and comprise the following: customer focus, leadership, the engagement of people, process approach, improvement, evidence-based decision-making, and lastly, relationship management.

3.2.8.1.2 The focus of TQM

Similar to principles mentioned above, Slack *et al*. (2017:451) state that the focus of TQM is on:

- meeting the needs and expectations of customers;
- covering all parts of the organisation;
- including every person in the organisation;
- examining all costs which are related to quality, especially failure costs and getting things 'right first time';
- developing systems and procedures which support quality and improvement; and
- developing a continuous process of improvement.

TQM is thus both a philosophy and a set of guiding ideologies to get everyone involved in the process of long-term sustainability and continuous improvement. It is a holistic approach that puts quality at the heart of all activities in an organisation.

3.2.8.2 Six Sigma

The term Six Sigma was derived from a statistical measure associated with 3.4 (or fewer) defects per million opportunities (Evans, 2017). The Six sigma methodology was first used in the 1980s by the electronics and communications system company, Motorola. Its objective was 'total customer satisfaction', which could only be achieved through delivering products on time, with no defects or product failures during its application. The Six Sigma improvement cycle comprises five steps, namely define (goals and project deliverables), measure (current performance through process measurement), analyse (the causes of defects), improve (the process by eliminating defects) and control (the process performance) (Foster, 2015; Goetsch & Davis, 2012; Oakland, 2014; Slack *et al*., 2017). According to Evans (2017) and Dale *et al*. (2016), many of the concepts of Six Sigma are similar to those of TQM, especially the assimilation of human and process elements of improvement, such as customer focus, team-based processes, education and training, culture change and process management techniques. Six Sigma builds on TQM and brings engineering and statistics back into quality.

Goetsch and Davis (2012) also draw attention to the benefits of Six Sigma, namely a reduction in cost and cycle time, improvement in productivity, market share growth coupled with customer retention, culture change as well as product or service development. Evans (2017) confirms that the Six Sigma approach can also be applied in various service settings and is often referred to as transactional Six Sigma. It is generally accepted that 50% or more of the total savings opportunity in organisations are found outside of manufacturing. Even though Six Sigma also applies to service industries, it must be noted that there are various differences between service characteristics and product characteristics (this is elaborated on in section 3.2.10). While Six Sigma is applied to services, certain key performance measures need to be examined, such as accuracy (complete information and correct financial figures), cycle time (the time it takes to do something), cost (internal process cost) as well as customer satisfaction – the primary measure of success.

Probably the best explanation of Six Sigma was provided by General Electric who defined it as "a highly disciplined process that helps us focus on developing and delivering near-perfect products and services" (Slack *et al.*, 2017:488).

3.2.9 Strategic quality planning

Strategic planning has two important dimensions, namely content and process. 'Content' refers to what is to be included in the plan, while 'process' consists of the steps used to develop the strategic plan (Foster, 2015). In addition, Evans (2017) proposes that strategic planning assists in moulding the future of the organisation by focussing on the vision of the organisation of what it could become in 10 to 20 years' time and developing short-term plans and long-term objectives to achieve that vision. In viewing strategic planning as a process, organisations need to plan for the long term while taking cognisance of risks and challenges, projecting the future competitive environment, developing action plans (especially resource deployment) and ensuring the successful implementation of the strategic plan. In line with the two dimensions of strategic planning mentioned previously, Evans (2017) also identifies two principal activities of strategic planning: development and implementation. Development incorporates defining the mission and vision of the organisation, and implementation focusses on successful strategy execution. Moreover, Summers (2009) acknowledges that strategic planning is the linking of the mission, vision and core values of the organisation in order to focus on future activities. However, strategic quality planning embraces a broader view of the planning process than traditional strategic planning as presented in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3: Quality and traditional strategic planning

Strategic quality planning	Traditional strategic planning
Focus on customers (internal and external)	Focus is not defined or spread among many considerations
Leaders determine critical success factors	Leaders lack understanding of factors critical to success
Quality goals and objectives are process and results oriented	Goals and objectives are results-oriented
Quality goals and objectives are based on data and are driven by trend or pattern analysis	Goals and objectives may be based on hunches or guesses
Focus is on quality processes	Focus is on products
Alignment exists between critical success factors, mission, vision, goals, objectives and day-to-day activities	No alignment exist
Everyone knows how his or her day-to-day activities align with critical success factors, mission, vision, goals and objectives	Few people know how their day-to-day activities fit in with the plan
Quality improvement activities are focussed on activities critical to success	Improvement activities lack focus
Quality improvement activities are both within and across functional areas	Improvement activities are usually within functional areas

Source: Adapted from Summers (2009:159)

The differences between product quality and service quality are discussed in the 3.2.10 below.

3.2.10 Product quality and service quality dimensions

The confusion about what quality is, is always clarified by its dimensions. The discussions in the previous sections leaned towards a focus on manufacturing and product quality even though most of the principles and terminologies deliberated on also apply to services and service quality. Evans (2017:16) defines service as "any primary or complementary activity that does not directly produce a physical product – that is, the non-goods part of the transaction between the buyer (customer) and the seller (provider)." As such, services have unique characteristics differentiating it from products. Services are intangible and there are usually no physical evidence that a service has been performed. Further, services are perishable and cannot be inventoried or stored. The production of services is often simultaneous, implying that the customer may be present in the service performance thus enhancing the importance of the service process in delivering quality services. Service outputs are also heterogeneous. In many organisations, no two services are the same. There is often variability between service offerings due to non-standardised inputs resulting in non-standardised service delivery. As a result, differences in service outputs can exist within the same organisation, offering the same service by the same employee on different occasions (Dale *et al*., 2016; Foster, 2015; Oakland, 2014). Furthermore, Evans (2017) adds to the above-mentioned characteristics of services and contends that the production of services often require more customisation whereas the goal in manufacturing is uniformity. Added to this, performance standards are difficult to measure since they are defined by the customer and each customer is different. In addition, services are also more labour-intensive whereas production is more capital-intensive. In services that involve human contact, the quality of human interaction is a crucial factor in the service offering.

Adendorf and De Witt (1997) provide another useful categorisation, which they call the service package and its quality in terms of four components (categories) namely:

- **The core service** – this is the actual or primary service offered by the service provider.
- **The peripheral service** – this comprises the additional services offered contributing to the core service.
- **The tangible components** – these are the physical items that form part of the service environment.

- **The intangible components** – these are components of the service package, such as the atmosphere of the service environment.

The seminal works produced by Garvin (cited in Foster, 2015) as well as Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985; 1988) are still widely accepted today as generic dimensions of product and service quality respectively. The research conducted by these authors indicates the vast dimensional differences between these two constructs.

Table 3.4 below represent a summary of these differences.

Table 3.4: Product and service quality dimensions

Product quality dimensions	Core service quality dimensions
Performance: the operating characteristics of the product and the way the product achieves its intended purpose	**Tangibles**: the service provider's physical appearance and facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials
Features: the additional attributes to the product, the 'bells and whistles'	**Service reliability**: the ability to provide a dependable and accurate service as promised
Reliability: the ability of the product to perform its basic operating requirements over its stated design life	**Responsiveness**: providing a prompt service and willingness to assist and help customers
Conformance: the adherence of the product's physical characteristics (numeric product dimensions) to pre-established design standards	**Assurance**: employees' knowledge and courtesy and their ability to enthuse confidence and trust
Durability: the amount of stress a product can tolerate before it physically deteriorates	**Empathy**: care and individualised attention provided to customers
Serviceability: the ease with which a product can be repaired	
Aesthetics: the sensory characteristics of a product, such as look, feel, smell, taste and sound	
Perceived quality: the subjective opinion of the customer resulting from brand names and advertising	

Source: Adapted from Dale *et al*. (2016), Evans (2017) Foster (2015), and Oakland (2014)

Taking cognisance of the differences between product and service quality, the customer-focussed approach of both constructs seems to eradicate these dissimilarities and provides a uniting perspective.

Inherent in this study were the concepts of service quality and TQS, which are discussed in the following sections.

3.3 SERVICE QUALITY

The focus of this section is on service quality with specific attention to the various definitions of service quality, the importance of service quality as well as the identification of several service quality dimensions based on a literature review covering the period 1988 and 2015.

3.3.1 Service quality defined

Foster (2015) confirms that service quality is more difficult to define than product quality due to its personal nature, subjectivity, intangibility and multidimensionality; hence, the plethora of service quality definitions found in literature. Dale *et al.* (2016:122) also argue that various definitions for service quality exist but essentially it has to do with "meeting customer needs and requirements and with how well the service level delivered matches customers' expectations". Expectations are the desires that the customers feel that the service should offer. Added to this, Palmer (2014) asserts that theorising service quality is much more challenging than product quality, and that service quality is extremely difficult to define. Because of the unique characteristics of service quality (see section 3.2.10), Kadampully and Solnet (2015) are of the opinion that definitions of service quality can differ from person to person as well as from situation to situation. The section that follows presents various definitions of service quality spanning several years of research and concludes with a proposed service quality definition for PHE in South Africa.

Štimac and Šimić (2012) provide a useful summary of the definitions of service quality over the years:

- readiness for use (Juran, 1982);
- adaptation to the requirements (Crosby, 1984);
- consumer's satisfaction (Juran, 1988); and
- value added (Shannon, 1997).

Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990:18) define service quality as "meeting or exceeding what customers expect from the service". Asubonteng, McClearly and Swan (1996:64) refer to service quality as "the difference between customers' expectations for service performance prior to the service encounter and their perceptions of the service received". Markovic (2006:88) also focusses on expectations, and reports that service quality "is a measure of the extent to which the service delivered meets the customers' expectations". Khoshafian (2007:312) adopts a different approach and states that service quality "is always associated with the reliability and performance of the service". However, Etgar and Fuchs (2009:475) state that the various definitions of service quality only use different wording but that in essence, they all "involve determining whether perceived service delivery meets, exceeds or fails to meet customer expectations". This is confirmed by Dehghan, Shahin and Zenouzi (2012:4) who define service quality as "the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations". Palmer (2014:278) adds to the above, and defines service quality as "the extent to which a service meets customers' requirements" and "the extent to which perceived service delivery matches up to these initial expectations". Sun and Pang (2017:1061) draw their definition from the pioneers of service quality research (Parasuraman *et al*., 1985; 1988) and define service quality as "[t]he gap between consumers' expectation and the actual service performance they received and service quality is largely perception based".

Because this study investigated service quality for PHE, it is necessary to define service quality in HE. O'Neill and Palmer (2004, cited in Voss, Gruber & Szmigin, 2007:950) define service quality in HE as "the difference between what a student expects to receive and his/her perceptions of actual delivery". Similarly, Daud and Sapuan (2012:25) rely on three interrelated perspectives (based on the definitions of the quality experts) to define service quality in HE:

- first, the perspective of conformance to requirements based on customer expectations (Crosby, 1979);
- second, the perspective of fitness for use as determined by the customer (Juran, 1945); and
- third, the perspective of willingness to pay based on what the customer can get out rather than what the supplier puts in (Drucker, 1985).

Ali, Zhou, Hussain, Nair and Ragavan (2016) and Giannakis and Bullivant (2016) conclude that it is difficult to conceptualise a universal definition for service quality in HE and that the definition is dependent on various stakeholders who have different experiences of the service provided.

For the purpose of this study, and following on the above-mentioned definitions, service quality in PHE was defined as "meeting and exceeding students' expectations and perceptions by constantly rendering a reliable service that conforms to pre-determined requirements for which the student is willing to pay, resulting in tangible and intangible benefits".

3.3.2 The importance of service quality

The rise of the service sector over the last few decades can be attributed to the natural evolution of world economies from agriculture to manufacturing and then to services (Oakland, 2014).

The realisation of the importance of the service sector only materialised several years after the manufacturing sector had done so. Service quality issues have become increasingly important in both developed and developing countries over the last two decades. Services are increasingly becoming part of the value proposition of an organisation to customers (Dale *et al*., 2016; Evans, 2017). This notion is supported by Foster (2015) who proclaims that high service quality is fundamental to internal and external customer satisfaction and is a major differentiator of competitiveness in the marketplace. Service quality is a multidimensional term, and to provide high-quality services, a grounded understanding of customer needs, and who the customer is, are required.

Dale *et al*. (2016) argue that a lack of focus on service quality could manifest in various problems, such as complaints from internal and external customers coupled with financial and other costs. Conversely, organisations with a service quality culture and accompanying service quality programmes, can expect several benefits related to employees, customers and corporate image. In addition, excellent service quality can provide an organisation prominence in the market place thus also becoming a factor in strategic planning.

Dale *et al*. (2016) further provide several reasons for the importance of service quality. **First**, offering quality services to customers may lead to customer loyalty (repeat customers) as well as attracting new customers through positive word-of-mouth communication. Keeping current customers is more cost-effective than attracting new customers. **Second**, developing relationships and rapport with customers through service quality enables organisations to identify customer needs and preferences. **Third**, service quality could increase employee job satisfaction and morale, loyalty and reduced staff turnover, which in turn could lead to costs savings associated with staff recruitment. **Lastly**, good service quality improves corporate image and leads to reduced costs and increased productivity, business performance and profitability. Evans

(2017:17) concurs and emphasises the following customer service facts, which are indicative of the importance of service quality for the sustainability for any organisation:

- The average company never hears from more than 90% of its unhappy customers. For every complaint it receives, the company has at least 25 customers with problems, about one-fourth of which are serious.
- Of the customers who make a complaint, more than half will do business again with that organisation if their complaint is resolved. If the customer feels that the complaint was resolved quickly, this figure jumps to about 95%.
- The average customer who has had a problem will tell nine or ten others about it. Customers who have had complaints resolved satisfactory will tell only about five others.
- It costs six times more to get a new customer than to keep a current customer.

The notion that service quality improvement could lead to increased profitability is best represented by the concept of the service–profit chain (Palmer, 2014). Figure 3.6 represents the service–profit chain indicating a link between internal service quality (the workplace) and employee satisfaction to customer value and ultimately to a growth in revenue and finally improved profitability.

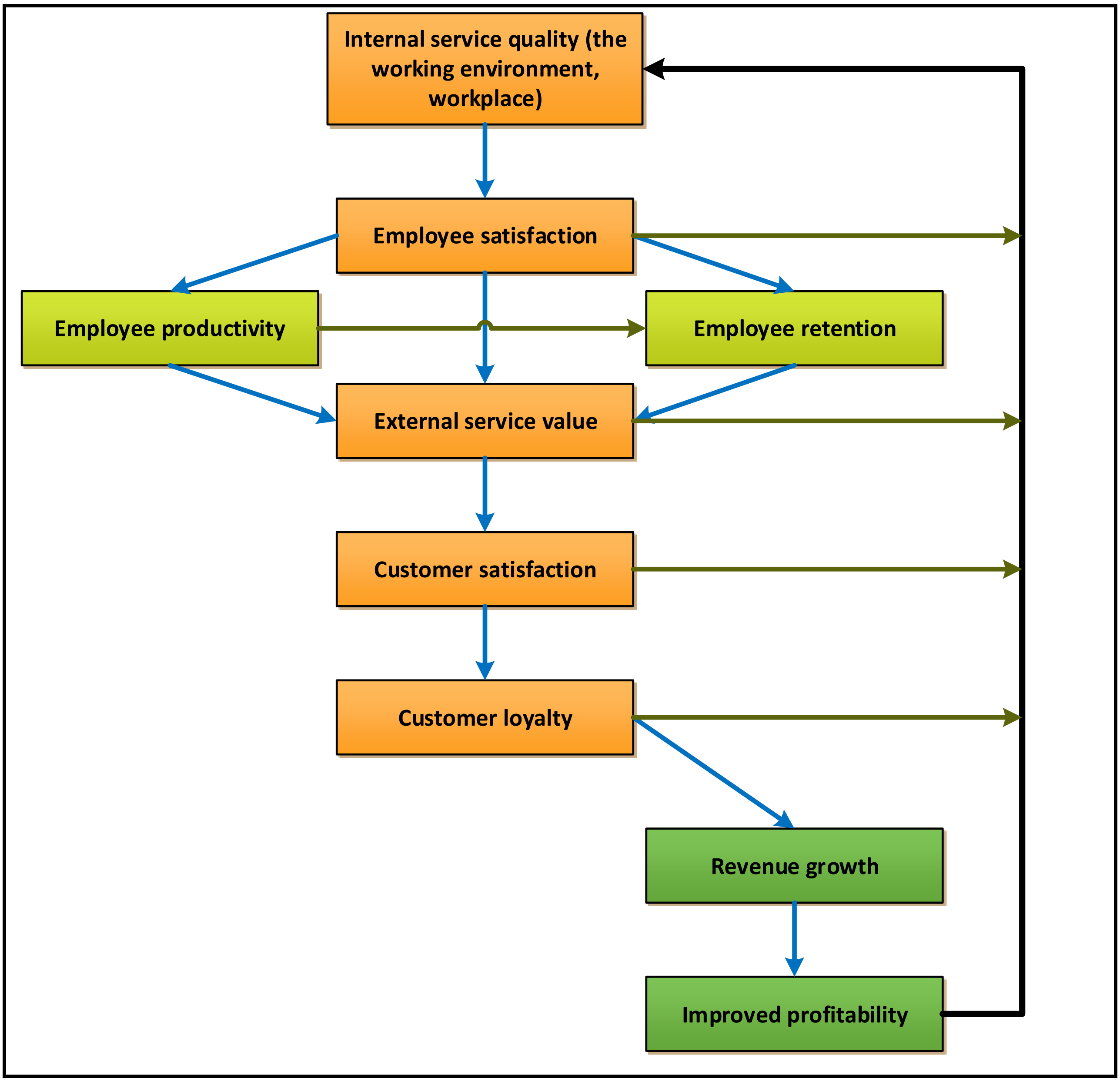

Figure 3.6: The service–profit chain

Source: Adapted from Palmer (2014:282)

This section focussed on the importance of increased service quality as well as some of the benefits, such as reduced costs and increased productivity, business performance and profitability. However, one needs to take cognisance of the so-called 'cut-off' point where service quality improvements are no longer profitable. Palmer (2014:296) poses the following question, "What level of service quality should an organisation provide for its customers?" The oversimplified answer is, as far as the customer is willing to pay for the improved service quality. Figure 3.7 shows the cut-off point where the service provider should stop its quality improvement efforts.

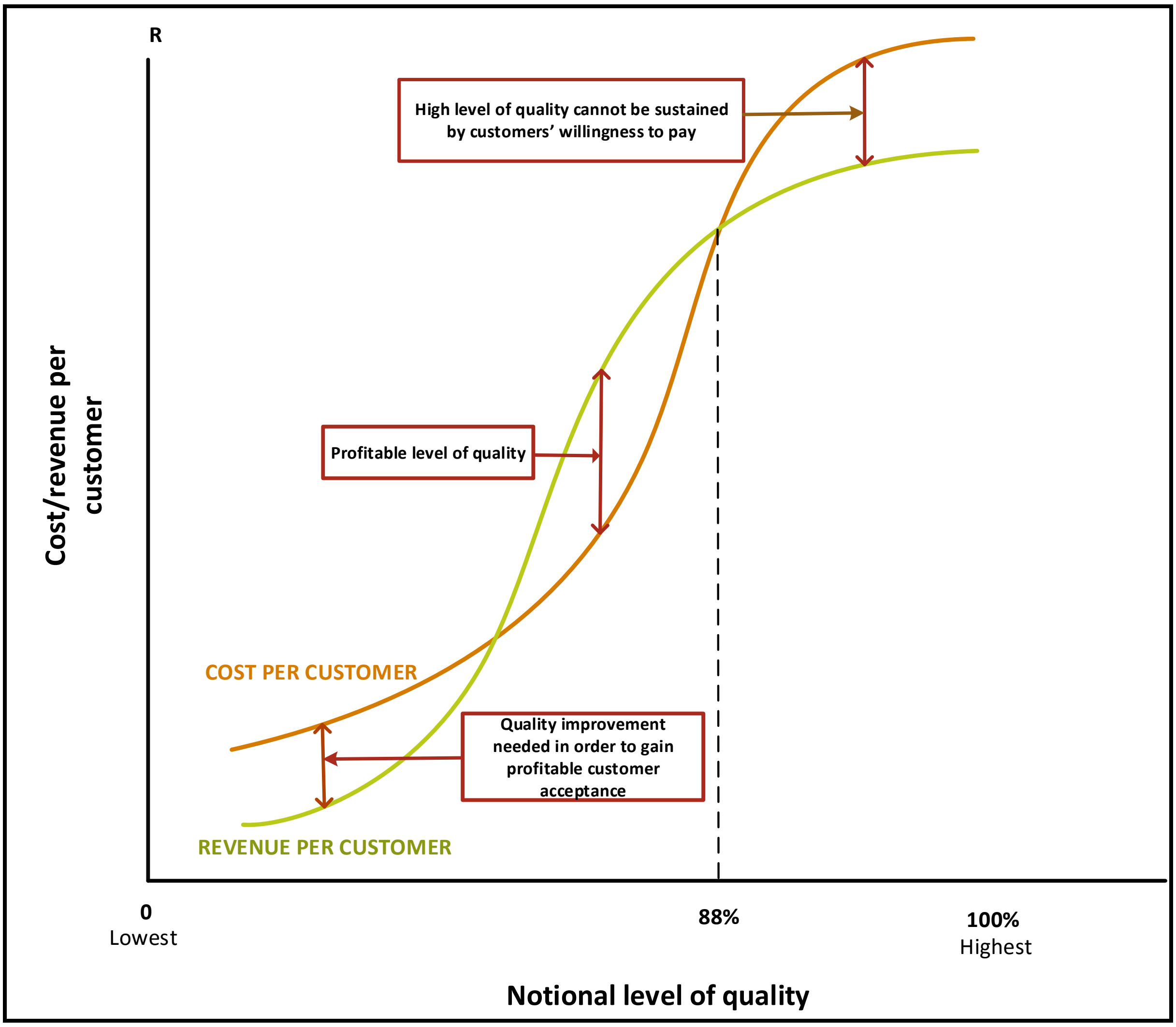

Figure 3.7: The cost benefit of service quality improvement

Source: Adapted from Palmer (2014:296)

The service provider should have a clear understanding of its market dynamics and customers' willingness to pay extra for increased levels of service quality. Figure 3.7 shows that, if an organisation increases its notional level of service quality, there is an expected increase in the amount that customers are willing to pay for the service. However, it is evident that above a notional level of 88%, the cost of providing the service becomes more than what the customer is willing to pay.

Palmer (2014) acknowledges that this is a simple example of reality, and that service quality is therefore more complicated due to its multidimensionality. Yet, it shows that the highest level of service quality is not always the most profitable and that an exhaustive knowledge of markets is required to offer the ideal level of service quality.

The next section focusses on various service quality dimensions identified through a historical and systematic literature review. These dimensions laid the foundation in the developmental process of the TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

3.3.3 Service quality dimensions: a historical and systematic literature review (1988–2015)

This sub-section illustrates the comprehensiveness of service quality dimensions.

Most authors, such as Kadampully and Solnet (2015), contend that in order to understand service quality, it is important to know what customers want and what they experience as good-quality services. It is thus critical first to identify service quality dimensions that are important and relevant to a specific industry, before service quality can be managed or improved. Kadampully and Solnet further argue that the vast variety of service quality models found in literature exemplify the difficulty in developing a single framework or model that incorporates all aspects of service quality. It is impossible to find a single model that integrates all aspects of something as complicated as how humans make subjective assessments of personal experiences. And that is what service quality is – a subjective assessment of a human experience and by no means an easy task to model or analyse in simple terms. This again reiterates the importance of developing an industry-specific framework, and as was the case in this research, a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

The following section reports on Step 1 of this research project (see Figure 1.3). A systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted on service quality frameworks and models to identify service quality dimensions (the follow-up review on TQS dimensions is described in section 3.4). An SLR involves the systematic identification, evaluation and interpretation of all available research based on a specific topic or phenomena of interest. Conducting an SLR requires significantly more effort than traditional reviews. However, the major advantage of an SLR is that it provides information covering various settings and empirical methods (Kitchenham, 2004). The focus of an SLR is the synthesis of high-quality research related to the specific topic or phenomena (Byrne, 2016). In addition, the nature of an SLR enables the researcher to address broader questions than single empirical studies and uncover connections among various empirical findings (Baumeister & Leary, 1997).

As previously stated, the aim of Step 1 of this research project was to conduct a historical and systematic literature review to identify service quality dimensions. In order to identify service quality dimensions, a review was conducted on various service quality frameworks and models spanning the period 1988 to 2015. The following online databases were searched: SA ePublications, ProQuest, EBSCOhost, ScienceDirect, Emerald Journals, Sage Journals Online as well as Taylor and Francis Online Journals. The SLR identified 73 service quality frameworks and models over a period of 27 years, involving 26 countries covering 29 different industries as indicated below:

- **26 countries:**

United States of America, Sweden, Canada, Netherlands, Belgium, England, Japan, Scotland, India, Korea, Greece, United Arab Emirates, Cyprus, Malaysia, Turkey, Croatia, Spain, Australia, Portugal, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, North Cyprus, Qatar, China, Colombia and Indonesia.

- **29 industries:**

Banking, product repair and maintenance, hotel service, lodging industry, hospitality industry, car service industry, health care sector, restaurant industry, hospital service quality, retail sector, higher education, travel agencies, logistic services, historic houses, service of pictorial directory vendors to churches, library service, voluntary sector, internet retail service quality, ecotourism, consulting service, cell phone service, business to business service, electronic service quality, urgent transport service, medium and large-sized mass and technological services, secondary schools, generic services, port services and insurance industry.

Tabulation was used to synthesise the information obtained into the following five categories:

- author and year;
- sample;
- data analysis;
- scale; and
- dimensions and items.

This provided useful information with regard to methodological approaches to constructing service quality frameworks. Trustworthiness and credibility were improved by data saturation. Online databases were searched until no new information surfaced. The identified 73 frameworks and models yielded a total of 184 dimensions (a detailed report on the 73 frameworks and models with their accompanying dimensions were beyond the scope of this research project). From the 73 frameworks, 29 frameworks and models were developed for HE and PHE, spawning a total of 85 dimensions. A systematic 'funnel approach was then followed, which included the logical combination, integration, re-grouping and re-naming of these 85 dimensions into the final 34 service quality dimensions identified from literature. Figure 3.8 presents a graphical depiction of the systematic process followed deriving at these final 34 dimensions. Following Figure 3.8, is Table 3.5, which represents the 34 identified dimensions (in the PHE context) with their corresponding authors.

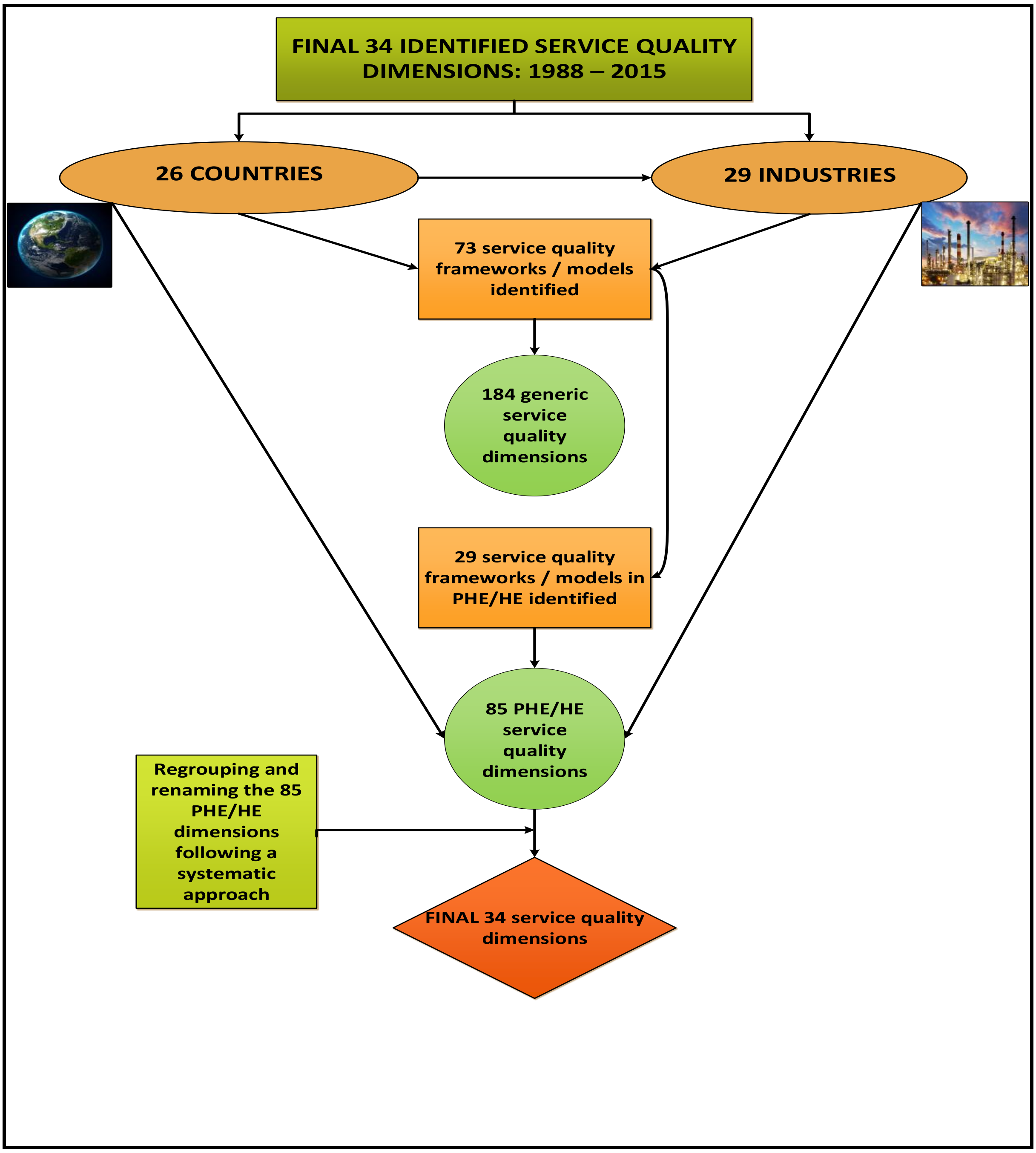

Figure 3.8: Identified service quality (SQ) dimensions: 1988–2015

Source: Author's own compilation

Table 3.5: SQ dimensions: 1988–2015

Service quality dimensions: 1988–2015	Author(s)
1. Campus facilities	Ardi, Hidayatno and Zagloel (2012), Calvo-Porral, Levy-Mangin and Novo-Corti (2013), Choudhury (2014), Clemes, Cohen and Wang (2013), Engelland, Workman and Singh (2000), Jain, Sahney and Sinha (2011), Jain, Sahney and Sinha (2013), Jayasundara, Ngulube and Minishi-Majanja (2009), Markovic (2006), Rave and Giraldo (2015), Sakthivel and Rajendran (2005), Sakthivel and Raju (2006), Sayeda, Rajendran and Lokachari (2010), Sultan and Wong (2012), Sultan and Wong (2014), Yusoff, McLeay and Woodruffe-Burton (2015)
2. Trust	Calvo-Porral *et al*. (2013), Choudhury (2014), Engelland *et al*. (2000), Markovic (2006), Sahney, Banwet and Karunes (2004), Sultan and Wong (2012), Sultan and Wong (2014)
3. Responsiveness	Calvo-Porral *et al*. (2013), Choudhury (2014), Engelland *et al*. (2000), Jayasundara *et al*. (2009), Kwek, Lau and Tan (2010), Markovic (2006), Rave and Giraldo (2015), Yusoff *et al*. (2015)
4. Assurance	Calvo-Porral *et al*. (2013), Engelland *et al*. (2000), Markovic (2006)
5. Empathy from campus staff	Ardi *et al*. (2012), Calvo-Porral *et al*. (2013), Clemes *et al*. (2013), Engelland *et al*. (2000), Hussain and Birol (2011), Markovic (2006), Sahney *et al*. (2004), Sakthivel *et al*. (2005), Yusoff *et al*. (2015)
6. Reputation	Kong and Muthusamy (2011), Sayeda *et al*. (2010), Sultan and Wong (2012), Sultan and Wong (2013), Sultan and Wong (2014)
7. Information management	Sayeda *et al*. (2010), Sultan and Wong (2012), Sultan and Wong (2013), Sultan and Wong (2014)
8. Leadership	Ardi *et al*. (2012), Sahney *et al*. (2004), Sakthivel and Rajendran (2005), Sakthivel and Raju (2006), Sayeda *et al*. (2010), Voon (2006)
9. Communication	Clemes *et al*. (2013), Jain *et al*. (2011), Jain *et al*. (2013), Sakthivel *et al*. (2006).
10. Library quality	Clemes *et al*. (2013), Icli and Anil (2014), Kwek *et al*. (2010), Jayasundara *et al*. (2009)
11. Faculty expertise	Choudhury (2014), Clemes *et al*. (2013), Ghani, Muhammad and Said (2012), Sahney *et al*. (2004), Sayeda *et al*. (2010), Yusoff *et al*. (2015)
12. Contribution to society	Clemes *et al*. (2013), Sahney *et al*. (2004), Sayeda *et al*. (2010)
13. Continuous improvement	Sayeda *et al*. (2010), Sakthivel *et al*. (2006)
14. Quality teaching	Ardi *et al*. (2012), Clemes *et al*. (2013), Hussain and Birol (2011), Icli and Anil (2014), Jain *et al*. (2011), Jain *et al*. (2013), Kong and Muthusamy (2011), Kwek *et al*. (2010), Sahney *et al*. (2004), Sakthivel *et al*. (2005), Sakthivel *et al*. (2006), Sultan and Wong (2012), Sultan and Wong (2014), Yusoff *et al*. (2015)
15. Stakeholder focus	Ardi *et al*. (2012), Sakthivel *et al*. (2005), Sharif and Kassim, (2012), Sayeda *et al*. (2010), Sultan and Wong (2012), Sultan and Wong (2014), Yusoff *et al*. (2015)
16. Students in scientific work	Markovic (2006)
17. Technology	Jayasundara *et al*. (2009), Markovic (2006), Rave and Giraldo (2015).
18. Operations management	Jayasundara *et al*. (2009), Sayeda *et al*. (2010), Sharif and Kassim (2012)
19. Recreational activities	Clemes *et al*. (2013), Kwek *et al*. (2010)

Service quality dimensions: 1988–2015	Author(s)
20. Employability	Icli and Anil (2014), Ghani *et al*. (2012), Jain *et al*. (2011), Jain *et al* (2013), Sayeda *et al*. (2010)
21. Feeder institution partnership	Sayeda *et al*. (2010)
22. Benchmarking	Sayeda *et al*. (2010)
23. Research	Ghani *et al*. (2012), Sayeda *et al*. (2010).
24. Tutoring	Ghani *et al*. (2012), Hussain and Birol (2011), Sayeda *et al*. (2010), Senthilkumar and Arulraj (2011)
25. Functional quality	Kong and Muthusamy (2011)
26. Student support	Clemes *et al*. (2013), Icli and Anil (2014), Jain *et al*. (2011), Jain *et al*. (2013), Kong and Muthusamy (2011), Yusoff *et al*. (2015)
27. Loyalty	Sharif and Kassim (2012), Sultan and Wong (2012), Sultan and Wong (2013), Sultan and Wong (2014)
28. Non-academic processes	Jain *et al*. (2011), Jain *et al*. (2013)
29. Administrative quality	Clemes *et al*. (2013), Icli and Anil (2014), Jain *et al*. (2011), Jain *et al*. (2013), Sultan and Wong (2012), Sultan and Wong (2014)
30. Accommodation	Clemes *et al*. (2013), Yusoff *et al*. (2015)
31. Personal development	Clemes *et al*. (2013)
32. Academic development	Clemes *et al*. (2013)
33. Textbooks and tuition fees	Yusoff *et al*. (2015)
34. Class sizes	Rave and Giraldo (2015), Yusoff *et al*. (2015)

Source: Author's own compilation

Following the identification of service quality dimensions, the focus of the SLR shifted to the exploration of TQS dimensions, which is presented in section 3.4.

3.4 TOTAL QUALITY SERVICE

The contribution and benefits of service quality to organisational performance have been widely acknowledged but the exploration of TQS has received much less attention. In contrast to the plethora of research available on service quality, research on TQS is scarce. In support of this, Kaur and Lamba (2012:289) refer to the "non-availability of sufficient literature on TQS".

The focus of this section is on TQS with specific reference to the various definitions of TQS as well as the identification of several TQS dimensions based on a literature review between 1991 and 2015. All literature references to TQS that the researcher could find are included here.

3.4.1 Total quality service defined

This section reflects definitions of TQS. From the definitions provided below, it is clear that TQS refers to a holistic approach to quality services and service quality management.

Albrecht (1991:19) defines TQS as "a family of interrelated methodologies for assessing, defying, and improving service quality". In contrast to Albrecht's methodological approach to TQS, Perotti (1995:19) refers to TQS as a strategy, package and system, and defines it as:

> [T]he creation of a service strategy, a service package, and service systems" and adds that TQS includes four parts:
>
> 1) a strategy to satisfy specific customers;
> 2) a service package which satisfies customers' specific needs;
> 3) a service delivery approach designed for the convenience of the customers; and
> 4) a customer friendly system to support service delivery.

Stamatis (1996:43) adds that TQS is "a strategic, integrated management system which involves management and employees and uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to continuously improve an organisation's processes in order to meet and exceed customer needs, wants, and expectations". Equally important, Milakovich (1998:51) focusses on internal and external processes as well as statistical methods and reports:

> TQS is aimed at satisfying customer expectations by continuously working across the organisation to improve internal and external processes; encouraging teamwork and active employee participation; using problem solving techniques, such as brainstorming, quality circles, or Pareto analysis; and employing statistical process control methods.

Sureschandar, Rajendran and Anantharaman (2003:1034) define TQS in its simplest form as "a sustained effort with total commitment from the entire organization towards improvement of everything it does". In comparison to the definition of TQS as indicated by Albrecht (1991), TQS is also referred to as:

> [T]he achieving of short and long term financial goals, the realisation of increased market share, and the creation of sustainable competitive advantage. TQS is a comprehensive methodology, which engages crucial elements of the firm toward a

> vision of delivering increasingly high quality services to customers (Gupta, McDaniel, & Herath, 2005:398).

Saravanan and Rao (2006:733) add total quality management (TQM) to their explanation of TQS by stating, "[it] is a comprehensive approach in which the various critical factors of total quality management are integrated and implemented in a service organization to achieve customer satisfaction". In line with the above definitions, Feliks and Hotman (2014:143) define TQS as:

> [A] strategic and integrated management system that involves all managers and employees, as well as using the methods of qualitative and quantitative continuously to improve organizational processes, in order to meet and even exceed the needs, desires, and expectations of customers. The goal of total quality service is to create customer satisfaction, give responsibility to any person, and perform continuous improvement.

Moreover, Singh (2015:392) refers to TQS as:

> [A] social-technical approach for revolutionary and effective management. This approach takes service as work done by one person for the benefit of another, with the help of changed management methodology based upon the system perspective for improvement in products and service quality.

Dale *et al*. (2016) add to the previous comments and confirm that the challenge is to ensure that the service delivered meets the promise of the service specifications. This requires a TQS approach, which is dependent on all employees who must be willing to deliver the required levels of service. Employees' influence in meeting the needs of the customer and hence influencing service quality perceptions cannot be emphasised enough.

With due consideration of the above definitions, TQS was defined in this research project as:

> A holistic comprehensive methodology that incorporates TQM principles for improving service quality, achieving internal and external customer satisfaction and exceeding customer expectations. It is also a service strategy and system that takes a holistic approach by fostering total commitment towards improvement that could lead to the achievement of financial goals, increased market share as well as the creation of a viable competitive advantage.

3.4.2 Total quality service dimensions: a historical and systematic literature review (1991–2015)

Along with section 3.3.3, this section reports on Step 1 of this research project (see Figure 1.3). Again, a comprehensive SLR was conducted to identify TQS dimensions and frameworks in various industries. A descriptive and historical SLR approach was followed, which involved the identification, evaluation, synthesis and interpretation of all available research on TQS dimensions between 1991 and 2015. The same databases as indicated in section 3.3.3 were consulted. The SLR identified 17 TQS frameworks and models over a period of 24 years. This included five countries and 11 industries as indicated below:

- **Five countries:**

United States of America, Pakistan, United Kingdom, India and Malaysia.

- **11 industries:**

General service industries, financial services, public services, health services, banking, postal services, business college service, automobile services, domestic airline services, hotel services and hospital service.

Tabulation was used to synthesise the information and again, trustworthiness and credibility were improved by data saturation. Online databases were searched until no new information was obtained. The identified 17 frameworks and models produced a total of 111 dimensions. A systematic 'funnel approach' was again followed, which comprised the logical combination, integration, re-grouping and re-naming of these 111 dimensions into the final 27 TQS dimensions identified from literature. Figure 3.9 presents a graphical depiction of the systematic process followed deriving at these final 27 dimensions. Following Figure 3.9, Table 3.6 crystallises the dimensions and the corresponding authors.

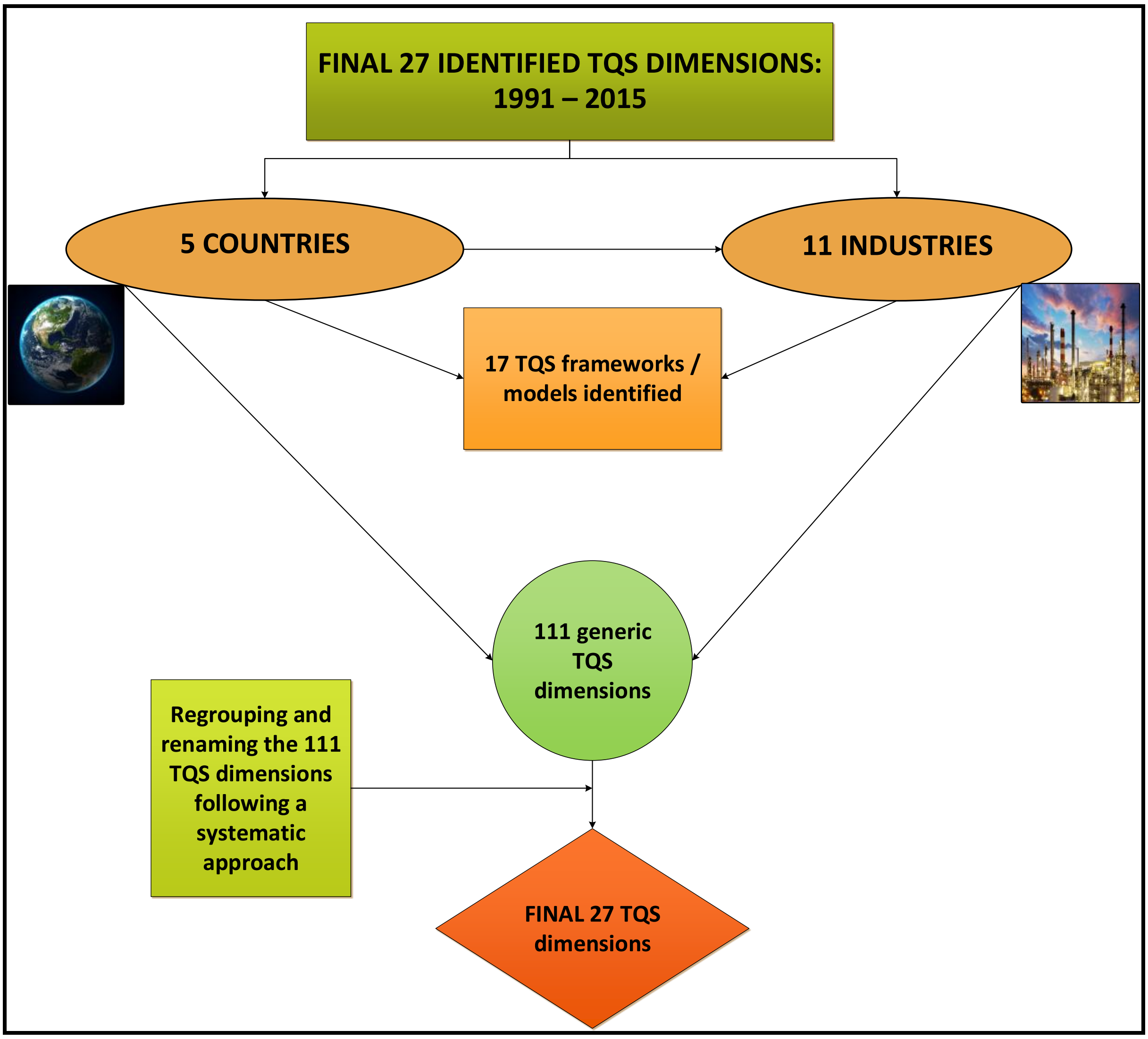

Figure 3.9: Identified total quality service (TQS) dimensions: 1991–2015

Source: Author's own compilation

Table 3.6: TQS dimensions: 1991–2015

TQS dimensions: 1991–2015	Authors(s)
1. Leadership and top management commitment	Albrecht (1991), Choppin (1994), Stamatis (1996), Milakovich (1998), Sureshchandar, Rajendran and Anantharaman (2001), Gupta *et al*. (2005), Milakovich (2006), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Steenkamp (2012), Lam, Lee, Ooi and Phusavat (2012), Kaur *et al*. (2012), Singh and Sushil (2013), Voon, Abdullah, Lee and Kueh (2014), Singh (2015), Arshad and Su (2015)
2. Service quality culture	Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Gupta *et al*. (2005), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Steenkamp (2012), Kaur *et al*. (2012), Voon *et al*. (2014), Arshad and Su (2015)
3. Service quality standards	Milakovich (1998), Steenkamp (2012)
4. Employee commitment and satisfaction / Total employee involvement	Milakovich (1998), Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Gupta *et al*. (2005), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Steenkamp (2012), Kaur *et al*. (2012), Singh and Sushil (2013), Voon *et al*. (2014)

TQS dimensions: 1991–2015	Authors(s)
5. Customer focus and satisfaction (including customer needs and expectations) / Customer involvement	Albrecht (1991), Perotti (1995), Stamatis (1996), Milakovich (1998), Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Gupta *et al*. (2005), Milakovich (2006), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Steenkamp (2012), Lam *et al*. (2012), Kaur *et al*. (2012), Singh and Sushil (2013), Voon *et al*. (2014), Singh (2015), Arshad and Su (2015)
6. Social responsibility	Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Duggirala *et al*. (2008), Kaur *et al*. (2012)
7. Human resource management (employee selection, training, empowerment, involvement) / Training and education / Continuous training	Albrecht (1991), Milakovich (1998), Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Duggirala *et al*. (2008), Lam et al (2012), Kaur *et al*. (2012), Singh and Sushil (2013), Voon *et al*. (2014), Singh (2015)
8. Technical system	Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Kaur *et al*. (2012)
9. Information analysis system / Information system quality	Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Lam *et al*. (2012), Kaur *et al*. (2012), Arshad and Su (2015)
10. Servicescape	Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Kaur *et al*. (2012)
11. Benchmarking	Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Kaur *et al*. (2012), Singh and Sushil (2013)
12. Continuous improvement / Continuous improvement culture	Albrecht (1991), Stamatis (1996), Milakovich (1998), Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001), Saravanan and Rao (2006), Singh and Sushil (2013), Voon *et al*. (2014), Singh (2015), Arshad and Su (2015)
13. Systems approach (people tools and statistical tools) / Process management / Process improvement	Perotti (1995), Stamatis (1996), Milakovich (1998), Milakovich (2006), Steenkamp (2012), Lam *et al*. (2012), Kaur *et al*. (2012), Singh and Sushil (2013)
14. Teamwork / Coordination and teamwork	Milakovich (2006), Singh and Sushil (2013), Voon *et al*. (2014), Singh (2015)
15. Infrastructure	Duggirala *et al*. (2008)
16. Administrative procedures	Duggirala *et al*. (2008)
17. Service marketing	Saravanan *et al*. (2006)
18. Union intervention	Sureshchandar *et al*. (2001)
19. Rewards for quality and productivity achievement	Milakovich (1998)
20. Reducing barriers to productivity and quality improvement	Milakovich (1998)
21. Assessment, measurement and feedback	Albrecht (1991)
22. Strategic planning	Lam *et al*. (2012)
23. Communication	Singh and Sushil (2013)
24. On-time performance	Singh and Sushil (2013)
25. Democratic management style	Voon *et al*. (2014)
26. Knowledge sharing	Arshad and Su (2015)
27. ICT usage	Arshad and Su (2015)

Source: Author's own compilation

The next section presents the theoretical TQS framework based on identified dimensions from literature.

3.5 A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR TQS FOR PHEIs IN SOUTH AFRICA

Figure 3.10 presents a proposed theoretical TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa and epitomises the synthesis of identified service quality and TQS dimensions in the period 1988–2015. A logical and systematic approach of combination and elimination was followed to merge the 34 service quality dimensions and the 27 TQS dimensions into primary and secondary TQS dimensions. The primary dimensions are representative of the PHE and HE dimensions while the secondary dimensions are generic in representing various industries. The primary TQS dimensions in the proposed framework, coupled with the qualitative findings of Stage 1 of the research process (see Chapter 5), was incorporated into the quantitative questionnaire that was applied in Stage 2 of this research study (see Chapters 4 and 6).

Figure 3.10 elucidate the first version of the TQS framework in its development process (see Figure 1.3: Project plan and process).

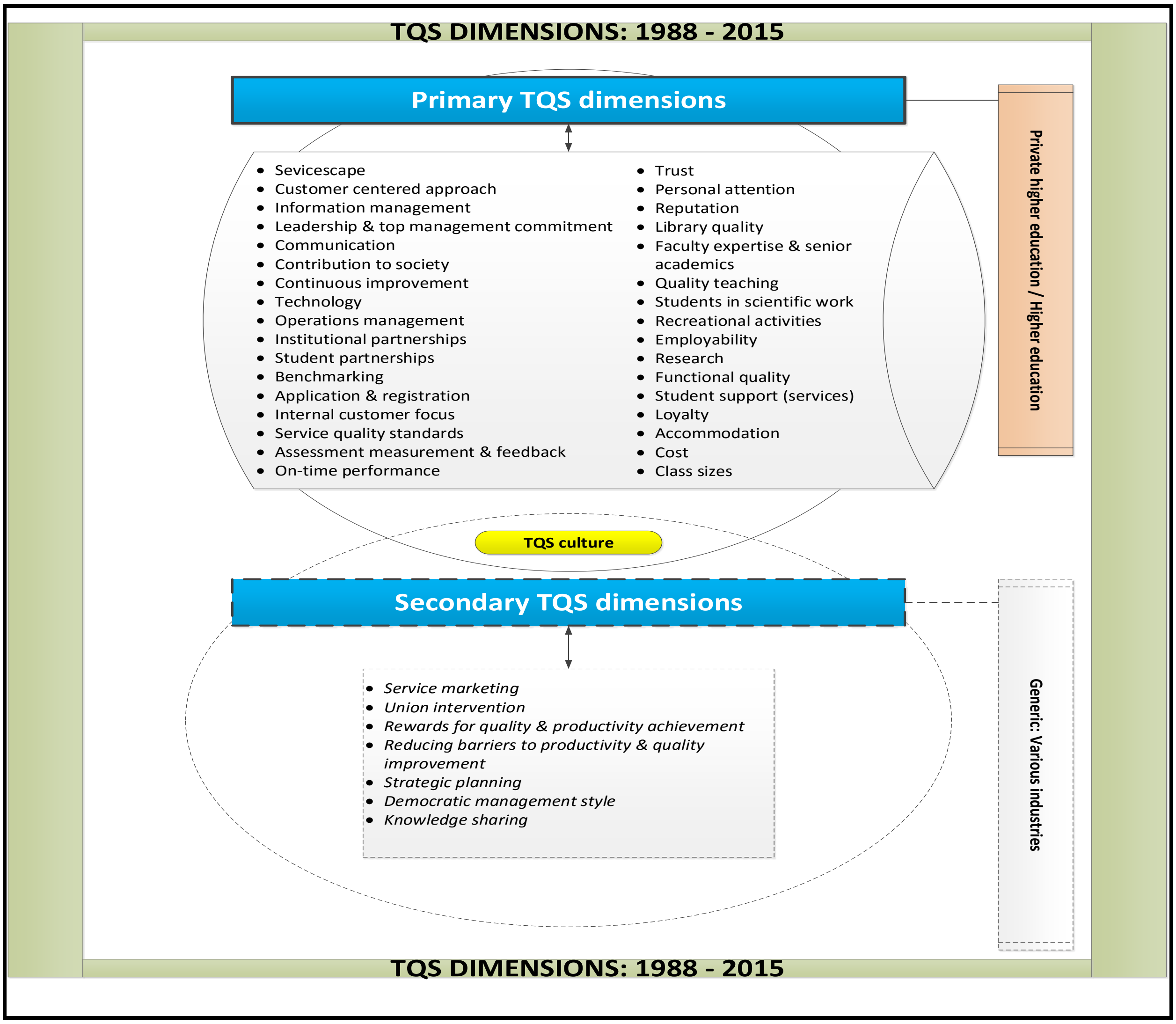

Figure 3.10: Proposed theoretical TQS framework

Source: Author's own compilation

3.6 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The economic climate today is characterised by changing customer expectations, expanding service and product innovations, unstable political conditions and increased competitive conditions contributing to an increased focus on exceptional service quality. The management of service quality necessitates a holistic and integrated approach involving marketing, human resources, operations and all others key areas of a business. This can only be achieved through satisfying both internal and external customers, identifying key service quality dimensions, and emphasis on service delivery systems and procedures (Dale *et al*., 2016). Hence, the importance of a TQS approach in the development of a TQS framework.

This chapter provided an overview of quality, service quality and TQS and was subdivided into four sections. The first section of this chapter focussed on quality. The focus of section two and three was on service quality and TQS. These two sections provided an SLR on service quality and TQS, identifying dimensions covering 27 years of literature in various industries. Section four proposed a theoretical TQS framework as the basis for the eventual development of a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

Chapter 4 will focus on the research design and methods providing a detailed discussion on the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design followed in this research project.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

"Research is to see what everybody else has seen, and to think what nobody else have thought" (Szent-Gyorgyi, n.d.).

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the literature concerning quality, service quality and TQS as the departure point for the development of a TQS framework was reviewed. In addition, this research was anchored in the organisational realities of PHEIs in South Africa as portrayed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 4 describes and defines research and its purpose as well as the research scope, including the primary objectives, secondary objectives and significance of this research study. The compelling case for the selection of the target population is explained and it also justifies the research paradigm and argument, as well as the methodologies and techniques adopted for this study. In this study, the research design incorporated the integration of both qualitative and quantitative data. Therefore, a mixed method research design, more specifically an exploratory sequential mixed methods research design was followed.

The chapter continues by explaining the mixed methods design in terms of its strengths and challenges, rationale, sequential phases, data emphasis and integration. It also elucidates the two stages (qualitative Stage 1 and quantitative Stage 2) by focussing on the sampling procedure, data collection, data analysis and the validity and reliability of the data for each stage. Attention is also given to the procedures pursued in seeking informed consent of the participants. This is followed by an explanation of the instrument development process as an intermediate stage between the quantitative and qualitative stages. The remainder of this chapter focusses on the limitations and delimitations of the study, and the chapter concludes with a discussion on research ethics.

The main themes of this chapter are depicted in Figure 4.1 below.

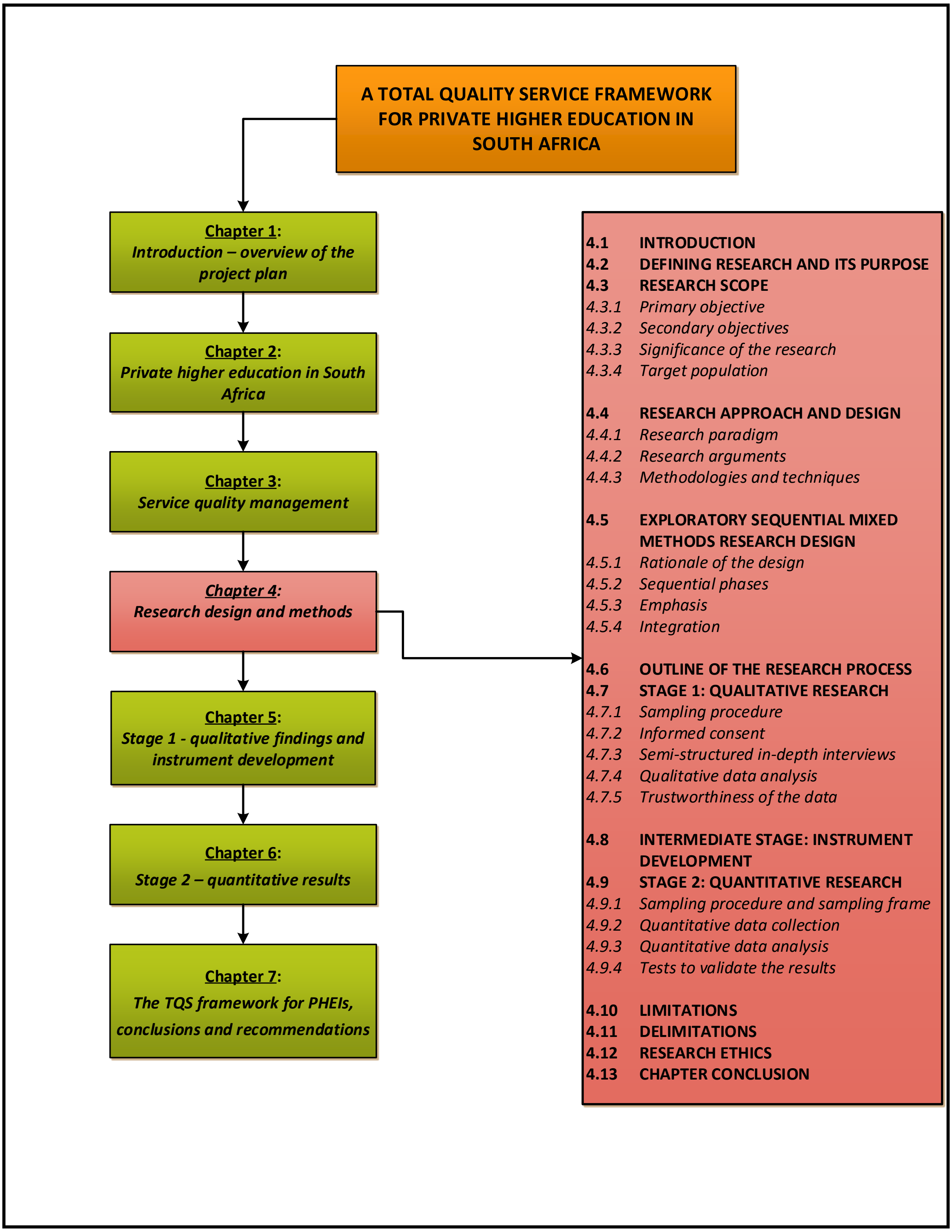

Figure 4.1: Layout of Chapter 4

Source: Author's own compilation

4.2 DEFINING RESEARCH AND ITS PURPOSE

Walliman (2011) explains that the term 'research' is used incorrectly when just collecting information with no clear purpose, or reordering facts or information without interpretation, or when referring to an activity with little or no relevance to everyday life. Thus, to understand the true meaning of 'research', it is essential to reflect on some of its characteristics. First, in research, data are collected systematically. Second, data are interpreted systematically. Third, the purpose of research is clear, namely to find things out (Saunders *et al*., 2016). The research process therefore comprises several activities or steps and is "a systematic process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting information– *data* – in order to increase our understanding of a phenomena about which we are interested or concerned" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:20). More specifically, according to Cooper and Schindler (2014), business research is the process of planning, obtaining and disseminating relevant information in order to take appropriate action, which in turn, will maximise organisational performance. Business research follows the standards of the scientific method namely systematic and empirically based procedures for producing research that is replicable. The characteristics of the scientific method include a clearly defined purpose, a planned and detailed research process, high ethical standards, the reporting of limitations and findings that are presented unambiguously (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). A more simplistic explanation of research is provided by Salkind (2012:3), who says, "research is a process through which new knowledge is discovered". He further contends that high-quality research is based on the work of others, can be replicated, is generalisable, is logical and tied to a theory and is undertaken for the betterment of society.

The aim of research is to find things. Based on this fact, research can be classified in three broad groups, namely exploratory studies, descriptive studies or explanatory studies (Saunders *et al*., 2016). Exploratory studies are valuable in order to discover what is happening, to gain insight into an interesting topic and to assist in the understanding of a problem or phenomenon. Although both qualitative and quantitative methods are applicable, research is usually conducted through literature searches, in-depth interviews with experts on the subject or focus group interviews. Descriptive studies try to find answers to the questions 'who', 'what', 'where', 'when' and 'how' and aim to gain an accurate profile of events, persons or situations. This type of study could be an extension of a piece of exploratory research, or a forerunner to such research. The third classification, explanatory research, attempts to explain the reasons for the phenomenon, which the descriptive study only observed, and studies the relationships between two or more variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Saunders *et al*., 2016). The current study followed the exploratory approach.

Research can further be differentiated according to the chosen research strategy. According to Saunders *et al*. (2016), a research strategy is the general plan of how to answer the research question (or meet the research objectives). Research strategies can range from a so-called qualitative approach to a quantitative approach, as well as a mixed methods approach. These can be done in sequence or combined. The research strategy selected is dependent upon the nature and type of the problem, the nature and availability of data, and the researcher's control over actual events (Pellissier, 2007).

The following section describes the research scope of the current study.

4.3 RESEARCH SCOPE

The research scope summarises the focus of the study by describing the research problem, primary and secondary objectives as well as the significance of the research. The compelling case for the identified target population selected for inclusion in the current research will also be explained. The motivation for the research originated from the researcher's experience and interest in service quality improvement in PHE. As indicated in Chapters 1 and 2, both practitioners and academics have recommended further research on the development of industry-specific frameworks and models to improve service quality, especially in public and private HE. The research scope determines the research design and methods, and this will be described in the remainder of this chapter. The purpose of the study is discussed next.

4.3.1 Primary objective

Service quality is a challenge for any enterprise, but it is of particular concern for PHEIs and one of their key challenges due to the increasingly competitive, marketing-oriented and highly regulated environment. In this environment, these institutions have to function, survive and compete, not only with one another, but also with public institutions of HE; hence, the problem – competition is on the increase and PHEIs need to find new ways to compete if they wish to survive in this dynamic service industry environment. Further to this, PHEIs focus on service quality at a strategic level but not necessarily on structure or a service quality management system. As a result, the problem is the lack of a scientifically sound and holistic system to manage, improve and maintain service quality by means of a broad TQS framework. The need to develop a TQS framework for implementation and application could therefore be the differentiating factor for success.

The primary purpose of this study was to address the problem regarding service quality in PHE by developing an industry-specific TQS framework (as a potential basis for an established TQS model) for PHEIs in South Africa. The framework (as a tool) will contribute to the need to manage service quality of PHEIs on a holistic and strategic basis.

4.3.2 Secondary objectives

The following secondary objectives were formulated in support of the primary objective:

- to provide a conceptual analysis of TQS within the context of organisational theory;
- to identify broad TQS dimensions based on a literature study to be incorporated in a conceptual framework for TQS in PHEIs in South Africa;
- to analyse PHEI stakeholders' perceptions of service quality and service quality dimensions;
- to make a significant contribution to PHE literature and sustainability in South Africa; and
- to make a significant contribution to service quality for all stakeholders of PHEIs.

4.3.3 Significance of the research

With regard to the primary and secondary objectives, the significance of this research study was twofold. Firstly, the research foresaw filling the areas that had not been addressed by literature. As such, this research study was a pioneering effort in the development of a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa. Secondly, the research envisioned adding to the current paucity of literature on PHE in South Africa. To date, the PHE sector has received little attention nationally. Bezuidenhout and De Jager (2014) confirm the notion of a very limited body of knowledge regarding PHEIs in South Africa. Dirkse van Schalkwyk and Steenkamp (2014a) support the statement by Bezuidenhout and De Jager (2014) and declare that research on PHEIs in South Africa is extremely limited. Finally, it is envisaged that the entire study with the TQS framework at the core will contribute to service quality and the eventual sustainability of PHEIs.

4.3.4 Target population

As indicated in Chapter 2, there are currently 125 registered PHEIs in South Africa (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2017c). Of the 125 institutions, 16 offer up to a master's degree of whom 12 can be classified as business schools (of the others, three are theological colleges and one an arts college) and only four up to a PhD (two of whom are theological colleges). Six institutes were purposively selected for this study to represent the target population. According to Saunders *et al*. (2016), a researcher may redefine the population as something more manageable. This is called the target population, and is often a subset of the population, which is the focus of the research study.

The selected institutes can be equated with private universities (offering up to master's and doctoral degrees). However, legislation in South Africa prohibits PHEIs to call themselves universities. The compelling case for the inclusion of the selected six PHEIs (with 13 campuses or PHEI sites) in this research study were the following:

- South Africa's leading PHEIs have committed to improving the quality and positioning of the sector in the country by formalising a PHE association. For the purpose of this research study and to protect the anonymity of the PHEIs, this association will be referred to as the "Private higher education quality association" (PHEQA). The PHEQA was formed based on the need for a unified voice on the quality alternatives that PHE could offer students, society and the South African economy. The aims of the PHEQA are to:
  - build trust in and awareness of the PHE sector;
  - increase access to HE; and most importantly; and
  - to ensure that its members deliver on quality and relevance promises. The six PHEIs selected for this research study were the founding members of the PHEQA (since 2017, more PHEIs have joined the association).
- The directors of the six PHEIs welcomed this study and were convinced that it would add value in the long term to the PHE industry in South Africa. Furthermore, the PHEQA provided access and support for such a comprehensive study, such as making available lists with names and contact details (sampling frame) of all possible participants for inclusion in the research study.
- The student profile of the six PHEIs was aligned with other PHEIs (second language, mostly previously disadvantaged students).

- The six PHEIs have a national footprint in South Africa (concentrated in Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal as depicted in Figure 2.5) as well as one delivery site in Windhoek, Namibia.
- At the time of this research, the six PHEIs had a large number of students and lecturers in excess of 8 000.
- All of these institutions offer qualifications up to a master's degree (one institute also offers a PhD while four are in the process of developing PhDs).
- The six selected leading institutions boasted business-oriented strategies with entrepreneurial university cultures.
- At the time of this study, two of the institutes were part of international education groups with PHEIs in the Americas, Europe, Middle East and Africa, Asia Pacific and South Asia. In addition, a third institute was part of a JSE-listed company.
- All six selected PHEIs were registered with the DHET and their programmes were accredited by the CHE.

The research approach and design that were applied in this research study are discussed in the next section.

4.4 RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), a research design offers the structure or plan used to collect and analyse data. In addition, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) assert that the research design is the general plan for the research. It contains clear objectives, states the reasons for the selection of a particular organisation or department for the research, identifies the sources from which data will be collected, and explains the research constraints and ethical issues.

With reference to the research problem, the PHE sector in the service industry was chosen and focussed on in order to have a high level of internal validity. The PHE sector in South Africa was chosen due to general service quality challenges in HE and the fact that service quality is perceived as essential for sustainability and gaining a competitive edge in this ever-evolving environment. Furthermore, service quality plays an important role in high-involvement industries where there is high interaction between customers and the service provider (Sureshchandar et al., 2001b). The PHE sector in South Africa is large enough to represent all the critical dimensions of TQS. Although the framework could possibly be applied to the service sector as a whole, it was designed specifically to address TQS in the PHE sector in South Africa.

4.4.1 Research paradigm

The broad approach, frame of reference and body of thought are fundamental to the research process followed. According to Ponterotto (2005) and Saunders *et al*. (2016), ‘research philosophy’ and ‘research paradigm’ are broad terms referring to a viewpoint of the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge. The research philosophy that the researcher follows contains vital assumptions about his or her view of the world. These assumptions reinforce the research strategy, tools, instruments and methods used in a study. In addition, Morgan (2007) highlights the terms ‘worldviews’ and ‘shared understandings of reality’ as synonyms for paradigms, and he defines a paradigm as a system of beliefs that influences the methods of research and interpretation of the evidence collected. The current study was grounded within the pragmatic philosophical assumption or research paradigm. Creswell (2014:294) defines pragmatism as:

> [A] worldview or philosophy arises out of actions, situations, and consequences rather than antecedent conditions (as in post-positivism). There is a concern with applications – what works – and solutions to problems. Instead of focusing on methods, researchers emphasize the research problem and use all approaches available to understand it.”

Pragmatism originated in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century from the work of historical figures such as Peirce, James, Mead and Dewey to contemporaries such as Murphy (1990), Patton (1990) and Rorty (1990). Pragmatism as a worldview is concerned with applications and solutions to problems. It is angled toward ‘what works’. Multiple methods or pluralistic approaches are often highly possible and appropriate within one study, but one single point of view can never give the entire picture and multiple realities may exist (Creswell, 2014; Saunders *et al*., 2016). The researcher emphasises the problem and uses all available approaches to understand the problem; thus, supporting the mixed method approach adopted in this study (see section 4.4.2). According to Creswell (2014:39–40), the pragmatic worldview offers the following philosophical foundations for research:

- “Pragmatism is not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality. This applies to mixed methods research in that inquirers draw liberally from both quantitative and qualitative assumptions when they engage in their research.
- Individual researchers have a freedom of choice. In this way, researchers are free to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures of research that best meet their needs and purposes.
- Pragmatists do not see the world as an absolute unity. In a similar way, mixed methods researchers look to many approaches for collecting and analyzing data rather than subscribing to only one way (e.g., quantitative or qualitative).
- Thus, for the mixed methods researcher, pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews, and different assumptions, as well as different forms of data collection and analysis.”

Pragmatism is therefore a philosophical belief that the truth or value of a theory (e.g. TQS) depends on its practical value.

4.4.2 Research arguments

In research, there are two contrasting approaches or arguments that can be adopted, namely induction and deduction. The inductive approach involves the development of theory based on the observation of a specific event or empirical data (Saunders *et al*., 2016). In the current study, a deductive process was followed, which is “a form of argument that purports to be conclusive – the conclusion must necessarily flow from the reasons given. These reasons are said to imply the conclusion and represent a proof” (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:66). In order for deduction to be correct, it must be true and valid. The reasons for the conclusion must therefore be true and the conclusion must flow from the reasons. Supporting this, Saunders *et al*. (2016) assert that in the deductive approach, literature is used to identify ideas or theories that will be tested by means of data. Hence, a theoretical framework can be developed and tested with data. Saunders *et al*. (2016) add that deduction has several significant characteristics:

- it is the search to explain causal relationships between variables;
- a highly structured methodology is followed to facilitate replication;
- quantitative (and/or qualitative) data are collected;
- the researcher is independent of the study; and
- the concepts need to be operationalised so that the facts can be measured quantitatively.

4.4.3 Methodologies and techniques

A variety of research methods are available to address problems. As mentioned in the previous section, Creswell (2014) identifies pragmatism as the paradigm for mixed methods research. The mixed method approach selected for this study was therefore in line with the research design in terms of the pragmatic paradigm, adopting a highly structured approach using qualitative and quantitative methods. Saunders *et al*. (2016) refer to qualitative data as facts expressed through words whereas quantitative data is based on meanings derived from numbers. Similarly, Leedy and Ormrod (2015) on their part argue that qualitative data involve the in-depth analysis of a phenomenon and cannot easily be reduced to numbers. In contrast, quantitative data are information that is expressed in numbers. The overall methodology is replicable and the vigorous process to obtain quantifiable observations leads to a very specific deductive process in developing a TQS framework.

This study therefore followed a mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) research approach because it involved collecting, analysing and interpreting both qualitative and quantitative data and assimilating conclusions from the data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; Saunders *et al*., 2016). The reasons for choosing a mixed methods approach was in line with the suggestions by Leedy and Ormrod (2015):

(1) **Triangulation**: a more convincing and valid case can be made for conclusions based on both quantitative and qualitative data.

(2) **Completeness**: a research problem can be addressed fully only when both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analysed.

(3) **Complementary**: the quantitative phase of the research project can compensate for weaknesses in the qualitative phase of the research project.

(4) **Development of appropriate research tools**: the interviews in the qualitative phase can guide the setting of questions for the quantitative survey.

Furthermore, Creswell (2014) is of the opinion that, at a general level, the strength of a mixed method study is greater than either a single quantitative or a qualitative approach and it minimises the limitations of both approaches. At a practical level, it is ideal for researchers who have access to both qualitative and quantitative data. In addition, Leedy and Ormrod (2015) argue that a mixed method design might produce a more significant contribution to the field of research than a limited investigation could possibly do. Moreover, Saunders *et al*. (2016) mention that the use of mixed methods may enhance the credibility of a study and produce more complete knowledge leading to greater confidence in the conclusions. Creswell (2014) warns that, despite the strengths attributed to the mixed methods research design, it is a complex and time-intensive design requiring extensive data collection and analysis of both qualitative and be presented to explain the details and flow of research activities (see Figure 4.2).

There are different schools of thought or approaches relating to mixed methods research. One such an approach is proposed by Plowright (2011). This approach completely rejects the traditional separation between the terms 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' and refers to 'narrative' and 'numerical' data. It proposes a fresh view of what data are and how it can be used. Reference is made to the application of an integrated methodological approach known as 'Frameworks for Integrated Methodology' or FraIM. This approach also proposes a radical alternative in that the research philosophy does not determine the methodology applied, but rather that the methodology determines the philosophy employed. According to Plowright (2011), this is a 'liberating' approach that frees the researcher from past constraints, and paves the way for future research. Bearing in mind Plowright's integrated methodology (see Plowright, 2011), the more traditional and accepted mixed methods approach, specifically the exploratory sequential mixed method design as proposed by Creswell (2014), was selected for this study.

There are numerous ways in which quantitative and qualitative methods can be combined. As indicated, the exploratory sequential mixed method design was applied in this study and comprised two stages. The first stage used qualitative methods and the second stage, quantitative methods. Qualitative data provide a foundation for a more structured quantitative study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). Similarly, Creswell (2011) refers to this type of mixed method design as the exploratory sequential design. First, the topic is explored quantitatively followed by building a quantitative phase. In many cases, an instrument is developed between the phases that are used for data collection in the second, quantitative phase. Hence, this design has also been referred to as the instrument development design and the quantitative follow-up design (see Creswell, 2011). The purpose of the exploratory design is to generalise the qualitative findings of a few respondents (Stage 1) to a larger sample in the second, quantitative stage. The exploratory sequential mixed method design followed in this study is discussed in more detail in section 4.5.

Two basic research methods have developed over the last 100 years, namely the longitudinal and cross-sectional methods (Salkind, 2012). The longitudinal method studies a single group of people over a certain period, whereas the cross-sectional method examines several groups of people at one point in time (i.e. in the form of a 'snapshot') (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; Salkind, 2012; Saunders *et al*., 2016). Table 4.1 indicates the advantages and disadvantages of the cross-sectional method.

Table 4.1: The cross-sectional method

Research strategy	Advantages	Disadvantages
Cross-sectional method	• Inexpensive • Short time span • Low dropout rate • Requires no long-term administration or cooperation between staff and participants	• Limits comparability of groups • Gives no idea about the direction of change that a group might take • Examines people of the same chronological age who may be of different maturational levels • Reveals nothing about the continuity of development on an individual basis

Source: Adapted from Salkind (2012:254)

With due consideration of the advantages and disadvantages indicated in Table 4.1 above as well as the primary objective of this study, a cross-sectional design was followed in which the participants were interviewed and surveyed at a specific point in time.

The focus of the next section is on the data collection method employed in this study, namely the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design.

4.5 EXPLORATORY SEQUENTIAL MIXED METHODS RESEARCH DESIGN

As indicated previously, the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design was selected for this study. This research design starts with a qualitative stage followed by a quantitative stage. The stages are sequential; thus, the first qualitative stage informs or directs the next quantitative stage (Saunders *et al*., 2016). It is also noteworthy to mention some of the strengths and challenges of this design. Creswell (2011) refers to challenges such as the time it takes to implement the two-stage design, including the time to develop a new instrument. In addition, researchers must follow a duel sampling strategy. A small purposeful sample in the first stage and a large sample in the second stage should be considered. Fortunately, the two-stage process could be implemented. A small purposive sample was used in the first stage followed by a large sample of different participants in the second stage. However, the strengths or advantages of this design outweigh its challenges. The separate stages make it easy to implement and report, it can produce a new instrument, and the quantitative component makes this design especially acceptable for audiences inclined towards quantitative research. This design has been used numerous times to develop instruments and tests (e.g. Bilodeau, 2016; Copeland, 2015; Guetterman, 2015; Milton, Watkins & Studdard, 2003; Patsalides, 2015). The current study was not unique in the application of this design but drew from these previous studies to guide its methodology. To be very clear, the focus of this study was not on the development of instruments. Rather, the purpose was to develop a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa as noted in the primary objective of this study.

4.5.1 Rationale of the design

According to Creswell (2011), the main purpose of the exploratory design is to generalise the qualitative findings based on a few individuals in the first stage to a larger sample in the second stage. As previously indicated, the intent of the two-stage exploratory design is that the results from the first qualitative stage can help develop or inform the second, quantitative stage. The design is based on the proposition that exploration is needed for one of several reasons:

- measures or instruments are not available;
- variables (dimensions) are unknown; or
- for the in-depth exploration of a phenomenon and to measure the prevalence of its dimensions.

In line with the suggestions from Creswell (2011), the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design was selected for the development of a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

Cognisance was also taken of other considerations by Creswell (2011) relevant to the selection of the exploratory design:

- the constructs or dimensions to incorporate into a TQS framework needed to be determined;
- the research could be conducted in two stages in terms of available time; and

- due to limited resources, a design was chosen where one type of data was collected and analysed at a time.

The selection of the design was also based on the fact that no previous studies had addressed the issue of TQS in PHE. Moreover, when this study was conceptualised, no quantitative instrument was available to identify and measure the importance of TQS dimensions for the development of a TQS framework. For a comprehensive framework to be developed, the TQS phenomenon had to be researched and explored extensively. To develop a good instrument, it was necessary to explore TQS in depth and qualitatively to facilitate the development of a quantitative measuring instrument. Furthermore, Collins, Onwuegbuzie and Sutton (2006) argue that beginning with a qualitative exploration is a strategy to increase the applicability and value of an assessment instrument.

4.5.2 Sequential phases

In support of the view of Saunders *et al*. (2016), Creswell (2011;2014) purports that the exploratory sequential method begins with collecting and analysing qualitative data. Building from the exploratory results, the second, quantitative stage was conducted. In many applications of this design, an instrument is developed as an intermediate step between the two stages. This design has also been referred to as the instrument development design or quantitative follow-up design (see Creswell, 2011; 2014). Sequential timing was used in this study. From the literature review, the research process proceeded to the initial qualitative stage that explored the importance of service quality as well as the identification of TQS dimensions from the perspective of PHEI principals. This was followed by an intermediate instrument development phase (based on literature and qualitative findings) and finally to the quantitative stage, which tested the instrument. The stages built on one another with each stage producing distinct outcomes. This eventually led to the development of a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

Creswell (2011) proposes that sampling occurs in two stages, and that the samples should be related to each other. The participants of the quantitative stage are typically not the same as the qualitative stage. This is because the purpose of the quantitative stage is to generalise the results to a population; hence, different participants are used. The second quantitative stage also requires a much bigger sample than the first qualitative stage. Added to this, Leedy and Ormrod (2015) also emphasise that the samples of the two stages should be connected or linked in some meaningful way relevant to the research problem. In this study, the sample for the first qualitative stage consisted of PHEI principals while students and lecturers formed part of the second, quantitative sample.

4.5.3 Emphasis

Creswell (2014) is of the opinion that a mixed methods study can reflect an equal or unequal emphasis on both databases. In this study, the emphasis leaned towards the quantitative stage. The reason is that the purpose of the initial qualitative stage was to collect data to contribute to the development of a quantitative instrument to be utilised in the second, quantitative stage. However, it must be noted that both stages were given equal attention concerning the amount of depth and sophistication in data collection and analysis (see Chapters 5 and 6).

4.5.4 Integration

As indicated previously (see 4.5.1), data of the first stage was used to guide the planning of the second stage. Data from the first stage did not stand in isolation from the data from the second stage. In fact, data collection in the second stage could not take place until the data from stage one had been collected and the findings analysed. In short, data from stage one informed the data collection in stage two; hence. the follow-up data collection was built on the results from the initial stage. However, it must be noted that there are no prescriptions or recipes for analysing and integrating qualitative and quantitative findings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). Data integration for the current study was employed on three levels. First, integration transpired at the design level because the exploratory sequential mixed methods design implied a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The initial qualitative stage informed the ensuing quantitative stage. Second, integration was done on the methods level. A visual, joint display of data was presented where the dimensions identified from literature and the qualitative findings were integrated to inform the dimensions (items or constructs) of the quantitative instrument. Third, on a reporting level, the final TQS framework consisted of the integration of qualitative data (from a top management perspective), the analysed quantitative data as well as the data obtained from an open-ended question in the quantitative instrument (the voice of the internal and external customer).

4.6 OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Figure 4.2 below reflects a visual presentation of the research process adopted for this study.

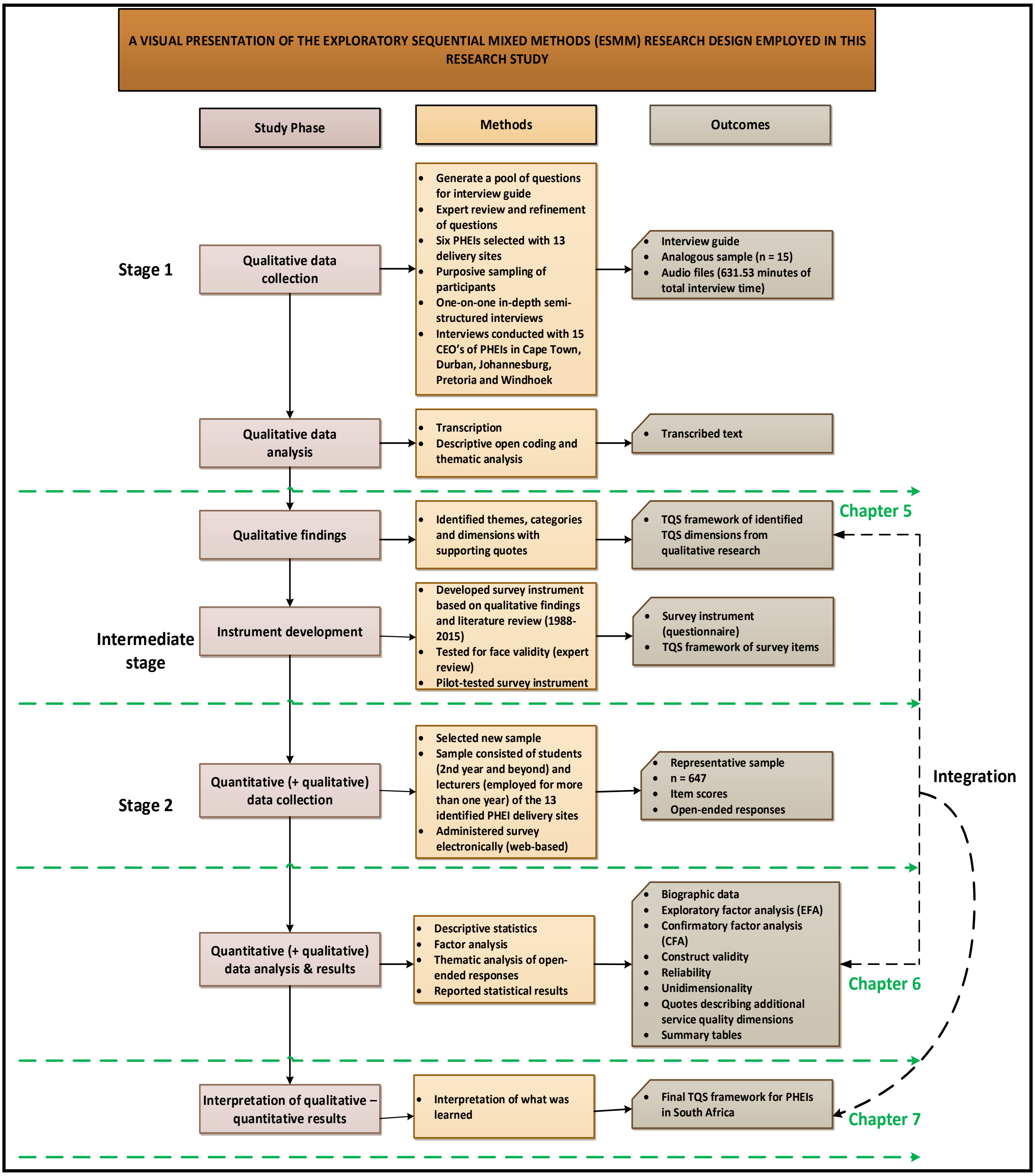

Figure 4.2: A visual presentation of the research process

Source: Author's own compilation

As indicated in Figure 4.2, the research process started with the collection and analysis of qualitative data to explore TQS and its dimensions. From there, the qualitative findings (coupled with the findings informed by literature) were applied in the intermediate phase to develop an instrument to be used in the following quantitative stage. Following the intermediate phase, the quantitative phase started with pilot testing the newly developed instrument. After refinement of the instrument, it was distributed to a new sample of participants. The quantitative data were collected and analysed and the statistical results reported. Finally, a TQS framework was proposed. The focus of the following sections is on the various stages of the research project (i.e. Stage 1, intermediate stage and Stage 2).

4.7 STAGE 1: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Cooper and Schindler (2014:144) define qualitative research as "an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world". Supporting this, Saunders *et al*. (2016) contend that data derived from qualitative research are based on meanings expressed in words and images, and that analysis is conducted by using conceptualisation. The first stage of the current study was a qualitative exploration of TQS dimensions for PHEIs in South Africa from a top management perspective. The goal of this stage was to generate critical TQS dimensions to inform and contribute to the development of a quantitative instrument to be applied in Stage 2 of the research process, as well as determining top management's views on the level of TQS practices in their respective PHEIs.

4.7.1 Sampling procedure

This section describes the number and selection of participants for Stage 1 of the research study. Choosing the number of participants in qualitative research is neither systematic nor mathematical. A nonprobability, purposive sampling technique was employed in Stage 1. According to Teddlie and Yu (2007), purposive sampling is primarily used in qualitative studies where units (e.g. individuals, groups of individuals or institutions) are selected based on a specific purpose or where people are deliberately selected for the important information they can provide. Purposive sampling can also lead to greater depth of information from a smaller number of selected units. In addition, Cooper and Schindler (2014) comment that in purposive sampling, the researcher chooses participants based on their unique characteristics or expertise. Further to this, Saunders *et al*. (2016) and Leedy and Ormrod (2015) contend that in purposive sampling, individuals are chosen who would provide the most information to meet the research objectives.

The compelling case for the inclusion of the selected six PHEIs (with 13 campuses or PHEI sites) in this research study was explained and substantiated in section 4.3.4. From this target population, a non-probability, homogeneous, purposive sample was drawn. According to Saunders *et al*. (2016), a homogeneous sample focuses on a subgroup where the sample members are similar, for example, a particular occupation or level in the hierarchy of an organisation. The target population in the current study consisted of top managers at the selected PHEIs such as principals, vice-principals, deans, directors, academic managers, registrars, heads of school and academic presidents. For ease of reference and due to the different titles of top managers at PHEIs in South Africa, all top managers are referred to as 'principals'. Section 5.2 in Chapter 5 will elaborate on the participants who were selected for Stage 1. Table 4.2 presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria of participants.

Table 4.2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Must be in top management	In a middle or lower management position
Must be a decision-maker in terms of the effective, efficient and profitable operations of the PHEI	Not a strategic decision-maker
Be more than 2 years in a top management position	Less than 2 years in a top management position
Permanently employed	Consultant or contract appointment

Source: Author's own compilation

A permission letter (Appendix A) was drafted and sent to each of the six PHEIs to obtain provisional consent to conduct research on their respective sites of delivery. After permission had been granted, the first contact with the 13 PHEI sites of delivery was initiated by the chairperson of the PHEQA. Top management at each site were informed about the research study and their possible inclusion in the research process, should they wish to participate. The principals at the identified delivery sites where then contacted via email for the following reasons:

- to introduce myself as the researcher and to provide a brief overview of the research study;
- to confirm their participation in the research study; and

- to confirm a date and venue for the interview had they accepted the invitation.

Once feedback was received from all the delivery sites, top management were contacted telephonically to establish rapport before the actual interview and to confirm the arrangements in the email correspondence. Two of the 13 sites indicated that more than one top manager would like to participate in the interview process. The relevant participants complied with all four of the inclusion criteria listed in Table 4.2. From the target population, 15 participants were eventually identified as potential rich sources of information. All 15 participants welcomed the research and agreed to participate in the research study. According to Davis (2013), the size of the sample drawn is not as important as the actual sample drawn. The credibility of the findings is measured in terms of the richness of the information and not the number of participants. Thus, the aim of Stage 1 was to select participants who would produce rich data. According to Saunders *et al*. (2016), where research is done to understand communalities within a homogeneous group, 12 in-depth interviews should be adequate. Saturation in data collection is the point where any additional data collected provides no new themes, insights or information. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) operationalised saturation and made recommendations regarding non-probabilistic samples sizes for interviews. Based on the research by Guest *et al*. (2006), data saturation was reached within the first twelve interviews but basic elements for metathemes were present as early as six interviews. Moreover, Creswell (2013, cited in Saunders *et al*., 2016) mentions that in a general study, five to 30 interviews should suffice. Thus, the sample size of 15 participants seemed to be in agreement with the findings from literature.

4.7.2 Informed consent

Participants were recruited on a voluntary basis and without any incentives promised. Both the PHEIs and their participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. The commitment from participants to partake in the research study was pursued through the process of informed consent. The concept 'informed consent' refers to the full disclosure of the nature, procedures and role of the participant within the proposed study as well as obtaining written permission from all participants (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; Saunders *et al*., 2016).

A participant information and consent form (Appendix B) was drafted and presented to participants. Adhering to the suggestions from Salkind (2012), the consent form contained the following information:

- an introduction to and the contact details of the researcher and the research supervisor;
- the purpose of the research, assurance of anonymity of participants and voluntary participation in the research study;
- duration of the participant's involvement;
- what the results would be used for;
- how the results would be stored; and
- how participants could obtain a copy of the results.

Upon confirmation of the interview appointment, the informed consent letter was circulated to the participants via email. At the start of each interview, the participant was asked to complete and sign the informed consent form. As indicated in section 4.7.1, permission was also obtained from each of the six PHEIs prior to the interviews and data production. The researcher also acquired permission to continue with the research study from Unisa's College of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee. Every effort was made to ensure confidentiality and the anonymity of participants during the interview process. The researcher avoided leading questions and refrained from pressing participants for responses. The signed consent forms were stored with the primary data on a password-protected computer.

4.7.3 Semi-structured in-depth interviews

In Stage 1 of the research study, the researcher was the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. Semi-structured in-depth interviews following a conversational mode were applied in the collection of the data. The conversational approach led to a sort of social relationship and was personalised and unique for every participant. The aim was not to generalise but to obtain rich descriptions of TQS and TQS dimensions in PHEIs in South Africa. According to Saunders *et al*. (2016), in semi-structured interviews, the researcher commences with a set of interview themes but is prepared to vary the order of the questions asked or to ask new questions in the context of the research situation. Additionally, Cooper and Schindler (2014) state that in semi-structured in-depth interviews, respondents are encouraged to provide as much information as possible. Supporting this, Gray (2014) explains that semi-structured interviews allow for the probing of views and attitudes where respondents have the opportunity to expand on their answers, making it a favourable data collection technique for qualitative researchers and allowing for in-depth exploration of the topic.

An interview guide was developed for the individual interviews aimed at producing rich descriptions of TQS and TQS dimensions by incorporating questions related to the participant's conceptions of TQS, service quality systems, service quality management, service quality improvement and a holistic approach to TQS. The themes and questions for the interview guide were derived from literature, common sense, the researcher's experience in service quality and the PHE sector as well as discussions with researchers from various public and private HEIs. Jacob and Furgerson (2012) recommend that questions should be open-ended and non-threatening and that the researcher should be willing to make 'on-the-spot' revisions to the questions. This allows for the design of the study to emerge as the research is conducted. Questions should also be limited in number. Six to ten well-formulated questions should suffice. The questions should also be wide and expansive rather than having a large number of small, detailed questions. This will allow for the free flow of the interview and the possible materialisation of unexpected data from participants. In addition, Creswell (2014) suggests that no more than 12 should be used. The interview should conclude with a wrap-up or summary question. Following these suggestions, the interview guide was developed consisting of nine non-threating and open questions to achieve in-depth responses.

The interview guide was sent to all respondents via email prior to the arranged interview. Saunders *et al*. (2016) argue that by informing the interviewee beforehand about the interview questions could promote validity and reliability because it provides them the opportunity to prepare for the interview. The research settings were the 13 delivery sites of the selected six PHEIs. The 13 sites were geographically dispersed between Gauteng, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Namibia. Participants were not regarded as 'numbers', but rather as a unique pool of individuals who could offer rich and exceptional descriptions of TQS dimensions for PHE in South Africa. During the interviews, the researcher attempted to probe issues in depth and allowed the respondent to lead. In addition, the researcher kept field notes of the research setting, behaviours of participants and possible activities and events that could occur at each interview. The researcher kept the conversation focused on the topic but provided the respondents room to expand on their views and to define the content of the discussion.

All interviews were recorded with a digital recorder and transcribed verbatim. The total interview time was 631.53 minutes with the average length per interview amounting to 42 minutes. The transcribed interviews consisted of 255 pages. The transcribing function was outsourced to a reputable transcription and typing solutions organisation, NIKANN. A professional transcriber was used to transcribe the interviews and create the verbatim transcripts. Due to the employment of the professional transcriber, the researcher had to audit every transcript against the recorded audio. This was particularly important for gaining familiarity with the data and therefore added to overall trustworthiness (Davis, 2013). The final interview guide is presented in Appendix C.

Although an interview guide was used, the interviews followed an informal and conversational approach. As mentioned previously, a sort of social relationship developed between the researcher and the participant. The participants could talk extensively and freely, sharing as much information as possible about their perceptions and beliefs related to the research topic (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Saunders *et al*., 2016), hence, the in-depth nature of the semi-structured interviews.

4.7.4 Qualitative data analysis

According to Labuschagne (2003), the analysis of qualitative data comprises the non-numerical organisation of data in order to discover themes or patterns found in field notes, interview transcripts or open-ended questionnaires. Methods of qualitative data analysis include conversation analysis, interpretive phenomenological analysis, discourse analysis, narrative analysis and thematic analysis. The diverse and complex nature of qualitative research calls for a flexible analysis approach – this is one of the advantages of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Howitt and Cramer (2014), thematic analysis implies that the researcher identifies a limited number of themes, which sufficiently reflect their textual data. It is important that the researcher be familiar with their data if the analysis is to be significant; hence, data familiarisation (as in other qualitative methods) is the key to meaningful thematic analysis. Added to this, Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) state that thematic analysis is the search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon under investigation. Themes are identified through reading and re-reading of the data. It is thus a form of pattern recognition in the data where themes become categories for analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) further argue that thematic analysis is a method that works both to reflect reality and to analyse or unravel the surface of 'reality'. In supporting the previous arguments explaining thematic analysis, McLeod (2001, cited in Braun & Clarke, 2006) confirms that thematic analysis differs from other analytic methods in that it seek to describe patterns across qualitative data to understand people's everyday experiences of reality in greater detail. This is done in order to understand the phenomenon under investigation.

In agreement with the arguments from Braun and Clarke (2006), Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) and Howitt and Cramer (2014), the researcher concluded that thematic analysis was the most appropriate method for qualitative data analysis in lieu of the research objective of the current research study. Figure 4.3 presents a summary of the qualitative study of Stage 1 in the research process.

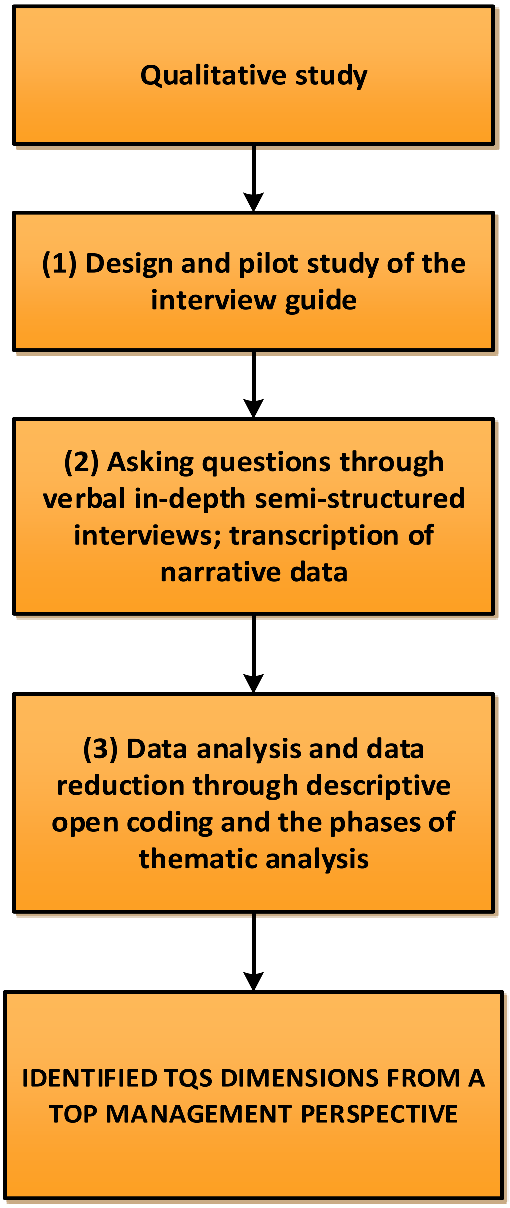

Figure 4.3: Summary of the qualitative study

Source: Author's own compilation

Coding is one of the crucial phases in thematic analysis and is used to categorise data with similar meanings. It involves the labelling of each data unit with a code that represents that meaning of the extract (Saunders *et al*., 2016). Tesch's descriptive method of open coding presents 'a way of working' with textual data and is summarised in eight steps (Creswell, 2014). These steps guided the researcher through the data analysis process. The researcher first had to obtain a sense of the whole by reading through the transcriptions. One interview was selected, and to arrive at the underlying meaning in the information, the question was asked, 'What is this about?' After the initial thought process, preliminary thoughts were written down. This was then done for all the interviews. These thoughts were then collated into groups to become topics eventually. Thereafter, topics were clustered together to form initial major topics and unique topics. The topics were then abbreviated as codes and the codes were written down next to the appropriate segments of transcribed data. This preliminary organising scheme was repeated several times to see whether new codes emerged. The codes were then combined and grouped together to form categories and subcategories (dimensions), which related to one another. The data belonging to each category were assembled in one place and a preliminary analysis was performed to identify the overarching themes that emerged from the open coding process. The researcher's review of the literature chapters and discussions with peers and experts greatly contributed to the coding process. Furthermore, through the keeping of field notes and the rereading of transcripts, coupled with revisiting of the audio recordings, the researcher began to see the bigger picture through the identification of patterns and connection of themes. The data were co-coded for verification by an independent expert in qualitative research. This expert was from a different field (i.e. health studies) and did not review the literature on which this research study is based. As such, the themes, categories and dimensions that were identified were not informed by the co-coder's background or interest in the research topic. Consensus was reached on all identified themes, categories and dimensions thus contributing to triangulation.

Howitt and Cramer (2014) confirm that there is not a single, standardised approach to conducting thematic analysis. Different researchers can therefore do things differently, as long as certain quality criteria for thematic analysis are adhered to. Braun and Clarke (2006) provide fundamental principles for what is probably the most systematic introduction to doing thematic analysis to date (Howitt & Cramer, 2014). Table 4.3 presents the phases of thematic analysis that were followed in the data analysis process.

Table 4.3: Phases of thematic analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data	Transcribing data, reading and rereading the data, noting down initial ideas
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (level 1) and the entire data set (level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis
5. Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each them.
6. Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research objectives and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis

Source: Adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006:87)

The criteria for good thematic analysis as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006) were applied in this research. The data were transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts were checked against the recorded interviews for accuracy. Each data item was given equal attention in the coding process and all applicable extracts for each theme were collated. The themes were checked against each other and back to the original dataset. The themes identified were internally coherent, consistent and distinctive. Data were analysed and interpreted (made sense of rather than just paraphrased or described). The analysis and data matched each other, and told a convincing story about the data and the topic with an even balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts. The researcher was active in the research process and enough time was allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately, without rushing a phase or giving it a once over lightly.

The steps taken by the researcher to ensure the trustworthiness of the data are discussed in the next section.

4.7.5 Trustworthiness of the data

In qualitative research, validity and reliability are described through strategies of trustworthiness. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), trustworthiness can be described as the extent to which other people find the results to be convincing and worth taking seriously. Supporting this, Gunawan (2015) is of the opinion that a research study is only trustworthy if the reader judges it as such. For the purpose of this research study, Guba's model of trustworthiness was applied. This model includes the following four strategies for trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 cited in Visagie, 2012). Visagie (2012) and Anney (2014) explain these strategies as follows:

Credibility refers to the truth-value and truth in reality. This is the confidence in the truth of the research findings. Credibility establishes the plausibility of the original data drawn from participants and seeks to prove the correct interpretation of participants' original views.

Transferability indicates the degree to which the results of the research can be transferred to a similar setting with other respondents. This is achieved through a detailed description of the research process so that other researchers can duplicate the described methodology and follow similar steps.

Dependability refers to the stability or consistency of the findings over time. As a result, where another researcher analyses the data, they will come to the same conclusions.

Conformability measures are applied to prevent researcher bias. It refers to the degree to which the results could be corroborated by other researchers; consequently, the results should represent the perceptions of the participants and not the preferences of the researcher.

A fifth strategy, also applied in this research study, was introduced by Christians (2000, cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), namely **authenticity**. This strategy demonstrates fairness by preventing marginalisation through the equal inclusion of and attention to all voices in the study.

Table 4.4 below offers an account of the criteria and applicability of each trustworthiness strategy employed in the current research study.

Table 4.4: Trustworthiness strategies

Strategy	Criteria	Applicability
Credibility	Prolonged engagement with participants	The researcher built trust and rapport with participants by travelling to the different PHEI delivery sites and spending time with them prior to the interview. The researcher also understood the culture of the PHE environment having been employed in this sector prior to his employment in public HE.
	Interview technique	The researcher facilitated the conversation, probed for in-depth responses and gave the participant the opportunity to lead the conversation. The first interview was used to pilot the data collection method. In addition, the researcher's supervisor accompanied him to all the

Strategy	Criteria	Applicability
		research sites and acted as an observer in all 15 interviews.
	Structural coherence	A detailed description of the findings is important for promoting credibility. The research findings are presented in a logical flow providing a holistic picture of the results (see Chapter 5).
	Adequate references	All references used were current and accounted for in the reference list. Appendix D provides an accurate account of verbatim quotes used in the analysis.
	Triangulation	Site triangulation was achieved with participants from several PHEIs. Similar results from different PHE delivery sites contributed to greater credibility.
	Peer examination	The findings were discussed with peers, such as academic staff and members of the department. This was to ensure that the researcher analysed the data correctly. In addition, part of the findings was also published in an accredited South African journal in 2016.
	Member checking	This involved returning to the participants after the data had been analysed and presenting them with the findings (see section 4.8).
	Reflectivity	The researcher kept field notes of the research setting and behaviours of participants.
	Authority of the researcher	The researcher has received training in various research methodologies, was familiar with the phenomenon under investigation, and was actively involved on all 15 interviews. In addition, the researcher's supervisor is an expert in the field of TQS and the interpretation of qualitative data.
Transferability	Thick description	As mentioned previously, a purposive sampling approach was followed and the demographics of the respondents are described in detail (Chapter 5). Thick descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation are provided (Chapter 5) and the results are described in depth with verbatim quotations from the interviews.
Dependability	Audit trail	The research process was detailed, clearly documented, logical and traceable and can be audited for authentication.
	Code–recode strategy	Data quality checks were performed and the data were co-coded by an independent expert in qualitative research.
Conformability	Triangulation	As described above.
Authenticity	Fairness	Marginalisation of participants' contributions was prevented through the equal inclusion of and attention to all voices in the study.

Source: Adapted from Anney (2014), Gunawan (2015), Shenton (2004) and Visagie (2012)

Table 4.4 provided a detailed account of the strategies for trustworthiness of the qualitative data analysis employed in this research study. The next section will focus on the intermediate stage of the research process, namely instrument development.

4.8 INTERMEDIATE STAGE: INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

The instrument development stage was an intermediate stage of the research study. The developed instrument was informed by literature as well as the qualitative findings as explained in section 4.7. The literature study investigated service quality frameworks and models over approximately the last 30 years incorporating 29 different service industries in 26 countries. This culminated in several identified dimensions (27 TQS dimensions and 34 service quality dimensions). The instrument development process encompassed combining both TQS and service quality dimensions identified in literature with the identified dimensions from the 15 qualitative interviews. Creswell (2011) mentions that an important aspect in the intermediate instrument development stage in the exploratory mixed methods research design, is to decide which aspects in the qualitative findings should be used to inform the quantitative data collection instrument. The identified service quality dimensions from the first qualitative stage as well as the selected items (dimensions) from the literature study to be included in the questionnaire, were presented in a joint display of data to present the data integration process visually (see Table 5.15). This is expounded in more detail in Chapter 5. The general approach followed in developing the quantitative instrument was adapted from the recommendations by Barry, Chaney, Stellefson and Chaney (2011) as well as DeVellis (2003) for scale development. Figure 4.4 exemplifies the instrument development process.

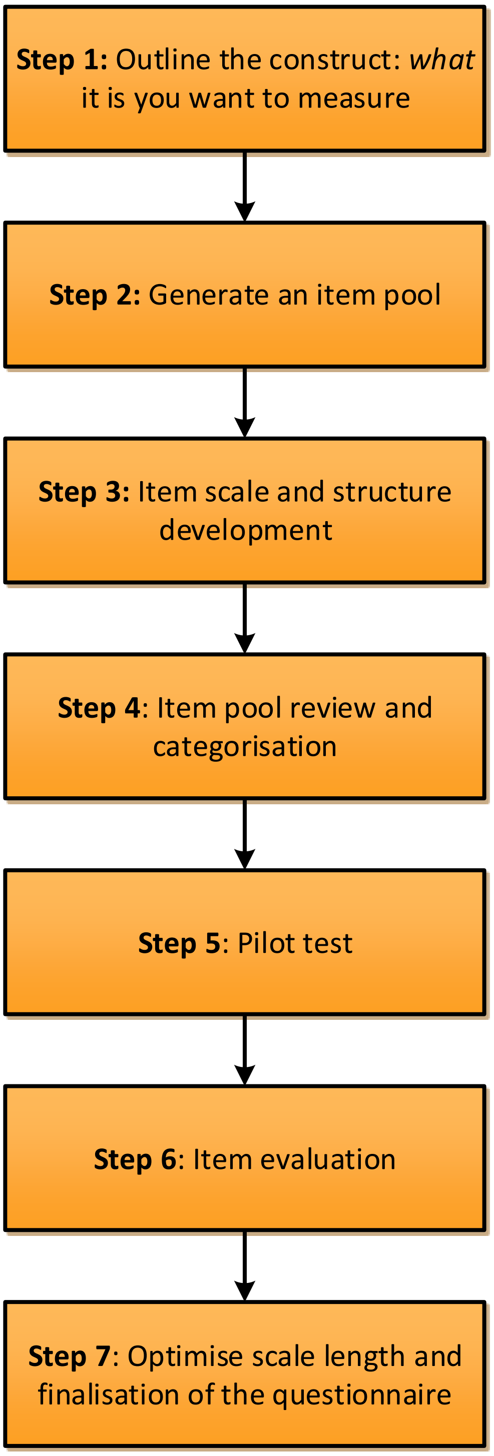

Figure 4.4: The instrument development process

Source: Adapted from Barry *et al*. (2011) and DeVellis (2003)

Step 1. The starting point in instrument development is to elucidate what will be measured and at which level of specificity. DeVellis (2003) suggests the researcher should be well grounded in theories related to the phenomenon to be measured. In this study, the importance of identified dimensions for managing, measuring and improvement of service quality on a continuous basis had to be included in a TQS framework.

During **Step 2**, a pool of sample items was generated based on an extensive literature study and findings from the qualitative stage. The objective was to develop items that respondents would understand in a similar manner, which would result in an exact response, and which respondents would be willing to answer (Dillman 2007, cited in Barry *et al*., 2011). All items were worded positively and at an appropriate reading level for respondents.

In **Step 3**, the item scale and instrument structure were developed. The instrument consisted mainly of Likert-type questions. Saunders *et al*. (2016) describe a Likert-style rating as follows: respondents must indicate, for example, how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement or series of statements. This type of response is usually measured on a four-, five-, six- or seven-point rating scale. However, Comrey (1988, cited in Barry *et al*., 2011) confirms that, due to a lack of variance in a three- or four-point rating scale, it is advisable to include at least five response options in a Likert-type scale. In adherence to the recommendation by Comrey, a five-point Likert-type scale was used ranging from 1 = *not important* to 5 = *very important.* Section A of the questionnaire consisted of the demographic information of the respondents. This section distinguished between two types of respondents, namely external customers (students) and internal customers (lecturers). In Section B, respondents had to indicate the importance of each dimension (item or construct) in terms of measuring, managing and improving service quality on a continuous basis as part of a TQS framework. Section C consisted of the same dimensions (items or constructs) as section B. Here, respondents were asked to group the dimensions in the categories provided. The final section (Section D) consisted of an open-ended question where respondents could provide additional input (any unique suggestion in their own words) on what could additionally contribute to excellent service quality in a PHEI.

During **Step 4**, the item pool was reviewed by experts in the fields of operations and service quality management. The rationale behind this was to have knowledgeable people confirm the clarity of each item and its significance to the main construct being measured. Literature proposes three rationales to include an expert review in order to improve content validity (DeVellis, 2003):

- experts can rate how relevant each item is to what you want to measure;
- experts can suggest wording changes to improve clarity and reduce ambiguous meanings; and

- experts can identify and point out aspects relevant to the phenomenon that might have been omitted.

These experts included my supervisor, two professors from a comprehensive public university, a statistician with expertise in questionnaire development as well as a service quality expert from the PHE sector. In addition, I re-visited the campuses situated in Gauteng, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Namibia. The reason for the re-visit was two-fold. First, the questionnaire was presented to the 15 interviewees (principals) from Stage 1 for inputs on clarity and significance. The draft questionnaire was sent to the principals beforehand so that they could study it and provide feedback at the scheduled future meeting. Second, practical arrangements had to be made (per campus) for the distribution of the final questionnaire to the selected sample of respondents. A face validity invitation letter (Appendix E) was sent to all 15 principals. Step 4 thus contributed to the content validity of the scale.

Step 5 involved the implementation of a pilot test of the questionnaire. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), a pilot study is a brief exploration to determine the feasibility of procedures and measurement instruments to be used in a more exhaustive, follow-up research study. In the current study, the need for the pilot study was based on suggestions from Bell and Waters (2014, cited in Saunders *et al.*, 2016), for example, how long the questionnaire took to complete, the clarity of instructions, whether the respondents felt uneasy to answer certain questions, whether all questions were clear and unambiguous and whether there were any major topic omissions. One PHEI in Gauteng was selected for the pilot study. The questionnaire was randomly distributed to 50 possible respondents. These respondents were not sampled for the main quantitative study. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire and then to provide their comments on the clarity and content of the questionnaire. A total of 21 completed questionnaires were collected and checked to see whether they had been completed appropriately. It was found that all parts of the questionnaire were completed satisfactory. Next, the responses to the list of dimensions (items or constructs) were examined. The majority of the respondents specified that the questionnaire was clearly structured and did not contain irrelevant ideas.

Step 6 comprised item evaluations of the received questionnaires. The data were analysed using a statistical software package, namely IBM SPSS Statistics version 24. First, Cronbach's alpha was computed as a measure of scale reliability and internal consistency. This indicates how closely related the set of items as a group were. In section B of the pilot questionnaire, the Cronbach alpha was computed for all 37 Likert-scale items. An alpha value of 0.992 was obtained, which, according to Saunders *et al*. (2016), is indicative of excellent scale reliability. Second, item normality was investigated by means of two measures of dispersion, namely skewness and kurtosis.

Step 7 related to the optimisation of the scale length. Minor modifications were incorporated in the questionnaire based on the results and feedback obtained from steps four, five and six of the instrument development process. Section C was omitted from the final questionnaire since this section would not contribute to the primary objective of the research study. According to Leedy and Ormrod's (2015) guidelines for questionnaire development, a questionnaire should be as brief as possible and only solicit information that is essential for solving the research problem and addressing the objective of the research study. After the pilot study, a good balance was achieved between the needs of the participants in terms of length and difficulty of the questionnaire and the primary objective of the research study. The final questionnaire therefore consisted of 37 dimensions (items or constructs) where respondents had to indicate the importance of these dimensions in terms of measuring, managing and improving service quality on a continuous basis as part of a TQS framework (see Appendix F).

4.9 STAGE 2: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Quantitative research attempts to measure something and produces information that is fundamentally numerical in nature. It usually measures attitudes, opinions or knowledge, with surveys as the dominant methodology of the quantitative researcher (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; Saunders *et al*., 2016). The second stage of the research study consisted of a quantitative exploration of the importance of TQS dimensions from the perspective of the internal (lecturers) and external (students) customers. The goal was to identify TQS dimensions to be incorporated into a holistic TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa. The data collection strategy of this stage comprised a quantitative survey.

According to Salkind (2012), the characteristics of a population can be studied through surveys. In addition, Saunders *et al*. (2016) contend that a survey is usually associated with a deductive research approach and is frequently used to answer 'what', 'where', 'who', and 'how much' questions that allow for the collection of standardised data from a sizeable population in an efficient way. This is in line with Leedy and Ormrod's (2015) view that a survey involves collecting information such as opinions, attitudes or previous experiences from groups of people by asking questions and tabulating the answers. A survey captures a single moment in time, like a snapshot photograph of an on-going activity.

4.9.1 Sampling procedure and sampling frame

Initially, when this research study was conceptualised, proportional stratified sampling was considered to select participants for the quantitative study. According to Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins and Van Wyk (2005), the stratified sampling method implies that the population is divided into subgroups (strata) and random samples are then drawn from each subgroup. For the purpose of this study, the population was stratified according to campuses across South Africa. Each stratum (campus) was sampled in proportion to its size in the overall population. However, this approach was reconsidered due to the high level of access to respondents, the support and agreement and acceptance from top management of all the PHEIs involved as well as the expected low response rate from participants. Another reason for the reconsideration of this approach was the primary objective of this research project: to develop a TQS framework for PHE in South Africa. In other words, the objective was to develop a framework for the PHE industry and not to measure and compare service quality between different providers. With due consideration of the above-mentioned reasons, it seemed logical to distribute the questionnaire to all potentially specified respondents. Following the approach adopted by Tolmay (2012), the questionnaire was then distributed via email to all specified students and lecturers of selected PHEIs in the sampling frame, which at the same time can be defined as the target population. The specified respondents (sampling frame) consisted of all students (second year and beyond) and all lecturers (employed by the PHEI for more than one year at the time of this research). The reason for including only second year (and beyond) students and lecturers (employed for more than one year) was to obtain an accurate account of their service quality perceptions on the respective sites of delivery.

DeVellis (2003) argues that a ratio of about five to 10 subjects per questionnaire item is needed up to a minimum of 300 subjects. When a sample is bigger than 300, this ratio can be relaxed. A sample of 100 is classified as poor, 200 as fair, 300 as good, 500 as very good and 1 000 as excellent. However, a sample of 200 should be adequate in most cases for factor analysis permitting no more than 40 items. Similarly, Hair *et al*. (2010) explain that the sample size for factor analysis should be at least 50 and preferably more than 100. As a rule of thumb, it is advised to have at least five times as many observations as the number of variables to be analysed. Saunders *et al*. (2016) propose the following sample sizes in relation to the size of the target population at a 95 per cent confidence level as indicated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Sample sizes of the target population at a 95 per cent confidence level

	Margin of error			
Target population	**5%**	**3%**	**2%**	**1%**
200	132	168	185	196
250	151	203	226	244
300	168	234	267	291
400	196	291	343	384
500	217	340	414	475
750	254	440	571	696
1 000	278	516	706	906
2 000	322	696	1 091	1 655
5 000	357	879	1 622	3 288
10 000	370	964	1 936	4 899

Source: Adapted from Saunders et al. (2016:281)

4.9.2 Quantitative data collection

Quantitative data collection consisted of two steps: recruiting a larger sample of different participants than in the qualitative strand in Stage 1, and administrating the instrument to participants to test the instrument. Recruitment and data collection spanned a four-month period – July 2016 to October 2016. The 13 PHEI sites accommodated the distribution of the questionnaire during different times in the four-month period to suit their timetables and daily operational schedules. This required a coordinated effort to distribute the questionnaire to the various sites in Gauteng, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Namibia. The questionnaire distribution was facilitated via each delivery site's internal electronic platform to the personalised email addresses of the selected students and lecturers. Selected students and lecturers were invited via each site's intranet to participate in the survey sent to their personal email addresses. Regular reminders were also sent in the same manner. Dispensing the questionnaire to the respondents' email addresses via internal online platforms was deemed the best medium of communication. This is the space where students and lecturers are active on a daily basis in terms of internal communication, announcements, submission of assignments, uploading of tutorial matter and general administrative and academic enquiries. The questionnaire distribution process was facilitated by the information technology (IT) manager of each PHEI site. The data collection procedure included the following:

- The LimeSurvey web application was employed to develop the on-line survey and collect responses.
- The survey opened with an introduction explaining the primary objective of the study, clarification of the anonymity of the survey, and an indication until when the survey link would be available.
- The survey deployed when the participant clicked on the “I agree” to consent prompt.
- Anonymity was established by the LimeSurvey settings by not linking individual responses to email addresses.
- A reminder for participation in the survey was sent regularly.
- Participants could also opt out of the survey at any time by clicking a specified link.
- Participants could return to the survey at any time during the data collection period but the system only accepted one completed survey per participant.
- A thank you page was displayed at the end of all completed surveys.
- To protect participants in this research study, all procedures followed conformed to the privacy and confidentiality regulations of Unisa’s College of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee.

Initially, a total of 647 completed questionnaires were received from the 13 sites of delivery. The size of the target population was N = 8 208, resulting in a response rate of 7.8%. Of the 647 respondents, 35 were deemed unengaged, since these respondents selected the same option on the five-point Likert-scale for all items in section B of the questionnaire. Hence, the final number of useable responses were 612, resulting in a response rate of 7.5%. Using the guidelines of DeVellis (2003), Hair *et al*. (2010) and Saunders *et al*. (2016) reported in section 4.9.1, a suitable sample size was achieved.

4.9.3 Quantitative data analysis

The first step of the analysis was to report on the biographic and demographic data of the participants. The biographic and demographic data of student and lecturer respondents were reported separately to provide a holistic view of the internal and external customers in PHEIs (this is reported in Chapter 5). Next, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on the 37-item instrument. As in the case of the pilot test, SPSS was used to facilitate the quantitative analysis of the data. Cooper and Schindler (2014) explain that factor analysis is a technique used to discover patterns among variables in order to determine if a combination of the original variables (a factor) can summarise the original set. In addition, Hair *et al.* (2010:16) provide a detailed account on the meaning of factor analysis:

> Factor analysis, including both principal component analysis and common factor analysis, is a statistical approach that can be used to analyse interrelationships among a large number of variables and to explain these variables in terms of their common underlying dimensions (factors). The objective is to find a way of condensing the information contained in a number of original variables into a smaller set of variates (factors) with a minimal loss of information. By providing an empirical estimate of the structure of the variables considered, factor analysis becomes an objective basis for creating summative scales.

In line with the recommendations from Hair *et al*. (2010), the following assumptions for the appropriateness of factor analysis were verified:

- the minimum sample guidelines as explained in section 4.9.1 were met;
- in terms of conceptual assumptions, it was confirmed that some underlying structure did exist in the set of variables selected; and
- there was sufficient correlation between the variables.

To this end, the computed communalities were inspected to identify items that were unlikely to be associated with any underlying factors. Furthermore, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was used together with Bartlett’s test of sphericity (to determine whether the data was suitable for factor analysis. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy is a statistic, which indicates the proportion of variance in the variables that might be caused by underlying factors. Bartlett’s test of sphericity is a statistical test of the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, which indicates whether the variables are unrelated and therefore unsuitable for structure detection (Hair *et al*., 2010).

Following the clarification by Pallant (2011), exploratory factor analysis was used first in the quantitative research process to explore the interrelationship among the set of variables and for factor extraction. There are two commonly used approaches for determining the number of factors to extract, namely the scree test and the eigenvalue rule (Hair *et al.,* 2010; Pallant, 2011). Both were employed in this research study. The reasoning for this was twofold:

- the software package SPSS was readily available to create the scree plot and generate eigenvalues effectively. This allowed for a quick visual assessment to determine how many factors to extract; and
- the factors and their associated items were reviewed to ensure that it made sense in the context of the study.

Many researchers consider factor analysis as only exploratory, therefore useful in searching for a structure among a set of variables or as a means for data reduction. However, in other situations, the researcher has predetermined thoughts on the structure of the data based on theory or prior research. For example, the researcher might want to determine which variables should be grouped on a factor or the precise number of factors. In these cases, factor analysis takes a confirmatory approach – it measures the degree to which the data meet the expected structure (Hair *et al*., 2010).

As mentioned, in this research study, EFA was conducted to determine the number of constructs and belonging items. With the view of developing a TQS framework, it was necessary to examine the results from EFA to determine whether modification of the structure was necessary. To this extend, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied in order to test the extent to which the pattern of factor loadings on the constructs, as obtained from EFA, represents the data. Hair *et al*. (2010:693) refer to CFA as "a statistical technique of testing how well measured variables represent a number of constructs".

Hence, CFA was conducted in order to assess and inform the underlying structure of the set of variables, as obtained from the EFA, as a first step towards establishing a TQS framework.

The final step in the data analysis process comprised the analysis of the open-ended question (section C in the questionnaire). From the 612 useable questionnaires, 499 responses were obtained. These findings were also thematically analysed to identify additional service quality dimensions for inclusion in the final TQS framework. The same procedure of thematic analysis was followed as explained in section 4.7.4.

4.9.4 Tests to validate the results

To ensure valid and reliable results, a rigorous instrument development process was employed as explained in section 4.8. In addition, the following tests were conducted to validate the results: unidimensionality and construct validity.

4.9.4.1 Unidimensionality

Unidimensionality is achieved when a set of measured variables have acceptable factor loadings for the underlying construct (Awang, 2014; Hair *et al*., 2010). Items are unidimensional when they are strongly associated with each other and represent a single concept (Duggirala *et al*., 2008). Factor analysis plays a fundamental role in assessing the dimensionality of a set of items empirically by determining the number of factors and the loadings of each variable on the factor(s). A test for unidimensionality is that each summated scale should consist of items loading highly on a single factor. A comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.90 or above implies strong scale unidimensionality (Duggirala *et al*., 2008; Sureshchandar *et al*., 2001). Moreover, Awang (2014) contends that to achieve unidimensionality for newly devolved items, all factor loadings should be positive and exceed 0.5.

4.9.4.2 Construct validity

According to Hair *et al*. (2010:708), construct validity “is the extent to which a set of measured items actually reflects the theoretical latent construct those items are designed to measure”. Construct validity was tested through several goodness-of-fit (GOF) measures as well as the achievement of convergent validity.

The GOF measures reveal how fit the items are in quantifying their respective latent constructs, in other words, how good the data will fit the proposed model. Following the proposals from Hair *et al*. (2010) and Kline (2011), the following GOF measures (see Table 4.6 below) are reported on in Chapter 5.

Table 4.6: GOF measures and their levels of acceptance

GOF measure	Level of acceptance
Chi-square CMIN/Df	> 0.05 < 3 Good; <5 Sometimes permissible
GFI AGFI SRMR	0.90 Traditional; > 0.95 Great > 0.80 Good < 0.09 Good
NFI RFI TLI IFI CFI	> 0.90 Good > 0.90 Good > 0.90 Good > 0.90 Good 0.80 sometimes permissible; 0.90 traditional; > 0.95 great
RMSEA PCLOSE	0.05 good; 0.05–0.10 moderate; > 0.10 bad > 0.05 Good

Source: Adapted from Hair *et al*. (2010) and Kline (2011)

Convergent validity is attained when all the items in a measurement model are statistically significant. Hair *et al.* (2010) explain that convergent validity is achieved when the items of a specific construct share a high proportion of variance. In line with the recommendations by Hair *et al.* (2010), several approaches were employed to verify the existence of convergent validity. **First**, the rule of thumb that all factor loadings should be 0.5 or higher, and ideally 0.7 or higher, was considered. **Second**, the average variance extracted (AVE) was calculated using standardised loadings:

$$\boxed{\text{AVE} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} L_i^2}{n}}$$

An acceptable guideline is that the AVE should be 0.5 or higher. **Third**, reliability (which is also an indicator of convergent validity) was established. Reliability is commonly referred to as data collection techniques that produce consistent results (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015; Saunders *et al*., 2016). Both internal reliability and composite reliability (CR) measures were applied in this research study. Internal reliability was applied using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. Saunders *et al*. (2016) explain that the closer Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is to 1.0, the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale will be. Values of 0.7 and higher indicate that the combined questions in a scale are measuring the same construct. The CR measure specifies the internal consistency and reliability of a latent construct.

The mathematical formula for computing CR is:

$$\boxed{\mathrm{CR} = \frac{\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} L_i\right)^2}{\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} L_i\right)^2 + \sum_{i=1}^{n} e_i}}$$

A guideline for both reliability estimates is that 0.7 or higher suggests good reliability. However, a value between 0.6 and 0.7 may also be acceptable provided other indicators of construct validity are good (Hair *et al*., 2010).

4.10 LIMITATIONS

Extensive time was spent in the data collection and analysis processes. The intensity of the data production and analysis for both Stages 1 and 2 of the research study, coupled with peer and expert collaboration, transformed this study into a lengthy research project. Nationwide travelling to the 13 PHEI sites of delivery was expensive. As mentioned previously, the purpose for travelling was for conducting interviews, confirming face validity of the questionnaire and practical arrangements for Stage 2 of the research study. Most of the PHEIs were located in Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal (see section 2.4.6). The study had a strong South African focus, and the findings cannot be generalised to PHEIs outside of South Africa regardless of external validity. For the qualitative survey, principals involved in the study might have felt uncomfortable to provide their true perception regarding service quality. Their opinions could have been in contrast to the policies of the PHEIs or the views of their board of directors regarding the quality of service on the campus. For the quantitative survey, some respondents might have thought that their responses would not be treated as anonymous and they might not have provided their true perceptions regarding the importance of TQS dimensions. To conclude, there might have been interpretive errors in one or both stages of the research study. Taking cognisance of the above-mentioned limitations, the advantages of the in-depth study outweighs the negatives.

4.11 DELIMITATIONS

Leedy and Ormrod (2015) mention that delimitations can be defined as what the researcher is not going to do or did not intend to do. The delimitations for this research project can be summarised as follows:

- Public HEIs were excluded from this study.
- First-year students were excluded as participants.
- Not-for-profit PHEIs did not form part of this study.
- Despite the fact that this was a lengthy research project, the data were obtained in a relatively short period and represented a ‘snapshot’ as opposed to a trend. Hence only the ‘depth’ of the data was examined and not the ‘width’ also.
- Only members of the PHEQA were approached to form part of the research study.
- Respondents included top management, lecturers and students. Other stakeholders, such as parents, industry and administrative workers did not from part of the sampling frame.

4.12 RESEARCH ETHICS

With the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design, ethical issues had to be considered for both the qualitative and qualitative stages of the research study. Research ethics, according to Saunders *et al*. (2016:726), can be defined as “the standards of the researcher’s behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of the research project, or who are affected by it”. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) put forward that most ethical issues in research fall into one of the following four categories:

(1) **Protection from harm**: participants should not be exposed to unnecessary physical or psychological harm.

(2) **Voluntary and informed participation**: when people are engaged to take part in a research study, they should be informed about the nature of the study and given the choice to either participate or not participate.

(3) **Right to privacy**: all research reports should be presented in such a way that other people do not become aware of how a participant has responded or behaved. The nature and quality of a participant’s performance should be kept confidential.

(4) **Honesty with professional colleagues**: findings should be reported in an honest way without misrepresentation or misleading others about the nature of the findings.

During the duration of this research study, every effort was made to conform to the above four categories. The following issues were taken into consideration to ensure that ethical standards were upheld:

- Permission to conduct the study was obtained from Unisa's College of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee.
- The final questionnaire was language edited, analysed by a statistician from UNISA, and a pilot study was conducted.
- Respondents participated voluntarily and were informed about their rights to withdrew from the study at any time without any negative consequences.
- Respondents were informed about the purpose and objectives of the research study.
- The respondents were informed how the results would be used and published.
- Respondents were given the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments about the research study.
- The qualitative data from Stage 1 were co-coded by an independent expert in qualitative data analysis.
- The quantitative results from Stage 2 were captured on the LimeSurvey web application; hence, respondents were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity.
- Respondents were given the assurance that all data would be stored on a password protected computer and that it would be deleted permanently after five years.
- On request, PHEIs will be sent a summary of the findings and conclusions.
- No individual was harmed as a result of the research study.
- Finally, care was taken not to misrepresent the qualitative findings and quantitative results to meet the intended purpose of the research study.

4.13 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Chapter 4 provided a detailed discussion on the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design that was followed in this research study. The qualitative and the quantitative approaches of the exploratory sequential design were justified in accordance with the purpose and the context of the study. Data collected from semi-structured interviews in Stage 1 (coupled with the findings informed by literature) were used to help design the quantitative questionnaire for Stage 2 of the research study.

The first three sections of Chapter 4 focused on research and its purpose as well as the research scope, including the primary objectives, secondary objectives and significance of this research study. The main reason for the selection of the target population was also explained followed by a justification for the research paradigm and argument, as well as the methodologies and techniques adopted for this study. The chapter then considered the mixed methods design in terms of its strengths and challenges, rationale, timing as well as data emphasis and integration. This was followed by a graphic summary of the entire research process. Attention was then paid to the two stages (qualitative Stage 1 and quantitative Stage 2) by focusing on the sampling procedure, data collection, data analysis and the validity and reliability of the data for each stage including the procedures to obtain informed consent from participants. Instrument development, as an intermediate stage between the quantitative and qualitative stages, was also explained. Following this, the remainder of the chapter focused on the limitations and delimitations of the research study. Chapter 4 concluded with a discussion of research ethics. Emphasis was placed on the issues that were considered to maintain ethical research standards.

The next chapter analyses and interprets the qualitative findings of Stage 1 followed by a brief presentation of the development of the quantitative research instrument.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (STAGE 1)

"Profit in business comes from repeat customers, customers that boast about your project or service, and that bring friends with them" (Deming, cited in Mody, 2016:11).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the identification of TQS dimensions from a PHEI top management perspective for the development of a TQS framework.

The current research was conducted on service quality and service quality dimensions as identified by CEOs and principals of PHEIs in South Africa. Therefore, the unit of analysis was the service quality perceptions of principals. According to Choudhury (2015), the first step towards the delivery of quality service and the establishment of a customer-centred culture is the identification of underlying service quality dimensions. There is also growing competition in the market between private providers of HE. These private providers are playing an increasingly important role in HE, and service quality is becoming a key word for these providers (Štimac & Šimić, 2012). Supporting this, Ansary, Jayashree and Malarvizhi (2014) confirm that tertiary education is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world, and that in such a competitive setting, only institutes delivering exceptional service quality will survive.

TQS, which is a holistic approach towards service quality, can be defined as a holistic and comprehensive methodology that incorporates TQM principles for improving service quality, achieving internal and external customer satisfaction, and exceeding customer expectations. It is also a service strategy and system that takes a holistic approach by fostering total commitment towards improvement that could lead to the achievement of financial goals, increased market share as well as the creation of a viable competitive advantage. The aim of this study was to develop a TQS framework as a point of departure to measure, manage and improve service quality on a continuous basis. As explained in the previous chapter (see section 4.7), Stage 1 of the empirical research was to explore and describe perceptions of service quality and service quality dimensions as identified by CEOs and principals of PHEIs in South Africa. The presentation here addresses this objective through 15 interviews conducted with these CEOs and using a thematic analysis approach (as proposed by Braun & Clarke, 2006) to analyse the data qualitatively. This culminated in the identification of 30 service quality dimensions (this chapter represents step 2 in the development process of the TQS framework – see Figure 1.3: Project plan and process. In this chapter, only selected quotes will be provided. Additional quotes will be provided in Appendix D.

The qualitative phase (Stage 1) of this research project makes four contributions to the existing body of knowledge on service quality in PHE in South Africa. **First**, where previous studies on service quality mainly focussed on the perception of the customer, this phase of the research provides a description of service quality from a top management perspective. **Second**, this research identified unique dimensions of service quality in the organisational context of PHE in South Africa. **Third**, the findings of this phase (coupled with an extensive literature review as described in Chapter 3) contribute to the development of a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa. **Fourth**, this phase contributes to the paucity of literature on PHE in South Africa. When this research study was conceptualised, no previous research existed with a focus on TQS dimensions from the perspective of top management in PHEIs in South Africa.

Figure 5.1 offers a diagrammatical depiction of the structure of Chapter 5.

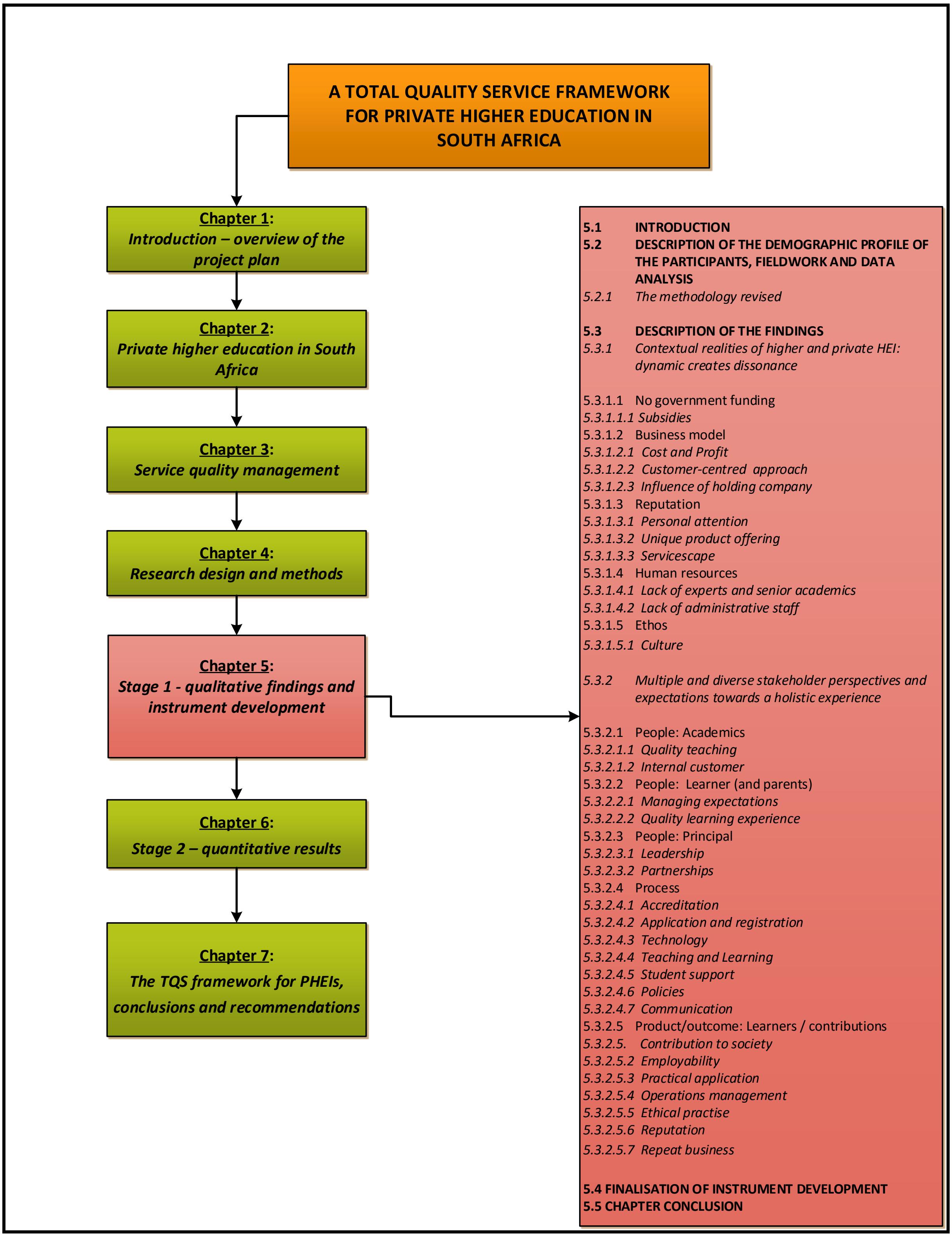

Figure 5.1: Layout of Chapter 5

Source: Author's own compilation

5.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS, FIELDWORK AND DATA ANALYSIS

Stage 1 of this study comprised 15 participants. This included the CEOs and principals of six PHEIs from 12 campuses across South Africa and one in Windhoek, Namibia. The CEOs and principals were selected through purposive selection. The campuses were situated in Gauteng, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Namibia. Seven of theses participants were male and eight were female. Table 5.1 indicates the academic qualifications, positions and demographical information of participants. All the interviews were used in the study.

Table 5.1: Demographical information of participants

Interviewee	Academic qualification	Position	Race	Gender
1	Postgraduate diploma	Campus principal	White	Male
2	Doctorate	Campus vice-principal	White	Female
3	Master's	Dean	White	Female
4	Master's	Dean	White	Female
5	Master's	Director	Coloured	Male
6	Master's	Campus principal	White	Female
7	Diploma	Campus principal	White	Female
8	Postgraduate diploma	Campus principal	White	Male
9	Master's	Campus principal	White	Male
10	Master's	Manager: academic development	White	Female
11	Master's	Registrar	White	Female
12	Postgraduate diploma	Campus principal	White	Male
13	Postgraduate diploma	Head of school	White	Female
14	Doctorate (professor)	Academic president	White	Male
15	Doctorate	Dean	White	Male

The sample and selection of participants were described in section 4.7.1 of Chapter 4. Participants were regarded as much more than 'numbers' with demographic properties, but rather as a unique pool of individuals who could provide different (rich and exceptional) descriptions of service quality dimensions for PHE in South Africa. In the next section (Table 5.2), I briefly describe a cryptic version of the core interview context of each participant. The data analysis was not influenced by my own values and assumptions, and field notes to describe the context of each interview were used.

Table 5.2 summarises the context of each interview.

Table 5.2: The interview context and summary

Participant	Interview context and summary
Interviewee 1	I arranged the interview via the PHEI's head office. All arrangements were facilitated by the head of teaching and learning at the institution. After formal approval had been granted, I contacted the participant and scheduled a time and date for the interview. The interview was conducted in the participant's office in the city of Cape Town. It was evident that this PHEI was in the process of being relocated since several boxes were observed throughout the institution with lectures and admin staff frantically packing and sealing these boxes. This was confirmed by the participant who explained that they were in the process of relocating to a better site, more accessible for students. The participant seemed at ease and it was evident that he studied the interview guide prior to the scheduled meeting. Shortly after the start of the interview, the participant fetched his laptop to support some of his responses. The participant provided rich responses and I observed him as very operations-driven and knowledgeable about the systems approach to quality improvement. His replies testified of many years of experience in both the HE and private sectors.
Interviewee 2	As in the case of interview 1, this interview was also conducted in the city of Cape Town. A similar route was followed to gain approval for the interview and access to the participant. The interview was conducted in the participant's office. This participant was one of the few interviewees who had held a PhD. Although very well qualified, the participant seemed to lack experience in the PHE sector. Nevertheless, she provided detailed feedback on the questions asked. The participant seemed to be very negatively inclined towards current customer service procedures, but provided valuable suggestions for improvements. There were many personal effects in her office, which gave the impression that she spends a lot of time there, almost a home from home. I observed the participant as someone who still wants to broaden her horizons in the PHE industry.
Interviewee 3	I arranged the interview with this participant via the PHEI's executive manager of quality assurance and regulatory affairs. The meeting was held in the participant's office in Cape Town. From the participant's accent, I suspected that she was from Germany. She confirmed my suspicion along with a confirmation of her vast international experience in the private as well as HE sectors. The campus portrayed a corporate image rather than that of a college, which made sense because their main target group of students comprised working professionals studying towards an MBA degree. Interviewee 3 understood the purpose of the study and confirmed the need of this study in the South African context. She seemed tired and did not work through the interview guide beforehand. I perceived the participant as highly analytical (from her background in the banking and finance sectors) and a decidedly skilled and driven person. At the time of the interview, the participant was appointed as the dean of the PHEI.
Interviewee 4	The interview was arranged in the same manner as in the case of interviewee number three – via the PHEI's executive manager of quality assurance and regulatory affairs. The meeting was held in the participant's office in Cape Town. At the time of the interview, the participant was the dean of this PHEI. The participant's office also reflected a corporate feel rather than the feeling of an academic environment. I perceived the participant as policy-driven and energetic to improve service quality, but her lack of experience also manifested in some of her responses. Her feedback was of considerable value. She had recently completed her MBA at a major public university. I found her feedback regarding service quality highly significant since she could speak from a student as well as a dean's perspective.

Participant	Interview context and summary
Interviewee 5	I arranged the interview with this participant via the PHEI's academic head of the business school. The meeting was held in the participant's office in Windhoek. The first impression I got when I arrived at the campus was that of an office park. The administration building was in disarray due to a break-in the previous night. The participant provided lengthy feedback with rich descriptions, which revealed his years of experience in both the public and PHE sectors. I perceived the participant as passionate about quality teaching and got the impression that he longed back to his days of lecturing before his transfer to academic management. During the interview, the participant used examples, which confirmed his management style based on working systems and realistic, practical policies. The participant was easy to talk to and maintained eye contact throughout the interview. What impressed me about this participant were his positive attitude and the willingness to go the extra mile for his students. At the time of the interview, the participant was director of this PHEI.
Interviewee 6	Initially, it was difficult to confirm a date for the interview with this participant (campus principal). The interview had to be rescheduled twice due to "massive backlogs" and "deadlines" before a final date was established. The interview was arranged via the personal assistant of the managing director of this particular PHEI. The meeting was held at the campus in Johannesburg. My first impression of this participant was that she was a dynamic, career-oriented person who would succeed in any project that she pursues. The interview was interrupted twice by students seeking her advice or counselling. This confirmed her open-door policy and customer-centred approach to students. I considered her most valuable contribution to be her reference to a metric needed to measure service quality, which contributed to the main objective of the study – the development of a TQS framework. The participant conveyed excitement about the study and requested a presentation of the findings upon project closure.
Interviewee 7	I arranged the interview with this participant via the PHEI's managing director. The meeting was held in the boardroom of this PHEI in Pretoria. I had to wait for the participant since she was caught up in a meeting with the marketing and sales team. The participant seemed nervous and unsure of herself and avoided eye contact during the interview. I observed hesitation on the part of the participant and had to prompt all the time to get responses. Eventually, she shared various constraining operational conditions but remained optimistic and made valuable contributions. This was probably the most difficult interview due to the participant's initial lack of engagement. Nevertheless, I was very positive about the information provided. At the time of the interview, the participant was the campus principal of this PHEI.
Interviewee 8	The interview was arranged via the personal assistant of the managing director of this particular PHEI. The meeting was held in the participant's office on the Pretoria campus. The participant was fairly new in a management position of a PHEI having come through the ranks of the private school system as school principal. My first impression was that of a positive and energetic person who is process-driven and who would meet and overcome all challenges without hesitation. During the interview, he consistently referred to his white board that displayed a colour-coded Gantt chart with various projects, due dates and milestones. This again confirmed my suspicion that this was a very organised and analytical person. He seemed at ease and considered each question carefully before answering. I perceived this person to have a high work ethic and he portrayed a humble personality as someone who is not afraid to ask for assistance.

Participant	Interview context and summary
Interviewee 9	I arranged the interview with this participant via the PHEI's academic head of the business school. The interview was conducted on the Johannesburg campus of this PHEI in the participant's office. Not only was the participant the campus principal, but he was also one of the founding members and owner of this PHEI. I was amazed by this participant's professional business-like conduct while he explained that he had many other business interests apart from the day-to-day management of a PHEI. I felt comfortable in his presence and his comments testified of many years in both the business and HE sectors. I observed a high level of peer support at this PHEI and in general a very positive attitude towards the future of PHE in South Africa. As with previous interviewees, the respondent conveyed excitement about the study and confirmed the need for a TQS framework. I considered his responses as honest, valuable comments with rich descriptions. The main quality drive of this participant was to form partnerships with public institutions as opposed to competing with them.
Interviewee 10	The interview was arranged with the participant directly and I observed that there was no personal assistant who managed her diary. She immediately agreed to the interview and sounded excited about the study. Although this PHEI is situated in Johannesburg, the respondent requested the meeting to be held in a coffee shop in Pretoria. It later became apparent that she lived in Pretoria and having the interview there seemed more convenient for her. She requested the interview guide before the meeting to prepare her responses. I perceived her answers as honest and sincere and believed she was an open-minded person with a strong quality drive. She acknowledged the shortcomings in PHE in South Africa but replied with positive inputs and suggestions for improvements. I enjoyed this participant's sense of humour and found her an easy person to get along with. She provided many examples of service quality initiatives that were not working and suggested alternative initiatives. At the time of the interview, she was the manager of academic development at this PHEI.
Interviewee 11	I arranged the meeting with this participant (registrar and client engagement manager of this particular PHEI) herself. The interview was conducted off-campus at a popular restaurant in Pretoria. I asked the participant to describe her career to date as she had years of experience in the government sector. The participant could provide several examples of service quality initiatives, which were working and which had to be re-engineered to add value. Similar to interviewee number 4, the participant was busy with her postgraduate studies (PhD) and could give feedback from both a manager as well as a student perspective. What made this interview even more valuable was the fact that the participant was enrolled for her PhD at a leading PHEI in the country. She constantly referred to herself as the PHEI's "happiness officer", which led me to believe that happy customers were her main goal. In addition, she provided extremely rich descriptions and valuable suggestions for service improvement. I perceived this participant as a warm-hearted person making a difference in customer service at the PHEI.
Interviewee 12	The interview was arranged via the managing director's personal assistant of this PHEI. The interview was conducted in the participant's office on their Durban campus. This participant was one of the founding members of this PHE group. His comments reflected years of experience of running his own advertising agency. After many successful years in the private sector, he decided to invest his experience in PHE. His office gave the impression of an art studio, which led me to believe that this was a creative and 'out-of-the-box' thinker. I considered the participant to be highly skilled but noticed that he was not as systems-oriented or policy driven as the previous interviewees. He provided rich descriptions and focussed all his comments

Participant	Interview context and summary
	on the importance of quality teaching. At the time of the interview, this participant was the principal of the Durban campus.
Interviewee 13	As in the case of interviewee 12, the interview was conducted in Durban (in the PHEI's boardroom) and a similar route was followed to gain permission to conduct the interview. I observed the participant as someone very dedicated to her internal customers (lecturing and administrative staff). She worked through the interview guide beforehand and prepared her answers in advance. The participant portrayed a positive attitude and made valuable comments with detailed examples on how she wanted to improve service quality on the campus. The participant was no stranger to PHE in South Africa and at the time of the interview was vice-principal of the Durban campus.
Interviewee 14	I arranged the interview via the executive assistant of the CEO of this PHEI. The meeting was held on the campus of the PHEI in Johannesburg. This institution is part of an international education group with various PHEIs in North America, Latin America, the Middle East, Europe, Pacific Asia and Africa. The participant is a well-respected member of the academic community and still holds the title of professor. Prior to joining the PHE sector, the participant served as deputy vice-chancellor and acting vice-chancellor of a South African public university. Out of respect, I addressed the participant by his title. I considered this participant the most experienced of all interviewees in managing an HE institution, both public and private. At the start of the interview, I felt a bit intimidated by the respondent's personality, but after a while, I felt at ease with his warm-hearted approach to the conversation. I perceived this respondent as someone who thrives on information and systems. Based on his years of experience, I was very positive about the information he provided. It seemed as if his conceptual skills motivated others always to see the big picture. During our discussion, he focussed mainly on creating an enabling environment where both academics and students could achieve their aspirations. At the time of the interview, the respondent was academic president of this PHEI.
Interviewee 15	The interview with the last participant was arranged via this PHEI's executive manager of quality assurance and regulatory affairs. The interview was conducted on the PHEI's campus in Johannesburg. This PHEI is also part of an international group with campuses situated in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Asia Pacific and South Asia. This PHEI was rated as the number one private institution offering the MBA degree in 2013 according to a national survey on accredited business schools. The participant was one of three interviewees who had obtained a PhD. I addressed the participant by his title, but he immediately indicated that I should address him by his first name. He focussed his answers on the holistic experience that should be provided for both students and lecturers in order to lead a successful PHEI in South Africa. Equally important, he mentioned that the lack of service quality across all industries is a worldwide pandemic and that HE (and PHE) was no exception. I considered his responses to be honest and frank. He emphasised his passion for service quality and indicated that the only way forward for PHE in South Africa is through exceptional service quality to stakeholders.

5.2.1 The methodology revised

After designing a concept interview guide, I set about validating the guide. During validation, the concept interview guide was adapted by experts in qualitative research.

These included two professors and one associate professor from the University of South Africa (Unisa), one of whom was a National Research Foundation- (NRF-) rated researcher specialising in business management research while the other professor was an expert in quality and service quality management. The associate professor is an expert in qualitative research. Further validation included input from a director of one of the leading PHEI groups in South Africa. In addition, the first interview was used to pilot the data collection method.

Data were gathered using semi-structured in-depth interviews. The total interview time was 631.53 minutes. The average length of each interview was 42 minutes and the transcribed interviews amounted to 255 pages. Logistically, it was a challenge to meet all of the participants face to face within a given timeframe. Travelling had to be coordinated between Gauteng, the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Namibia. All interviews were conducted between August and November 2014. No major challenges were experienced during the interviews.

With the exception of one participant, all the participants had more or less the same level of education (postgraduate qualifications) and the ability to express themselves clearly. It was also clear that all the participants were familiar with the area of study. Moreover, all the participants welcomed the study and expressed the expectation that the research would add to the long-term sustainability of their businesses. The central storyline (narrative) that emerged revealed that management was in tune with the measuring and improvement of the quality of services offered on their campuses, but they seemed to be negatively inclined towards the current systems implemented to improve overall quality.

As explained in Chapter 4, section 4.7.4, Tesch's descriptive method of open coding was applied in the data analysis process. To ensure trustworthiness, an independent expert was involved. Consensus was also reached in terms of themes and categories.

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to the interpretation of the data obtained from the 15 CEOs and principals of selected PHEIs. I observed the recurring themes that emerged, and I am convinced that data saturation, the point where no new information was collected, was reached after about 10 interviews and confirmed during the final stages of the open coding process.

In the next section, the reporting structure of the findings starts with a conceptual map of the TQS life cycle process. This is followed by a summary of the findings and is inclusive of all the identified dimensions for TQS in a PHEI in South Africa. Next, the reference system used to report on the findings of Stage 1 of the study is explained. Finally, the dimensions for TQS are described.

5.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE FINDINGS

This section provides descriptions of the perceptions of service quality and service quality dimensions as identified by CEOs and principals and which are described by using a framework. This will be done in a narrative way, based on a conceptual map as indicated and introduced by Figure 5.2. The aim is to confirm and elaborate on what was described in Chapter 3, with a richer description, taken from verbatim quotes of CEOs and principals, of service quality, service quality dimensions and the importance of it for the PHE industry in South Africa. The descriptions provide a holistic view into the day-to-day operational realities of top managers in PHEIs.

Figure 5.2 presents a conceptual map of the TQS life cycle process: the perceptions of service quality and service quality dimensions of CEOs and principals of PHEIs in South Africa. This figure is representative of the second version of the TQS framework during its development process (see Figure 1.3: Project plan and process).

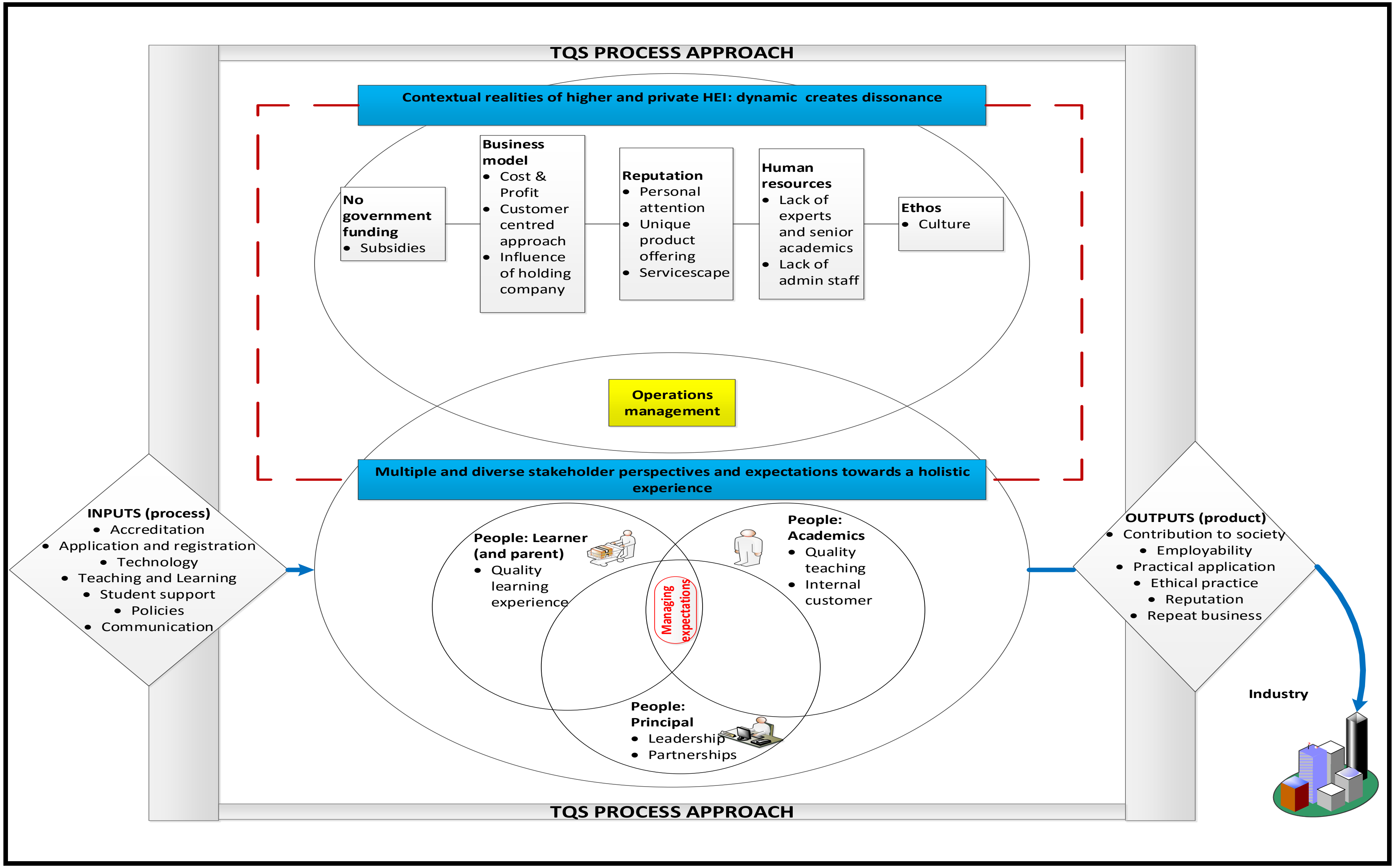

Figure 5.2: The TQS life cycle process

Source: Dirkse van Schalkwyk and Steenkamp (2016)

Figure 5.2 represents the linkage between the two overarching themes identified:

Theme 1: *Contextual realities of higher and private higher education: dynamic creates dissonance*

Theme 2: *Multiple and diverse stakeholder perspectives and expectations towards a holistic experience*

Theme 1 includes the categories of no government funding, business model, reputation, human resources and ethos, each with its own underlying dimensions. Theme 1 is interlinked with theme 2 via an operations process approach, input–transformation–output (hence, the process approach to TQS). Theme 2 was conceptualised into three clusters, namely input, managing and exceeding various stakeholder expectations and output (each with its own underlying dimensions). The clusters co-exist in a process-driven environment, which eventually leads to the final product – not just a final product (output) in the form of a graduate, but also the positive influence on and contribution to society as a whole.

The data analysis and data reduction process through descriptive open coding and thematic analysis produced several service quality dimensions and overarching themes from a top management perspective. I discuss the themes in relation to the dimensions that emerged from the CEOs and principals. This section briefly lists, describes, categorises and illustrates these dimensions.

Table 5.3 provides a summary of the findings.

Table 5.3: Themes, categories and sub-categories (dimensions)

Theme	Category	Sub-category (dimensions)
1. Contextual realities of higher and private HEI: dynamic creates dissonance	1.1 No government funding	1.1.1 Subsidies
	1.2 Business model	1.2.1 Cost and profit
		1.2.2 Customer-centred approach
		1.2.3 Influence of holding company
	1.3 Reputation	1.3.1 Personal attention
		1.3.2 Unique product offering
		1.3.3 Servicescape
	1.4 Human resources	1.4.1 Lack of experts and senior academics
		1.4.2 Lack of administrative staff
	1.5 Ethos	1.5.1 Culture
2. Multiple and diverse stakeholder perspectives and expectations towards a holistic experience	2.1 People: Academics	1.6.1 Quality teaching
		1.6.2 Internal customer
	2.2 People: Learner (and parents)	1.7.1 Managing expectations
		1.7.2 Quality learning experience
	2.3 People: Principal	1.8.1 Leadership
		1.8.2 Partnerships
	2.4 Process	1.9.1 Accreditation

Theme	Category	Sub-category (dimensions)
		1.9.2 Application and registration
		1.9.3 Technology
		1.9.4 Teaching and learning
		1.9.5 Student support
		1.9.6 Policies
		1.9.7 Communication
	2.5 Product/outcome: Learners/contributions	1.10.1 Contribution to society
		1.10.2 Employability
		1.10.3 Practical application
		1.10.4 Operations management
		1.10.5 Ethical practice
		1.10.6 Reputation
		1.10.7 Repeat business

Source: Dirkse van Schalkwyk and Steenkamp (2016)

Table 5.4 indicates the reference system used to report the findings of Stage 1 (qualitative data) of the research project.

Table 5.4: The reference system used to report on the findings of Stage 1

Example:	1.2: 1.2.1: 1: JH
Where **1.2** represents the category number of the transcribed interviews summary document (see Appendix D)	
Where **1.2.1** represents the sub-category (dimension) number	
Where **1** represents the quotation number	
Where **JH** represents the respondent code	

The above reference system is based on the summary of the transcribed interviews attached as Appendix D. This document presents a summary of all 15 interviews and follows the same format as Table 5.4 above. Quotations are grouped per sub-category (dimension) based on the thematic analysis process described in Chapter 4. For anonymity, all references in the verbatim quotes to names of people, PHEIs, holding companies of PHEIs and company-specific software packages have been replaced by […]. All quotations are reproduced verbatim and unedited.

5.3.1 Contextual realities of higher and private HEI: dynamic creates dissonance

The five categories of theme 1 are discussed next.

Theme 1 comprises no government funding, business model, reputation, human resources and ethos. Whereas public HEIs receive subsidies from government, PHEIs receive no government subsidies and have to generate their own income. Furthermore, PHEIs have to compete with other institutions that are offering the same product at the same or higher fees. The operational model of PHEIs is purely business-driven and for-profit-oriented. Reputation, human resources and ethos are further central to the profitable survival of PHEIs in South Africa. The theme was further conceptualised to include the following dimensions: subsidies, cost and profit, customer-centred approach, influence of the holding company, personal attention, unique product offering, servicescape, lack of experts and senior academics, lack of administrative staff, and culture.

5.3.1.1 No government funding

While public HEIs receive subsidies from government, PHEIs receive no government subsidies and have to generate their own income and compete with other institutions offering similar products and services at similar fee structures. Table 5.5 offers a summary of the dimension used in analysing the category 'no government funding'.

Table 5.5: A summary of the dimension used to analyse 'no government funding'

Dimension	Description
Subsidies	The financial support provided by the government to public HEIs

As indicated in Table 5.5, the dimension within this category is subsidies. The issues associated with this dimension are described below. Issues that were mentioned by participants in terms of subsidies focussed mainly on the lack of government support and subsidies for PHEIs. This lack of support has a negative influence on the resources, human capital and eventually the customers of PHEIs. It also adds to the challenging process for PHEIs to establish themselves as reputable research institutes.

5.3.1.1.1 Subsidies

As mentioned previously, within the HE context in South Africa, 'subsidies' refer to the financial support from government to public institutes of HE. It was confirmed that PHEIs do not receive any support (financial or otherwise) as reflected by the following quotes:

- No funding from the government. (1.1: 1.1.1: 1: JH)
- [B]ecause you don't have subsidy, you need to attract your learners with service and quality. (1.1: 1.1.1: 28: CV)
- [B]ecause government's not able to rollout and not able to provide enough support. (1.1: 1.1.1: 11: GK)

One principal voiced his viewpoint in this regard by providing a possible reason for the lack of government support:

> I think there can be more collaboration between government and independent institutions. I think right now there's a fear from government level of that … the success of independent institutions are gonna highlight the failing of government. (1.1: 1.1.1: 12: GK)

It also became evident that due to the absence of government subsidies, service quality is perceived as more important in a private institution than in a public institution of HE:

> And also, sorry, the income generation, you don't get subsidy, and obviously, it should be strategically more important for privates than for publics. Yes. (1.1: 1.1.1: 2: JH)

This was confirmed by another principal who added, "I would say it's even more important because we don't get funding" (1.1: 1.1.1: 7: AH). It was also mentioned that it seemed as if public institutions are more concerned about student numbers than service quality, hence the source of their government provided subsidy (1.1: 1.1.1: 3: CO).

Many participants described the negative influence of the lack of government subsidies and support for PHEIs. The bulk of descriptions all refer negatively towards human capital, resources, customers, the meeting of industry-specific demands and the academic standing of a PHE provider as a recognised research institution. There was a clear disappointment on the side of one participant as she expounded on the situation:

> [F]or example, salaries, benefits, and that's all stuff that I've seen after I did my research as well. Yes you are an academic, yes you are the best, yes it's a niche market, yes we accept the best students, everybody here can walk on water. It's one of those … that's the image that we are portraying but they don't look after their staff. (1.1: 1.1.1: 6: AS)

Feelings of isolation also emerged as described by one principal:

> So, we are on our own. So, we need to basically ensure that what we offer is a hundred times better than what a public provider can offer. (1.1: 1.1.1: 24: LZ).

One principal noted that the absence of government subsidies also affect the resources and facilities of PHEIs. She explained,

> We don't get any subsidies, we don't have fancy sports fields and stuff to spend the money on. (1.1: 1.1.1: 32: CS)

Another participant explained in a passionate tone of voice,

> We've a got a huge demand for corporate training mainly. There's not a cent to get it going. I need a donor with a few million. (1.1: 1.1.1: 33: MV)

According to the descriptions provided by participants, most of them felt that the biggest influence of the lack of subsidies is on the research status of PHEIs. It is almost impossible for a PHEI to "play" in the "research arena" without government funding (1.1: 1.1.1: 20: AJ). This was supported by another principal who stated:

> [I]f the privates would be honest with you they will tell you it's financially not possible to be a research institution. (1.1: 1.1.1: 1: CV)

Key insights on the lack of government funding

The findings suggest that PHEIs receive no subsidies from government. This lack of financial support from government affects various factors negatively and in a sense also hampers effective service delivery. It negatively affects human resources (such as fewer permanent faculty appointments) and the ability to provide facilities, such as sports fields and research laboratories. Equally important, it affects salaries and benefits, which has an automatic negative influence on the employment of academic and support staff. However, findings indicate that the lack of subsidy has the most profound negative effect on the academic standing and research status of PHEIs. No subsidies are afforded to PHEIs for accredited research outputs or conference attendances. These institutions have to generate their own funds through student enrolments and cannot afford to lose customers due to anything such as poor service delivery.

5.3.1.2 Business model

One of the unique characteristics of PHE in South Africa is its for-profit-motivated approach. The big advantage is the freedom to be creative, innovative and profitable. The operational model of PHEIs is purely business-driven. They operate in a highly competitive and regulated environment and have to generate their own income.

According to Levy (2002), commercial PHE originates from economic forces and market needs and is not driven by government initiatives. Additionally, Bezuidenhout, De Jager and Naidoo (2013) state that PHEIs should formulate strategies to be profitable and remain competitive and survive as a business. This section provides descriptions, from verbatim quotes on how participants elucidated the business model of PHEIs. During the interviews, participants focussed mainly on the high cost of PHE accompanied with high expectations from the customer, the importance of customer centricity as well as the challenges of operating as an HEI in a corporate environment. Dimensions referring to the for-profit nature of PHEIs were grouped into the business model category.

Table 5.6 offers a summary of the dimensions used in the analysis.

Table 5.6: Summary of the dimensions used to analyse 'business model'

Dimension	Description
Cost and profit	High tuition fees of PHE and the profit-driven nature to make the business sustainable in the long term
Customer-centred approach	Focus on the external customer (student) within the business model of PHEIs
Influence of holding company	Dissonance between academic and corporate culture

5.3.1.2.1 Cost and profit

This dimension seemed to be the most important for TQS from the perspective of CEOs and principals. According to Howitt and Cramer (2014), incidence is the number of times a theme (or in this case, a dimension) is mentioned throughout the dataset. The dimension 'cost and profit' had the highest incident count of 47 times. During the interviews, all participants emphasised the influence of costs and profits on the quality of service delivered by a PHEI.

With reference to 'cost', the mutual feeling expressed by participants related to the high cost of PHE coupled with even higher expectations and demands from students (external customers). One participant explained this as follows, "And, I think that's where the biggest challenge lies with regards to delivering on the expectation that many people have, because private tertiary education also comes at a high cost" (1.2: 1.2.1: 1: JH). Added to this, another participant pointed out the following:

> And they demand more. If they don't come from private schools the folks think they overpaying so they demand more … moving from universities of thirty-eight through to

seventy it is a sacrifice to some people and they demand more. They say give me more and we do. (1.2: 1.2.1: 13: GT).

The reference made to the high cost of PHEIs was mirrored by other participants as indicated by the following quotes:

- [A]nd our fees are through the roof … (1.2: 1.2.1: 4: AS)
- [S]tudents pay sixty-five thousand rand a year to be here. (1.2: 1.2.1: 5: AS)
- [P]arent who is generally paying more at a private institution … (1.2: 1.2.1: 11: MV).

One participant alluded to the fact that many PHEIs cater for mature MBA students who are willing to pay a premium price for a prestigious MBA qualification:

> [T]hese are all senior working people that pay a lot of money for their MBA and they've journeyed in life, they have become accustomed to certain levels of service and they keep the institution on its toes and we invite them. (1.2: 1.2.1: 3: CO)

Another participant added, "they also prepared to pay a little bit more" (1.2: 1.2.1: 9: AJ).

In terms of 'profit', evidence confirmed that the operational model of PHEIs was purely business-driven. All participants supported the notion of a profit-driven PHE environment. Key terms and phrases that surfaced during the discussion included "sustainable business", "competitive market", "entrepreneurial spirit", "business orientation", "profit driven" and "competitive edge" to mention a few. The problem statement of this study (see section 1.3) indicated that PHEIs have to operate in a highly competitive and dynamic environment. This was confirmed by various participants who argued that they function in a hostile environment, and that if one provides poor service and make mistakes, it will have a negative effect on profitability and that will be the end of your business (1.2: 1.2.1: 32: CV; 1.2: 1.2.1: 33: CV; 1.2: 1.2.1: 35: JG; 1.2: 1.2.1: 39: CS). The argument of poor service equating to "no business" was accentuated by a participant who expressed:

> [S]tudents is … they're our clients and if we can't service them properly we aren't gonna get clients and we aren't gonna get the brands out there and the industry support that we need and that's very important. (1.2: 1.2.1: 41: GT)

> [B]ecause if we don't get our numbers we don't make a profit, we don't survive, we don't get capex, we don't buy equipment. So, we've gotta push, push, push all the time and we've gotta make sure that we developing new ideas, new ways of working and thinking to stand out and make a difference and I think that's where the edge is. (1.2: 1.2.1: 42: GT)

Reference was also made to the importance of spending money on the marketing of PHEIs for a good return on investment*:*

> [M]any companies skimp on marketing a private education college and if you don't spend money you not gonna make money and the only way you gonna make money is to bring students, bums on seats, and the only way you gonna do that is to market and advertise correctly and the only way you gonna retain them is to actually have good service delivery and the only way you gonna do that is to spend money on it. (1.2: 1.2.1: 44: CS2)

The same participant also explained further that marketing is not only the responsibility of top management, but agreement and acceptance by lecturers (internal customers) are also vital to promote and market the PHEI (1.2: 1.2.1: 46: CS2).

One participant acknowledged the importance of a TQS framework within the corporate PHE environment. She explained,

> Yes, yes, I think it [TQS framework] would add hugely because it gives us a benchmark. I think it's a very difficult area, let's face it, and I've worked in the service industry all my life. It is difficult, but it certainly is measurable and if other service companies … I've worked in the financial sector, they measure your service delivery so why can't we (1.2: 1.2.1: 29: MV).

5.3.1.2.2 Customer-centred approach

This dimension is directly linked to the previous dimension of cost and profit. Central to the business model and the for-profit nature of PHEIs, is the focus on the external customer. Evans (2017) demonstrates the importance of a customer-centred approach with regard to service quality. On average, a customer who has had a problem with a company will tell nine or ten other people. If the complaint was resolved, they will tell only about five people. Moreover, the cost to attract a new customer is about six times more than to retain a current customer. The evidence from the interviews confirms the argument of Evans (2017) emphasising the importance of a customer-centred approach to PHE in South Africa.

Some of the participants interviewed referred to a type of paradigm shift in PHE from knowledge creation to commercialisation. One participant mentioned,

> [W]e shifted from the teaching approach to a learner-centred approach and by having a learner-centred approach all of a sudden the awareness of what quality is, the expectation of what it should be, to a large extent shifted to a more consumer type of … and consumer-based type of approach and we do understand that quality is defined by the customer. It's not defined by the supplier anymore. (1.2: 1.2.2: 1: AL)

All the participants were in agreement about the importance of the external customer to ensure long-term sustainability and success. Some of the key messages that were identified in the interviews suggested that the sole reason for the existence of a PHEI is its customers (1.2: 1.2.2: 5: CO) and a lack of external customer focus will result in the loss of business (1.2: 1.2.2: 8: AH). Also, some PHEIs are run as small business, and agreement and acceptance from everyone involved are needed for a customer-centred approach, "remember, it's small business so everybody in the business needs to understand the importance of client engagement roles, more than just client service" (1.2: 1.2.2: 15: JG). Further topics addressed included the importance of regular customer feedback (1.2: 1.2.2: 19: CS; 1.2: 1.2.2: 31: MP) and treating the customer as a 'very important person' (VIP) as indicated by this participant, "a business, and it's good that they have their high expectations especially when it comes to the MBAs. They are … we should treat them like private banking clients" (1.2: 1.2.2: 6: CO).

One participant provided detailed descriptions on the importance of internal quality management processes to ensure that only the best product and service will be delivered to the customer:

> [W]e have an assessment or study material authoring process and it's quite stringent, in terms of whom we select to write the study material. And then we have internal editors, and formatters, and proof-readers who make sure that it's at the right level. And then it goes to the lecturer, so it's quite a long process until the material is finished. Then in terms of the assessment, we have a stringent process in terms of the fact that it gets set and it gets internally moderated and externally moderated and to make sure that the assessment is fair. And, when it go … and it also goes to the editor. So, when it goes out to the student, it needs to be a fair assessment, it needs to look presentable, it needs to portray a certain professional image. (1.2: 1.2.2: 28: AH)

5.3.1.2.3 Influence of holding company

As previously stated in Chapter 4 (section 4.3.4), four of the selected PHEIs are part of private national and international corporations. Two of the institutes are part of international education groups with private HE facilities in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Asia Pacific and South Asia. Furthermore, an additional two institutes are part of companies listed on the JSE in South Africa. The fact that most of the CEOs and principals were 'academics at heart' became evident during the interviews. They wanted the operational academic autonomy associated with operating a HEI, but it seems that they were suppressed by the holding company's primary agenda for return on investment.

Negative sentiments seemed to outweigh positive remarks in the discussions. Feelings of hostility surfaced without reservation, and the dissonance between running an academic institution within a corporate culture became evident. One participant explained, "Exactly, because it's a corporate culture trying to run an educational facility which is a problem" (1.2: 1.2.3: 2: AS).

This was confirmed by another participant who described the difficulty in reporting to both an academic assurance body and a corporate entity with shareholders expecting return on investments:

> Now we've got the holding company. So, operationally we are answering to the holding company and academically we are answering to the […]. So, we get our money from […], we get our academic guidance from the […] and sometimes there's a bit of a disconnect because you're answering to a shareholder here and academic quality control there. (1.2: 1.2.3: 4: MV)

Overall, it seemed that most participants were negatively inclined towards operating as part of a bigger corporate entity. The general opinions expressed included the lack of academic freedom, corporate rules and regulations forced on an HEI and additional responsibility on academics to answer indirectly to the board of directors and shareholders (1.2: 1.2.3: 1: AS; 1.2: 1.2.3: 5: MV; 1.2: 1.2.3: 7: JG). Feelings of division were also noticed. Participants referred to themselves as "us" or "we" and to the holding company as "them" (1.2: 1.2.3: 6: LZ).

Key insights on the business model of PHEIs

I made three observations (during which I identified three dimensions) when I reviewed the rich explanations proposed by the participants. Firstly, cost and profit were identified as the most significant features for TQS from the perspective of CEOs or principals. The higher cost equated to higher demands from customers and PHEIs had to demonstrate entrepreneurial spirit, looking for a competitive edge in the marketplace. Secondly, the high cost and profit-driven approach necessitated a customer-focussed strategy for long-term success and sustainability. Lastly, where PHEIs were not autonomous and part of a holding company or international group, negative sentiments outweighed positive inputs. The PHEI and the holding company seemed to co-exist in an inharmonious environment. Academics have to conform to corporate cultures and regulations where the inspirational sphere of academic freedom is consumed by shareholder demands and return on investments.

5.3.1.3 Reputation

All descriptions and references made by participants dealing with reputational issues were grouped in this category. Today, competition in all industries are rife: whether it is competition for customers, students, patients or resources. Basically, all organisations compete in terms of reputation – for quality service, reliability, price and delivery (Oakland, 2014). This is especially true for PHEIs in South Africa. Table 5.7 offers a summary of the dimensions used in the analysis process.

Table 5.7: Summary of the dimensions used to analyse 'reputation'

Dimension	Description
Personal attention	Personal service to the customer
Unique product offering	Offering specialised and flexible academic products to a niche market
Servicescape	The physical facilities and space where the service is delivered.

5.3.1.3.1 Personal attention

This dimension almost personifies the previous dimension of the 'customer-centred approach'. During the interviews, participants mentioned the importance of providing individual attention to students by having smaller classes. Findings indicated that PHEIs have a drive towards customer-centricity and fostering personal relationships with students as evidenced by the following quotes:

- Private tertiary institutions always have this one line that they use as a marketing tool, smaller classes, individual attention … (1.3: 1.3.1: 1: JH)
- They will say because we're smaller, it's more personal attention, more one-on-one. (1.3: 1.3.1: 2: JH)
- [R]elationship that is built so that students feel comfortable to take thing further or to have a relationship with somebody like a campus principal or the 2IC. (1.3: 1.3.1: 19: GK)
- Customer-centricity and that service is of absolute importance. (1.3: 1.3.1: 8: CO)

The topic of smaller classes in PHEIs was further emphasised by various participants. Some student–lecturer ratios mentioned included one to five, one to ten and one to fifteen, which again proved the personal attention drive of PHEIs (1.3: 1.3.1: 4: CS2; 1.3: 1.3.1: 6: JH).

As mentioned previously, PHEIs function on the for-profit business model and students (customers) are their only source of income for long-term sustainability and competitiveness. It was also accentuated that PHEIs exist only because of paying students, as noted by this participant:

> So, I would very much like to … and that's to me why the students are so important and with most of the team…and we really try to inculcate this sort of thing in people's thinking because ultimately we are here because of them, not the other way around. (1.3: 1.3.1: 9: CO)

Several participants interviewed also made reference to the importance of personal service and the fact that students will never be treated as 'numbers' but as clients of the institution (1.3: 1.3.1: 21: CV; 1.3: 1.3.1: 22: JG; 1.3: 1.3.1: 24: CS). One participant even suggested regular telephone conversations with students – not only about academic matters but also showing empathy towards them and their personal situations. She explained*:*

> I expect that administrator or the key account manager to have at least one telephonic conversation with their student once a month. So, besides the fact that you are coming to class we'll see you there and how are you doing? Is there anything you are struggling with? […] how are you doing, how's you research going, do you need any additional support? […] what's wrong? Is there a problem? (1.3: 1.3.1: 23: CS)

Another participant suggested the importance of customer care. She suggested that when it comes to customer care, the customer could also be another staff member, industry or a parent (1.3: 1.3.1: 28: CS2).

5.3.1.3.2 Unique product offering

In the context of this study, the dimension 'unique product offering' refers to how PHEIs can differentiate themselves in terms of products offered to stay competitive and to ensure their long-term growth and survival in the market. Key expressions and phrases that surfaced during the discussion included "cutting edge products", "flexible product offerings", "master's degree", "specialisation", "niche market" and "practical application". As mentioned in the previous section, the smaller classes offered by PHEIs were also hypothesised as a unique attribute of PHEIs (1.3: 1.3.2: 12: GT).

One participant indicated the importance of being at the forefront of academic product development and how this could differentiate one in the market:

> [T]here's a couple of places how you can differentiate yourself. You can do that by being at the forefront of new product development all the time. Your products that you have that you produce is just so cutting edge that it's complete different from what everybody else does. (1.3: 1.3.2: 1: JH)

In line with this, another participant mentioned that what makes their offering also unique is the fact that they create "thinkers" – students learn to think and not to focus on theory only (1.3: 1.3.2: 6: MV). Another participant shared this sentiment by arguing as follows:

> Mode two, if I can compare it to mode one, most public…all the public universities are mode one thinkers. So, that means everything is built on a theoretical framework. We do not necessarily focus on can we apply the theoretical aspects? In mode two we say, yes, the theoretical framework is very important but the practical application is much more important. (1.3: 1.3.2: 11: JG)

The general sentiments expressed in terms of 'unique offerings' also referred to flexibility and specialisation. Flexibility for example in terms of what students can afford. A student can complete one year, find employment, for example, for two years and come back after that and do the second year without the fear of credits expiring. PHEIs offering master's degrees were also interpreted as being unique in the PHE environment. As previously stated in Chapter 4, of the 125 registered PHEIs, only 16 of these institutions offered up to a master's degree at the time of this research (1.3: 1.3.2: 4: AJ; 1.3: 1.3.2: 7: MV; 1.3: 1.3.2: 9: CV).

5.3.1.3.3 Servicescape

This dimension refers to the look and feel of the environment where the service is delivered. The concept was developed by Booms and Bitner to show the effect the environment has on service delivery. Booms and Bitner (1990 cited in Palmer, 2008:101) define a servicescape as "the environment in which the service is assembled and in which the seller and customer interact, combined with tangible commodities that facilitate performance or communication of the service". In addition, Slack *et al*. (2017) point out that servicescapes are the look and feel of the environment where the service is delivered. The idea is that the conditions, space and the signs and symbols should create an experience for both the internal and external customer that will support the service quality concept.

Several participants testified to the value of servicescapes as an important dimension of TQS for PHEIs in South Africa. On-campus facilities were frequently mentioned by most participants as an important feature that could add to the service quality experience of both the internal and external customer. Amongst others, these facilities included the reception areas, lecture rooms, parking bays, cafeterias and restaurants, accessibility to taxis and clean and hygienic rest rooms (1.3: 1.3.3: 7: AJ; 1.3: 1.3.3: 9: LZ; 1.3: 1.3.3: 18: GK; 1.3: 1.3.3: 26: CS2).

One manager provided a detailed description of the importance of on-campus facilities and referred to it as the 'infrastructure' of the institution:

> So, the look and feel of the infrastructure. I would want auditorium style classrooms with hi-tech equipment in them, ample parking, good cafeteria facilities, beautifully clean hygienic restrooms. All of these little blocks adds to the experience and which links obviously to the service. (1.3: 1.3.3: 3: CO)

Although most participants indicated the importance of servicescapes (with specific reference to the appearance of buildings), one participant was in disagreement and indicated that the physical appearance of the building is not an indicator of TQS:

> I don't think … a lot of students … most of the students, it's unimportant to them the way your building looks and so on, that doesn't play. (1.3: 1.3.3: 6: AJ)

Safety and security were also mentioned as important aspects of the servicescape (1.3: 1.3.3: 17: GK). This same participant explained further:

> [E]nvironment that is good for learning and then also including social interaction, safe and secure environment, that there are enough social events that happen. (1.3: 1.3.3: 19: GK)

Key insights on the reputation of a PHEI

My observation was that participants associated the reputation of a PHEI with three factors (dimensions): personal attention to students, the unique service and product offering, and the environment where the service is provided. The viewpoint that principals were the champions of enhancing personal attention to customers was enforced. Emphasis was on individual student attention and smaller classes – individual attention not only in terms of academic support, but also in terms of empathy and care towards students on a personal level. The importance of specialised products and services also received attention. In order to stay competitive in the market, unique and flexible offerings were the determining factors for success. I also observed the importance that participants attributed to the physical environment where the service is produced. Apart from the physical facilities, safety and security were also mentioned as determining factors for servicescapes. Only one participant was in disagreement on the influence of the servicescape on the quality of services offered.

5.3.1.4 Human resources

The descriptions below were grouped under the dimensions of academics and administrative staff in the category ‘human resources’. It is widely accepted that human resources are the greatest asset of any organisation for enhancing competitiveness (Goetsch & Davis, 2012; Slack *et al*., 2017). According to Foster (2015), the human resources perspective on quality is essential since it is impossible to implement and sustain quality without the commitment of employees. In the case of PHEIs, it seems as if a dissonance is created between human resources and the service provided, especially in terms of experts and senior academics. As stated previously in the dimension of ‘unique product offering’, some PHE offerings are highly specialised and catering for niche markets. However, as is evident from the findings, it seems difficult to attract and retain senior academics (faculty) to act as course leaders for these products.

Table 5.8 offers a summary of the dimensions used in analysing the category of ‘human resources’.

Table 5.8: Summary of the dimensions used to analyse ‘human resources’

Dimension	Description
Lack of experts and senior academics	The paucity of academic expertise in PHEIs in South Africa
Lack of administrative staff	The lack of administrative staff to fulfil support roles due to budget constraints

5.3.1.4.1 Lack of experts and senior academics

During the interviews, the importance of having excellent staff, that is having experts and senior academics, was confirmed by all participants. While describing the importance of faculty, matters of concern that surfaced involved the shortage of teaching and research staff and the lack of appropriate skills and experience such as online facilitation, industry involvement and presentation skills (1.4: 1.4.1: 5: LZ; 1.4: 1.4.1: 7: JG; 1.4: 1.4.1: 8: CS2). Due to this apparent lack of the right combination of skills, it seemed that, at the time of this research, PHEIs were very careful and particular when it came to the employment of academics as stated by two participants:

> [W]e have simulation sessions with our facilitators. They have to come and they do a session with people like […] and myself and some of the other senior managers so that we can see if they will work for us because we facilitate the [...] way. So, if you can't do the […] way, you're out, you can't be there. (1.4: 1.4.1: 26: CS)

and

> They've gotta come with the experience and they've gotta come in with the right skills that you need 'cause you might have somebody who's been involved in the industry, who's got the right qualification but what they bring to the college they may not be a good facilitator. (1.4: 1.4.1: 32: CS2)

However, overall the main concern seemed to be the attraction and retention of quality academics in PHEIs in South Africa. The following quotes serve as evidence:

- It's difficult to attract academics in the whole of South Africa. (1.4: 1.4.1: 3: AL)
- So, for that reason if you not able to deliver quality you will not attract people into the system so you miss the access opportunity and once you have people in the system you want to retain them in the system to ensure that effective learning takes place. (1.4: 1.4.1: 9: AL)
- [I]t's very difficult for us as management to attract top academics because your top academics want that freedom to publish and want that financial support to publish and when bring them…attract them to privates they are mostly involved in teaching and learning and that's a problem. (1.4: 1.4.1: 22: CV)
- [Y]ou've gotta catch hold and retain lecturers because there's so much competition out there in private education… get the right person for the right job at the right time at the right salary and it's not always about salary. (1.4: 1.4.1: 29: CS2)

One participant expressed disbelief and frustration when she responded to a question on how to retain academics based on remuneration. She reiterated the need for fair remuneration and proposed, "if you pay peanuts, you're gonna get monkeys."

The same participant concluded, "we want to hire the best but we don't wanna pay the best" (1.4: 1.4.1: 13: AS).

5.3.1.4.2 Lack of administrative staff

This dimension includes descriptions of the lack of administrative staff and the operational implications thereof on PHEIs in South Africa. As in the previous section with reference to experts and senior academics, PHEIs also seemed to struggle with the appointment of adequate administrative staff to fulfil support functions. Where the paucity of quality faculty seemed to be due to the lack of experts, the shortage of administrative staff seems to be purely the result of budget constraints. One participant voiced her concern that they had a shortage of administrative staff and that they are "swamped" which affected support functions and operational effectiveness (1.4: 1.4.2: 1: AS). Another frustration that was mentioned was the fact that, at the time of this study, current support staff could not focus on delivering better service due to bureaucratic rules that hindered effective decision-making:

> [B]ecause then you need more resources and the current people that you have cannot actually focus on providing a better service delivery to the student because they spend so much time on red tape. (1.4: 1.1.2: 4: MP)

Descriptions from participants indicated that, at the time, one of their top priorities (with an increased budget) was to appoint more administrative staff to improve service delivery to both internal and external customers (1.4: 1.4.2: 5: LZ; 1.4: 1.4.2: 6: CS).

Key insights on human resources

Based on my analysis of the descriptions by the participants, I concur with Foster (2015) that human resources are essential for quality improvement. It seemed that principals were all in agreement on the importance of having quality faculty, but were also fully aware of the dissonance created between available academic staff and the aspirations of offering unique products and services to niche markets. The difficulty to attract quality academics was seen as twofold: firstly, the shortage of skills available in academia and industry-aligned remuneration; and secondly, and to a lesser extent, academic freedom, as the academic freedom granted to academics in public institutions is not mirrored in PHEIs. The lack of administrative staff was solely attributed to the lack of funds. Not having the correct staff complement could have a negative effect on quality teaching and student support. This is discussed later in this chapter (5.3.2.1).

5.3.1.5 Ethos

This category can be interpreted as the philosophy or moral belief of a PHEI, which can be equated to its culture. Culture refers to the norms and beliefs shared by people, which leads to action and decision-making in an organisation (Evans, 2017; Foster, 2015). Added to this, Oakland (2014) defines culture as the way in which business is conducted and the way employees are treated in the organisation. The descriptions by participants, which referred to the beliefs and philosophy of a PHEI, were grouped into the culture dimension. Table 5.9 presents a summary of this dimension used in the analysis process.

Table 5.9: Summary of the dimension used in analysing 'ethos'

Dimension	Description
Culture	The way we do things around here'; the norms and beliefs of the institution

5.3.1.5.1 Culture

Key expressions related to culture that were mentioned during the discussions included "a culture of training", "human empathy", "trust", "quality output", "relationship building", "integrity", "values" and "respect". Findings suggested that a quality culture is deeply embedded in most of the PHEIs and that it is at the core of delivering TQS to both the internal and external customers. Goetsch and Davis (2012) summarise a quality culture as having, amongst others, the following characteristics:

- a shared management philosophy;
- acknowledgement of the importance of human resources;
- a strong value system; and
- a definite organisational character.

One participant demonstrated his compassion for a quality culture by adding to the list of characteristics above:

> The first one, operational leadership, the second one product leadership, and the last one customer intimacy. […] All three should be your culture. (1.5: 1.5.1: 3: JH)

Culture was mentioned by most participants as crucial for delivering TQS. When asked about the quality culture in his institution, one participant indicated that there was a "significant sensitivity around quality" and that it was part of their culture that they are growing on campus (1.5: 1.5.1: 4: AL). Another participant indicated the importance of service quality and referred to it as a "holistic approach" and a "culture". According to her, culture should be part of everyone and embedded in what they do (1.5: 1.5.1: 11: LZ). Another participant described the importance of culture as a dimension of TQS by stating:

> [T]he culture is something which should come from the top and be given down, cultivated amongst the staff with the students but, ja, there's different levels of that but, ja, you'd certainly want a positive culture to be built into the tertiary institution and I'd say that that would be very important. (1.5: 1.5.1: 13: GK)

Key insights on the culture of a PHEI

My observations and reflections about culture were very much aligned with the descriptions given by the participants. Key expressions used to describe culture included aspects such as respect, values and integrity. These aspects form the basis of a PHEI culture that is central to the delivery of TQS. The findings indicated that a culture of quality was at the core of most PHEIs that participated in the study. Culture should start at the top and should be embedded in everyone's belief that "this is the way we do things around here".

5.3.2 Multiple and diverse stakeholder perspectives and expectations towards a holistic experience

The five categories of theme 2 are discussed next.

Theme 2 is inclusive of people (academics, students/parents and principals), process and product (output). The three stakeholder groups are intertwined in terms of expectations. The theme was also further theorised to include the following dimensions: quality teaching, internal customer, managing expectations, quality learning experience, leadership, partnerships, accreditation, application and registration, technology, teaching and learning, student support, policies, communication, contribution to society, employability, practical application, operations management, ethical practice, reputation and repeat business.

5.3.2.1 People: academics

The focus of this category is on the service delivered by the internal customer, the employed academic responsible for teaching and learning. As such, it comprises two dimensions, namely quality teaching and the internal customer. The first dimension encompasses all descriptions related to quality teaching as the heart of any PHEI. The second dimension emphasises the importance of the internal customer as the steward of service quality delivery to the external customer. Table 5.10 provides a summary of the dimensions used in the analysis process.

Table 5.10: Summary of the dimensions used in analysing 'people: academics'

Dimension	Description
Quality teaching	The core service of PHEIs to external customers
Internal customer	Quality at the source – academic employees of PHEIs (credible faculty) receiving goods and services from the PHEI to offer a quality service to the external customer (students)

5.3.2.1.1 Quality teaching

The findings indicate that quality teaching can be associated with the 'nuts and bolts' of the business of a PHEI. When asked what they see as one of the most important pillars of service quality in PHE, one participant responded as follows, "I say is just quality education just because I think you still need to deliver quality education at the end of the day" (2.1: 2.1.1: 10: MP). Although research is important, quality teaching is the core function of any PHEI and probably the most important factor contributing to the reputation of the PHEI. This was confirmed by another participant as, "[the] way that you retain and build your reputation is by the quality of the education in the class" (2.1: 2.1.1: JH: 1).

During the interviews, the following key aspects were mentioned in relation to quality teaching: "teaching aids", "industry-aligned teaching", "attention to detail", "updated course content", "programme design", "continuous curriculum development" and "excellent facilitators"*.* One participant emphasised that quality feedback is central to quality teaching and students want to understand where they went wrong in assessments and what is expected of them in future (2.1: 2.1.1: 16: MV). Another participant, however, offered a distinctive view on what quality teaching encompasses:

> [T]hree modes of learning, and by that I mean if I may simplify it, the heart, the hands and the head, it shouldn't just be a mental exercise or an academic exercise. So, again there the content, the syllabus, the curriculum. (2.1: 2.1.1: 2: CO)

Various participants mentioned the importance of having recent and relevant industry-aligned product offerings as verified by the following quotes:

- So, we do try our best to deliver the content to come up with new ideas to put in actual trends and things that are happening in the banking sector. (2.1: 2.1.1: 9: AH)

- [A]lso somebody that has worked in the industry understands all of that and can actually provide the correct information and because it's very much dependent on legislation, tax law, and those type of things, which changes regularly, whereas the public university updates their books once every five years. (2.1: 2.1.1: 11: MP)
- So, I think the most important thing, and this is crossing over to our students, number one they must have the latest information. Number two, the lecturers must understand where the latest information is coming from and that's gonna put them out in the front. (2.1: 2.1.1: 38: GT)

5.3.2.1.2 Internal customer

Internal customers are all employees contributing to the mission of the organisation and who receive goods and services from within the same organisation to serve the external customer (Evans, 2017; Foster, 2015). According to Wilson *et al*. (2008), successful service organisations share certain common characteristics, such as employee investment and trust-based relationships. Furthermore, Seth, Deshmukh and Vrat (2005) state that if internal customers are unhappy, it will be challenging to offer quality services to external customers. The focus of this dimension is the importance of the academic as internal customer, as the provider of TQS to the external customer (student) as well as the receiver of TQS from the PHEI where he or she is employed. There were several descriptions from the participants of how they attempt to improve academic standing and qualifications of lecturers. References were made to “training”, “mentoring”, “up-skilling”, “further studies” and “the continuous development of academic staff”.

The findings indicate that PHEIs have a vested interest in the internal customer and are willing to support them in their academic development:

> We do have a centre of excellence where we train internal staff members and we also train our contractors, our part-time academics that we use. So, that is done through the centre of excellence, and the centre of excellence drives our values in terms of training. (2.1: 2.1.2:6: AH)

One participant also confirmed support to the internal customers by emphasising that lecturers should never see themselves as the finished product, but should continue to develop themselves in the context of lifelong learning with the support of the institution (2.1: 2.1.2: 9: GK). Another participant described the creation of an environment to allow the internal customer to grow and develop. He provided a description of what he considered a favourable environment:

> From an academic's perspective it is an enabling environment to achieve…to allow the academic to achieve his or her aspirations as academic, to develop personal capacity and to be able to engage in sharing that information towards learning. (2.1: 2.1.2: 1: AL)

Not all descriptions of internal customer support were positive as this principal described when she was asked to give input about the value of the internal customer. Her response was:

> You are supposed to be this white collar, awesome person who dedicated your life to academia but you are treated like a blue-collar person, if I can put it like that, and that also come through in the classes. Some of the lecturers don't really prepare so well because they feel why should I? The internal customer is neglected. (2.1: 2.1.2: 16: AS)

The same participant also claimed that, at the time of this research, there were huge salary discrepancies in PHE, even within PHEIs of the same group. This is a source of conflict and unhappiness that directly influences the quality of service towards the external customer (2.1: 2.1.2: 17: AS).

Key insights on academics

The evidence suggested that the services offered by the internal customer, namely quality teaching, were probably the most important pillar of service quality for any HE provider. The importance of current learning material and industry-aligned education was identified as the most important factor related to quality teaching. In line with the argument by Seth *et al*. (2005), the importance of the internal customer as the custodian of TQS was reiterated. The internal customer was also the receiver of services provided by the institution. All participants had a high regard for the academic staff and focussed on their continuous development along with the creation of an enabling environment where they could grow and achieve their personal objectives. Having come from a PHE background, I found it interesting, but not surprising that there were also some negative sentiments towards the treatment of academics in PHE. The financial abuse in terms of salary discrepancies and not giving recognition to the professional status of academics were deemed unacceptable.

5.3.2.2 People: learner (and parents)

All descriptions and references made by participants to the external customers (students) and their parents were grouped in this category. In PHE in South Africa, the parent or sponsor of the student are just as involved in the learning experience. Managing the expectations of both student and parent as well as providing a quality learning experience is fundamental to the delivery of excellent service quality to these external stakeholders. Table 5.11 provides a summary of the dimensions used during the analysis process.

Table 5.11: Summary of the dimensions used in analysing 'people: learner (and parents)'

Dimension	Description
Managing expectations	The 'desires' of the customer that must be managed by delivering on what was promised
Quality learning experience	This includes the holistic student experience, from registration to graduation, and incorporates the total value chain

5.3.2.2.1 Managing expectations

In various research studies on service quality, expectations are regarded as the preferred outcome of the service experience. Expectations are viewed as the 'desires' or 'wants' of the customer, that is, what he or she feels the service provider *should* offer as opposed to *would* offer. Findings from the research indicated that it was challenging to manage this dimension for the provision of excellent service quality. Descriptions by participants pertaining to expectations revealed the importance of managing expectations as well as the fact that different stakeholders had different expectations. References were made to the expectations of MBA students, parents, mature working students, first-time students (school-leavers) and the institution as evidenced by the following quotations:

- [A] business and it's good that they have their high expectations especially when it comes to the MBAs. They are … we should treat them like private banking clients. (2.2: 2.2.1: 10: CO)
- And also, if I look at parent involvement, that's something that we need to definitely look at. In government and bigger institutions, parents and guardians and account payers aren't really involved. (2.2: 2.2.1: 11: AS)
- I also think perhaps people that are already working have slightly different expectations of studies than school-leavers. (2.2: 2.2.1: 21: MP)
- It's important in terms of your service delivery expectations how those three groups engage each other in terms of meeting these different expectations. (2.2: 2.2.1: 23: AJ)
- [W]e need to keep in mind what the expectations are, whether it's from the students or wherever it's from the staff that is … (2.2: 2.2.1: 30: LZ)

One participant shared her experience with regard to higher fees for PHE, saying that it subconsciously creates a higher expectation of service delivery with stakeholders. She explained students (and parents) feel that they have the right to contact the institution or the lecturer with unrealistic demands (2.2: 2.2.1: 20: MP). The word 'private' also seems to create this higher expectation at PHEIs as acknowledged by this participant:

> There are some people who definitely see…some of our students who come from the public institution and they have that perception that it's better in the private institution. I have a lot of those. (2.2: 2.2.2: 26: AJ)

When asked whether service quality was more important in a PHEI than in a public institution, another participant replied:

> I don't think it's more important, definitely not, but I do feel that it's expected to a higher degree in private. There is this whole … I won't say stigma, I don't really know what the right word is, there's this expectation, this specialisation, this idea of prestige. So, I am going to this and this and this institution because it's private, it is awesome. So, ja, no it's not more important but it is expected. (2.2: 2.2.1: 17: AS)

Several participants referred to the importance of managing expectations of different stakeholders. The point was raised that one should not "oversell and over promise your service delivery" (2.2: 2.2.1: 18: JH). If expectations were managed, it would result in less internal conflict and happy stakeholders (2.2: 2.2.1: 7: JH). One participant provided a suggestion on how to manage student expectations effectively:

> What is it that the student expects, what is that the client is expecting? And we try to do that proactively. So, when a new cohort comes in, I meet with them and I say what are your expectations? What are … when we sign an SLA [service level agreement] from a client to get new students in the question is what are you expectation? How do you see this panning out and how can we actually meet or exceed your expectations? (2.2: 2.2.1: 35: CS)

5.3.2.2.2 Quality learning experience

This dimension comprised all descriptions by participants with reference to a quality learning experience by students. When asked what a quality learning experience entailed, this participant answered, "service quality would incorporate the total student experience from the moment of application" (2.2: 2.2.2: 3: CO). This was confirmed by another participant who proposed that a quality learning experience represents the holistic experience offered to the student, from registration through to graduation (2.2: 2.2.2: 6: AH). Findings indicated that offering a quality learning experience to students has a positive effect on the improvement of service quality. Key aspects related to a quality learning experience included the following: interaction with lecturers and study material, timely services, transparent processes and support. The creation of an environment conducive to learning also enhances the learning experience. One participant provided the example that students will always be given the opportunity to resubmit and improve their assignments or portfolios as part of their growth and learning experience (2.2: 2.2.2: 21: JG). This participant contended that students must be given the opportunity grow and learn from their mistakes as part of their learning experience:

> So, enabling them or giving them the tools to succeed which is being gracious and allowing them to make mistakes, which invariably they will. We make mistakes in our professional careers so we should be gracious enough to allow them to make mistakes and learn from them. (2.2: 2.2.2: 17: GK)

When asked for descriptions on additional aspects that could influence the learning experience of students, the following descriptions emerged:

> I am saying it's the thinking in the management, it's the thinking in the staff and it's also the acceptance of all of that by the students that creates a different…completely different environment. (2.2: 2.2.2: 13: AJ)

and

> [T]he students are asking that they have more social life here, that they don't just come to a college or university to study, they come here to make lifelong friends. So, they've also asked for more social interaction. (2.2: 2.2.2: 25: CS2)

Key insights on learners (and parents)

While analysing the data of this category, two issues came to mind: the importance of managing the expectations of these two stakeholder groups and the student life cycle – the total quality learning experience of the student. The evidence suggested that in South African PHE, the parent or sponsor is much more involved in the student life cycle than in the case of public HEIs. The importance of managing the expectations of various stakeholders was emphasised. The word 'private' seemed to refer to higher and sometimes unrealistic expectations from stakeholders. The evidence also suggested that these expectations had to be managed to avoid internal conflict. One way was to deliver on promises made. Furthermore, the delivery of a holistic quality learning experience had a positive effect on service quality improvement. A quality learning experience included, amongst others, lecturer interaction, support, transparent processes and on-time service delivery.

5.3.2.3 People: principal

The focus of this category was on the principal as the driver of TQS in a PHEI. Copious literature exists confirming the importance of leadership as a core element for product and service quality and continuous improvement. Leadership by top management is crucial for achieving quality superiority (Gryna *et al*., 2007). In addition, Foster (2015) argues that quality management begins with leadership, which is an essential element of the quality management process. According to Evans (2017), quality can only be improved through strong leadership, which is the responsibility of top management. Quality improvement efforts cannot be sustained without strong leadership from the top. If there is no commitment to quality, all quality initiatives are set to fail. The influence of leadership is clear – organisations with weak leadership will not gain a market advantage in quality.

During the interviews, the participants focussed mainly on leadership as the catalyst for TQS and the importance of forming partnerships in the PHE environment in South Africa. Table 5.12 presents a summary of the dimensions used in analysing the category ‘People: Principal’.

Table 5.12: Summary of the dimensions used in analysing ‘People: Principal’

Dimension	Description
Leadership	Mobilising people towards a common goal despite risk and uncertainty
Partnerships	Working together with industry or other HEIs towards a mutual beneficial relationship

5.3.2.3.1 Leadership

The importance and influence of leadership in quality management and service quality provision cannot be overemphasised and is well documented in literature. Leadership is a key variable in quality management and is at the core of all quality improvement theories (Foster, 2015). According to Bratton (2007:132), “leadership is one of the most observed but least understood phenomena on earth”. For the purpose of this study, the definition of leadership by Dirkse van Schalkwyk (2012:126) seemed the most appropriate: “the mobilisation and influencing of people to work towards a common goal through the building of interpersonal relationships and the breaking of tradition to achieve the organisation's objectives despite risk and uncertainty".

According to the descriptions provided by the participants, leadership was the single most important variable to deliver quality service in a PHEI. The importance of service quality was emphasised by this participant, "without service quality we're dead" (2.3: 2.3.1: 20: JG). All participants agreed that leadership should see the bigger picture and should have a holistic view of facilities, staff and students and ways to combine these components into an integrated TQS offering. Leadership should guide all stakeholders involved to achieve the vision and culture of the institution, to overcome challenges and to follow a customer-centred approach in order to deliver outstanding service quality (2.3: 2.3.1: 4: AJ; 2.3: 2.3.1: 10: CO; 2.3: 2.3.1: 16: LZ; 2.3: 2.3.1: 21: CS). One participant vehemently expressed his passion for leadership starting at the top and filtering through the whole value chain right through to the graduated student:

> We've decided that quality assurance and quality issues is something that should be implemented right through the institution at all different levels. So, all the managers are responsible for quality in their different divisions. So, when we look at quality, it's from where we start in advertising, what we advertise, making sure that we start there with the quality delivery right through from the student that walks in right through to the graduation ceremonies and then also your alumni. So, the definition is that everything that we do should be based on quality and quality assurance. (2.3: 2.3.1: 18: CV)

Other participants also explained their leadership roles in order to deliver TQS in their institutions. The following quotations serve as evidence:

- [F]rom where I'm sitting, my responsibility to firstly define effectively our purpose, in other words do we have a clear understanding of what our purpose should be? And then to create an environment that will enable this purpose to be realised. That includes all the dimensions of our business. That includes a clear understanding of the priorities that we want to achieve and the type of capacity required to achieve that but on a level where I can do it in an effective and efficient way. (2.3: 2.3.1: 1: AL)
- I think it's very important that we have three key people there, and that's the tuition and research person, the quality assurance and regulatory affairs, and then the executive dean, because she oversees all the different scores and she works with procedures and processes and making sure that we follow certain steps to ensure quality. (2.3: 2.3.1: 13: AH)

5.3.2.3.2 Partnerships

Most organisations now recognise the importance of establishing mutually beneficial relationships with other organisations or 'partners'. The beliefs behind most TQM and excellence models support the idea of establishing partnerships as a means of developing a stronger relationship geared towards better products and services for customers. The basis of any partnership should be a constructive and team-based relationship that enables knowledge transfer, which adds value based on continuous improvement principles (Oakland, 2014). According to Goetsch and Davis (2012), some of the benefits of partnerships include continuous improvements in key areas such as products, services and customer satisfaction. These benefits can eventually lead to a more competitive position in the marketplace.

The findings of this research suggest that participating PHEIs in South Africa also realised the importance for forming partnerships as a means of continuous improvement and survival in a highly dynamic and competitive market. In the case of PHEIs, the need for partnerships can also be linked to the dimension of engagement for subsidies. As mentioned earlier (see 5.3.1.1.1), the lack of financial support from government necessitates PHEIs to form partnerships. One participant, who is the CEO of a PHEI, which is in partnership with an international education group, referred to the benefits of partnerships:

> [T]he types of services that we provide in general is of a high standard plus we have the benefit to share in the experience infrastructure and products of a global network and that opens up the opportunity to, firstly, save a lot of time in terms of developing new products and new opportunities but at the same time also learn and use … or learn from best practice across the world. (2.3: 2.3.2: 1: AL)

By comparison, most PHEIs in South Africa are not in the privileged position to have international (or even national) partners. However, the evidence showed that all private providers are striving towards the forming of these partnerships. Several examples were given of the type of partners and the potential benefits that such partnerships could bring. Mention was made of partnerships with industry as well as public institutions of higher education. This is related to the university–business cooperation (UBC) concept related to entrepreneurial universities. One participant mentioned that there are actually more research funds available in industry than in public institutions of higher education. Partnerships with such an industries could result in additional research funds for private institutions. Another benefit could result in industry experts getting involved in the tuition or mentoring of students in PHEIs (2.3: 2.3.2: 2 AL; 2.3: 2.3.2: 11: GK). In terms of partnerships with public HE providers, the comments made by participants referred to benefits such as using the public provider's infrastructure and facilities such as training venues and library facilities. In return, the PHEI could accommodate the 'surplus students' who did not get access to the public provider (2.3: 2.3.2: 8: AJ; 2.3: 2.3.2: 13: GK; 2.3: 2.3.2: 18: CS).

Goetsch and Davis (2012) are of the opinion that it has become common practice for HEIs to partner with business and industry. This was confirmed by one participant who declared that they had a partnership with one of the leading banking groups in South Africa. She further indicated that they were the HE service provider of choice for this banking group enrolling their staff from diploma to PhD level.

Key insights on principals

Two of my key observations regarding principals were related to leadership and the importance of forming partnerships for TQS. All participants interviewed were either principals or CEOs or PHEIs. I found it interesting that they all followed a team or participative leadership approach based on different levels of management to support the top structure. The findings also confirmed the view of Goetsch and Davis (2012) where all participants acknowledged the advantages of forming partnerships with either industry or public HE providers.

5.3.2.4 Process

A process is a sequence of activities with the intention of achieving predetermined desired results. Value for customers is created through processes. Total quality (TQ) views an organisation as a system of interdependent and linked processes. A process perspective links all activities together to understand the entire system rather than just focussing on one small part (Evans, 2017).

The focus of this category is on the input dimensions of the TQS process (see Figure 5.2). Table 5.13 reflects the dimensions used in analysing this category.

Table 5.13: Summary of the dimensions used in analysing 'process'

Dimension	Description
Accreditation	Formal recognition of the quality of HE programmes by the HEQC
Application and registration	Formal enrolment into a PHEI. This is the first point of contact between the external customer and the PHEI
Technology	Electronic equipment and software programs used as tools in formal tuition and research
Teaching and learning	Teaching strategies employed in class (or online) to meet the needs of the students and to allow lecturers to achieve their own goals
Student support	Academic and emotional support focussing on the wellbeing of students
Policies	The standard operating procedures that guide decision-making, action and the day-to-day operations of a PHEI
Communication	The effective transfer of a message that is received and understood, and which is crucial for quality improvement

5.3.2.4.1 Accreditation

Accreditation is the recognition status granted to a programme for a specific period after a Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) evaluation had indicated that it meets minimum standards of quality. One of the main reasons for programme accreditation is to protect students against poor quality programmes. Both public and private HE providers can only offer programmes that have been accredited by the HEQC (CHE, 2017). An institution that applies for registration must first conform to the requirements of quality assurance as set by the HEQC of the CHE. The CHE is the body responsible for quality assurance in HE, while the HEQC is responsible for programme accreditation (institutional and programme assessment). One of the benefits of accreditation is the guarantee that the programmes offered by the institution, whether public or private, are indeed of an HE standard.

As indicated in the problem statement in Chapter 1 of this study, PHEIs function in a highly regulated environment. From a regulatory point of view, being accredited as a PHE provider is probably one of the most important dimensions of service quality for private providers as expressed by a participant during the interview:

> If you don't have accreditation, then you're nothing, you literally can't operate, you're not a business, you're not an education institution, you're nothing. (2.4: 2.4.1: 5: JH)

It is therefore crucial to obtain and retain accreditation for the survival of a PHEI in a highly regulated and competitive environment. Several participants explained how they prepare for accreditation audits and stay 'ready' and 'alert' since a PHEI can be audited at any time. One participant referred to their "internal processes" and “internal audits” where the holding company does an audit of the institution in preparation for the formal HEQC audit (2.4: 2.4.1: 3: AS). Another participant indicated the value and importance of having “good service and quality control systems in place” (2.4: 2.4.1: 6: JH). Having the correct internal processes in place seems to be the best way to abide by the legal requirements from accreditation bodies as described by this participant:

> [B]ecause we are highly regulated and we can be audited anytime, not that a public institution will not be audited, but there’s always this cloud … no, it’s not a cloud, but there’s always this thing hanging there, but we can get audited, so you see lots of files and lots of processes and lots of…and we have to stick the processes, (2.4: 2.4.1: 7: AH)

As mentioned previously in this section, one of the advantages of accreditation is the guarantee that the institution is recognised by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) as a reputable provider of HE and that the programmes offered are of an HE quality standard. One participant testified that they acquired dual accreditation. With dual accreditation, she explained, they have been accredited by the HEQC and also have obtained British accreditation status, which is an added value for students (2.4: 2.4.1: 8: LZ).

There seemed to be consensus among participants that, although accreditation is a tedious and time-consuming process, it confirms the credibility of the institution and its programmes in the market (2.4: 2.4.1: 9: GK; 2.4: 2.4.1: 11: CS2).

5.3.2.4.2 Application and registration

This dimension comprised all descriptions by participants with reference to the application and registration processes at PHEIs. The findings suggested that the application and registration processes are crucial in delivering quality services to the external customer. Moreover, it is the first point of contact between the service provider (the PHEI) and the external customer (the student). One participant gave his version of the importance of the application and registration process. He mentioned the importance of providing a service at the first point of entry that the customer does not expect, and explained in a passionate tone of voice:

> When people come to us it is literally you walk in, you go and have a cup of coffee, somebody calls you, they walk you through the whole process, within an hour, you’re out of here, you’re done. Thank you very much. The wow factor. And it can be the smallest thing, the smallest thing. Like, for instance, when … something that makes a big difference in our environment, if you go and you register … Here, there’s my certification, I am a commissioner of oaths, you

> arrive here, you've got all your documents but don't you have a copy? Sorry, we'll just make you a copy in the photocopier quickly, I stamp it, I sign it, I'm a commissioner of oaths, it's done. Everything is here. You can actually give people – a one-stop service … one stop, but they don't expect it. (2.4: 2.4.2: 2: JH)

The importance of this first point of contact between the customer and the service provider was accentuated by several participants. This is the encounter where the PHEI has the first opportunity to meet or exceed the customers' expectations and perceptions. It is here where the customer will get a sense of efficient (or inefficient) administrative processes, speed, turnaround times, friendliness of staff and operational service delivery. This is true not only for face-to-face registrations and applications, but also for telephone and online registrations (2.4: 2.4.2: 1: JH; 2.4: 2.4.2: 3: CO; 2.4: 2.4.2: 5: MP; 2.4: 2.4.2: 6: AJ; 2.4: 2.4.2: 9: MV).

Another participant described her view of the importance of the student's encounter with the application and registration processes as follows:

> And then, another touch point that we have is … and that also relates back to the contact centre, is when the students first get admitted and when they register. So, they go through their contact centre, they might also have interactions with a consultant, and they might have interactions with a programme manager. So, that's all during that initial admission and registration process. So, what is the turnaround time, are students treated friendly, do they feel supported, do they feel they're getting a good service out of that initial process? (2.4: 2.4.2: 4: AH)

One participant, referring to the distance education unit of his institution, reported that they aim to have a turnaround time of seven days from the point of registration to where the student receives the study material. This turnaround time is a benchmark for both their national and international students (2.4: 2.4.2: 8: AJ).

5.3.2.4.3 Technology

This dimension incorporates all descriptions related to technology as a dimension of service quality in PHEIs. As in the previous dimension of human resources, a kind of dissonance emerged from the findings on this dimension. All PHEIs would like to offer programmes online with the latest technology and improved IT infrastructure, have auditorium-style classrooms, interactive Skype classes, move away from print material and give each student a tablet, iPad or Apple Mac. Unfortunately, the reality is that South Africa is not a technology leader and bandwidth and Internet provision remains a problem. With reference to the previous dimension of 'managing expectations', the word 'private' also creates these expectations in terms of technology provision. This expectation then has a negative effect on service delivery as the PHEI is measured against its ability to provide world-class online services. One participant stated bluntly:

> So, the minute you have that, they come with that expectation. And sometimes it's difficult to deliver on, not because we can't, but because South Africa is not a world leader in technology fields, especially when it comes to bandwidth provision but we get measured against that. We get measured against, but why is the Internet so slow? And then becomes a service delivery contact point. (2.4: 2.4.3: 2: JH)

This sentiment was echoed by another participant who argued as follows:

> As I said, the challenge is between purely electronic or technology driven, we need some … we still have some challenges there. How do we ensure that our learners have the access that we want them to have to make the whole support thing better? (2.4: 2.4.3: 28: CV)

The findings also revealed that the first thing that students will complain about is problems related to Internet accessibility and bandwidth. The following quotes serve as evidence:

- And secondly, accessibility to the material because I have found that it's very nice to have the online systems and all of that but, if the students can't access it, then they are … it makes them really unhappy. (2.4: 2.4.3: 7: MP)
- [T]he Internet has gone down once in three months for twelve minutes at midnight but they're too lazy to actually log in properly. Never went to get my password, never went to IT. So, we get that particularly with the second years. Any little thing they are too lazy and now we're not getting service. (2.4: 2.4.3: 21: MV)

Social media in a way enhances this problem because it is the first place where students go to complain. Students start complaining on Facebook and other platforms and once this "information is out there", it affects market perceptions and has a negative effect on future student enrolments (2.4: 2.4.3: 12: AJ).

All participants interviewed agreed that better technology would lead to better service delivery and eventually better service quality. One participant explained:

> So, if that could be more like online or so, then it's not so much paper and we could do it online on a system or maybe that could alleviate a lot of pressures. (2.4: 2.4.3: 6: AH)

Another participant attested: "So, you can do very nice things, I think, which will increase your service delivery immensely if we can go more online" (2.4: 2.4.3: 8: MP). One PHEI seemed to be in the frontline in terms of online tuition, student support and technology. This participant declared that their master's students receive a preloaded tablet with all the study material and the online platform already set up (2.4: 2.4.3: 19: AJ). Of all the participants interviewed, only one declared her satisfaction with her institution's computer lab and software programs. However, the Wi-Fi on that particular campus was still "not good enough" (2.4: 2.4.3: 23: LZ).

5.3.2.4.4 Teaching and learning

> Learning results from what the student does and thinks and only from what the student does and thinks. The teacher can advance learning only by influencing what the student does to learn (Simon, cited in Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, Lovett & Norman, 2010:1).

This dimension is also linked to the dimension of "quality teaching". For the purpose of this study, this dimension represented the teaching strategies employed in class (or online) to meet the needs of the students and to allow lecturers to achieve their own goals. One participant took a more holistic approach to the importance of teaching and learning and explained:

> [A]nd then even … what happens in the classroom, the study material, study guidelines, student support, right through the whole process up to the end that I cross the stage and I'm capped and I'm sashed. (2.4: 2.4.4: 2: CO)

When asked about crucial pillars of service quality in PHE, this participant indicated, "teaching and learning space, a crucial pillar … for me, the teaching and learning support is a critical pillar" (2.4: 2.4.4: 3: MV).

Another participant confirmed this and added that he would like to appoint more professional experts to improve the quality of teaching and learning (2.4: 2.4.4: 1: AL). The reality of a "double strategy" in teaching and learning was also mentioned. Most PHEIs are moving towards a dual system where both face-to-face and online teaching and learning will be provided. This "double strategy" will have to be implemented to cater for the needs of students of both streams. This strategy will also have to be adapted for the needs of the distance or online student who requests regular face-to-face contact with lecturers (2.4: 2.4.4: 4,5: CV).

5.3.2.4.5 Student support

This section reports on all student support initiatives instigated by PHEIs and the importance thereof for quality service delivery.

Reference again was made to fact that the word 'private' is accompanied by the expectation of better services and more student support than in a public institution of

HE (2.4: 2.4.5: 1: JH). The findings suggested that several academic support services were offered to students at PHEIs. These included services such as contact and call centres, on-campus and online tutor services as well as professional writing skills courses for students not proficient in the English language (2.4: 2.4.5: 2: AH; 2.4: 2.4.5: 3: AH; 2.4: 2.4.5: 30: CS). One participant emphasised the importance of student support services as an indicator or predecessor for establishing customer perceptions:

> [Y]our back-office type service that you give to the students in terms if they phone in for a deferral of the exam, those type of things … although we do think about as sort of secondary, or support services, do play an immense role in terms of the student's perspective or perception, then, of the training that they receive. (2.4: 2.4.5: 4: MP)

Another participant was of the opinion that lecturers should also be involved with students on emotional levels. He explained:

> [J]a, building a team mentality when it comes to being involved in a student's careers that it's not just about one lecturer being involved, that they are available to them from an emotional aspect as well. So, helping them from that standpoint and collaborative decision-making in terms of the student's academic careers. (2.4: 2.4.5: 20: GK)

An overwhelming observation was the time, effort and cost allocated to student support. Apart from additional academic support, several examples were provided of the services to support the emotional wellbeing of students. These included the services of specialist counsellors such as drug counsellors, relationship navigators, relationship coordinators, key account managers, student support specialists and wellness psychologists. All these services were offered in pursuit of outstanding customer support (for both the internal and external customer) (2.4: 2.4.5: 14: MV; 2.4: 2.4.5: 15: MV; 2.4: 2.4.5: 18: LZ; 2.4: 2.4.5: 27: CS; 2.4: 2.4.5: 36: CS2).

One participant provided a detailed description of how she perceived student support:

> [A]nything that I do to support a student to me is student support … So, this … the key account managers, the administration, whatever we do to make sure that you get your marks on time, that we know what's going on in your classroom, that we give you extension on an assignment or whatever, I see as student support because we're holding your hand … psychologists, who's available and we started with the BCom programmes and they see each BCom student as compulsory, you don't have a choice, four time a year and if you have nothing to say you can come and sit there and say I have nothing to say but you have to attend those sessions. (2.4: 2.4.5: 28: CS)

Additional support services stated by this participant were flexibility in processes to support single moms as well as working students (2.4: 2.4.5: 5: MP). Another focal point identified seemed to be the proactive approach towards student support. One participant explained, “proactive engagement … but proactive engagement we don’t wait until the student calls us to say I’m in trouble; we call them” (2.4: 2.4.5: 31: CS).

This was confirmed by another participant who described a situation where the student was not meeting deadlines. The student was ‘red flagged’ and an appointment was set up between the student and the relationship navigator to work towards a solution (2.4: 2.4.5: 34: GT).

One participant provided a bold account of the importance of student support in a PHEI, “Curriculum is important for learners but it’s not as important as the student support mechanisms that you put in place” (2.4: 2.4.5: 22: CV).

5.3.2.4.6 Policies

This dimension incorporated all descriptions related to policies and procedures of PHEIs and how these affect service delivery. Policies were defined as the standard operating procedures that guided decision-making, action and the day-to-day operations of a PHEI.

Findings from the current research indicated that, at the time of this research, all participating PHEIs were policy-driven, which basically set the parameters within which they could operate as a business. Some participants referred to policies not as documents in a file, but rather as working documents navigating the day-to-day activities of these institutions (2.4: 2.4.6: 1: CO; 2.4: 2.4.6: 9: CS2). This policy-driven paradigm links back to the problem statement with regard to PHEIs operating in a highly regulated environment.

Different views on policies emerged. One participant referred to institutional policies and procedures as a “pillar” of service quality (2.4: 2.4.6: 2: CO). Another participant indicated that they did not have a specific service quality system, but rather that it was embedded within their policies and procedures:

> I don’t think we have a specific service quality system, but we have a policy to look at that and we have very regular discussion around the issue of service … the quality of the service that we provide to the students and how we relate that to our own teaching and learning strategies and other related strategies and policies. (2.4: 2.4.6: 3: AJ)

Not all sentiments about policies were positive. One participant stated in a negative tone of voice that they had to adhere to 23 policies and that there were "policies for everything" (2.4: 2.4.6: 7: LZ). This participant added that policies cannot inspire passion and enthusiasm for value-added service. She explained:

> Standard operating procedures does not bring passion, it doesn't bring that care and attention that you want. If it says you have to call the student once in two weeks they may make the call but it may not add any value. (2.4: 2.4.6: 8: CS)

5.3.2.4.7 Communication

Goetsch and Davis (2012:119) define communication as "the transfer of a message (information, idea, emotion, intent, feeling, or something else) that is both received and understood". Furthermore, Oakland (2014) argues that communication is possibly the most neglected part of the operations of many organisations. Failure to communicate effectively creates unnecessary problems resulting in declining quality. Effective communication is essential for quality improvement and competitiveness. Without it, the total quality process will collapse (Goetsch & Davis, 2012; Oakland, 2014; Evans, 2017).

All descriptions and references made by participants dealing with communication issues were grouped together in this dimension. In line with the arguments of Goetsch and Davis (2012), Oakland (2014) and Evans (2017), it was interesting to observe from the findings that poor communication was still one of the main contributors to a breakdown in service delivery. This participant commenced the qualitative interview by stating:

> Well, I think the biggest thing that sometimes becomes the reason for perceived breakdown in service delivery is communication. So, I think that, if you have a robust communication system in place that can keep people informed about what is happening and how it is happening and what they should expect with regards to how things are going to happen, then that's the one thing that I think we … whether it is private or public, I think that's the one place where we sometimes fall flat. So, I would think, ja, I would want to come up with really good transparent communication systems. (2.4: 2.4.7: 1: JH)

Several other participants testified to the notion that poor communication leads to the erosion of service quality. Descriptions provided made reference to aspects such as the breakdown in service quality, chaos without effective internal communication, and the internal operations of a PHEI falling apart without communication. It was also mentioned that poor communication was still the number one complaint from lecturers (2.4: 2.4.7: 2: JH; 2.4: 2.4.7: 26: GT; 2.4: 2.4.7: 28/28: CS2). When asked what could be done to improve service quality on campus, this participant responded without hesitation and explained,

> I would say communication, first of all, because I've seen, from ourselves as well, every once in a while there's a change that happens and so on and we email it out to the students but they don't necessarily understand why the change is made or the context within it. So, first of all, definitely good communication, whether it is via email and so on. (2.4: 2.4.7: 3: AS)

Another participant voiced his opinion in this regard by sharing the following:

> Communication … effective communication in terms of consistent meetings, engaging with staff on relevant issues, following up debriefing on issues that have been raised or points on the agenda that have been raised at a previous staff meeting and then painting a picture of unity. (2.4: 2.4.7: 20: GK)

This sentiment was supported by several participants who commented on the importance of communication for effective service delivery. Communication as a 'pillar' of service quality has to be transparent, continuous and effective and should include all stakeholders, including the parents and sponsors of students (2.4: 2.4.7: 15: MV; 2.4: 2.4.7: 8: AJ; 2.4: 2.4.7: 22: JG; 2.4: 2.4.7: 30: CS2).

Key insights on process

My observations about the process category involved various input dimensions that linked together as part of a cohesive process for TQS delivery. Findings indicated that, without accreditation, no PHEI could legally offer HE qualifications. The application and registration processes were identified as the first point of contact between the customer and the service provider while technology assisted with improving the teaching and learning strategies employed. The focus in terms of student support was not just on academic support but also on the emotional wellbeing of students. Policies guided the day-to-day decision-making processes of PHEIs. Effective and transparent communication was identified as a crucial pillar of effective service delivery.

5.3.2.5 Product/outcome: learners/contributions

This category encompasses the output dimensions of TQS. Table 5.14 summarises the dimensions used in analysing this category.

Table 5.14: Summary of the dimensions used in analysing 'product/outcome: learners/contributions'

Dimension	Description
Contribution to society	The student as an output to contribute to society and the corporate social responsibility of a PHEI
Employability	The ability of students to be employed in industry through different strategies by PHEIs to improve the value of the qualification
Practical application	Mastering both the theory and practical application of knowledge
Operations management	Managing resources from a systems view approach to create and deliver quality products and services
Ethical practice	Doing the right thing – the application of morality in delivering TQS
Reputation	The perceived status of a PHEI based on factors such as quality teaching, research output and service quality systems
Repeat business	Continuous student enrolments based on a good reputation and positive word-of-mouth recommendation for growth and sustainability

5.3.2.5.1 Contribution to society

This dimension incorporated all descriptions with relation to PHEIs contributions to society. These contributions were described as twofold.

- a contribution of PHEIs in terms of delivering an output – in the form of a graduate student who will enter the marketplace and invest in the economy; and
- a contribution by PHEIs to social transformation and other social issues as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR).

One participant described the output of a PHEI as a successful graduate who is prepared to contribute to society, as follows:

> From a student's perspective, it's an opportunity to engage in learning effectively, to be successful in terms of meeting the outcomes of the programme and to be effectively prepared for the world of work and society. (2.5: 2.5.1: 1: AL)

This was supported by another participant who stated that the ultimate goal or outcome was to produce a graduate where –

> [T]here has been fundamental shifts in the way that that person thinks and acts and reasons and ultimately the marketplace is the judge if you were successful in that. (2.5: 2.5.1: 2: CO)

One participant confirmed a valuable contribution to society as a graduate who demonstrates "competence in the workplace" and who is able to "apply the relevant industry-related knowledge" (2.5: 2.5.1: 4). Ultimately, if a PHEI does not offer TQS to the external customer, the person will not be able to function in the workplace resulting in a poor contribution to society (2.5: 2.5.1: 3: AH). This participant took exception to the fact that some people are of the opinion that PHEIs are just there for the money. She defended her particular institution by relating producing quality graduates to a positive and valuable contribution to business and society:

> [I]s a private business but the amount of money that they [graduate students] actually plough back into the business and into the community and that sort of a thing, I must say, I take exception to people that says we're just in there for the money. (2.5: 2.5.1: 7: CS)

Several other examples of contributions to society were stated, such as enrolling promising previously disadvantaged students free of charge, contributions to various campaigns and social causes, and making social transformation a top strategic priority (2.5: 2.5.1: 10: GT; 2.5: 2.5.1: 6: JG).

5.3.2.5.2 Employability

In the context of this study, employability was regarded as an output dimension of TQS (see Figure 5.2). This is an important measurable metric used by many institutions for marketing. This dimension was identified from descriptions by participants on the importance of employability of students, and how this is achieved as part of the TQS offered by a PHEI. One participant declared:

> So, our students need to be employable when they walk out of here; that's very important. (2.5: 2.5.2: 9: LZ).

Findings also indicated how PHEIs pursued different strategies to prepare their graduate students for successful careers in the marketplace. These strategies are verified by the following quotations:

- The way in which this content is applied in shaping and shifting the views of … or the knowledge of the students. (2.5: 2.5.2: 2: CO)
- Ja, and we do specialise and that is part of the service as well … So, it will give you the edge, it's not just another BCom. (2.5: 2.5.2: 7: MV)
- For us it's a prerequisite [employability]. Very important because, in all our programmes, the students need to identify a work-based challenge and, through the learning process, find a possible solution for that work-based challenge. So, that's an important one. (2.5: 2.5.2: 12: JG)
- [W]hen you can come up with ideas and therefore your longevity of creativity with strategic intent is higher. So, that I think is … if we can give that to the students … when the student leaves here and he [or she] goes into the industry he [or she] can solve problems by himself [herself]. (2.5: 2.5.5: 15/16: GT)

One participant shared that studying for employability does not only refer to graduate students entering the job market for the first time. There are also mature and adult students already employed who want to improve their career paths with industry-aligned and practical qualifications (2.5: 2.5.2: 3: AH).

Another participant provided an interesting perspective on the challenges faced by PHEIs in their product and service delivery efforts for graduate employability. Today, the knowledge society demands creative problem solvers and not just 'graduates'. Every level in an organisation requires creative problem solvers to generate knowledge and provide feasible solutions (2.5: 2.5.2: 1: AL).

5.3.2.5.3 Practical application

The interrelatedness of all the TQS dimensions is illustrated in Figure 5.2. This dimension interacts with the previously described dimensions of employability, contribution to society and quality teaching. Although these were identified as individual dimensions, they co-exist and interact as part of an interconnected process for eventually delivering a TQS experience to the internal and external customer.

During the interviews and the coding of the transcripts, the importance of the application of theoretical knowledge for TQS was clear. All participants wholeheartedly supported this notion as emphasised by this participant:

> The new generation university and talking about the entrepreneurial university, these two concepts come together but firstly in the new generation university our view is that industry say we don't want graduates anymore that they're either strong in theory or in application. We are looking for people that mastered both parts of the world. (2.5: 2.5.3: 1: AL)

The belief of practical application was also described by one participant as imperative that "theories link to the practice" (2.5: 2.5.3: 4: AH). Another example was provided:

> [W]e do make sure that our assessment processes are very stringent and that our assessments are practical. So, that is very important because ninety-five per cent of our students are employed and it's very important … it's a very important differentiator for us that we're not just giving the theory. (2.5: 2.5.3: 3: AH)

In many other instances, the importance of industry-focussed qualifications was echoed along with explanations on how it was practically executed on PHEI campuses (2.5: 2.5.3: 10: MV; 2.5: 2.5.3: 12: GK; 2.5: 2.5.3: 14: JG; 2.5: 2.5.3: 15: GT; 2.5: 2.5.3: 8: AJ). One participant indicated that they had "agency days" on campus where students “have a lot of lectures from industry people, brand managers from big companies” so that they can relate their theoretical knowledge to practice (2.5: 2.5.3: 9: MV). Another participant described how their courses are “industry focussed” with “good balance between theory and practical” (2.5: 2.5.3: 11: LZ). This participant provided a different perspective on how they assessed students on the practical application of knowledge:

> We do not write exams but our assessment process, our assignments, is as important as an exam because in that the student needs to demonstrate to us I can apply the theoretical aspects that I’ve learnt, the new knowledge, and if they can’t they have to redo and redo until they get it right. (2.5: 2.5.3: 13: JG)

This school of thought was supported by another participant who emphasised that “writing a three-hour proctor examination, in my humble submission is it means nothing” and added that he would rather have students ‘pitching’ their entrepreneurial projects to venture capitalists to close the gap between theory and practice (2.5: 2.5.3: 2: CO).

5.3.2.5.4 Operations management

Operations management focusses on process management and the continuous improvement of processes. Slack *et al*. (2017:5) define operations management as “the activity of managing the resources that create and deliver services and products”. All organisations have an operations function because all organisations produce some type of product or service. As indicated in Figure 5.2, operations management is at the centre of the TQS process approach. According to Foster (2015), operations management follows the systems view that inspires modern quality thinking. The systems view implies that quality (including service quality) is the result of interactions between various components, such as policies, procedures, processes and people. The systems view also focusses on the *system* as the cause of quality problems.

There were several positive descriptions from participants on the importance of the operations management system (the systems view approach). One participant felt that operations management is one place where there were high expectations from customers and explained:

> However, the one place where I find where the biggest expectation, with regards to service, comes is on operational management, academical operational management, and that's where people have a high level of expectation. (2.5: 2.5.4: 1: JH)

The same participant added, "an internal system can make a big difference" where one can deliver on touches of service quality that the customer does not expect (2.5: 2.5.4: 3: JH). One participant commented on the positive effect of a standardised operations procedure that drives a standardised service culture in the institution (2.5: 2.5.4: 15: AJ). Another participant referred to their operations management system as a "living, human system". All the procedures and systems in place are driven and managed by human beings to achieve the desired service quality level output (2.5: 2.5.4: 20: GK). Following procedures and processes could contribute to service quality as confirmed by this participant:

> [W]e have to follow these processes, we don't have a choice. So, it becomes human nature. You do these things and following all of these processes leads to a situation where you do have a good service quality, automatically. (2.5: 2.5.4: 12: AH)

Conversely, the same respondent indicated that these processes could be negatively perceived due to the administrative burden that it places on the workload of academic personnel.

Reported negative encounters usually outweighed positive comments in terms of the effectiveness of operations management systems in PHEIs. One participant specified that 90% of all complaints on his campus can be ascribed to ineffective "operational processes, systems" (2.5: 2.5.4: 2: JH). Several responses from participants suggested that the operations management systems on their campuses were ineffective, too standardised, not flexible enough and too complex, which resulted in poor service delivery (2.5: 2.5.4: 5: CO; 2.5: 2.5.4: 9: AS; 2.5: 2.5.4: 17: MV; 2.5: 2.5.4: 21: GK).

5.3.2.5.5 Ethical practise

Goetsch and Davis (2012:43) refer to ethics as "doing the right thing within a moral framework"; ethics is therefore the application of morality. Foster (2015) links quality to ethics and argues that quality is good business and also good ethics. Organisations focussing on their internal and external customers often develop ethical guidelines reflected in their education and training, wellness, health, compensation and empathy towards employees.

All descriptions provided by participants referring to ethical issues and ethical behaviour were grouped in this dimension. One participant specifically referred to ethics as a pillar of service quality. He testified that his graduates represent the ethical values of the institution, which in turn builds their reputation as an ethical PHE provider (2.5: 2.5.5: 1: GT). The same participant also referred to the prevention of plagiarism as a cornerstone of academic ethical behaviour (2.5: 2.5.5: 2: GT). This participant also associated ethics and ethical behaviour to quality teaching (2.5: 2.5.5: 3: MP). Another participant gave a detailed account of how a PHEI is ethically bound to offer service quality and create a service environment conducive to learning. He further proposed that ethics, apart from being morally correct, also build credibility and strengthen the brand of the institution (2.5: 2.5.5: 4: AL).

During the analysis and coding of the interview transcripts, I realised that references to the ethical behaviour of PHEIs, such as trust, values, integrity, responsibility and beliefs, were embedded in all preceding discussions of the TQS dimensions; hence, the identification of 'ethical practice' as a separate and unique dimension of TQS.

5.3.2.5.6 Reputation

There are several aspects of reputation, which are important for any organisation:

- Reputation is built on the competitive elements of quality and timely delivery at the right cost.
- Once an organisation has acquired a poor reputation, it takes a very long time to change it.
- Reputations (good or bad), quickly becomes national or even international reputations.
- Competitive weapons, such as quality, can be used to turn around a poor reputation (Oakland, 2014).

Several suggestions were offered by participants on how to build a good reputation. These included, amongst others, the quality of education, research status and a good service quality system (2.5: 2.5.6: 1: JH; 2.5: 2.5.6: 3: JH; 2.5: 2.5.6: 22: CS2). The importance of a good reputation for sustainability and growth was also mentioned by all participants. One participant asserted that a good reputation of a PHEI can lead to students transferring from a public HEI to a private institution and he explained:

> [P]eople perceive us as providing a certain level of quality in terms of service that drives part of our growth because we have students from other institutions coming to us because of that issue that they don't like the experience they've had with other institutions so they coming to us. (2.5: 2.5.6: 10: AJ)

Other advantages of a good reputation included qualification recognition by industry coupled with repeat business (2.5: 2.5.6: 5: CO; 2.5: 2.5.6: 8: MP). This participant acknowledged that service quality builds a good reputation and is perceived as "the roots of our success" (2.5: 2.5.6: 23: CS2). In contrast, poor service delivery and disappointing student experiences lead to reputational harm that negatively affects repeat business and industry relations. Another participant claimed that in a certain sense, PHEIs in South Africa are still in the embryo or start-up phase in terms of building reputations as world-class HE service providers. She further explained:

> We have to sort of make name for ourselves still and then … and where we have to please clients where, actually, they'll accept a whole lot of nonsense from a public, we don't have that luxury because we're still making name for ourselves. It's about our good name because you don't build a university in ten years. You don't build a reputation in ten years. So, we constantly working on our reputation. We're building … and I want to feel proud. (2.5: 2.5.6: 20/21: CS)

5.3.2.5.7 Repeat business

For the purpose of this study, repeat business was defined as not only current students who continued their further studies with the same institution, but also graduate students who marketed the institution through positive word of mouth. This dimension was identified from descriptions by participants related to business growth and represented the culmination of all service quality efforts to keep the business sustainable and growing in a highly competitive market. A few participants indicated that, amongst others, delivering on your promises coupled with a good reputation comprised the ingredients for sustainable growth and repeat business (2.5: 2.5.7: 1: JH; 2.5: 2.5.7: 2: CO). Moreover, it seemed that positive word of mouth was the main catalyst for repeat business in PHEIs in South Africa. All participants agreed that only by offering a TQS experience to customers, could positive word of mouth be realised. Students were referred to as "ambassadors" (2.5: 2.5.7: 12: JH) and "evangelists" (2.5: 2.5.7: 14: CO) who carried the good name of the institution to the industry and other HE providers in an attempt to stimulate repeat business.

One participant gave his account on the importance of word-of-mouth marketing for repeat business:

> Repeat business and, if I now talk from a commercial perspective…every MBA alumnus works somewhere. It's a potential entry to a company. So, if he or she had a wonderful experience here that could also serve as a warm introduction to the company. (2.5: 2.5.7: 16: CO)

Similarly, this participant indicated that positive word of mouth also attracts students from public universities. The reason for this was usually the "turnaround times" and "response times" that were perceived as so much better in this PHEI (2.5: 2.5.7: 17: MP). Another participant confirmed the importance of a TQS offering also to industry clients. She explained:

> [F]or instance, a client like FNB. They just keep sending us BComs. They have over two hundred students just from FNB because if they're happy they send more and they're happy and now we adding other banks because our banking … we have a BCom specialisation in banking that is fantastic, people love it. So, they keep sending us students. (2.5: 2.5.7: 22: CS)

Key insights on the product/outcome of PHEIs

The findings suggested several TQS outcome dimensions for PHEIs in South Africa. The graduate student was perceived as an outcome contributing to the economy and society as a whole. Linked to the student as an outcome and contribution, was employability. Industry requires active problem solvers for the economic and social challenges of South Africa. In support of literature, I observed that participants identified operations management and the systems approach as central to all TQS attempts. Operations management was also acknowledged as the one place where a PHEI could deliver unexpected and innovative pockets of excellence. Ethics and reputation were identified individually but complemented each other as catalysts for repeat business – one of the main reasons for the existence of PHEIs in South Africa.

5.4 FINALISATION OF INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

The instrument development process was explained in Chapter 4 (section 4.8) and consisted of a seven-step process as proposed by Barry *et al*. (2011) and DeVellis (2003). Step 2 of this process focussed on the development of a pool of items or dimensions. The service quality literature study investigated service quality frameworks and models in the period 1988–2015 incorporating 29 different service industries in 26 countries. This culminated in 34 identified service quality dimensions. Similarly, the literature study on TQS spanned 24 years, incorporating 27 identified TQS dimensions. The instrument development process encompassed combining both TQS and service quality dimensions identified in literature with the identified 30 dimensions from the 15 qualitative interviews.

Table 5.15 represents a joint display of data incorporating the identified service quality and TQS dimensions from literature (see Tables 3.5 and 3.6) as well as the dimensions identified from the qualitative interviews (see Table 5.3) respectively.

Table 5.15: Identified dimensions

Dimensions: TQS literature 1991–2015	Dimensions: SQ literature 1988–2015	Dimensions: Qualitative interviews
1. Leadership and top management commitment	1. Campus facilities	1. Cost and profit
2. Service quality culture	2. Trust	2. Quality teaching
3. Service quality standards	3. Responsiveness	3. Managing expectations
4. Employee commitment and satisfaction / Total employee involvement	4. Assurance	4. Technology
5. Customer focus and satisfaction (including customer needs and expectations) / Customer involvement	5. Empathy from campus staff	5. Student support
6. Social responsibility	6. Reputation	6. Customer-centred approach
7. Human resource management (employee selection, training, empowerment, involvement) OR Training and education OR Continuous training	7. Information management	7. Subsidies
8. Technical system	8. Leadership	8. Lack of experts and senior academics
9. Information analysis system OR Information system quality	9. Communication	9. Communication
10. Servicescape	10. Library quality	10. Servicescape
11. Benchmarking	11. Faculty expertise	11. Personal attention
12. Continuous improvement / Continuous improvement culture	12. Contribution to society	12. Quality learning experience
13. Systems approach (people tools and statistical tools) / Process management / Process improvement	13. Continuous improvement	13. Internal customer
14. Teamwork / Coordination and teamwork	14. Quality teaching	14. Repeat business
15. Infrastructure	15. Stakeholder focus	15. Culture
16. Administrative procedures	16. Students in scientific work	16. Reputation

Dimensions: TQS literature 1991–2015	Dimensions: SQ literature 1988–2015	Dimensions: Qualitative interviews
17. Service marketing	17. Technology	17. Leadership
18. Union intervention	18. Operations management	18. Operations management
19. Rewards for quality and productivity achievement	19. Recreational activities	19. Employability
20. Reducing barriers to productivity and quality improvement	20. Employability	20. Partnerships
21. Assessment, measurement and feedback	21. Feeder–institution partnership	21. Practical application
22. Strategic planning	22. Benchmarking	22. Application and registration
23. Communication	23. Research	23. Unique product offering
24. On-time performance	24. Tutoring	24. Accreditation
25. Democratic management style	25. Functional quality	25. Contribution to society
26. Knowledge sharing	26. Student support	26. Influence of holding company
27. ICT usage	27. Loyalty	27. Lack of administrative staff
	28. Non-academic processes	28. Policies
	29. Administrative quality	29. Teaching and learning
	30. Accommodation	30. Ethical practice
	31. Personal development	
	32. Academic development	
	33. Textbooks and tuition fees	
	34. Class sizes	

Source: Author's own compilation

The dimensions in Table 5.15 were then combined and integrated following a systematic approach (the process of combination and elimination) to compile the measuring instrument for Stage 2 of the research project (Appendix F). Table 5.16 below contains the results of the above mentioned integration process and represents the final TQS dimensions (items/constructs) that were utilised in the questionnaire.

Table 5.16: The final TQS dimensions represented in the questionnaire

TQS dimensions	
1.	Cost
2.	Quality teaching
3.	Technology
4.	Student support
5.	Customer-centred approach
6.	Faculty expertise and senior academics
7.	Servicescape
8.	Communication
9.	Personal attention
10.	Internal customer focus

TQS dimensions	
11.	Reputation
12.	Leadership and top management commitment
13.	Operations management
14.	Employability
15.	Institutional partnerships
16.	Student partnerships
17.	Practical application
18.	Culture
19.	Application and registration
20.	Unique product offering
21.	Accreditation
22.	Contribution to society
23.	Information management
24.	Continuous improvement
25.	Benchmarking
26.	Service quality standards
27.	On-time performance
28.	Assessment, measurement and feedback
29.	Trust
30.	Library quality
31.	Recreational activities
32.	Research
33.	Loyalty
34.	Accommodation
35.	Managing expectations
36.	Administrative capacity
37.	Ethical practice

Source: Author's own compilation

The final 37 TQS dimensions are also displayed as a conceptual framework below (Figure 5.3). The dimensions are grouped in logical clusters representing an operations management approach to a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa. The TQS framework then also exhibits the third version in its development process (see Figure 1.3: Project plan and process).

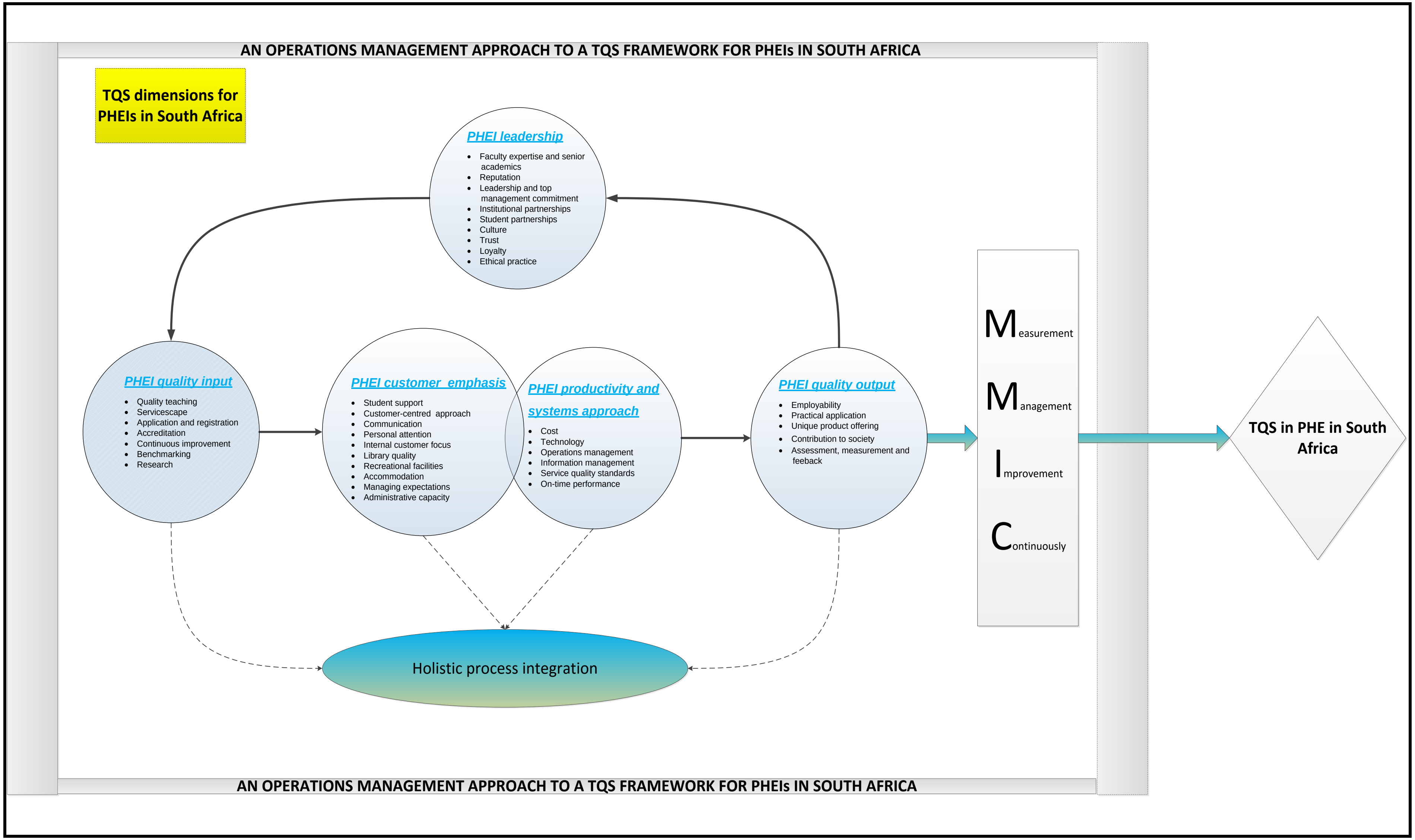

Figure 5.3: An operations management approach to the TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa

Source: Author's own compilation

5.5 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter reported on the qualitative research findings and used verbatim quotes to support the findings. A qualitative research approach was adopted to investigate the perspectives of 15 top managers (CEOs and principals) of PHEIs on the core service quality dimensions for PHEIs. The qualitative phase (Stage 1) of this research project makes four contributions to the existing body of knowledge on service quality in PHE in South Africa:

- While previous studies on service quality mainly focussed on the perception of the customer, this phase of the research provides a description of service quality from a top management perspective.
- This research identified unique dimensions of service quality in the organisational context of PHE in South Africa.
- The findings of this phase (coupled with an extensive literature review as described in Chapter 3) contribute to the development of a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.
- This phase contributes to the paucity of literature on PHE in South Africa.

The perspectives of top management were a crucial point of departure for identifying the core service quality dimensions in order to develop a TQS framework. The insights were based on selected, leading institutions with business-oriented cultures as entrepreneurial universities. The selected institutions, like all PHEIs in South Africa, face challenges, such as an increased competitive and highly regulated environment, a lack of government support and the #FeesMustFall campaign despite the fact that these institutions are purely profit-driven where students (customers) are their main source of income.

The sentiments observed during the interviews were confirmed during the analysis and interpretation of the data. Enthusiasm to improve the overall strategic service quality of the institutions became evident and the participants' responses portrayed determination to become the drivers of a unique TQS framework initiative for higher education and specifically PHEIs. The empirical investigation, transcription of the interviews, open coding and thematic analysis produced a comprehensive list of service quality dimensions for PHEIs as listed and illustrated in Table 5.2 and Figure 5.2.

When analysing and interpreting the data, feelings of great enthusiasm to improve the overall service offering emerged. The CEOs and principals expressed ambition and confidence to become the drivers of a TQS improvement initiative. It seems that a TQS framework could provide a benchmark for PHEIs to measure, manage and improve service quality on a continuous basis for enhanced profitability and long-term sustainability as reflected by the following quotations:

> Yes, yes, I think it would add hugely because it gives us a benchmark.
>
> [I]t would add most value if it was something that was … where there was a comparative.
>
> Absolutely, absolutely … a benchmark and also a good practice type of thing where the other privates can go and link in and say, okay, is this what is happening out there?
>
> So, a whole framework in which to work from will be absolutely awesome. Brilliant, brilliant.

It was therefore concluded that the qualitative identification of the 30 service quality dimensions for TQS was done on a scientific basis in the context of the purpose of Stage 1 of this study. The core overarching themes that were identified from the 30 dimensions are interlinked with the operations process approach (Figure 5.2) depicting the process approach to TQS. The process-driven environment of the main themes will eventually lead to a graduate (the output) who will have a positive influence on society as a whole.

The identified dimensions will form part of the comprehensive second phase of the research to obtain a solid TQS framework for PHEIs. The dimensions identified during the first phase (coupled with the dimensions identified in a comprehensive literature review in Chapter 3) will be tested among academia (lecturing staff) and the students of the selected PHEIs during the second phase of the empirical research (section 5.4 provided a summary of the final dimensions incorporated in the questionnaire). This will then form the foundation for the development of a holistic integrated TQS framework.

The results of the quantitative findings (Stage 2 – the survey among students and lecturers) will be the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

STAGE 2 – QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

“You can use all the quantitative data you can get, but you still have to distrust it and use your own intelligence and judgment” (Toffler, cited in Ginter, Duncan & Swayne, 2018:259).

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 indicated that the primary objective of this study was to develop a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa. Chapters 2 and 3 encompassed the literature review and included discussions on the PHE environment and quality (with emphasis on service quality dimensions) respectively. Chapter 4 deliberated on the research design and methodology that was followed to fulfil the objectives of the study. The rationale for the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design was provided and the data collection techniques and analyses were explained. Chapter 5 reported on the qualitative findings and provided an overview of the quantitative questionnaire compilation.

Chapter 6 represents the results of Stage 2 of the research study. The first part of this chapter reports on the biographic and demographic data of the respondents. The second part focusses on the analyses of the quantitative data through an EFA approach. This is followed by a CFA to assess and inform the underlying structure of the set of variables, as obtained from the EFA, as a first step towards establishing a TQS framework. The chapter concludes with the thematic analysis of the open-ended question in section C of the questionnaire.

(Please note that the terms ‘item/variable’ and ‘factor/construct’ will be used interchangeably throughout this chapter. This is done to adhere to the different linguistic approaches applied in EFA and CFA literature and research studies.)

Figure 6.1 offers a diagrammatical depiction of the structure of Chapter 6.

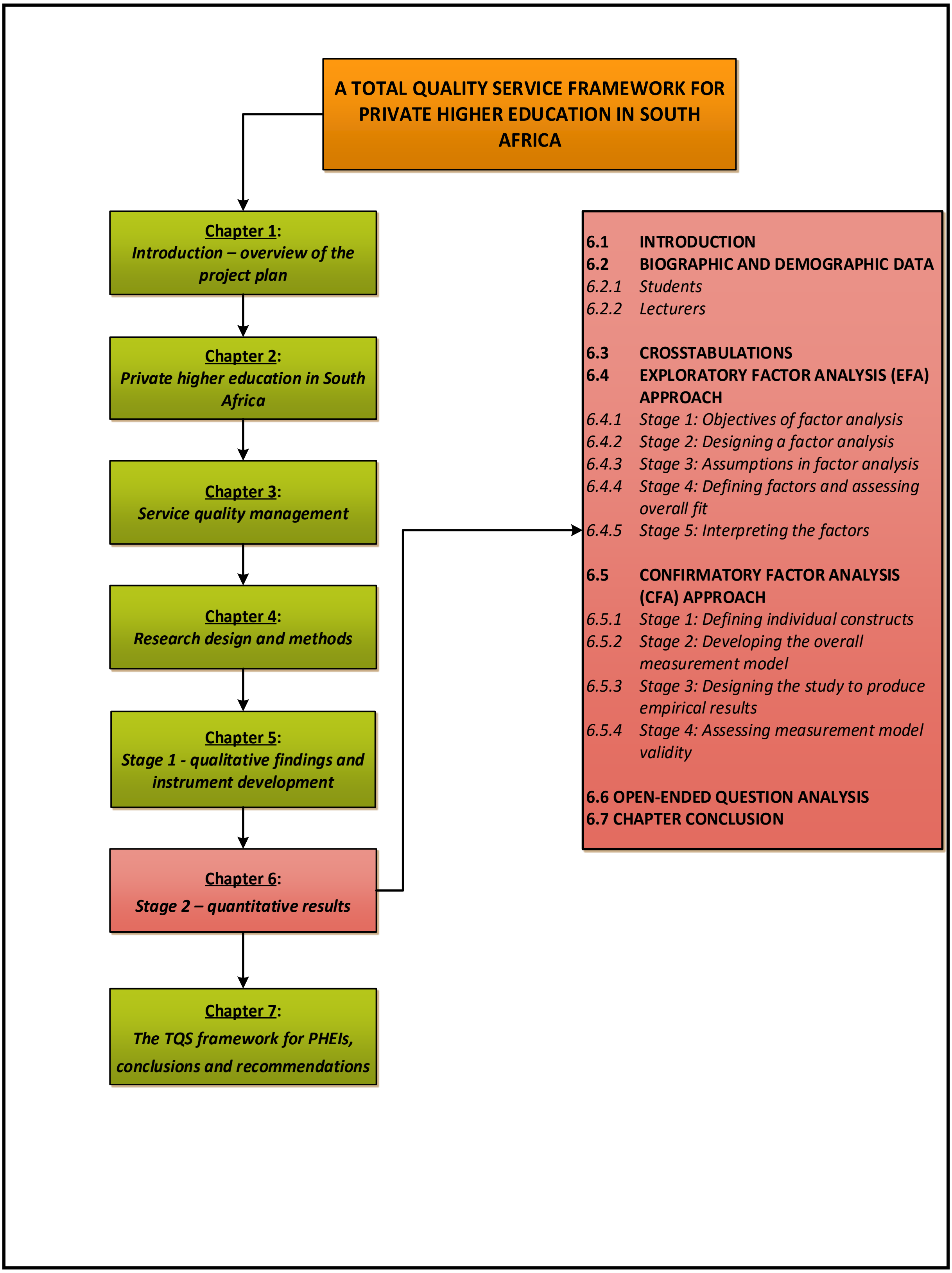

Figure 6.1: Layout of Chapter 6

Source: Author's own compilation

6.2 BIOGRAPHIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

This section provides a brief overview of the biographic and demographic characteristics of participating students and lecturers. The purpose of this section is to describe and confirm the nature and credibility of the population. For student respondents, a summary of gender, ethnic group, type of qualification for which enrolled, the year of study for which registered and the PHEI where registered, is provided. Similarly, the summary for lecturer respondents comprised gender, ethnic group, type of qualification taught, own highest qualification achieved and the PHEI associated with. This section concludes with cross-tabulations (per PHEI site) between the type of qualification enrolled for and type of qualification taught respectively.

6.2.1 Students

The total number of student respondents equated to 559. Table 6.1 below represents the biographic and demographic student data.

Table 6.1: Biographic and demographic student data

Biographic variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender (n = 559)	Female	319	57.1
	Male	240	42.9
Ethnic group (n = 559)	African	262	46.9
	Coloured	40	7.2
	Indian	44	7.9
	White	193	34.5
	Prefer not to indicate	20	3.6
Type of qualification (n = 559)	Undergraduate certificate	13	2.3
	Undergraduate diploma	15	2.7
	Undergraduate degree	390	69.8
	Hons/postgraduate qualification	76	13.6
	Master's	60	10.7
	Doctorate	5	0.9
Year of study (n = 559)	Second year	322	57.6
	Third year	171	30.6
	Fourth year	35	6.3
	More than four years	31	5.5

Biographic variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Private higher education institution (n = 559)	PHEI site 1	101	18.1
	PHEI site 2	16	2.9
	PHEI site 4	3	0.5
	PHEI site 5	11	2.0
	PHEI site 6	32	5.7
	PHEI site 7	63	11.3
	PHEI site 8	121	21.6
	PHEI site 9	60	10.7
	PHEI site 10	25	4.5
	PHEI site 11	56	10.0
	PHEI site 12	20	3.6
	PHEI site 13	51	9.1

6.2.1.1 Gender

Male and female students were both well represented. Of the respondents, 42.9% were male, while slightly more respondents (57.1%) were female.

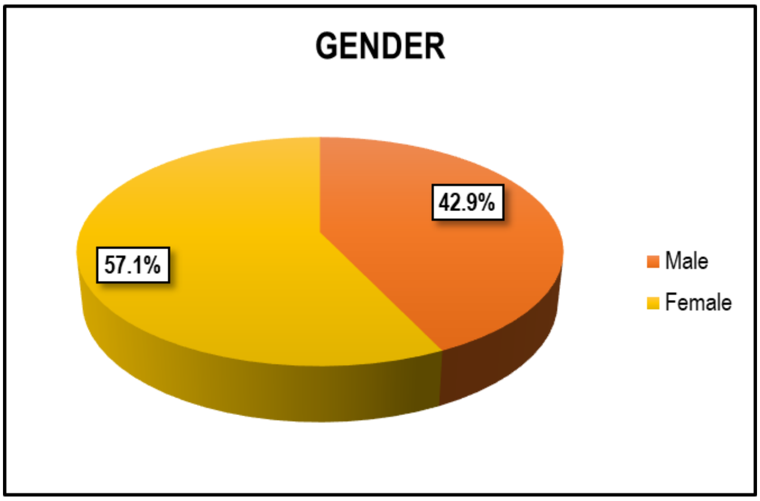

Figure 6.2: Gender of survey respondents (students)

6.2.1.2 Ethnic group

The largest proportion (46.9%) of students who participated in the survey was African. Of the sample, 34.5% were white students, while only 7.9% of the students were Indian and 7.2% coloured.

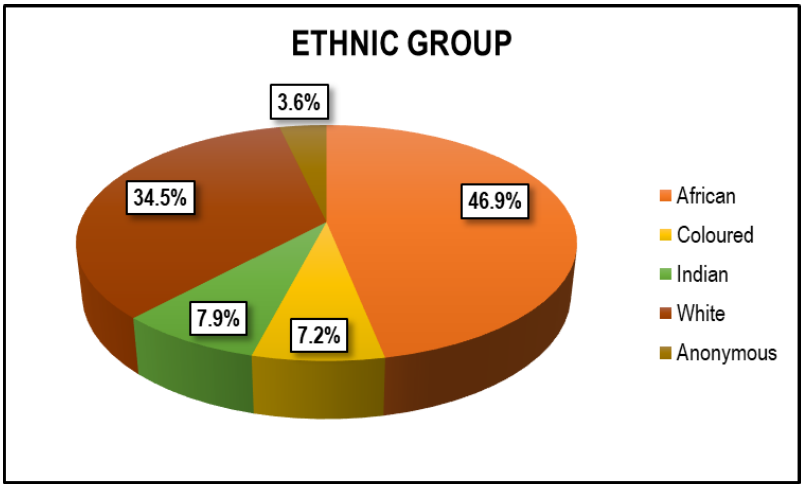

Figure 6.3: Ethnicity of students in the survey

6.2.1.3 Type of qualification for which currently enrolled

The overwhelming majority (69.8%) of the students in the survey were enrolled for an undergraduate degree. Another 13.6% of the student respondents were enrolled for an honours or postgraduate degree, while 10.7% were in the process of completing a master's degree. Very few students were enrolled for undergraduate diplomas (2.7%) and undergraduate certificates (2.3%). Only 0.9% of students in the sample were registered for doctoral degrees.

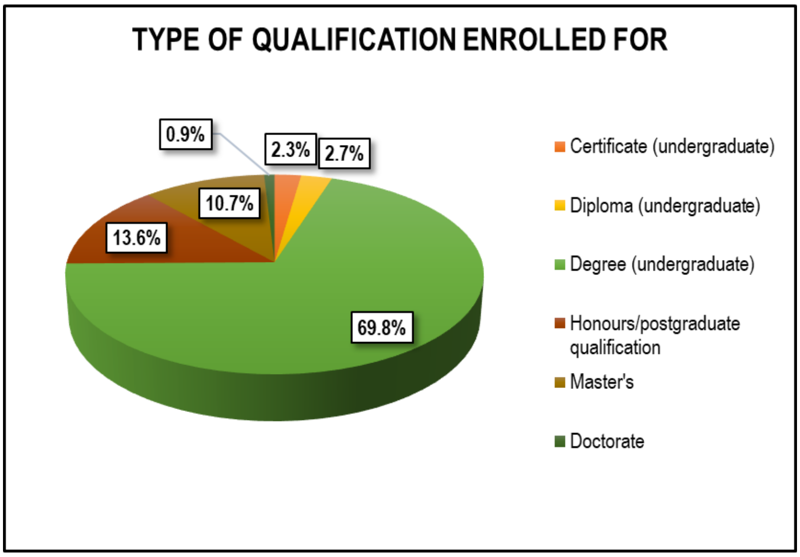

Figure 6.4: Type of qualification enrolled for by students in the survey

6.2.1.4 Year of study for which registered

More than half (57.6%) of the student respondents were in their second year of study, while 30.6% were busy completing their third year of study. The sample further consisted of only 6.3% students who were registered for a fourth year of study and only 5.5% were registered for a fifth or subsequent year of study.

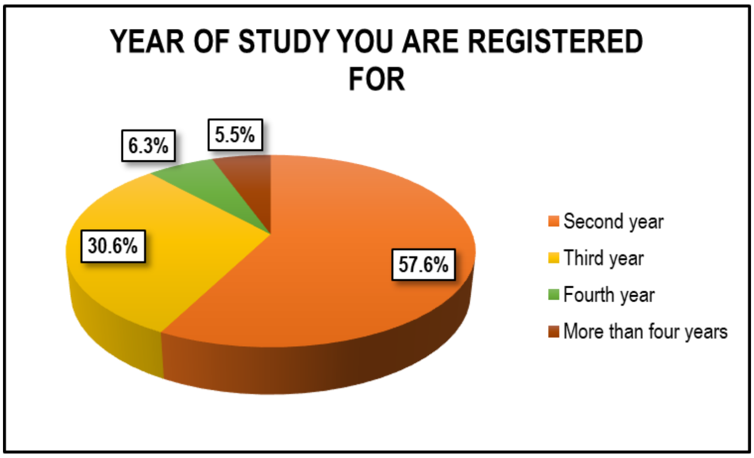

Figure 6.5: Year of study for students in the survey

6.2.1.5 Students from private higher education institutions

The students in the sample were mostly from PHEI site 8 (21.6%) and PHEI site 1 (18.1%). PHEI site 7 was represented by 11.3% of the student participants, while 10.7% of the students were registered at PHEI site 9, 10% at PHEI site 11 and 9.1% at site 13. The remainder of the students in the sample were registered at other PHEI sites.

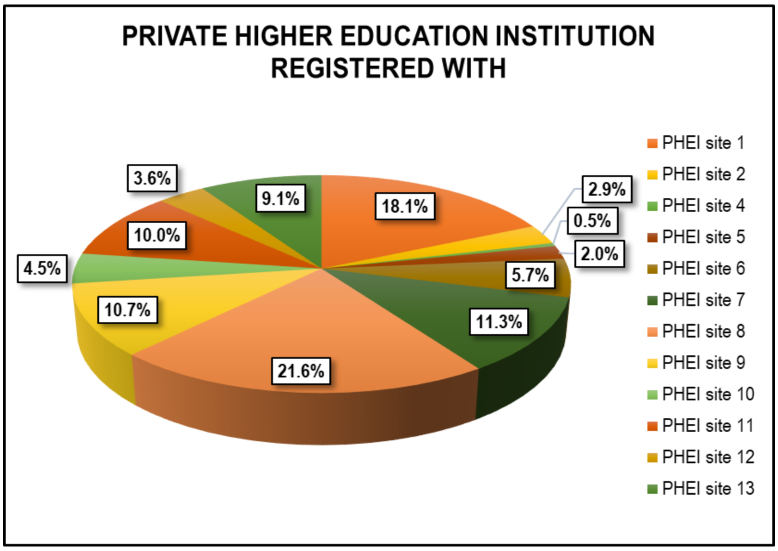

Figure 6.6: Students from private higher education institutions

6.2.2 Lecturers

A total of 88 lecturers participated in the survey. Table 6.2 indicates the biographic and demographic characteristics of lecturer respondents.

Table 6.2: Biographic and demographic lecturer data

Biographic variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender (n = 88)	Female	48	54.5
	Male	40	45.5
Ethnic group (n = 88)	African	15	17.0
	Coloured	3	3.4
	Indian	4	4.5
	White	62	70.5
	Prefer not to indicate	4	4.5
Type of qualification (n = 88)	Undergraduate certificate	16	18.2
	Undergraduate diploma	7	8.0
	Undergraduate degree	46	52.3
	Hons/postgraduate qualification	10	11.4
	Master’s	9	10.2
Highest qualification obtained (n = 88)	Undergraduate diploma	1	1.1
	Undergraduate degree	5	5.7
	Hons/postgraduate qualification	28	31.8
	Master’s	44	50.0
	Doctorate	10	11.4
Private higher education institution (n = 88)	PHEI site 1	15	17.0
	PHEI site 2	1	1.1
	PHEI site 3	4	4.5
	PHEI site 4	6	6.8
	PHEI site 6	5	5.7
	PHEI site 7	23	26.1
	PHEI site 8	5	5.7
	PHEI site 10	7	8.0
	PHEI site 11	4	4.5
	PHEI site 12	13	14.8
	PHEI site 13	5	5.7

6.2.2.1 Gender

From Figure 6.7, it is evident that, for lecturers, male and female participants were represented almost equally in the sample. Of the sample, 45.5% were male, while slightly more respondents (54.5%) were female.

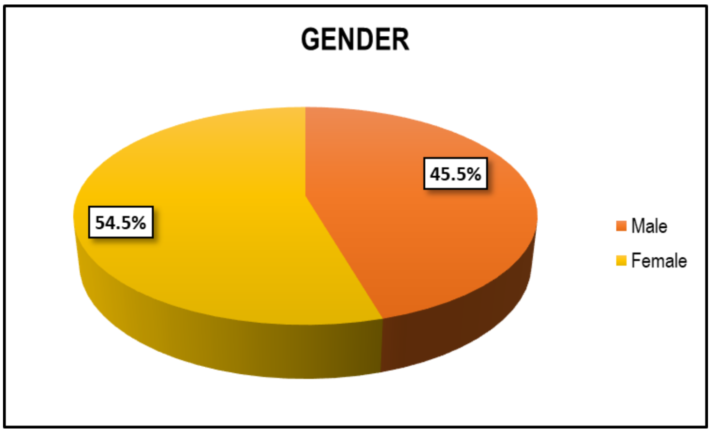

Figure 6.7: Gender of survey respondents (lecturers)

6.2.2.2 Ethnic group

Figure 6.8 indicates that the overwhelming majority of lecturers who participated in the survey were white (70.5%). The remainder consisted of 17% African lecturers, and very few (4.5%) Indian and coloured (3.4%) lecturers.

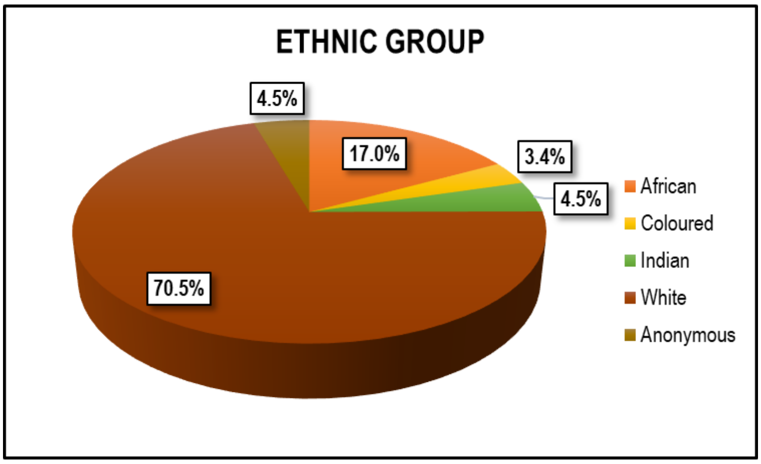

Figure 6.8: Ethnicity of sample participants (lecturers)

6.2.2.3 Type of qualification taught

Just more than half (52.3%) of the lecturer respondents taught undergraduate degrees, while 18.2% of the lecturers in the sample taught undergraduate certificates. The rest of the sample consisted of an even spread of portions of undergraduate diplomas (8%), master's degrees (10.2%) and honours degrees or postgraduate qualifications (11.4%). None of the lecturers in the sample survey was involved with supervising PhD students.

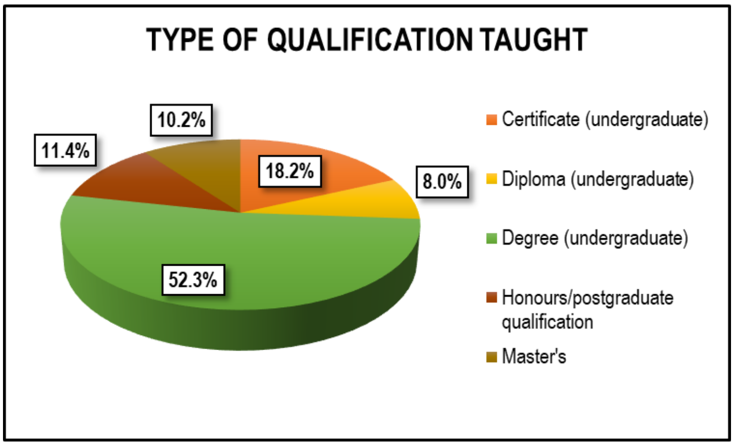

Figure 6.9: Type of qualification taught by lecturers

6.2.2.4 Own highest qualification achieved

The majority of respondents (50%) had a master's degree. A fairly large proportion (31.8%) of the sample had an honours or postgraduate qualification, while only 11.4% had doctorates, 5.7% an undergraduate degree and 1.1% an undergraduate diploma.

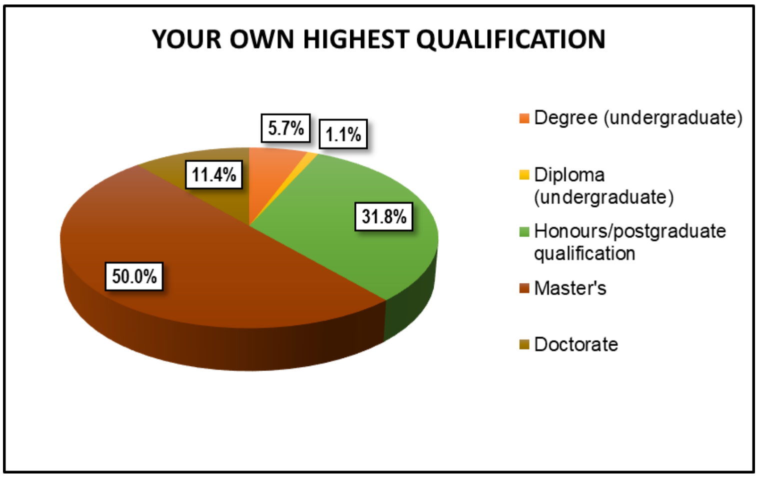

Figure 6.10: Highest qualification of lecturer respondents

6.2.2.5 Private higher education institution associated with

The lecturers in the sample were mostly from PHEI site 7 (26.1%), PHEI site 1 (17%) and PHEI site 12 (14.8%). There was an even spread of lecturers from the other PHEI sites, except PHEI site 2, with only 1.1% of the lecturer respondents.

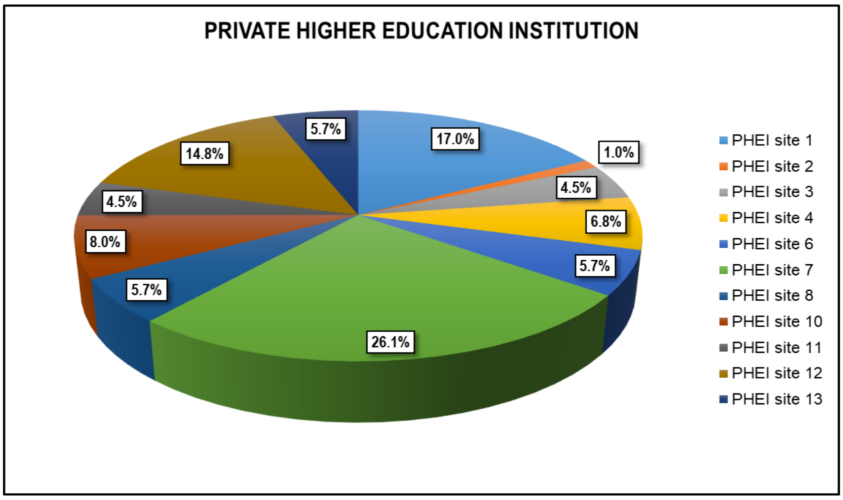

Figure 6.11: Private higher education institution of lecturers

6.3 CROSS-TABULATIONS

The cross-tabulations (per PHEI site) between the type of qualification enrolled for (students) and type of qualification taught (lecturers) are presented below.

6.3.1 Students

The PHEI was cross-tabulated with the type of qualification for which students were enrolled. Table 6.3 shows the percentage of students enrolled for the relevant types of qualifications for each PHEI. With the exception of PHEI sites 5 and 6, most students were enrolled for an undergraduate degree at each of the PHEIs considered for the study. Sites 8 and 9 had more than 20% of students who had registered for an honours or postgraduate degree.

Table 6.3: Cross tabulation – qualification for which enrolled

PHEI Site	Type of qualification for which currently enrolled						Total %
	Certificate (undergrad)	Diploma (undergrad)	Degree (undergrad)	Honours/ Postgraduate Qualification	Master's	Doctorate	
1	1.0	0.0	76.2	1.0	16.8	5.0	100
2	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100
4	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100
5	9.1	18.2	27.3	36.4	9.1	0.0	100
6	3.1	3.1	31.3	31.3	31.3	0.0	100
7	1.6	0.0	84.1	7.9	6.3	0.0	100
8	1.7	5.8	52.1	23.1	17.4	0.0	100
9	0.0	5.0	56.7	26.7	11.7	0.0	100
10	16.0	0.0	76.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	100
11	1.8	3.6	91.1	3.6	0.0	0.0	100
12	0.0	0.0	85.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	100
13	3.9	0.0	86.3	9.8	0.0	0.0	100

6.3.2 Lecturers

Table 6.4 shows the PHEI cross-tabulated with the type of qualification taught. For each PHEI, it indicates the percentage of lecturers who taught the relevant types of qualifications. With the exception of PHEI sites 6 and 13, most lecturers taught undergraduate degrees at each of the PHEIs considered for the study. Both sites 7 and 12 had more than 30% of lecturers teaching an undergraduate certificate, while a little more than a quarter of the lecturers from sites 10 and 11 taught an honours or postgraduate qualification.

Table 6.4: Cross tabulation – qualification taught

PHEI Site	Type of qualification currently taught					Total %
	Certificate (undergrad)	Diploma (undergrad)	Degree (undergrad)	Honours/ postgraduate qualification	Master's	
1	6.7	0.0	66.7	0.0	26.7	100
2	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100
3	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100
4	0.0	16.7	66.7	16.7	0.0	100
6	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	80.0	100
7	34.8	4.3	52.2	8.7	0.0	100
8	0.0	20.0	40.0	20.0	20.0	100
10	14.3	14.3	42.9	28.6	0.0	100
11	0.0	25.0	50.0	25.0	0.0	100
12	30.8	15.4	46.2	7.7	0.0	100
13	40.0	0.0	40.0	20.0	0.0	100

In general, the purpose of data analysis is to test the quality, reliability and validity of data before it can be used as trustworthy information. The two broad approaches utilised for this purpose were EFA and CFA, which are discussed in the sections to follow.

6.4 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (EFA) APPROACH

Hair *et al*. (2010) state that the primary purpose of (exploratory) factor analysis is to define the underlying structure among variables. It is used to analyse the structure of the correlations among a large number of variables, such as questionnaire responses, by defining sets of variables that are highly correlated, known as factors. Furthermore, according to Pallant (2011), there are two main approaches to factor analysis as described in literature, namely exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). EFA is often used in the early stages of research to gather information about (i.e. explore) the interrelationships among a set of variables, whereas CFA is a set of more sophisticated techniques used later in the research process to confirm the structure of the underlying set of variables.

Hair *et al*. (2010) mention that these groups of variables or factors are assumed to represent dimensions within the data. If the researcher has a conceptual basis for understanding the relationships among variables, then the dimensions may actually have meaning for what they collectively represent. To this end, with the development of a TQS framework in mind, EFA was applied to the data, followed later by CFA as method of validating the results for further use.

Hair *et al*. (2010) follow a five-stage approach to factor analysis. This approach was used as a guideline to conduct the EFA, and is explained in the section that follows.

6.4.1 Stage 1: Objectives of factor analysis

For this study, the unit of analysis for the use of factor analysis was variables. R factor analysis (see Author, date) was used in order to identify the structure of relationships among the variables. This type of factor analysis analyses a set of variables to find the latent or underlying dimensions. It is applied to the correlation matrix of the variables, examining the correlations between them (Hair *et al*., 2010).

The outcome of the factor analysis is data summarisation, in that it derives underlying dimensions, which can be interpreted and which describes the data with much less concepts than the original number of variables. Through this structure, the researcher can view the variables at a generalised level, that is, for what they represent collectively, not individually. The insight provided by data summarisation gives a clear understanding of which variables belong together and how many variables are expected to have a significant effect in the analysis, which is later incorporated into the CFA.

In order to ensure the appropriateness of the variables for factor analysis, the conceptual underpinning of the variables was considered before the variables were included in the survey instrument. A pilot study contributed to this end (see Chapter 4, section 4.8). Furthermore, a trial run was done with the necessary software, in which variables with low loadings on a factor were identified and reconsidered for inclusion in the factor analysis. These variables did not contribute towards the measurement model.

6.4.2 Stage 2: Designing a factor analysis

All variables included in the factor analysis were metric variables, that is, variables, which can be measured quantitatively, and which were therefore suited for factor analysis. As mentioned, the questionnaire consisted of 37 metric variables (Likert-type scale items), which ensured a reasonable number of variables per factor extracted. Up to seven factors can be extracted, with a possibility of five variables per factor. Furthermore, several key variables were identified which closely reflected the hypothesised underlying factors. This aided the validation of the derived factors and assessment of the results for practical significance. The sample size of n = 612 for 37 variables ensured that there were many more observations than variables, translating into about 16 observations for each variable and meeting the 10:1 guideline ratio of observations to variables (Hair *et al*., 2010).

6.4.3 Stage 3: Assumptions in factor analysis

It was assumed that some underlying structure, or factors, did exist among the set of variables selected for factor analysis. The observed patterns were investigated thoroughly to ensure that they were conceptually valid and appropriate to study with factor analysis.

The statistical software package IBM SPSS Statistics 24 was used to perform the EFA, in order to identify underlying constructs. As a first step in assessing whether the data were suitable for factor analysis, thorough inspection of the correlation matrix revealed that a substantial portion (53%) of all correlations between the variables was above 0.30. Therefore, the data matrix had sufficient correlation to justify the use of factor analysis (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett’s test of sphericity were used to assess whether the data were appropriate for EFA. The Bartlett test is a statistical test for the presence of correlations among the variables, while the KMO measure is a value, which quantifies the degree of inter-correlations among the variables. Table 6.5 shows the output from SPSS:

Table 6.5: KMO and Bartlett's test

KMO measure of sampling adequacy		0.950
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. chi-square	9784.702
	df	666
	Sig.	0.000

Both the KMO measure and Bartlett's test yielded favourable results. According to Hair *et al*. (2010), the KMO measure of 0.95 is a highly favourable outcome. Bartlett's test resulted in a highly significant approximate chi-square value of 9784.7 (p-value < 0.01), indicating that non-zero correlations existed between the relevant variables.

6.4.4 Stage 4: Deriving factors and assessing overall fit

In deciding the number of factors to extract, three criteria were used as guidelines, namely the latent root criterion, percentage of variance criterion, and scree test criterion.

The latent root criterion states that any factor should account for the variance of at least one variable if it is to be retained in the model to be interpreted. This means that only factors with latent roots, or eigenvalues greater than one, are considered as significant. Hair *et al*. (2010) state that using eigenvalues for determining a cut-off in the number of factors is most reliable in the case of 20 to 50 variables. Since there were 37 variables to be included in the factor analysis for the current study, it made sense to include this criterion. According to the percentage of variance criterion, successive factors must achieve a specified cumulative percentage of the total variance. This ensures that the derived factors are practically significant in that they explain at least a certain amount of variance in the data (Hair *et al*., 2010).

Table 6.6 represents the output from SPSS, and displays the computed eigenvalues, as well as the cumulative percentage of the total variance explained by successive factors.

Table 6.6: Total variance explained

Factor	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings[a]
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	***12.791***	34.570	34.570	12.246	33.097	33.097	11.122
2	***1.847***	4.993	39.563	1.303	3.521	36.618	8.723
3	***1.435***	3.878	43.441	.875	2.366	38.984	8.210
4	***1.364***	3.688	47.129	.839	2.267	41.251	6.088
5	***1.267***	3.425	50.554	.678	1.832	***43.083***	3.786
6	***1.058***	2.860	53.414				
7	***1.006***	2.719	56.133				
8	.945	2.553	58.686				
9	.928	2.508	61.194				
10	.847	2.290	63.484				
11	.823	2.225	65.709				
12	.791	2.137	67.846				
13	.747	2.020	69.866				
14	.711	1.921	71.788				
15	.680	1.837	73.625				
16	.652	1.762	75.387				
17	.636	1.720	77.107				
18	.619	1.673	78.781				
19	.593	1.603	80.383				
20	.564	1.524	81.908				
21	.549	1.484	83.392				
22	.537	1.451	84.843				
23	.524	1.415	86.258				
24	.485	1.310	87.568				
25	.450	1.215	88.784				
26	.426	1.150	89.934				
27	.420	1.136	91.070				
28	.402	1.085	92.155				
29	.397	1.074	93.229				
30	.367	.993	94.222				
31	.361	.975	95.197				
32	.334	.904	96.101				

Factor	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings[a]
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
33	.328	.887	96.988				
34	.310	.839	97.827				
35	.284	.767	98.594				
36	.267	.721	99.315				
37	.253	.685	100.000				

Extraction method: principal axis factoring (PAF)
[a] When factors are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance

Table 6.6 reveals that there were seven factors with eigenvalues larger than one, indicating that a factor model with more than seven factors will result in some factors not being significant to the resulting model structure.

As explained by Hair *et al*. (2010), the scree test is used to determine an optimal number of factors to extract without the amount of unique variance exceeding the common variance structure in the data. The scree test is performed by inspecting the scree plot, a graph displaying the eigenvalues plotted against the number of factors, in the same order in which they were extracted. The cut-off point is identified by inspection of the shape of the curve. The point at which the curve makes an 'elbow', in other words, where it starts to straighten out, is an indication of the maximum number of factors that can be extracted before becoming redundant. Figure 6.12 below shows the scree plot as obtained from the SPSS output.

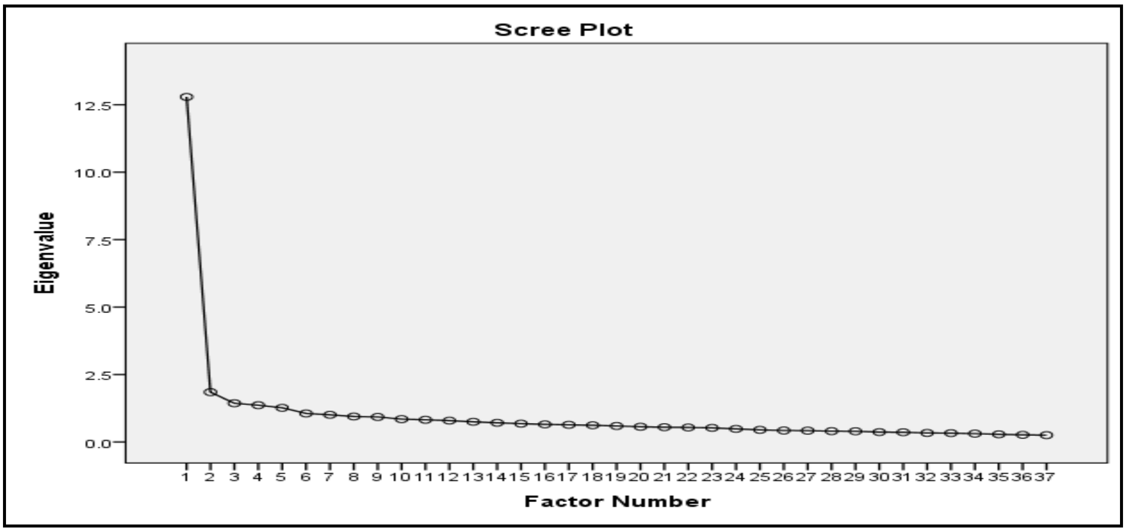

Figure 6.12: Scree plot
Source: Author's own compilation

The eigenvalues displayed in Table 6.6 (as well as a visual inspection of the scree plot in Figure 6.12) revealed that a maximum of between seven and nine factors could be considered for extraction. This is the approximate point at which the shape of the graph begins to straighten out. Beyond this point, the additional variance explained by the factor model becomes so marginal that it does not make a practical and/or significant contribution to the model. Note that due to the large number of variables included for factor analysis (the number of factors on the horizontal axis of the graph), it is difficult to pinpoint the exact point on the graph where a pattern of stabilisation is visible.

Further to the abovementioned three criteria, a number of different factor structures were obtained from trial solutions, after which the results were compared and contrasted to arrive at the best possible representation of the data. After inspection of the eigenvalues and percentage of variance explained, as contained in Table 6.6, as well as the scree plot (Figure 6.12), it was decided that six factors would be used as a trial run. The structure of the factor solution and practicality of the factors were assessed, and it was evident that a six-factor solution was not practical, and difficult to interpret theoretically. Next, five factors were used, resulting in a much improved, more practical structure, which was easier to interpret. Hence, it was decided that five factors should be extracted from the data.

6.4.5 Stage 5: Interpreting the factors

Communalities were computed to identify items, which were unlikely to be associated with any underlying factors. In Table 6.7, only one item, namely “B1 Cost” showed a low communality of 0.119 and it was decided that this variable would not be considered for EFA.

Table 6.7: Communalities

		Initial	Extraction
B1	Cost (this relates to the affordability of enrolling at a PHEI)	.165	.119
B2	Quality teaching (this relates to content and knowledge transfer)	.351	.376
B3	Technology (this relates to modern and innovative equipment)	.409	.458
B4	Student support (services) (this relates to additional teaching and learning support to students)	.425	.462
B5	Customer-centred approach (this relates to the student being treated as a customer)	.277	.255
B6	Faculty expertise and senior academics (this relates to good faculty reputation)	.418	.430

		Initial	Extraction
B7	Servicescape (this relates to modern, functional facilities)	.377	.353
B8	Communication (this relates to frequent, transparent, verbal and non-verbal contact with all stakeholders)	.413	.391
B9	Personal attention (this relates to addressing the unique needs of the external customers, e.g. students)	.427	.412
B10	Internal customer focus (this relates to addressing the unique needs of the internal customers, e.g. lecturers)	.459	.540
B11	Reputation (this relates to the image and reputation of the institution)	.339	.282
B12	Leadership and top management commitment (this relates to the efforts of the campus principal and senior staff to achieve process excellence)	.507	.414
B13	Operations management (this relates to productive, efficient and effective systems)	.496	.410
B14	Employability (this relates to the value of the qualification in terms of recognition by industry)	.335	.310
B15	Institutional partnerships (this relates to the cooperation between a PHEI with industry, government and other HEIs)	.480	.543
B16	Student partnerships (this relates to assisting high-performing graduates)	.503	.515
B17	Practical application (this relates to the vocational value of the learning material)	.411	.382
B18	Culture (this relates to the values and beliefs of the institution)	.353	.330
B19	Application and registration (this relates to an effective process with short lead times)	.419	.387
B20	Unique product offering (this relates to market differentiation and specialised qualifications)	.361	.341
B21	Accreditation (this relates to national acknowledgement of the qualifications offered)	.291	.224
B22	Contribution to society (this relates to adding value to the broad community)	.410	.357
B23	Information management (this relates to access to accurate data records)	.546	.502
B24	Continuous improvement (this relates to better-quality incrementally)	.600	.564
B25	Benchmarking (this relates to seeking new or best practices for improvement)	.582	.521
B26	Service quality standards (this relates to setting improved standards)	.596	.547
B27	On-time performance (this relates to punctuality in meeting deadlines and quick responses)	.563	.547
B28	Assessment, measurement and feedback (this relates to fair assessment and customer feedback)	.541	.504
B29	Trust (this relates to customer respect and confidence)	.513	.484
B30	Library quality (this relates to the access to and comprehensiveness of learning materials)	.415	.415
B31	Recreational activities (this relates to on-campus extra-curricular facilities, such as health and sport facilities)	.421	.536
B32	Research (this relates to knowledge creation and management)	.530	.519
B33	Loyalty (this relates to a sense of belonging to a PHEI)	.489	.500
B34	Accommodation (this relates to hospitality facilities for students)	.408	.459
B35	Managing expectations (this relates to knowing and honouring customer needs)	.571	.544
B36	Administrative capacity (this relates to efficient administrative services to internal and external customers)	.559	.553
B37	Ethical practice (this relates to institutional integrity)	.468	.457

Extraction method: PAF

The EFA was rerun, with variable B1 (Cost) excluded. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were again used to determine whether the data were indeed suitable to perform an EFA. Table 6.8 shows the output from SPSS after variable B1 had been removed.

Table 6.8: KMO and Bartlett's test

KMO measure of sampling adequacy		0.951
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. chi-square	9682.218
	df	630
	Sig.	0.000

Once again, both the KMO measure and Bartlett's test yielded favourable results. After removal of variable B1, the KMO measure was 0.951, which, according to Hair *et al*. (2010), is a meritorious outcome. In addition, Bartlett's test resulted in a highly significant approximate chi-square value of 9682.2 (p-value < 0.01), indicating that non-zero satisfactory correlations existed between the variables.

In Table 6.9, the calculated communalities indicate that all variables are likely to be associated with an underlying construct. Although three variables (B5, B11 and B21) showed relatively low communalities, they had significant factor loadings (see Table 6.9) and hence were included in the analysis. The output from SPSS is shown below:

Table 6.9: Communalities (excluding B1)

		Initial	Extraction
B2	Quality teaching (this relates to content and knowledge transfer)	.351	.378
B3	Technology (this relates to modern and innovative equipment)	.403	.443
B4	Student support (services) (this relates to additional teaching and learning support to students)	.425	.460
B5	Customer-centred approach (this relates to the student being treated as a customer)	.276	.256
B6	Faculty expertise and senior academics (this relates to good faculty reputation)	.416	.428
B7	Servicescape (this relates to modern, functional facilities)	.375	.355
B8	Communication (this relates to frequent, transparent, verbal and non-verbal contact with all stakeholders)	.412	.390
B9	Personal attention (this relates to addressing the unique needs of the external customers, e.g. students)	.427	.408
B10	Internal customer focus (this relates to addressing the unique needs of the internal customers, e.g. lecturers)	.459	.534

		Initial	Extraction
B11	Reputation (this relates to the image and reputation of the institution)	.339	.283
B12	Leadership and top management commitment (this relates to the efforts of the campus principal and senior staff to achieve process excellence)	.507	.414
B13	Operations management (this relates to productive, efficient and effective systems)	.495	.409
B14	Employability (this relates to the value of the qualification in terms of recognition by industry)	.327	.330
B15	Institutional partnerships (this relates to the cooperation between a PHEI with industry, government and other HEIs)	.467	.525
B16	Student partnerships (this relates to assisting high-performing graduates)	.502	.527
B17	Practical application (this relates to the vocational value of the learning material)	.411	.385
B18	Culture (this relates to the values and beliefs of the institution)	.352	.331
B19	Application and registration (this relates to an effective process with short lead times)	.416	.389
B20	Unique product offering (this relates to market differentiation and specialised qualifications)	.356	.341
B21	Accreditation (this relates to national acknowledgement of the qualifications offered)	.287	.224
B22	Contribution to society (this relates to adding value to the broad community)	.410	.358
B23	Information management (this relates to access to accurate data records)	.545	.502
B24	Continuous improvement (this relates to better quality incrementally)	.600	.565
B25	Benchmarking (this relates to seeking new or best practices for improvement)	.582	.520
B26	Service quality standards (this relates to setting improved standards)	.595	.548
B27	On-time performance (this relates to punctuality in meeting deadlines and quick responses)	.562	.551
B28	Assessment, measurement and feedback (this relates to fair assessment and customer feedback)	.537	.499
B29	Trust (this relates to customer respect and confidence)	.513	.480
B30	Library quality (this relates to the access to and comprehensiveness of learning materials)	.415	.416
B31	Recreational activities (this relates to on-campus extra-curricular facilities such as health and sport facilities)	.420	.537
B32	Research (this relates to knowledge creation and management)	.530	.516
B33	Loyalty (this relates to a sense of belonging to a PHEI)	.489	.500
B34	Accommodation (this relates to hospitality facilities for students)	.407	.461
B35	Managing expectations (this relates to knowing and honouring customer needs)	.570	.543

	Initial	Extraction
B36 Administrative capacity (this relates to efficient administrative services to internal and external customers)	.558	.558
B37 Ethical practice (this relates to institutional integrity)	.468	.457

Extraction method: PAF

Next, the factor matrix was computed, showing the loading of each variable on each of the five factors, the factor loading being the correlation between the factor and the variable. These loadings provide a measure of the degree to which the variable and factor relate to each other. Higher loading would indicate that the variable represents the factor well. The relevant output from SPSS is shown in Table 6.10 below.

Table 6.10: Factor matrix[a]

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
B26 Service quality standards (this relates to setting improved standards)	0.730	-0.031	-0.074	-0.077	-0.043
B24 Continuous improvement (this relates to better quality incrementally)	0.723	-0.037	-0.185	-0.051	-0.055
B35 Managing expectations (this relates to knowing and honouring customer needs)	0.702	0.076	0.005	-0.210	-0.008
B36 Administrative capacity (this relates to efficient administrative services to internal and external customers)	0.702	-0.031	-0.051	-0.238	-0.065
B27 On-time performance (this relates to punctuality in meeting deadlines and quick responses)	0.700	-0.143	-0.027	-0.197	-0.031
B25 Benchmarking (this relates to seeking new or best practices for improvement)	0.696	-0.033	-0.182	-0.020	0.022
B23 Information management (this relates to access to accurate data records)	0.671	0.054	-0.192	0.012	-0.111
B32 Research (this relates to knowledge creation and management)	0.666	0.210	-0.086	-0.024	0.140
B29 Trust (this relates to customer respect and confidence)	0.656	-0.047	0.047	-0.212	-0.009
B37 Ethical practice (this relates to institutional integrity)	0.634	-0.156	-0.086	-0.139	0.066
B13 Operations management (this relates to productive, efficient and effective systems)	0.627	-0.122	-0.020	0.028	0.028
B12 Leadership and top management commitment (this relates to the efforts of the campus principal and senior staff to achieve process excellence)	0.618	-0.161	-0.013	0.001	0.074

		Factor				
		1	2	3	4	5
B33	Loyalty (this relates to a sense of belonging to a PHEI)	0.596	0.344	0.034	-0.160	-0.026
B28	Assessment, measurement and feedback (this relates to fair assessment and customer feedback)	0.594	-0.211	-0.012	-0.318	0.004
B16	Student partnerships (this relates to assisting high-performing graduates)	0.590	0.144	-0.253	0.305	0.025
B30	Library quality (this relates to the access to and comprehensiveness of learning materials)	0.590	0.182	0.067	-0.005	0.173
B6	Faculty expertise and senior academics (this relates to good faculty reputation)	0.587	-0.184	0.137	-0.009	0.175
B10	Internal customer focus (this relates to addressing the unique needs of the internal customers, e.g. lecturers)	0.582	-0.026	0.317	0.096	-0.292
B17	Practical application (this relates to the vocational value of the learning material)	0.571	-0.187	-0.057	0.129	0.070
B19	Application and registration (this relates to an effective process with short lead times)	0.568	0.114	-0.039	0.015	-0.229
B8	Communication (this relates to frequent, transparent, verbal and non-verbal contact with all stakeholders)	0.565	-0.152	0.118	0.018	-0.183
B7	Servicescape (this relates to modern, functional facilities)	0.553	0.021	0.202	0.063	0.065
B15	Institutional partnerships (this relates to the cooperation between a PHEI with industry, government and other HEIs)	0.550	0.060	-0.245	0.397	0.034
B9	Personal attention (this relates to addressing the unique needs of the external customers, e.g. students)	0.545	-0.067	0.174	0.132	-0.244
B3	Technology (this relates to modern and innovative equipment)	0.523	-0.018	0.257	0.262	0.185
B4	Student support (services) (this relates to additional teaching and learning support to students)	0.523	-0.122	0.348	0.225	0.020
B22	Contribution to society (this relates to adding value to the broad community)	0.521	0.175	-0.158	0.084	-0.156
B20	Unique product offering (this relates to market differentiation and specialised qualifications)	0.513	0.171	-0.106	0.073	-0.180
B18	Culture (this relates to the values and beliefs of the institution)	0.509	0.163	0.053	0.090	-0.184
B11	Reputation (this relates to the image and reputation of the institution)	0.488	-0.102	-0.081	0.065	0.154
B2	Quality teaching (this relates to content and knowledge transfer)	0.484	-0.261	0.154	-0.015	0.227
B14	Employability (this relates to the	0.471	-0.158	-0.165	0.113	0.207

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
value of the qualification in terms of recognition by industry)					
B21 Accreditation (this relates to national acknowledgement of the qualifications offered)	0.436	-0.137	-0.099	0.015	0.067
B5 Customer-centred approach (this relates to the student being treated as a customer)	0.422	-0.103	0.246	0.015	-0.086
B31 Recreational activities (this relates to on-campus extra-curricular facilities such as health and sport facilities)	0.361	0.594	0.149	-0.065	0.167
B34 Accommodation (this relates to hospitality facilities for students)	0.393	0.490	0.167	-0.083	0.177

Extraction method: PAF
a 5 factors extracted. 9 iterations required

Interpretation of the factor matrix can be misleading. Hence, in order to obtain a simpler and conceptually more meaningful and practical factor solution, a rotational method was applied to the factor matrix. Rotation of the factor matrix enhances and eases interpretation of the factor solution, in that it reduces ambiguities often present in unrotated factor solutions. Table 6.11 shows the rotated factor matrix, or pattern matrix, from the SPSS output. Take note, only significant factor loadings are shown in this table.

Table 6.11: Pattern matrix[a]

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
B28 Assessment, measurement and feedback (this relates to fair assessment and customer feedback)	***0.883***				
B27 On-time performance (this relates to punctuality in meeting deadlines and quick responses)	***0.723***				
B36 Administrative capacity (this relates to efficient administrative services to internal and external customers)	***0.721***				
B37 Ethical practice (this relates to institutional integrity)	***0.646***				
B29 Trust (this relates to customer respect and confidence)	***0.635***				
B35 Managing expectations (this relates to knowing and honouring customer needs)	***0.597***				
B24 Continuous improvement (this relates to better quality incrementally)	***0.523***				

		Factor				
		1	2	3	4	5
B26	Service quality standards (this relates to setting improved standards)	***0.516***				
B25	Benchmarking (this relates to seeking new or best practices for improvement)	***0.466***				
B12	Leadership and top management commitment (this relates to the efforts of the campus principal and senior staff to achieve process excellence)	***0.412***				
B13	Operations management (this relates to productive, efficient and effective systems)	***0.353***				
B21	Accreditation (this relates to national acknowledgement of the qualifications offered)	***0.323***				
B11	Reputation (this relates to the image and reputation of the institution)	***0.254***				
B15	Institutional partnerships (this relates to the cooperation between a PHEI with industry, government and other HEIs)		***0.836***			
B16	Student partnerships (this relates to assisting high-performing graduates)		***0.778***			
B22	Contribution to society (this relates to adding value to the broad community)		***0.459***			
B23	Information management (this relates to access to accurate data records)		***0.411***			
B20	Unique product offering (this relates to market differentiation and specialised qualifications)		***0.397***			
B14	Employability (this relates to the value of the qualification in terms of recognition by industry)		***0.331***			
B17	Practical application (this relates to the vocational value of the learning material)		***0.281***			
B10	Internal customer focus (this relates to addressing the unique needs of the internal customers, e.g. lecturers)			***0.719***		
B9	Personal attention (this relates to addressing the unique needs of the external customers, e.g. students)			***0.557***		
B4	Student support (services) (this relates to additional teaching and learning support to students)			***0.485***		
B8	Communication (this relates to frequent, transparent, verbal and non-verbal contact with all stakeholders)			***0.417***		
B5	Customer-centred approach (this relates to the student being treated as a customer)			***0.398***		
B18	Culture (this relates to the values and beliefs of the institution)			***0.340***		

		Factor				
		1	2	3	4	5
B19	Application and registration (this relates to an effective process with short lead times)			***0.292***		
B3	Technology (this relates to modern and innovative equipment)				***0.502***	
B2	Quality teaching (this relates to content and knowledge transfer)				***0.444***	
B6	Faculty expertise and senior academics (this relates to good faculty reputation)				***0.384***	
B7	Servicescape (this relates to modern, functional facilities)				***0.275***	
B31	Recreational activities (this relates to on-campus extra-curricular facilities such as health and sport facilities)					***0.825***
B34	Accommodation (this relates to hospitality facilities for students)					***0.740***
B33	Loyalty (this relates to a sense of belonging to a PHEI)					***0.462***
B30	Library quality (this relates to the access to and comprehensiveness of learning materials)					***0.382***
B32	Research (this relates to knowledge creation and management)					***0.345***

Extraction method: PAF
Rotation method: Promax with Kaiser Normalizational
[a] Rotation converged in 45 iterations

Each factor loading was assessed for statistical significance in order to decide which of the factor loadings were worth considering. According to Hair *et al*. (2010), a factor loading of 0.3 or higher is seen as being statistically significant when the sample size is n = 350 or more. Therefore, factor loadings of 0.3 or higher were selected for interpretation. Although there were four variables (B11, B17, B19 and B7) with factor loadings lower than 0.3, they were still worth considering, since the values were close enough to 0.3 and the sample size of the study (n = 647) was much bigger than the guideline of 350. Some items loaded significantly onto two factors. In such cases, the variable was assigned to the factor with the highest factor loading. The cross-loadings signified the overlapping nature and integration, or convergence, of items underlying the framework.

Table 6.12 below summarises the structure as obtained by EFA, displaying each of the five factors and its associated variables.

Table 6.12: Five factors and associated variables

Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
B28: Assessment, measurement and feedback **B27:** On-time performance **B36:** Administrative capacity **B37:** Ethical practice **B29:** Trust **B35:** Managing expectations **B24:** Continuous improvement **B26:** Service quality standards **B25:** Benchmarking **B12:** Leadership and top management commitment **B13:** Operations management **B21:** Accreditation **B11:** Reputation	**B15:** Institutional partnerships **B16:** Student partnerships **B22:** Contribution to society **B23:** Information management **B20:** Unique product offering **B14:** Employability **B17:** Practical application	**B10:** Internal customer focus **B9:** Personal attention **B4:** Student support (services) **B8:** Communication **B5:** Customer-centred approach **B18:** Culture **B19:** Application and registration	**B3:** Technology **B2:** Quality teaching **B6:** Faculty expertise and senior academics **B7:** Servicescape	**B31:** Recreational activities **B34:** Accommodation **B33:** Loyalty **B30:** Library quality **B32:** Research

The next step in the development of the framework was to assess and, if necessary, adjust the factor model, as obtained from EFA. This was done by performing a CFA in order to assess and inform the underlying structure of the set of variables, as obtained from the EFA, as a first step towards establishing a TQS framework.

6.5 CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (CFA) APPROACH

The four-stage approach for conducting a CFA (Hair *et al*., 2010) was followed in this research study and is elaborated on below.

6.5.1 Stage 1: Defining individual constructs

The factor structure obtained from EFA, as discussed in the previous section, was used to identify the individual constructs needed for a CFA. Hence, the measurement model comprised five constructs. The specific name and definition of each construct were decided after assessing the validity of the measurement model.

The variables with which each construct was measured were also obtained from the results of the EFA (see Table 6.12 in the previous section).

The development of the measurement scale was discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. The same scale was used for all the individual variables, namely a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Not important) to 5 (Very important):

1	2	3	4	5
Not important	*Slightly important*	*Fairly important*	*Important*	*Very important*

Scale reliability was achieved as a result of the pilot study during the development of the research instrument (questionnaire). A Cronbach alpha value of 0.992 indicated excellent scale reliability among the items (variables) in the questionnaire (see section 4.8). These variables were used to perform an EFA and, with the exception of only one variable, were then applied to perform a CFA. Furthermore, the EFA performed previously acted as a pre-test for the purpose of scale purification.

Construct validity of the measurement scale was achieved as a result of using EFA in conjunction with literature and relevant theory to identify constructs for a measurement model (conceptual framework), to be used as input for a CFA.

6.5.2 Stage 2: Developing the overall measurement model

In this section, the measurement model to be tested is specified. The model defines the relationships between the constructs and indicates the nature of each construct. Figure 6.13 shows a diagram, which depicts the initial measurement model.

The model consists of 36 indicator variables, measured with a five-point Likert-type scale and five constructs. The following assumptions (hypotheses) applied to this model:

- All constructs are correlated with all other constructs.
- Unidimensionality exists among the set of variables: Each variable relates to only one construct, that is, all cross-loadings are zero. This ensures that there is no compromise in construct validity.

As obtained after performing an EFA, the first construct consisted of 13 items (variables or indicators). The second and third constructs each contained seven items, the fourth construct had four items, while five items belonged to the fifth construct. Therefore, the number of items per construct adhered to the recommendation by Hair *et al*. (2010), namely that each factor should contain at least three, but preferably four items. This will ensure that minimum coverage of the conceptual domain of the construct is achieved, as well as appropriate identification for the construct.

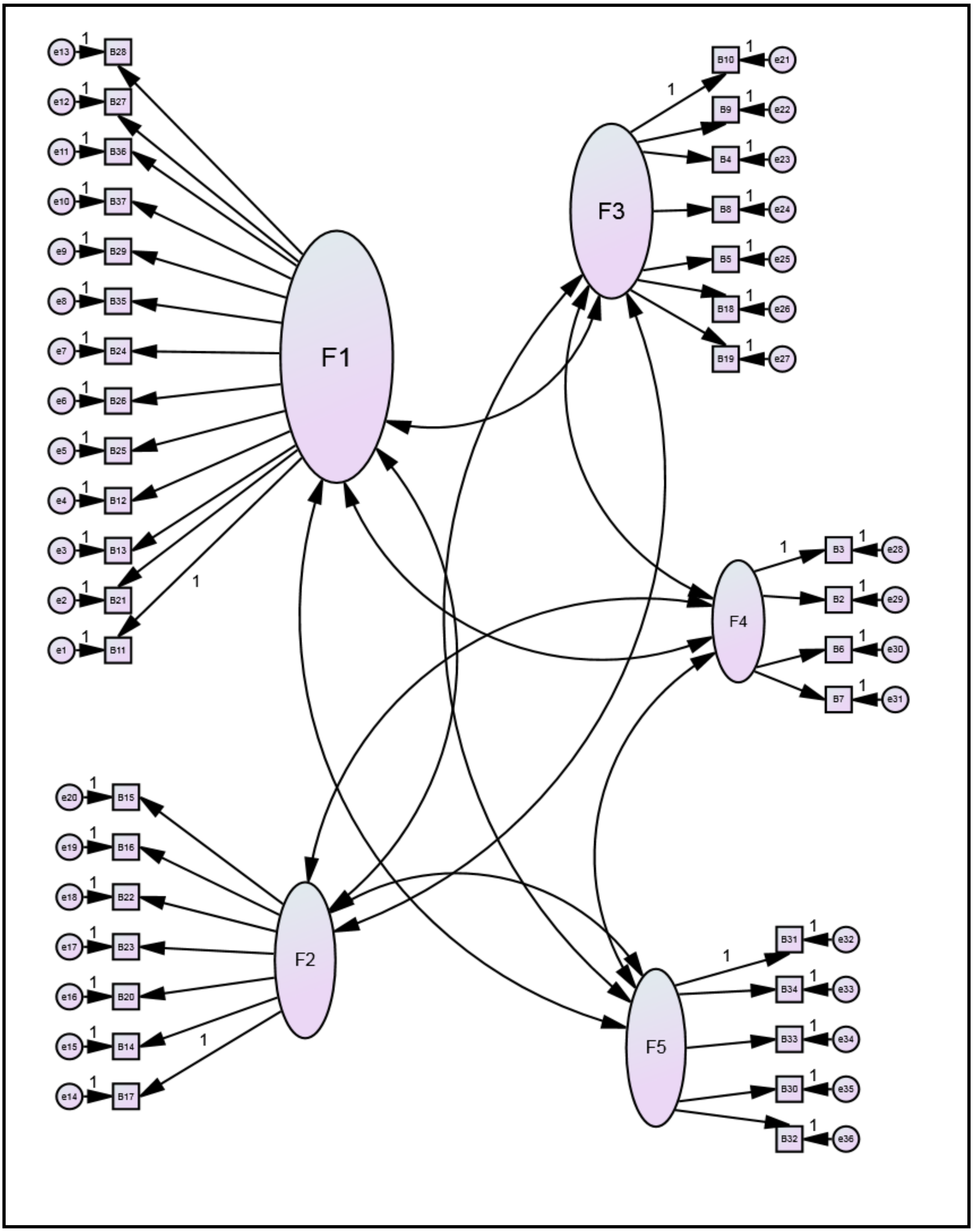

Figure 6.13: Initial conceptual measurement model

Source: Author's own compilation

Hair *et al*. (2010) emphasise that an important characteristic of a measurement model and its constructs is their level or degree of identification, as determined by the degrees of freedom. The degrees of freedom for a construct or entire measurement model is defined as the difference between the number of distinct sample moments (variances and covariances of items) and the number of parameters to be estimated. A construct with positive degrees of freedom is said to be overidentified. On the other hand, a construct with negative degrees of freedom is said to be underidentified, while a construct with zero degrees of freedom is just-identified. Table 6.13 below contains detail regarding the level or degree of identification for each construct.

Table 6.13: Degree of identification for the initial model

Construct	Number of variables	Number of distinct sample moments	Number of parameters to estimate*	Degrees of freedom	Level of identification
Construct 1	13	91	26	65	Overidentified
Construct 2	7	28	14	16	Overidentified
Construct 3	7	28	14	14	Overidentified
Construct 4	4	10	8	2	Overidentified
Construct 5	5	15	10	5	Overidentified

*Including standardised loading estimates

Source: Author's own compilation

As can be seen from Table 6.13, all five constructs were overidentified. This is a favourable condition to obtain the best possible solution to the measurement model. Underidentified constructs are unfavourable, since it may present problems in establishing unidimensionality.

Along with the IBP SPSS AMOS (statistical software) output for the model, as depicted in Figure 6.13, the following information was obtained. The number of distinct sample moments was 666, while the number of parameters that needed to be estimated was 82, which included the standardised loading estimates. The degrees of freedom for the measurement model were 584, and therefore the model was overidentified. A solution with positive degrees of freedom could therefore be obtained with corresponding chi-square GOF measure.

It is important to note that, in terms of causality, the measurement model is reflective, in that latent constructs cause the associated variables. Should a model be formative, in which case it is assumed that the variables cause the construct, the constructs are neither latent nor validated. As a result, formative models present difficulties in their identification. The error obtained from reflective models indicates the degree to which the constructs do not fully explain the variables. Hair *et al*. (2010) state that reflective models or measures adhere to classical test theory.

6.5.3 Stage 3: Design of the study to produce empirical results

The research study was designed and executed to collect the necessary data for testing the measurement model. Specifically, sample size and model specification were considered, which allowed for identification of the model. The details of the research design, such as target population, sample size, sampling procedure, questionnaire distribution process and screening (cleaning) of the data were explained in Chapter 4.

The statistical software package IBM SPSS AMOS 24 was used to specify the model to be used as input when running the CFA. The software provided a graphical interface to draw the model shown in Figure 6.13, by using various shapes, such as rectangles, ellipses, one-pointed straight arrows and two-pointed curved arrows. After specifying the model, it was ready to be estimated, that is, to determine the estimates of the parameters of the measurement model. The software computed a solution for the specified model, which was used to assess the validity of the measurement model.

A latent construct does not have a metric scale, as it has no range of values. In order to set the scale for each latent construct, the first factor loading on each construct was set to a specific value, namely 1.0, which is the typical value used by most researchers. This is also the value used by most software programs. The AMOS software used to perform the CFA for this study, automatically assigns a fixed value (preferably one) to one factor loading per construct. In running the initial CFA procedure in AMOS, the output was inspected to ensure that the correct loadings were fixed and that not more than one loading per construct was fixed. No abnormalities were found, and no additional constraints were placed on the CFA model.

As indicated during Stage 2 of the CFA process, the overall model had 584 degrees of freedom. Therefore, since the number of degrees of freedom for the model was greater than zero, the order condition was satisfied. The rank condition is satisfied when all factors in a congeneric model have at least three indicators (Hair *et al.*, 2010).

In section 4.9.2, the sample size for the study was discussed. The effective sample size was n = 612. According to Hair *et al*. (2010), CFA models satisfying the three-indicator rule, with large samples sizes greater than 300, generally do not produce unreliable results. Hence, using this as guideline, it can be concluded that the sample size is sufficient to perform confirmatory analysis with reliable results successfully and effectively.

6.5.4 Stage 4: Assessing measurement model validity

In this stage, the CFA model was estimated, that is, the parameters of the model were computed. As mentioned, the statistical software program IBM SPSS AMOS (or simply AMOS) was used for this purpose. This provided an empirical measure of the relationships between variables and constructs, as represented by the measurement model. The results gave insight into how the theory (model) compared to practice or 'reality' (sample data), in other words, how well the model fitted the data. Construct validity was tested through several GOF measures as well as the achievement of convergent validity.

6.5.4.1 Goodness-of-fit (GOF) measures

As stated by Schumacker and Lomax (2010), model fit describes how well the variance–covariance sample data fit the CFA model. Common criteria used include the chi-square statistic, the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), and the RMR. These criteria or statistics are determined by computing the difference between the observed (original) covariance matrix and the model-implied (reproduced) covariance matrix. Other model fit statistics can also be used to provide further insight into the model fit. To this end, the following model fit statistics were used:

- chi-square statistic
- CMIN/Df (normed chi-square)
- GFI (goodness-of-fit index)
- RMSEA (root-mean-square error of approximation)

- PCLOSE (p-value of close fit)
- RMR (root-mean-square residual index)
- NFI (normed fit index)
- CFI (comparative fit index)
- RFI (relative fit index)
- TLI (Tucker–Lewis index)
- IFI (incremental fit index)
- AGFI (adjusted goodness-of-fit index)

A short description of each statistic follows, together with its observed value, which was judged according to the relevant recommended guidelines. The model fit statistics used are categorised under the four most important categories, namely chi-square statistics, absolute fit measures, incremental fit indices and parsimony fit indices. Awang (2014) argues that there are there is no agreement among researchers on which fit indexes to use. Yet, Hair *et al*. (2010) propose that at least one fit index per category should be used.

6.5.4.1.1 Chi-square statistics

This sub-section explains the two Chi-square statistics used as GOF measures.

- χ^2 statistic

According to Schumacker and Lomax (2010), the chi-square statistic is interestingly enough, the only statistic, which tests the significance of the conceptual measurement model. Many of the known model-fit criteria are computed based on knowledge of the null model chi-square value. The null model refers to the independence model, where the covariance terms are assumed to be zero. The following information was used to formulate an index of model fit that ranges in value from zero (indicating no fit) to one (indicating a perfect fit):

- null model degrees of freedom;
- hypothesised model chi-square value;
- hypothesised model degrees of freedom;
- number of observed variables in the model;

- number of free parameters in the model; and
- sample size.

Using this information, the formulas for the GFI, NFI, RFI, IFI, TLI, CFI, and root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) can be derived. These formulas are presented in the discussion that follows.

A nonsignificant chi-square value is favourable, because it indicates that there is little difference between the sample covariance matrix and the model implied (reproduced) covariance matrix. It is useful to display the difference between these two covariance matrices in the form of a residual matrix. When the chi-square value is nonsignificant, i.e. close to zero, the residual values in the residual matrix are also close to zero, which is an indication that the theoretical model fits the sample data well.

On the other hand, when a chi-square value is significant, it shows a difference between the observed and implied covariance matrices. Statistical significance then points towards the probability that this difference is caused by sampling variation.

The observed value of the chi-square statistic for the initial model was 1978.555 (df = 584, $p < 0.01$). The small p-value means that the chi-square statistic was significant, indicating that the model fitted the sample variance–covariance matrix less than adequate. Further examination of the model fit was therefore done by a number of model fit statistics.

- Normed chi-square

This measure is obtained by dividing the value of the chi-square statistic by its degree of freedom. In other words, it is the ratio of the value of the chi-square statistic to its corresponding degrees of freedom (df). For the initial model, we had

$$\boxed{\frac{\chi^2}{df} = \frac{1978.555}{584} = 3.3388}$$

The value of the normed chi-square statistic was permissible, since it was smaller than 5 (Hair *et al*., 2010).

6.5.4.1.2 Absolute fit measures

These GOF statistics provide measures of how well the specified model can reproduce, or represent the sample data.

- GFI

Schumacker and Lomax (2010) explain that the GFI measures the amount, expressed as a percentage, of variance and covariance in the sample covariance matrix that is predicted by the reproduced covariance matrix.

The GFI is calculated using the ratio of the sum of squared differences between the observed and reproduced matrices to the observed variances. The formula for the GFI is shown below (note that the GFI allows for scale).

$$\boxed{\text{GFI} = 1-\left(\chi^2_{\text{model}}\big/\chi^2_{\text{null}}\right)}$$

In the initial model, GFI = 0.841 = 84.1%. In other words, 84.1% of the sample covariance matrix was predicted by the model-implied covariance matrix. Using the guideline by Hair *et al*. (2010), the GFI fell below the traditional benchmark of 90%.

- RMSEA

The root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) is one of the most popular GOF statistics used (Schumacker and Lomax, 2010). One of the problems occurring with the chi-square statistic is that it tends to reject models with large sample sizes or a large number of measured variables. The RMSEA makes provision for this, and is therefore a better measure to assess how well a model fits a population. It does not just use a sample for estimation (Hair *et al.,* 2010). The RMSEA is calculated as follows:

$$\boxed{\text{RMSEA} = \sqrt{\left(\chi^2_{\text{model}} - df_{\text{model}}\right)\big/\left(N-1\right)df_{\text{model}}}}$$

Hair *et al*. (2010) states that any RMSEA value that falls in the range between 0.05 and 0.10 can be considered moderate. For this model, a moderate RMSEA value of 0.063 was obtained.

- PCLOSE

The p of close fit (PCLOSE) is the p-value associated with a test of the null hypothesis that the value of RMSEA equals 0.05:

$$\boxed{H_0 : \mathrm{RMSEA} = 0.05}$$

against the alternative hypothesis that the RMSEA value is greater than 0.05:

$$\boxed{H_1 : \mathrm{RMSEA} > 0.05}$$

This provides the researcher with a test of close fit for a model. Browne and Cudeck (1993) suggest that an RMSEA of 0.05 or less indicates that a model has a ‘close fit’. Employing this definition of ‘close fit’, if the p-value is greater than 0.05 (not statistically significant), then it means that the RMSEA value is equal to or smaller than 0.05, and the fit of the model is ‘close’. On the other hand, if the p-value is less than 0.05, it shows that the model’s fit is not as good as a close fitting (Kenny, 2015). The PCLOSE value obtained for the initial model was 0.00, which did not adhere to the recommendation of Kline (2011), namely PCLOSE > 0.05.

- RMR

The RMR is best used as a means of comparing the fit of two different models with the same data, since it has no defined acceptable level. The RMR is the square root of the mean-squared differences between matrix elements in the sample covariance matrix and model-implied covariance matrix (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010):

$$\boxed{\mathrm{RMR} = \sqrt{\frac{1}{k}\sum_{ij}\left(s_{ij} - \sigma_{ij}\right)^2}}$$

For this model, the RMR value equated to 0.039. According to Hair *et al*. (2010), it is considered as good since it is below 0.09.

6.5.4.1.3 Incremental fit indices

These indices differ from absolute fit indices. Incremental fit indices are used to assess the fit of the specified (estimated) model, relative to an alternative baseline model. The most common baseline model is a null model, where it is assumed that no correlations exist among the observed indicator variables. This means that no specified model can be an improvement on the null model. This group of fit indices indicate the improvement in fit when specifying correlated constructs with multiple items (Hair *et al*., 2010).

- NFI

Schumacker and Lomax (2010) assert that the NFI (normed fit index) is a rescaling of the chi-square statistic into a zero (no fit) to one (perfect fit) range. It compares a restricted model with a full model using a baseline null model as follows:

$$\boxed{\text{NFI} = \left(\chi^2_{\text{null}} - \chi^2_{\text{model}}\right) / \chi^2_{\text{null}}}$$

For this model, the observed value of NFI was 0.80, which was less than the benchmark of 0.90, as provided by Hair *et al*. (2010).

- CFI

Schumacker and Lomax (2010) contend that in order to overcome the deficiencies for nested models present in the NFI statistic, a coefficient of comparative fit was developed. This was done by specifying a population parameter and distribution, such as a population comparative fit index (CFI). The rationale behind assessing comparative fit in nested models involves a series of models, ranging from the least restrictive model, say M_i, to the saturated model, say M_s. Matching this sequence of nested models is a sequence of model-fit statistics with associated degrees of freedom. The CFI then measures the improvement in noncentrality when moving from model M_i to M_k (theoretical model). Comparative fit is defined as:

$$\boxed{\left(\lambda_i - \lambda_k\right) / \lambda_i \text{, with } \lambda_k = \chi^2_k - df_k}$$

where λ_k is the noncentrality parameter of the noncentral chi-square (d_k) distribution, and

λ is the difference between the chi-square statistic and its degrees of freedom. Then,

$$\boxed{\text{CFI} = 1 - \left(\lambda_i - \lambda_k\right) / \lambda_i}$$

For this model, it was found that CFI = 0.849. According to Hair *et al*. (2010), a CFI value of 0.80 is ‘sometimes permissible’, while a value of 0.90 is considered 'traditional'. Therefore, using this guideline, the CFI for the initial model was permissible, although not far off from the traditional benchmark of 0.90.

- RFI

As with the other indices, the RFI makes use of the information contained in the chi-square statistics for the original model (null) and the proposed model. The computational formula for the relative fit index (RFI) is as follows:

$$\boxed{\text{RFI} = 1-\left[\left(\chi^2_{\text{model}}/df_{\text{model}}\right)/\left(\chi^2_{\text{null}}/df_{\text{null}}\right)\right]}$$

The model's RFI = 0.784, which, according to Hair *et al*. (2010), is below the 'good' guideline value of 0.90.

- TLI

The Tucker–Lewis index (TLI index) is a measure used to compare alternative models or to compare a proposed model against a null model. It is scaled from zero (no fit) to one (perfect fit). The TLI is computed using the chi-square statistic as follows (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010):

$$\boxed{\text{TLI} = \left[\left(\chi^2_{\text{null}}/df_{\text{null}}\right)-\left(\chi^2_{\text{model}}/df_{\text{model}}\right)\right]/\left[\left(\chi^2_{\text{null}}/df_{\text{null}}\right)-1\right]}$$

A value of 0.838 was obtained for the TLI. Using the guideline value of 0.90, suggested by Hair *et al*. (2010) to be a good value, it was concluded that the TLI was below par.

- IFI

Another incremental fit index is the incremental fit index (IFI), aptly named. The IFI is another index for assessing model fit. It is calculated as the ratio of the difference between the chi-square values for the null model and proposed model to the difference between the chi-square value for the null model and the degrees of freedom for the proposed model:

$$\boxed{\text{IFI} = \left(\chi^2_{\text{null}}-\chi^2_{\text{model}}\right)/\left(\chi^2_{\text{null}}-df_{\text{model}}\right)}$$

The IFI for this model was found to be 0.85, which was once again below the guideline of 0.90 for indicating a good value.

6.5.4.1.4 Parsimony fit indices

These indices (see Schumacker & Lomax, 2010) provide useful information about which model is best among some group of similar or competing models by inspection of their fit relative to their complexity. The parsimony ratio is used as basis for these indices, which is calculated as the ratio of the number of degrees of freedom used by a model to the total number of degrees of freedom that is available.

- AGFI

The adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) refers to the adjustment for the degrees of freedom of a model relative to the number of variables. The GFI and AGFI indices are useful in comparing the fit of two different models with the same data, or a single model using different data. The AGFI index is computed as

$$\boxed{1-\left[\left(k/df\right)\left(1-\mathrm{GFI}\right)\right]}$$

where k is the number of unique distinct values in the sample covariance matrix, and df is the number of degrees of freedom in the model (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). Since AGFI = 0.818 for the initial model, it was just above the cut-off value of 0.80, indicating that the AGFI was good (Hair *et al*., 2010).

Table 6.14 displays a summary of the GOF statistics. The recommended guideline and observed value of each statistic from the sample data as obtained from the AMOS output, are provided.

Table 6.14: Summary of goodness-of-fit statistics for the initial model

Statistic	Guideline/Benchmark*	Observed value
Chi-square	p > 0.05	1978.555 df = 584 p < 0.01
CMIN/Df	< 3 Good < 5 Sometimes permissible	3.388
GFI	0.90 Traditional > 0.95 Great	0.841
RMSEA	0.05 Good 0.05–0.10 Moderate > 0.10 Bad	0.063
PCLOSE	> 0.05 Good	0.000
RMR	< 0.09 Good	0.039

Statistic	Guideline/Benchmark*	Observed value
NFI	> 0.90 Good	0.800
CFI	0.80 Sometimes permissible 0.90 Traditional > 0.95 Great	0.849
RFI	> 0.90 Good	0.784
TLI	> 0.90 Good	0.838
IFI	> 0.90 Good	0.850
AGFI	> 0.80 Good	0.818

Source: Adapted from Hair *et al*. (2010) and Kline (2011)

As can be seen from Table 6.14, only the RMR and AGFI measures conformed to the recommended guidelines of goodness-of-fit.

6.5.4.2 Convergent validity

In order to examine convergent validity, the unstandardised factor loading estimates presented in Table 6.15 below were reviewed. For each indicator or variable the associated construct, estimated loading, standard error and critical ratio (C.R.) are presented.

Table 6.15: Unstandardised factor loading estimates

Indicator	Construct	Estimated loading	Standard error	C.R.
B11	F1	1.000	N/A	N/A
B21	F1	0.650	0.074	8.803
B13	F1	1.302	0.118	11.013
B12	F1	1.215	0.111	10.935
B25	F1	1.525	0.130	11.693
B26	F1	1.511	0.127	11.911
B24	F1	1.454	0.123	11.844
B35	F1	1.617	0.140	11.581
B29	F1	1.228	0.109	11.240
B37	F1	1.340	0.120	11.208
B36	F1	1.639	0.140	11.725
B27	F1	1.485	0.127	11.714
B28	F1	1.276	0.118	10.842

B17	F2	1.000	N/A	N/A
B14	F2	0.711	0.070	10.090
B20	F2	1.015	0.093	10.964
B23	F2	1.354	0.102	13.270
B22	F2	1.159	0.102	11.370
B16	F2	1.309	0.102	12.778
B15	F2	1.196	0.098	12.150
B10	F3	1.000	N/A	N/A
B9	F3	0.925	0.067	13.782
B4	F3	0.808	0.063	12.769
B8	F3	0.776	0.057	13.565
B5	F3	0.829	0.078	10.603
B18	F3	0.894	0.076	11.821
B19	F3	0.854	0.067	12.685
B3	F4	1.000	N/A	N/A
B2	F4	0.670	0.062	10.875
B7	F4	1.100	0.090	12.179
B6	F4	1.033	0.083	12.482
B31	F5	1.000	N/A	N/A
B34	F5	1.106	0.115	9.641
B33	F5	1.036	0.092	11.237
B30	F5	1.017	0.092	11.048
B32	F5	1.054	0.089	11.826

Source: Author's own compilation

The C.R. is a value obtained by dividing the estimated factor loading by its standard error. For example, the C.R. value for indicator B14 is z = 0.711/0.070 = 10.090. In other words, the factor loading estimate for B14 is 10.09 standard errors above zero. The C.R. is similar to a t-value from a t-test in which the loading estimate is hypothesised to be zero (Hair *et al*., 2010). The C.R. therefore acts as an indicator for significant loadings. Note that C.R. (with full stops) is different from CR (without full stops) (composite reliability).

As can be seen from Table 6.15, all of the unstandardised factor loading estimates are highly significant. Although the unstandardised loadings provide useful information, they do not give the diagnostics needed to determine convergent reliability. To that end, the standardised loading estimates were examined, since they also aid in the calculation of reliability estimates. Figure 6.14 shows the standardised loading estimates on the CFA model.

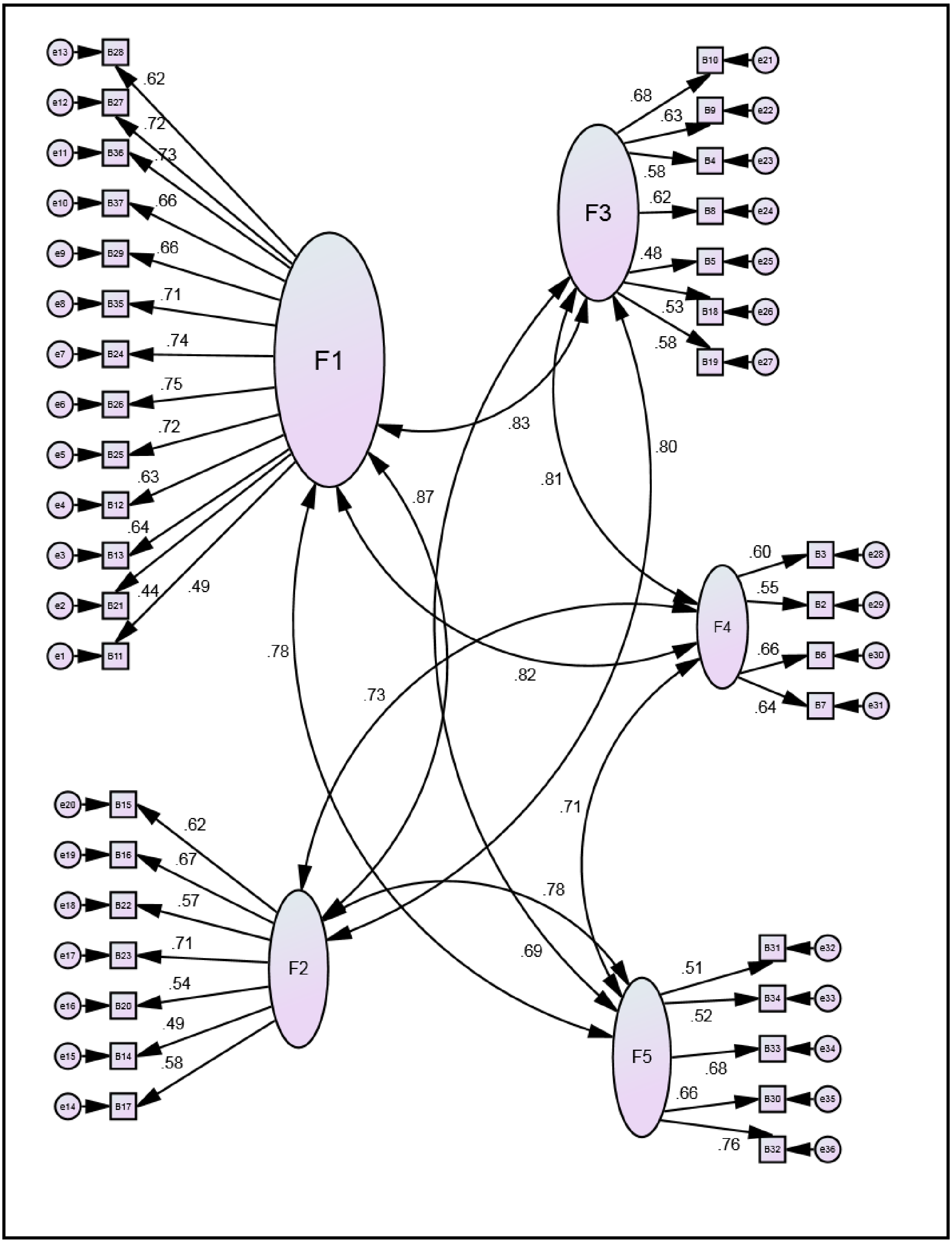

Figure 6.14: Initial conceptual measurement model with standardised loading estimates

Source: Author’s own compilation

The standardised loadings are displayed in Table 6.16, together with the Cronbach alpha, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) values for each construct.

Table 6.16: Standardised loading estimates and reliability

Construct	Items	Factor loading	Item mean (SD)*	Item-total correlation	Construct mean (SD)	Cronbach alpha	CR	AVE
F1	B11	0.486	4.48 (0.715)	0.462	4.48 (0.483)	0.908	0.954	0.438
	B21	0.442	4.77 (0.511)	0.419				
	B13	0.639	4.44 (0.709)	0.605				
	B12	0.630	4.53 (0.670)	0.618				
	B25	0.722	4.35 (0.735)	0.676				
	B26	0.752	4.46 (0.698)	0.696				
	B24	0.742	4.50 (0.681)	0.691				
	B35	0.707	4.25 (0.795)	0.661				
	B29	0.665	4.61 (0.642)	0.640				
	B37	0.661	4.57 (0.705)	0.645				
	B36	0.726	4.33 (0.785)	0.695				
	B27	0.725	4.46 (0.712)	0.691				
	B28	0.620	4.53 (0.715)	0.601				
F2	B17	0.579	4.44 (0.713)	0.486	4.34 (0.511)	0.794	0.872	0.362
	B14	0.487	4.64 (0.603)	0.429				
	B20	0.542	4.32 (0.774)	0.464				
	B23	0.710	4.30 (0.787)	0.587				
	B22	0.569	4.26 (0.842)	0.485				
	B16	0.670	4.22 (0.807)	0.628				
	B15	0.623	4.22 (0.793)	0.589				
F3	B10	0.681	4.21 (0.810)	0.628	4.28 (0.541)	0.776	0.841	0.348
	B9	0.633	4.33 (0.806)	0.539				
	B4	0.582	4.44 (0.766)	0.506				
	B8	0.622	4.56 (0.688)	0.517				
	B5	0.476	4.12 (0.961)	0.415				
	B18	0.535	4.01 (0.922)	0.446				
	B19	0.577	4.27 (0.816)	0.481				
F4	B3	0.604	4.42 (0.748)	0.507	4.47 (0.510)	0.704	0.834	0.216
	B2	0.548	4.73 (0.552)	0.437				
	B7	0.639	4.19 (0.777)	0.521				
	B6	0.662	4.52 (0.704)	0.511				
F5	B31	0.515	3.15 (1.225)	0.576	3.77 (1.043)	0.771	0.725	0.288
	B34	0.524	3.23 (1.331)	0.569				
	B33	0.681	4.04 (0.960)	0.552				
	B30	0.659	4.20 (0.974)	0.515				
	B32	0.759	4.22 (0.877)	0.547				

Source: Author's own compilation

After inspection of the loading estimates, it was found that a number of loadings were low. According to Hair *et al*. (2010), standardised factor loadings should be 0.5 or higher and ideally 0.7 or higher. In this case, 13 out of 36 (36.1%) loadings were below 0.6 (marked in red). The AVE for each construct fell below the 0.5 guideline, as provided by Hair *et al*. (2010). The AVE for the first construct (F1) came close to 0.5. For all constructs the Cronbach's alpha values were in the range between 0.704 and 0.908, which indicates good internal reliability. Further to this, the composite reliabilities ranged from 0.725 for the fifth construct (F5) to 0.954 for the first construct (F1). Therefore, all constructs meet the 0.70 guideline for adequate reliability, as proposed by Hair *et al*. (2010). The AVE and CR for each construct were calculated using the formulas presented in Chapter 4 (see 4.9.4.2).

After thorough inspection of the convergent validity results and after careful consideration, it was evident that the initial CFA model did not adhere to the requirements for construct validity. Based on this finding, it was clear that the initial model needed to be modified.

6.5.5 The modified conceptual measurement model

For careful data reduction, the modification approach included the elimination of those items with low loadings, to ensure that the average loading for each construct was as close as possible to 0.7. To this end, the following items were deleted:

Table 6.17: Items deleted from each construct

Construct	Item
F1	B21
	B11
F2	B22
	B20
	B14
F3	B4
	B5
F4	B2
F5	B31
	B34

It was now suitable to provide each construct a descriptive name. After deletion of these items or variables, labels were assigned to each construct. The items belonging to each construct determined the name of the construct. Hence, labels were assigned by taking into consideration the specific variables belonging to the construct. The appropriateness of each item for representing the underlying dimensions of the construct was also taken into account. The labels decided upon were as follows. For each label, an abbreviation was given for ease of reference and to facilitate the drawing of the modified model. Each abbreviation is shown in brackets.

Construct 1 = Reputational service leadership and operations excellence (SLO);

Construct 2 = Engagement and employability (EAE);

Construct 3 = Customer-centred culture (CCC);

Construct 4 = Faculty and facilities (FAF); and

Construct 5 = Research focus and association (RFA).

In the discussion, which follows pertaining to the modified model, each construct is referred to by its abbreviation whenever it is more convenient. Table 6.18 below shows the construct labels and variables belonging to each construct.

Table 6.18: Modified constructs with associated variables

Construct 1: Reputational service leadership and operations excellence	**Construct 2:** Engagement and employability	**Construct 3:** Customer-centred culture	**Construct 4:** Faculty and facilities	**Construct 5:** Research focus and association
B28: Assessment, measurement and feedback **B27:** On-time performance **B36:** Administrative capacity **B37:** Ethical practice **B29:** Trust **B35:** Managing expectations **B24:** Continuous improvement **B26:** Service quality standards	**B15:** Institutional partnerships **B16:** Student partnerships **B23:** Information management **B17:** Practical application	**B10:** Internal customer focus **B9:** Personal attention **B8:** Communication **B18:** Culture **B19:** Application and registration	**B3:** Technology **B6:** Faculty expertise and senior academics **B7:** Servicescape	**B33:** Loyalty **B30:** Library quality **B32:** Research

Construct 1: Reputational service leadership and operations excellence	**Construct 2:** Engagement and employability	**Construct 3:** Customer-centred culture	**Construct 4:** Faculty and facilities	**Construct 5:** Research focus and association
B25: Benchmarking **B12:** Leadership and top management commitment **B13:** Operations management				

The diagram for the initial measurement model was then modified to reflect the labelled constructs and associated indicator variables, after deletion of the ten variables, as shown in Table 6.17. Each construct then had fewer variables belonging to it, as reflected in Table 6.18 above. Construct SLO had two variables fewer than in the initial model, namely 11 variables instead of 13. Construct EAE had four associated variables after three variables had been removed. The number of variables belonging to construct CCC had changed from seven to five. Only one variable was deleted from construct FAF, leaving three associated indicator variables, adhering to the minimum number of variables per construct. Lastly, construct RFA, the fifth construct, had three associated variables in the modified model, instead of five in the initial model. The relationships among the constructs and indicator variables in the modified model remained unchanged from the initial model (Figure 6.14). The modified model is depicted in Figure 6.15.

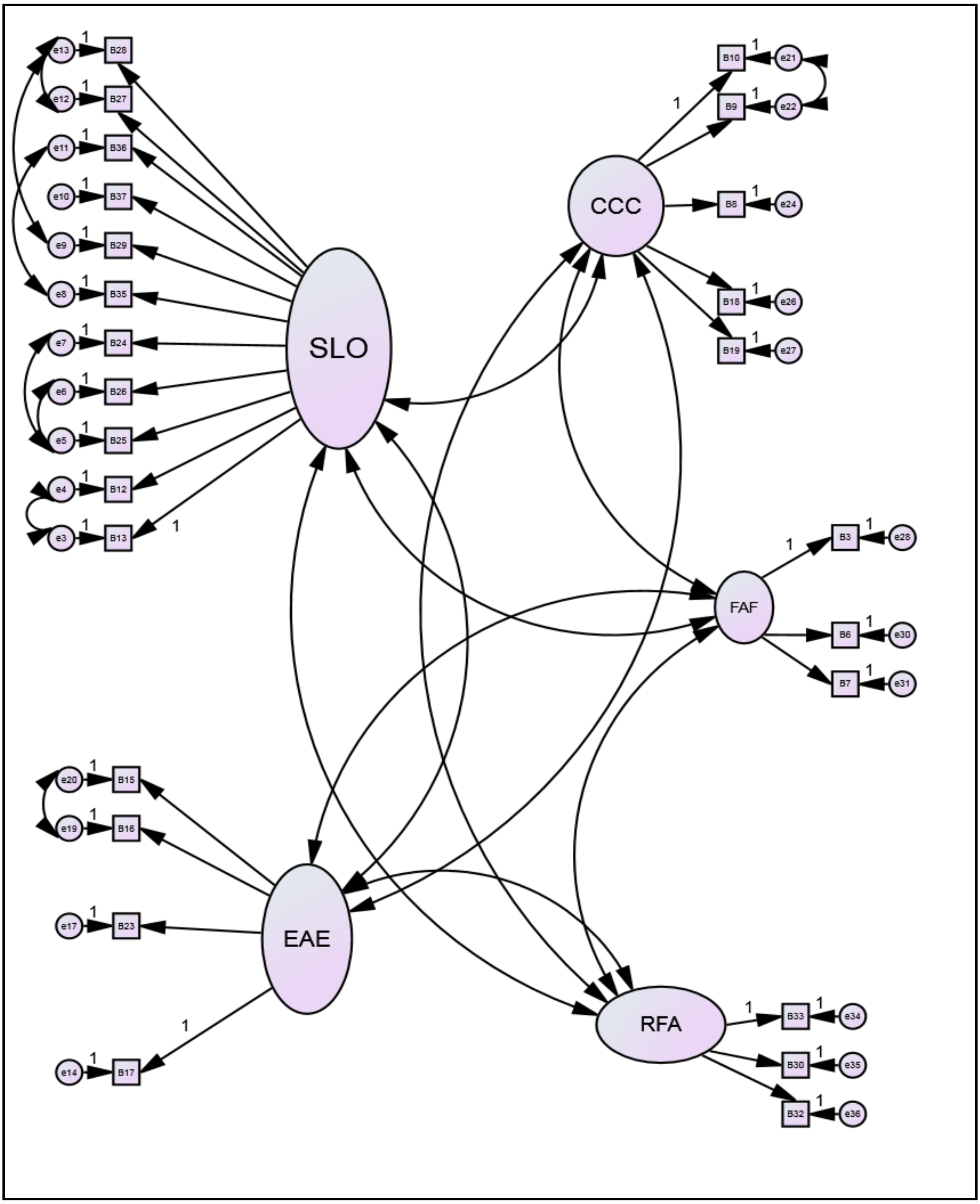

Figure 6.15: Modified conceptual measurement model

Source: Author's own compilation

The new model displayed 26 measured variables, along with the existing five latent constructs and the way they related to each other. The same assumptions applied to the measurement model, i.e. correlation was allowed between all constructs, and each variable could only load onto one construct, i.e. no cross-loadings were allowed.

As was done with the initial measurement model, the identification capability of the modified model needed to be checked. Table 6.19 below contains detail regarding the level or degree of identification for each construct.

Table 6.19: Degree of identification for the modified model

Construct	Number of variables	Number of distinct sample moments	Number of parameters to estimate*	Degrees of freedom	Level of identification
SLO	11	66	22	44	Overidentified
EAE	4	10	8	2	Overidentified
CCC	5	15	10	5	Overidentified
FAF	3	6	6	0	Just-identified
RFA	3	6	6	0	Just-identified

*Including standardised loading estimates

Source: Author's own compilation

As can be seen from Table 6.19, most constructs in the modified model were overidentified, except constructs FAF and RFA. As mentioned, this was favourable towards obtaining the best possible solution to the (modified) measurement model. Looking at the measurement model as a whole, as shown in Figure 6.15, the number of distinct sample moments was 351, while the number of parameters that needed to be estimated was 70, which included the standardised loading estimates. Hence, the degrees of freedom for the modified measurement model was 281, which was therefore overidentified. A solution with positive degrees of freedom could therefore be obtained with a corresponding chi-square GOF measure. Since the number of degrees of freedom for the model was greater than zero, the order condition was satisfied.

Next, the modified CFA model was also tested for construct validity through several GOF measures as well as the achievement of convergent validity. The same GOF statistics were utilised for the modified model as for the initial model. Table 6.20 summarises the results, as obtained from the AMOS output. The results from the initial model are included, in order to make a comparison between the GOF statistics for the modified model and those of the initial model.

Table 6.20: A comparison of goodness-of-fit statistics

Statistic	Guideline	Observed value	
		Initial model	Modified model
Chi-square	p > 0.05	1978.555 df = 584 p < 0.01	687.352 df = 281 p < 0.01
CMIN/Df	< 3 Good < 5 Sometimes permissible	3.388	2.446
GFI	0.90 Traditional > 0.95 Great	0.841	0.921
RMSEA	0.05 Good 0.05–0.10 Moderate > 0.10 Bad	0.063	0.049
PCLOSE	> 0.05 Good	0.000	0.679
SRMR	< 0.09 Good	0.039	0.022
NFI	> 0.90 Good	0.800	0.907
CFI	0.80 Sometimes permissible 0.90 Traditional > 0.95 Great	0.849	0.943
RFI	> 0.90 Good	0.784	0.893
TLI	> 0.90 Good	0.838	0.934
IFI	> 0.90 Good	0.850	0.943
AGFI	> 0.80 Good	0.818	0.902

The modified model shows a great deal of improvement in model fit in terms of the observed values of the GOF statistics. All GOF measures for the modified model adhered to the recommended standards, except for the chi-square statistic. As noted by Hair *et al*. (2010), there are problems pertaining to the chi-square statistic when used as a GOF measure for a CFA model. This is due to its mathematical properties. For this reason, the chi-square test is often not used as the only GOF measure. Added to this, Awang (2014) confirms that the fit index of minimum discrepancy chi-square can be ignored if the sample size obtained for the study is greater than 200.

The opposite was true for the initial model. Only two out of 12 GOF statistics for the initial model could be considered as adequate, satisfying the suggested guidelines. From this point of view, it was evident that the modified model was already a substantial improvement on the initial model. Nevertheless, construct validity and diagnostic information of the modified model were looked at in detail to provide more evidence pointing towards the modified model as the preferred model.

For examining convergent validity, the unstandardised factor loading estimates were inspected. These can be viewed in Table 6.21 below. For each indicator or variable, the associated construct, estimated loading, standard error and C.R. are displayed.

Table 6.21: Unstandardised factor loading estimates for the modified model

Indicator	Construct	Estimated loading	Standard error	C.R.
B13	SL	1.000	N/A	N/A
B12	SL	0.917	0.058	15.859
B25	SL	1.147	0.079	14.522
B26	SL	1.174	0.076	15.376
B24	SL	1.130	0.074	15.231
B35	SL	1.276	0.086	14.823
B29	SL	0.955	0.068	13.985
B37	SL	1.044	0.075	13.945
B36	SL	1.288	0.085	15.085
B27	SL	1.152	0.077	14.937
B28	SL	0.962	0.075	12.889
B17	CC	1.000	N/A	N/A
B23	CC	1.346	0.102	13.242
B16	CC	1.206	0.100	12.086
B15	CC	1.064	0.095	11.150
B10	RS	1.000	N/A	N/A
B9	RS	0.956	0.067	14.186
B8	RS	0.871	0.070	12.466
B18	RS	1.010	0.091	11.149
B19	RS	0.987	0.082	12.052
B3	CUL	1.000	N/A	N/A
B7	CUL	1.150	0.095	12.064
B6	CUL	1.016	0.086	11.872
B33	REC	1.000	N/A	N/A
B30	REC	1.008	0.077	13.123
B32	REC	1.084	0.073	14.923

Source: Author's own compilation

As with the initial model, all the unstandardised factor loading estimates were highly significant. However, as mentioned, the unstandardised loadings did not give the necessary diagnostics to determine convergent reliability. Hence, the standardised loading estimates were examined. Figure 6.16 displays a visual diagram of the modified model, showing the standardised loading estimates.

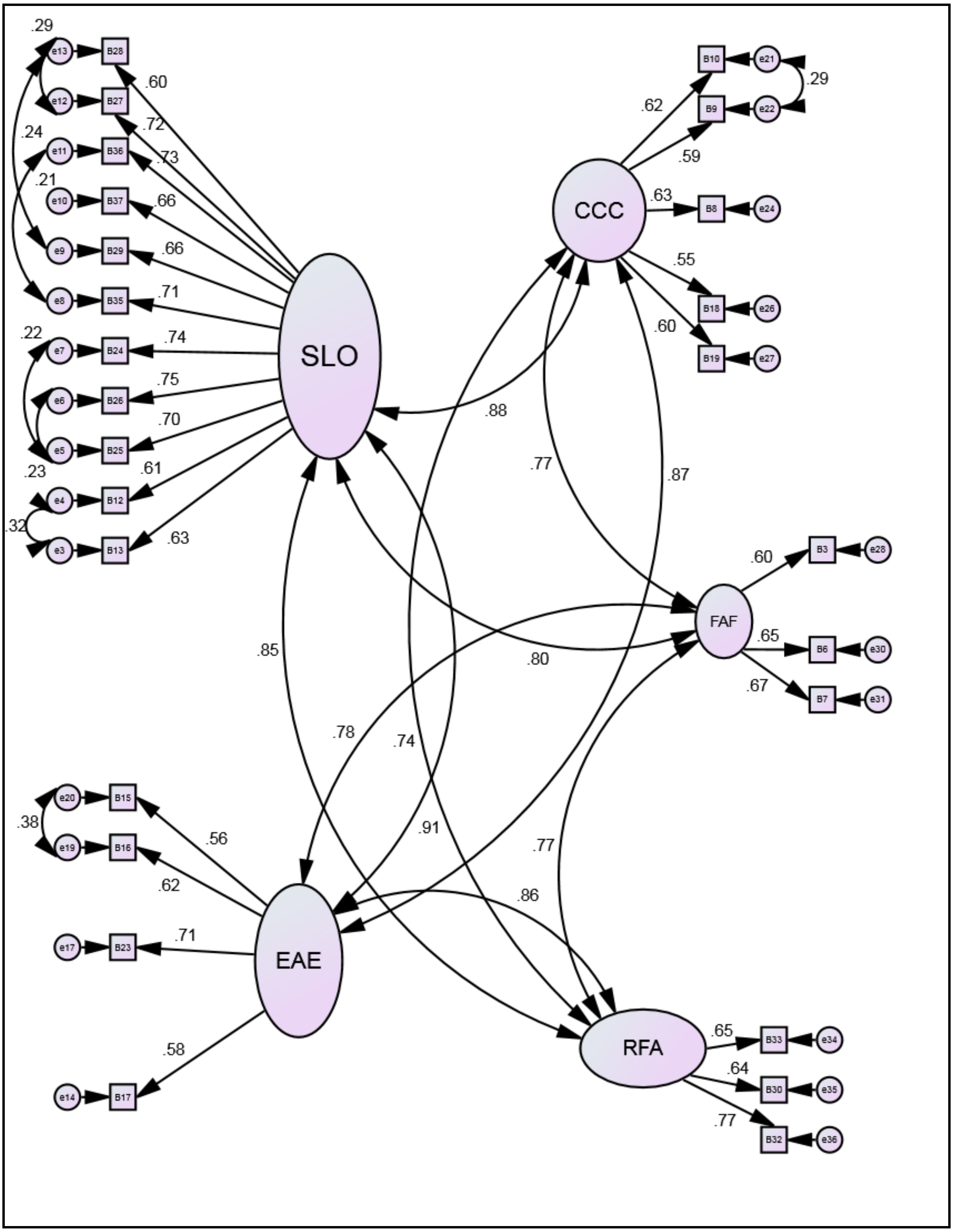

Figure 6.16: Modified conceptual measurement model with standardised loading estimates

Source: Author's own compilation

For ease of reference, the standardised loadings are displayed in Table 6.22, together with the Cronbach Alpha, composite reliability (CR), comparative fit index (CFI) and average variance extracted (AVE) values for each construct.

Table 6.22: Standardised loadings and reliability for modified model

Construct	Items	Factor loading	Item mean (SD)	Item-total correlation	Construct mean (SD)	Cronbach alpha	CR	CFI	AVE
Reputational service leadership and operations excellence (SLO)	B28	0.599	4.53 (0.715)	0.603	4.46 (0.52)	0.909	0.905	0.981	0.466
	B27	0.718	4.46 (0.712)	0.702					
	B36	0.729	4.33 (0.785)	0.703					
	B37	0.658	4.57 (0.705)	0.634					
	B29	0.660	4.61 (0.642)	0.634					
	B35	0.712	4.25 (0.795)	0.663					
	B24	0.737	4.50 (0.681)	0.695					
	B26	0.746	4.46 (0.698)	0.708					
	B25	0.695	4.35 (0.735)	0.669					
	B12	0.607	4.53 (0.670)	0.595					
	B13	0.627	4.44 (0.709)	0.611					
Engagement and employability (EAE)	B15	0.558	4.22 (0.793)	0.576	4.29 (0.59)	0.751	0.713	1.0	0.385
	B16	0.621	4.22 (0.807)	0.648					
	B23	0.710	4.30 (0.787)	0.518					
	B17	0.583	4.44 (0.713)	0.449					
Customer-centred culture (CCC)	B10	0.617	4.21 (0.810)	0.594	4.28 (0.57)	0.747	0.736	0.960	0.359
	B9	0.592	4.33 (0.806)	0.549					
	B8	0.632	4.56 (0.688)	0.509					
	B18	0.547	4.01 (0.922)	0.452					
	B19	0.604	4.27 (0.816)	0.474					
Faculty and Facilities (FAF)	B3	0.603	4.42 (0.748)	0.479	4.38 (0.58)	0.676	0.676	1.0	0.410
	B6	0.650	4.52 (0.704)	0.456					
	B7	0.667	4.19 (0.777)	0.532					
Research focus and association (RFA)	B33	0.646	4.04 (0.960)	0.517	4.15 (0.75)	0.718	0.727	1.0	0.473
	B30	0.642	4.20 (0.974)	0.497					
	B32	0.767	4.22 (0.877)	0.605					

After inspection of the loading estimates for the modified model, it was found that only 5 out of 26 (19.2%) loadings were below 0.6. The standard of higher than 0.5 and ideally higher than 0.7 was used again to assess the magnitude of the loadings. Hence, the majority of loading estimates were either above the standard or in close proximity of it. The AVEs for constructs SLO, FAF and RFA were in close proximity of the guideline of 0.5, while the AVEs for constructs EAE and CCC were a bit lower. However, each construct exhibited good internal and composite reliability (CR), which was indicative of adequate convergent validity (Hair *et al.,* 2010). For all constructs, the Cronbach's alpha values were in the range between 0.676 and 0.909, which indicated acceptable to good internal reliability. The CR values ranged from 0.676 for the fourth construct (FAF) to 0.905 for the first construct (SLO). Therefore, all constructs met the 0.70 guideline for adequate reliability. All constructs also achieved a CFI value of greater than 0.9 which implied strong scale unidimensionality. Again, the AVE and CR for each construct were calculated using the formulas presented in Chapter 4.

Model diagnostic information in the form of the standardised residual matrix was obtained from the output created by AMOS. Hair *et al*. (2010) advise that residuals smaller than 2.5 in absolute value do not pose a problem. Residuals are the differences between each sample (observed) covariance term and model implied (fitted) covariance term. The residual matrix is then the difference between the sample covariance matrix and the model implied covariance matrix (Hair *et al*., 2010). The residual matrix is too big (26 × 26) to display here. After thorough inspection, using an algorithm in a spreadsheet software program (Microsoft Excel), no residuals larger than 2.5 or smaller than -2.5 were found.

The above results provide evidence of unidimensionality and construct validity for the modified conceptual measurement model. Figure 6.16 was then refined and is presented in a more user-friendly manner (see Figure 6.17 below) in order to portray the final modified conceptual measurement model. This conceptual model will be incorporated in the final TQS framework for PHEIs, which will be presented in the next chapter.

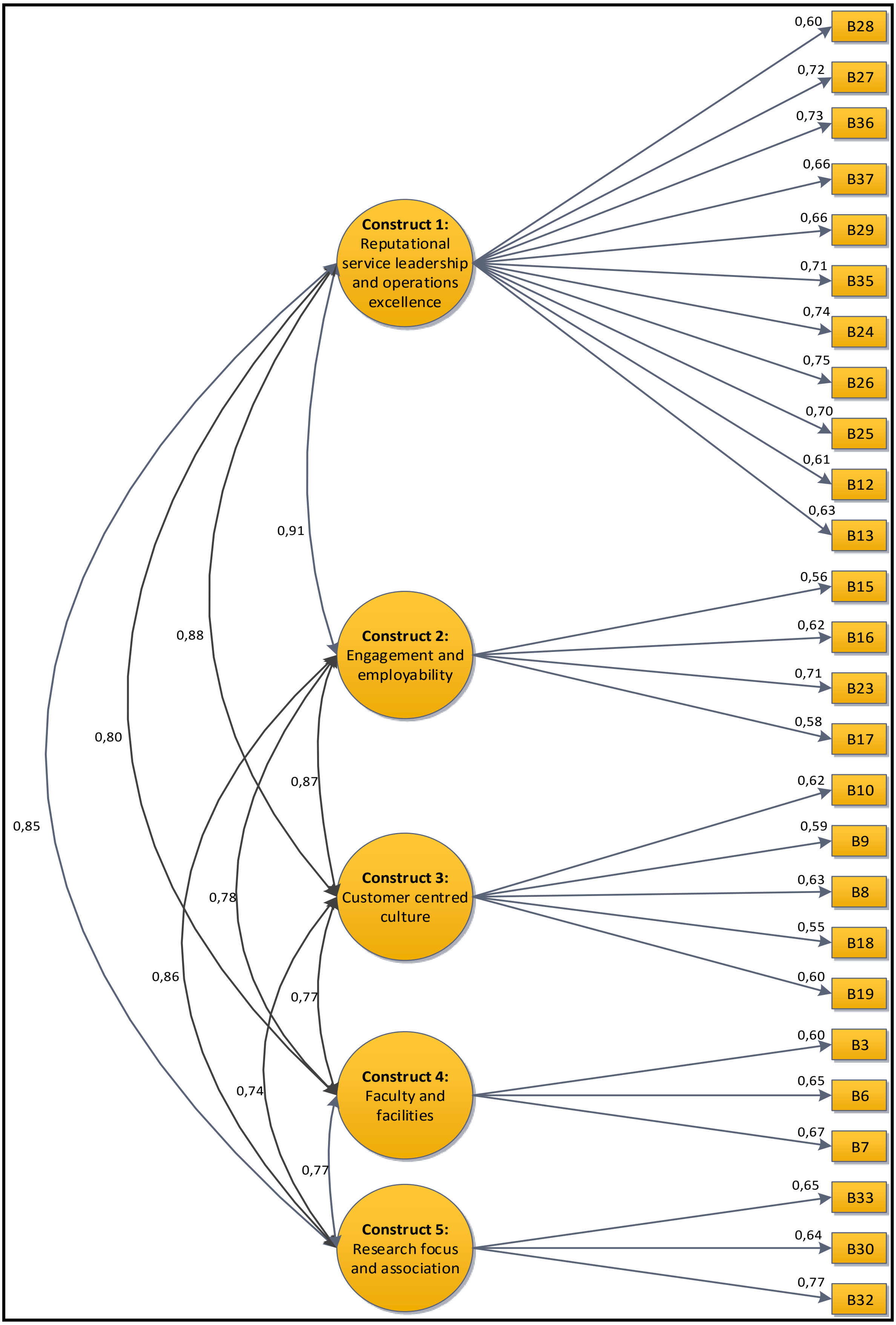

Figure 6.17: The final modified conceptual measurement model

Source: Author's own compilation

6.6 OPEN-ENDED QUESTION ANALYSIS

The final step in the data analysis process comprised the analysis of the open ended question (section C in the questionnaire). From the 612 useable questionnaires, 499 responses were obtained. These findings were also thematically analysed to identity additional service quality dimensions for inclusion in the final TQS framework. The same procedure of thematic analysis was followed as explained in Chapter 4 (section 4.7.4). The data were again co-coded for verification by the same independent expert in qualitative research as in Stage 1.

This section reports on those responses that related to additional input that could potentially contribute to excellent service quality in a PHEI; hence, the identification of additional service quality dimensions. The aim was to obtain richer descriptions from the viewpoint of lecturers (internal customers) and students (external customers). In the presentation, only selected responses are provided. Verbatim quotes are provided and referenced according to the response numbering system in Appendix G (responses to the open-ended question). For anonymity, all responses in Appendix G to names of people, PHEIs, holding companies of PHEIs and company specific software packages have been replaced by "[…]".

The qualitative findings produced from the open-ended responses in the survey identified 11 dimensions. The dimensions were grouped into five categories and finally combined as one major theme. This theme may be defined as the "social–technical" need namely 'enhancing the quality of life and educational experience of the private higher education customer'. The theme, categories and dimensions are reflected in the summary in Table 6.23 below and are discussed in the sections that follow.

Table 6.23: Service quality dimensions: voice of the internal and external customer

Theme	Category	Dimensions
1. Enhancing the quality of life and educational experience of the private higher education customer	1.1 Insufficient satisfaction of basic needs	1.1.1 Physical and emotional safety, security, housing, access to health care (clinics)
		1.1.2 Domestic issues
		1.1.3 'Green' or environmental issues
		1.1.4 Extra-curricular activities
	1.2 Educational needs transformation	1.2.1 Affordability and # FeesMustFall
		1.2.2 African epistemologies

Theme	Category	Dimensions
		1.2.3 Unique product offering, innovative teaching methodologies including an emphasis on postgraduate offerings
	1.3 Belongingness or social requirements	1.3.1 Management of diversity
	1.4 Esteem needs	1.4.1 International recognition
	1.5 Salient growth desires	1.5.1 Contribution to society
		1.5.2 Employability and work-integrated learning

Source: Author's own compilation

6.6.1 Enhancing the quality of life and educational experience of the private higher education customer

This theme is inclusive of the insufficient satisfaction of basic needs, educational needs transformation, belongingness (social requirements), esteem needs and salient growth desires. Participants were resolute that the product delivery in terms of quality education extended beyond the (current) quality life cycle offered by the PHEI. They felt that the emphasis on their cognitive and educational development should be supplemented with holistic, tailor-made attention to enhance their quality of life. Participants were also increasingly comparing their experiences of educational offerings with their peers in public institutions. They justified their expectation in view of the (higher) fees that they had to pay at private institutions.

The theme was further theorised to include the following dimensions:

- physical and emotional safety, security, housing, access to health care (clinics);
- domestic issues;
- 'green' or environmental issues;
- extra-curricular activities;
- affordability and # FeesMustFall;
- African epistemologies;
- unique product offering, innovative teaching methodologies, including an emphasis on postgraduate offerings;
- management of diversity;
- international recognition;
- contribution to society; and lastly

- employability and work-integrated learning.

6.6.1.1 Insufficient satisfaction of basic needs

The quest for an improved quality of life was reflected in comments on the insufficient satisfaction of basic needs, which included:

- aspects of physical and emotional safety;
- security, access to housing and health care;
- transport; and
- basic necessities such as access to water.

Also included were topics such as domestic arrangements, 'green' or environmental issues, and extracurricular activities.

6.6.1.1.1 Physical and emotional safety, security, housing, access to health care (clinics)

The importance of and the need for this dimension are reflected by quotes below. Please note that all quotations are reproduced verbatim and unedited. The number in brackets reflects the number assigned to the participant.

> "A sense of security, not only against perpetrators, but also for students on campus against other students that abuse others and that bully other people." (101)

> "It is important that the health of students is considered, and that the staff of the college ensure that each student is healthy mentally and physically." (307)

> "Not all students get on-campus accommodation, or off-mine accommodation that is controlled by the institution. These students have to make use of private accommodation. This comes at a high cost and little comfort as up to 15 students have to share kitchen spaces. Some homeowners promise things like free Wi-Fi, only to find that there is none. Home owners' only concern is to make money and they don't care about the students." (230)

6.6.1.1.2 Domestic issues

These aspects relate to internal housekeeping matters, which were often very basic such as well-organised facilities, parking and sanitary products.

> “Certain small things can greatly contribute to excellent service quality in a PHEI such as a neat campus with clean facilities (restrooms, classrooms, etc.) or having adequate parking space for students so that vehicles don't have to be parked off-campus in dangerous or high risk areas.” (81)

> “Cleaner sanitary products as well as cleaner bathrooms.” (472)

6.6.1.1.3 ‘Green’ or environmental issues

Participants demonstrated an awareness of environmental needs and the influence and harmful effects of human activity on the biophysical environment. They referred to recycling and ‘greener’ alternatives as well as sustainability and conservation.

> “I also think it is worth incorporating more sustainable options around the campus, this would be inclusive of recycling and switching to greener alternatives.” (198)

> “It would also be important to place some emphasis on the sustainability of the offering of the institution, with specific reference to creating a workforce as an outcome to studies at PHEIs that is ethical, less materialistic and conservation centred”. (208)

6.6.1.1.4 Extra-curricular activities

Participants called for the addition of extra-curricular, recreational activities, for example, sports or fun days as well as facilities, such as courtyards and sporting grounds. Participants were of the view that these undertakings would improve interactions with peers and staff and promote relaxation, in turn promoting better health, resulting in an improved quality of life.

> “It is important for private institutions to provide a higher standard of facilities than what is currently offered; such as quads for students, sporting grounds.” (323)

> “Increasing the number of recreational activities that take place at the campus which includes all members of the faculty and the students.” (44)

> “Extramural activities that involve students will help us relax out of campus but still stay in contact with fellow students.” (288)

> “Fun days where all university students meet.” (331)

6.6.1.2 Educational needs transformation

In light of the current educational crisis in South Africa (see Chapter 2, section 2.2.3), it was not surprising that participants called for the 'transformation of education' (371, 270). A number of suggestions were put forth, such as sponsorships, grants or scholarships, bursaries, flexible fee structures and incentive-based discounts. The dimensions of African epistemologies and unique product offerings were included in this category.

6.6.1.2.1 Affordability and # FeesMustFall

A call for affordability and #FeesMustFall became increasingly evident against the backdrop of the educational transformation agenda.

> "Affordability of fees can be problematic for students who are financing their own studies. Need to look at sponsorships for those students may by getting grants from industries/companies." (104)
>
> "Offering student bursaries or scholarships is extremely important." (135)
>
> "A flexible fee structure that can be afforded by many." (32)
>
> "I think that instead of students trying to abolish fees, it should be incentive based, so say that students will pay for the first year of education and those that excel in their academics should be offered a discount at the end of the year. This would be important because then people are motivated to work rather than just expecting to be given things at no additional costs for achieving minimum standard." (456)

6.6.1.2.2 African epistemologies

This point is linked to the transformation agenda in higher education. Participants raised awareness of the decolonisation of the curriculum, and urged that African epistemologies be considered in the educational offerings.

> "I think context is everything. If I am attending an institution in Africa, I expect to be given knowledge and information relevant to that context. The eurocentrism rampant in the majority of academic information is highly problematic in an African institution. Decolonization is of the utmost importance!" (438)

6.6.1.2.3 Unique product offering, innovative teaching methodologies, including an emphasis on postgraduate offerings

Participants requested tailor-made, innovative educational offerings and teaching methodologies as well as access to technological improvements. They were of the opinion that this would produce critical thinkers ready for the global market.

> "They should offer speciality degrees not just general core subjects." (235)
>
> "Continual alignment with technological advances in the way learning takes place." (196)
>
> "[There should be] ongoing research of latest international trends in the communication industry as well as teaching methodology, such as FLIP CLASSROOMS to produce creative and innovative students that solves problems and are distinctive in their area of study. This leads to students that are creative thinkers with strategic intent." (227)
>
> "Assist with research methodology aspects." (55)

6.6.1.3 Belongingness or social requirements

Moving beyond the 'insufficient satisfaction' argument to a higher level, participants expressed the need for affiliation, 'a sense of belonging' (315).

6.6.1.3.1 Management of diversity

Participants felt that this could be acquired through managing diversity and being more inclusive of "social and cultural experience". (62)

> "Being aware of the diversity of the student body and the employees of the campus and immediately addressing issues of race and unethical behaviour when it arises." (67)

6.6.1.4 Esteem needs

'Esteem needs' refers to the status associated with studying at a private institution, as well as the reputation of the qualification in an international arena.

6.6.1.4.1 International recognition

It seemed as if participants regarded the international recognition and the applicability of their degrees in other countries as important.

> "The quality and the reputation of the qualification will always be the most important aspect." (30)

> "Degrees need to be applicable in other countries." (45)

> "Being able to apply and know your degree carries weight locally and internationally." (187)

Participants also felt that "higher entry requirements" (92) to study at a PHEI could contribute to the reputation and international recognition of the institute.

6.6.1.5 Salient growth desires

Attention was drawn to the need to move beyond 'the self' of the student to the broader good of and contribution to the (African) community and society.

6.6.1.5.1 Contribution to society

From the responses, it seemed as if influence and involvement were at the heart of finding solutions to contextual problems in Africa.

> "Private institutions must be providing quality services at an affordable to meet the needs of the society and world class as well. Compliance and commitment to and finding solutions the challenges facing Africa as continent." (173)

> "The most important aspect is to create a culture and learning environment which will ensure that the students receive a grounding which will allow them to make a meaningful contribution to society." (256)

6.6.1.5.2 Employability and work-integrated learning

Without the ability to put their learning into practice through, for example, work-integrated learning or internships that may lead to greater and employability, participants felt that they could not contribute to the greater good of the academy or the economy. They confirmed a need for forging closer relationships with communities and cooperative enterprises.

> “Post-qualification employability and application must be the greatest concern or all is lost. What is the point of acquiring a qualification that cannot get you employed? A general education is great but doesn't help to put bread on the table.” (261)
>
> “I think work-based learning is going to become the new normal in private education institutions.” (250)
>
> “The university should seek/provide internships for its graduates. It needs to provide more support for third year students and guide them on the paths to take after they complete their bachelor’s degree.” (116)
>
> “Closer knowledge and understanding of specific employer and community needs from graduating students. Forging strong collaboration partnerships with consumers of the educational product being offered.” (210)

The challenges faced by PHEIs indicate that conventional views and approaches to service quality dimensions, measures and instruments may not suffice. The TQS framework for PHEIs needed to be holistic, and to achieve that, it had to be based on important contextual realities of higher education and multiple other stakeholder perspectives and expectations. Hence, the 11 additional service quality dimensions as portrayed in Table 6.23 were primary contributors to overall service quality and were included in the final TQS framework for PHEIs as the voice of the internal and external customer.

6.7 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter reported on the results of Stage 2 of the research study and therefore emphasised how the quantitative data were analysed and interpreted.

The first section reported on the biographic and demographic data of the respondents including cross-tabulations (per PHEI site) between the type of qualification enrolled for (students) and the type of qualification taught (lecturers). The second and third parts of the chapter focussed on the EFA and CFA approaches followed. A five-stage EFA process was conducted followed by a four-stage CFA approach. This was done in order to assess and inform the underlying structure of the set of variables, as obtained from the EFA. Based on the preliminary findings of the CFA, an initial conceptual measurement model was proposed. Following the initial model, an improved and modified conceptual measurement model was presented consisting of 26 dimensions (variables) represented by five primary constructs, namely –

- Reputational service leadership and operations excellence (SLO);
- Engagement and employability (EAE);
- Customer-centred culture (CCC);
- Faculty and facilities (FAF); and
- Research focus and association (RFA).

Both the internal and composite reliability scores were strong, and the CFA yielded a model with good fit. The modified model thus demonstrated evidence of unidimensionality and construct validity. The proposed modified model was presented in a more user-friendly manner in Figure 6.17. Finally, the qualitative findings produced from the open-ended responses in the survey identified 11 additional service quality dimensions from the voice of the internal and external customer.

The modified conceptual measurement model and the 11 additional service quality dimensions were incorporated into the final TQS framework presented in the next and final chapter.

CHAPTER 7

TOTAL QUALITY SERVICE FRAMEWORK FOR PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> 'TQS is a holistic comprehensive methodology that incorporates TQM principles for improving service quality, achieving internal and external customer satisfaction and exceeding customer expectations. It is also a service strategy and system that adopts a holistic approach by fostering total commitment towards improvement that could lead to the achievement of financial goals, increased market share as well as the creation of a viable competitive advantage' (see section 3.4.1).

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Although there is a plethora of literature available on service quality and service quality models and frameworks, no academic work was found on a TQS framework, and more specifically, for the PHE sector. As such, the current study set out to develop a holistic and integrated TQS framework for PHE in South Africa, as reported in this thesis.

Chapter 1 of the thesis provided a brief overview and background of the research study. The problem statement, research objectives as well as the significance and contribution of the research were outlined. The research framework and design, delimitations, research ethics and the project plan and process were also provided.

Chapters 2 and 3 focussed on the theoretical and empirical literature that pertained to the current research study. Chapter 2 reflected a review of the PHE environment in South Africa while PHE practices in other countries were also considered and compared to those in South Africa. The main objective of Chapter 2 was to provide a comprehensive background to the research problem. Chapter 3 provided the literature review on quality, service quality and TQS. Quality management terminology and concepts related to service quality were examined after which the focus shifted to the meaning and importance of service quality and TQS. Furthermore, various TQS dimensions were identified from literature spanning the last 27 years. The chapter concluded with a presentation of the proposed theoretical TQS framework.

Chapter 4 provided an explanation of the research design and methods applied in this study. The focus was on the application of the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design with dedicated attention to the two separate stages (qualitative Stage 1 and quantitative Stage 2). Attention was given to the sampling procedure, data collection, data analysis and the validity and reliability of the data for each stage. The chapter concluded with a discussion of research ethics.

The purpose of Chapter 5 was to explain Stage 1 of the research study, namely the identification of TQS dimensions from a PHEI top management perspective for the development of a TQS framework. Rich descriptions, validated by verbatim quotes, were provided and thematically analysed to derive at the identified dimensions. The final instrument development process was also explained by means of a joint data display.

Chapter 6 presented the results of Stage 2 of the research study. The chapter reported on the biographic and demographic data of the respondents followed by the analyses of the quantitative data through the EFA and CFA processes. (The chapter concluded with the qualitative thematic analysis of the open-ended question in the questionnaire.)

Chapter 7 provides a concluding overview of the research project in terms of the synthesis of the findings and results in relation to the research problem and objectives. The final TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa is presented (project closure). The chapter concludes with the contributions of the study and makes recommendations for future research.

The main themes of Chapter 7 are depicted in Figure 7.1 below.

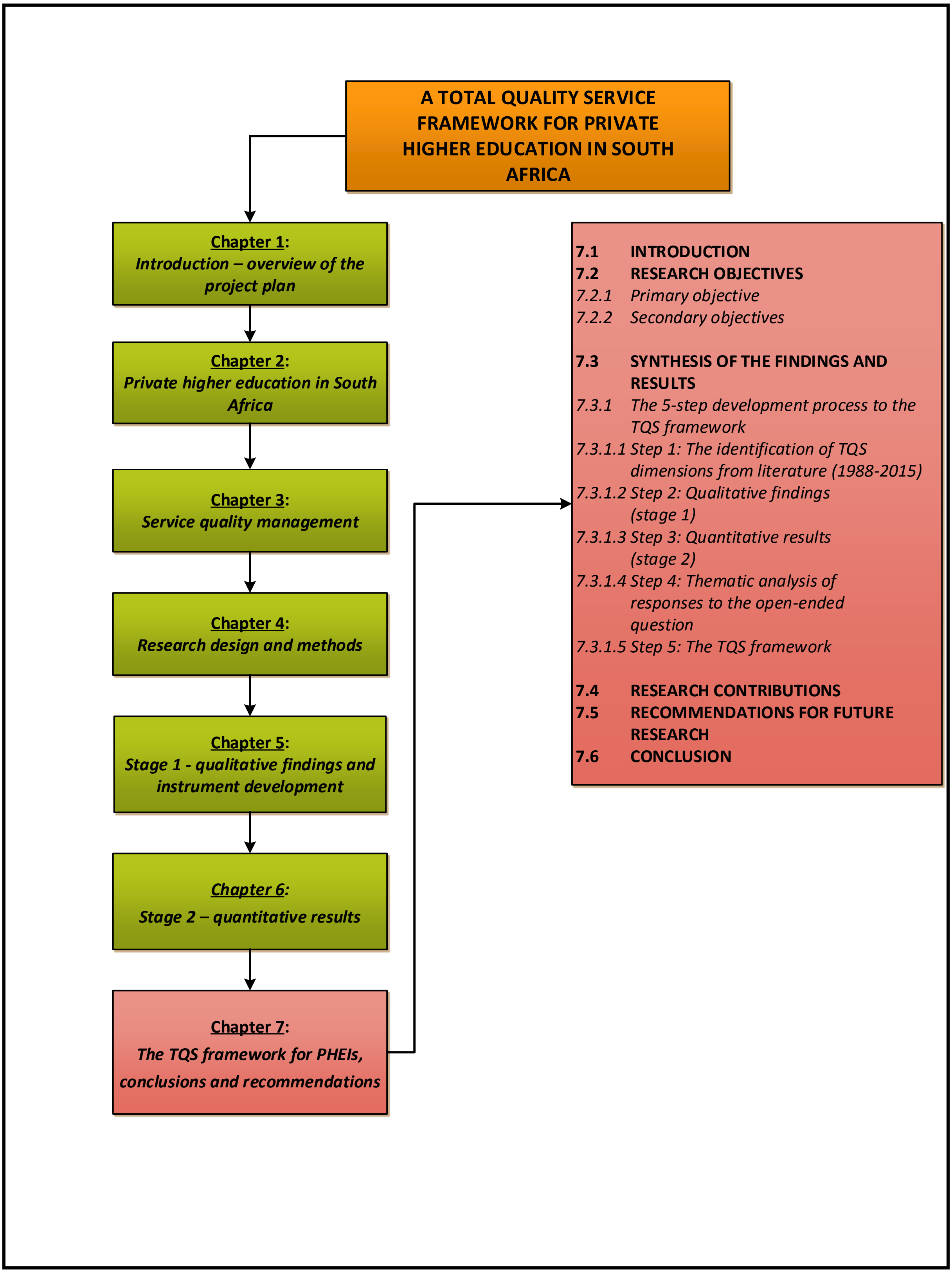

Figure 7.1: Layout of Chapter 7

Source: Author's own compilation

7.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This section restates the primary and secondary objectives of the current research study.

7.2.1 Primary objective

The primary purpose of this study was to address the problem regarding service quality in PHE by developing an industry-specific TQS framework (as a potential basis for an established TQS model) for PHEIs in South Africa. The framework (as a tool) will contribute to the need to manage service quality of PHEIs on a holistic and strategic basis. The final TQS framework, which is a culmination of Chapters 1 to 6, is presented in section 7.3.1.5. The next section presents the secondary objectives as stated in Chapter 1 (section 1.4.2), which contributed to the achievement of the primary objective.

7.2.2 Secondary objectives

The following secondary objectives were formulated in support of the primary objective:

- to provide a conceptual analysis of TQS within the context of organisational theory (addressed in Chapter 3, section 3.4);
- to identify broad TQS dimensions based on a literature study to be incorporated into a conceptual framework for TQS in PHEIs in South Africa (addressed in Chapter 3, sections 3.3–3.5);
- to analyse the perceptions of PHEI stakeholders in terms of service quality and service quality dimensions (addressed in Chapter 5, section 5.3 and Chapter 6, section 6.6);
- to make a significant contribution to PHE literature and sustainability in South Africa (addressed in Chapter 2, section 2.4); and
- to make a significant contribution to service quality for all stakeholders of PHEIs.

Sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 indicated that the primary and secondary objectives of the study, as stated in Chapter 1, sections 1.4.1–1.4.2, were addressed. The next section will focus on the synthesis of the findings and results.

7.3 SYNTHESIS OF THE FINDINGS AND RESULTS

This section compromises the synthesis of the 5-step development process in constructing the TQS framework.

7.3.1 The 5-step development process to the TQS framework

The first four steps in the development process of the TQS framework are summarised in this section. This is followed by step 5, which reflects the synthesis and culmination of the first four steps into the final TQS framework. Figure 7.2 (also presented in Chapter 1 [see Figure 1.3]), presents a diagrammatic depiction of the project plan and process followed in the development of the TQS framework.

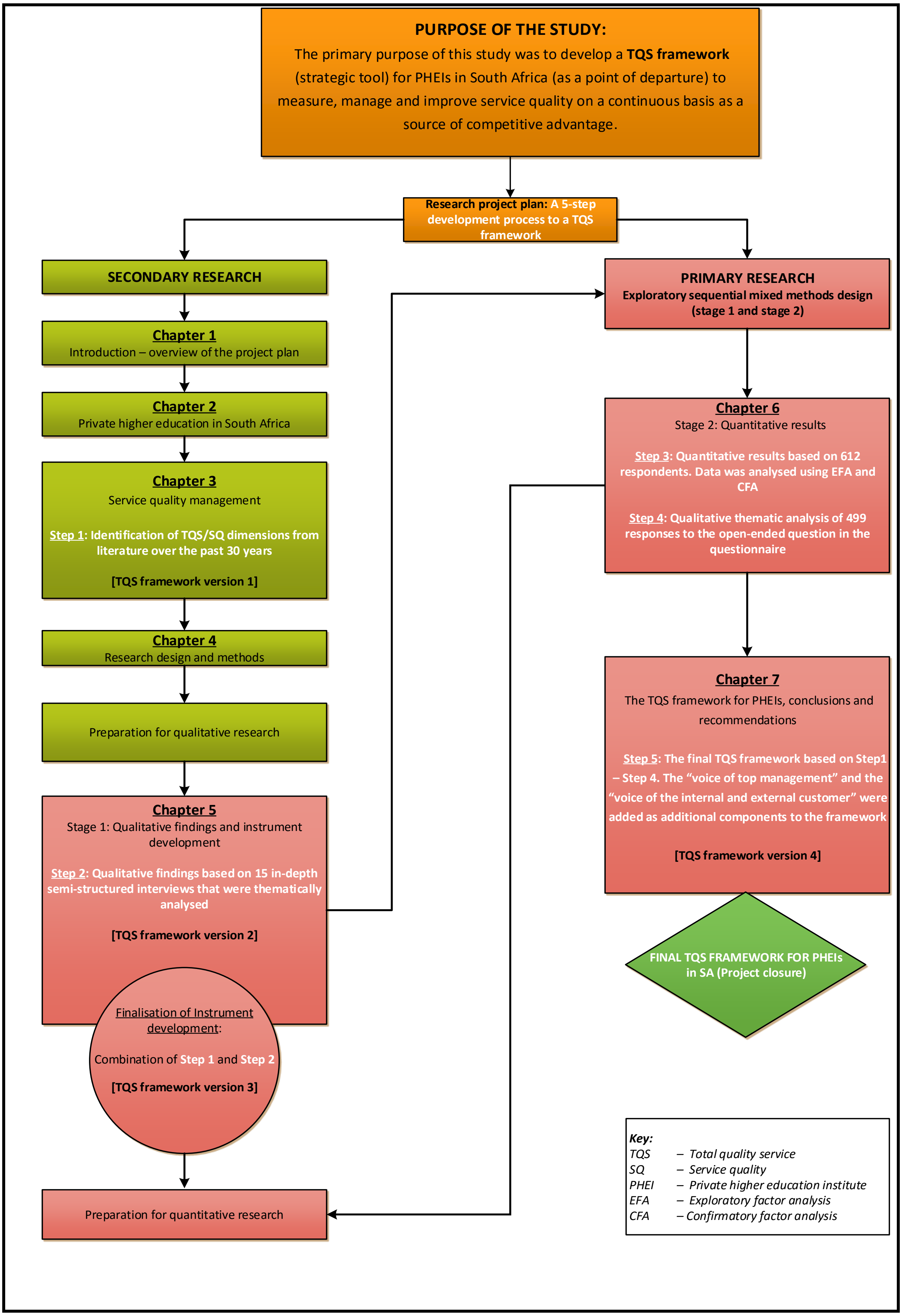

Figure 7.2: Project plan and process

Source: Author's own compilation

7.3.1.1 Step 1: The identification of TQS dimensions from literature (1988–2015)

Step 1 represented the identification of TQS dimensions from literature. Firstly, a systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted on service quality frameworks and models to identify service quality dimensions. This involved a historical literature review to identify service quality dimensions spanning the period 1988 to 2015. The SLR identified 73 service quality frameworks and models over a period of 27 years. This comprised 26 countries covering 29 different industries as indicated in Chapter 3, section 3.3.3. The identified frameworks and models emanated a total of 184 dimensions. A systematic 'funnel approach' was followed, which included the logical combination, integration, re-grouping and re-naming of these dimensions into the final 34 service quality dimensions identified from literature (see Chapter 3, Table 3.5). Following this, a second SLR was conducted to identify TQS dimensions and frameworks in various industries. A descriptive and historical SLR approach was followed, which involved the identification, evaluation, synthesis and interpretation of all available research on TQS dimensions between 1991 and 2015. The SLR identified 17 TQS frameworks and models over a period of 24 years. This included five countries and 11 industries (see Chapter 3, section 3.4.2). A total of 111 TQS dimensions were identified. A similar 'funnel approach' was followed, which re-grouped the 111 dimensions into 27 TQS dimensions identified from literature (see Chapter 3, Table 3.6). Finally, a logical and systematic approach of combination and elimination was followed to merge the 34 service quality dimensions and the 27 TQS dimensions into primary and secondary TQS dimensions (see Figure 3.10).

Steps 2 and 3 represent the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design followed in this study. (See Chapter 4, section 4.5.)

7.3.1.2 Step 2: Qualitative findings (Stage 1)

This step consisted of the qualitative exploration of TQS dimensions for PHEIs in South Africa from a top management perspective (Stage 1 of the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design). The target population consisted of six prominent PHEIs with 13 campuses or PHEI sites. From this population, a non-probability, homogeneous, purposive sample was drawn consisting of 15 top managers or principals. Data was collected by means of semi-structured in-depth interviews following a conversational mode. Data were gathered using semi-structured in-depth interviews. The total interview time was 631.53 minutes. The average length of the interviews was 42 minutes and the transcribed interviews amounted to 255 pages.

A thematic analysis approach was used to analyse the data. The validity and reliability of the data were tested via different strategies of trustworthiness (see Chapter 4, section 4.7.5). The thematic analysis approach generated 30 critical TQS dimensions that informed the development of a quantitative instrument that was applied in step 3 (Stage 2) of the research process (see Chapter 5, Table 5.3) and contributed to it. Included in step 2 was the intermediate stage of instrument development. A rigorous seven-step process was followed in the development process (see Chapter 4, section 4.8). The developed instrument was informed and complemented by literature as well as the qualitative findings. This process incorporated the combination of both TQS dimensions (27) and service quality dimensions (34) identified in literature with the identified 30 dimensions from the qualitative interviews, and was presented in the form of a joint data display (see Chapter 5, Table 5.15). The final instrument (questionnaire) consisted of 37 dimensions (items or constructs) where respondents had to indicate the importance of these dimensions in terms of measuring, managing and improvement of service quality on a continuous basis as part of a TQS framework (see Appendix F).

7.3.1.3 Step 3: Quantitative results (Stage 2)

Step 3 entailed the questionnaire survey for the quantitative exploration of the importance of TQS dimensions from the perspective of the internal (lecturers) and external (students) customers. This stage included recruiting a larger sample of different participants than in the qualitative strand in Stage 1. The goal was to identify TQS dimensions to be incorporated into the holistic TQS framework. The questionnaire was distributed via e-mail to all specified students and lecturers of selected PHEIs in the sampling frame. The specified respondents (sampling frame) consisted of students (in their second year and beyond) and lecturers (employed by the PHEI for more than one year). Data analysis included an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) approach. This was followed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in order to assess and inform the underlying structure of the set of variables, as obtained from the EFA. A conceptual measurement model was presented consisting of five 26 dimensions (variables) represented by five primary constructs. Both the internal and composite reliability scores were strong and the CFA yielded a model with good fit. The modified model thus demonstrated evidence of unidimensionality and construct validity (see Chapter 6, sections 6.4 and 6.5). Figure 4.2 in Chapter 4 provided a visual representation of the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design.

7.3.1.4 Step 4: Thematic analysis of responses to the open-ended question

This step represented the final step in the data analysis process, namely the thematic analysis of responses to the only open-ended question in the questionnaire (see Appendix F, section c). A total of 499 responses were obtained. These findings were also thematically analysed and produced an additional 11 service quality dimensions for inclusion in the final TQS framework (see Chapter 6, Table 6.23). The same procedure of thematic analysis was followed as explained in Chapter 4 section 4.7.4.

The next and last step, step 5, represented the culmination and synthesis of the first four steps into the final TQS framework. Selected top management perspectives (step 2), the conceptual measurement model (step 3) and the 11 additional service quality dimensions (step 4) were incorporated into the final TQS framework. Hence, the framework embodies the achievement of the primary objective and unique contribution of this study.

7.3.1.5 Step 5: The TQS framework

Step 5 signified the final TQS framework for PHE in South Africa and is represented by Figure 7.3 below. The framework is a culmination of the previous four steps and is the embodiment of the final product, representing project closure for this research study.

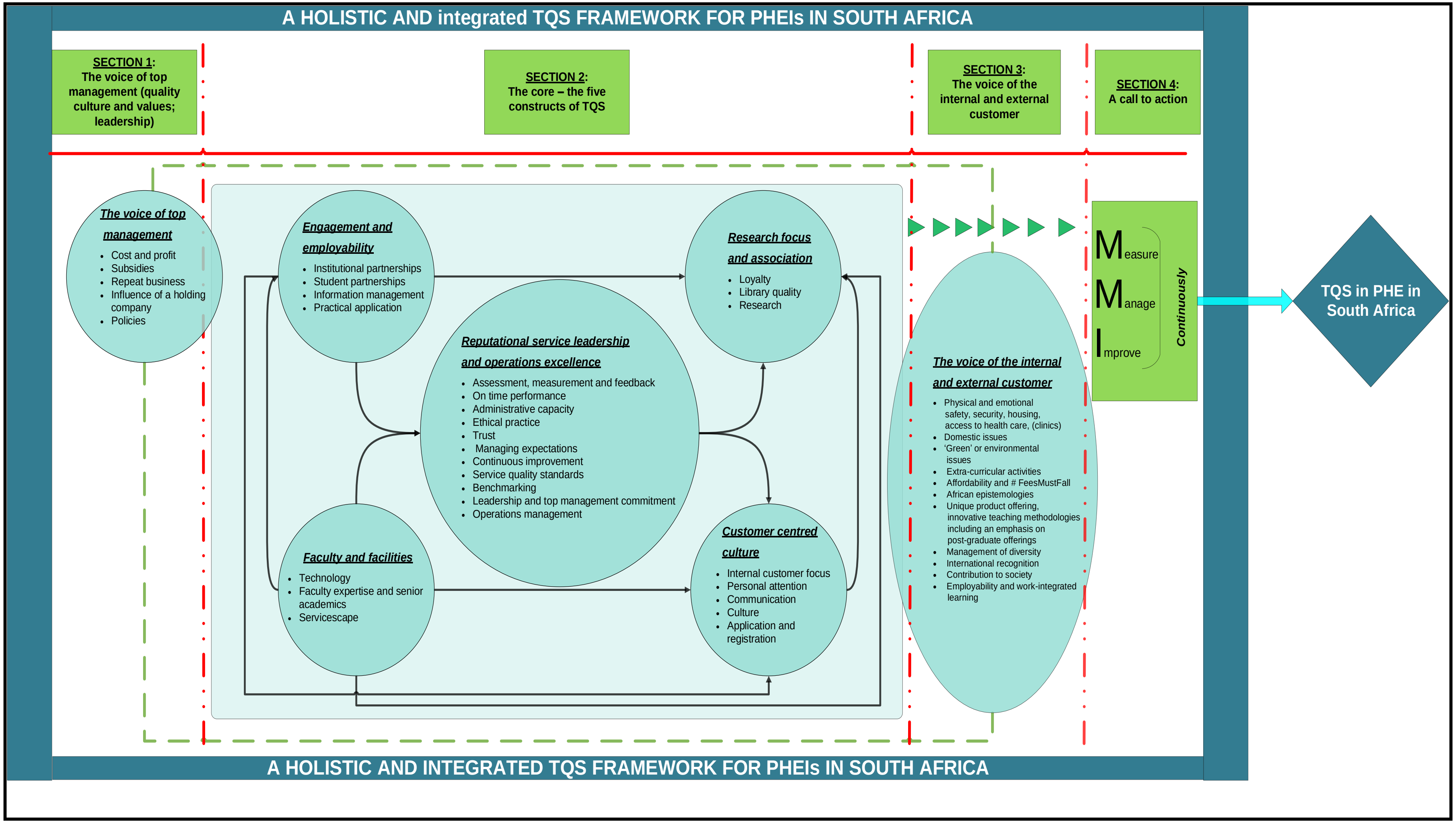

Figure 7.3: The TQS framework for PHE in South Africa

Source: Author's own compilation

With reference to Figure 7.3 above, the ‘voice of top management’ and the ‘voice of the internal and external customer’ were added as additional components to the framework.

Section 1 signifies the voice of top management, which is representative of a quality culture, values and leadership. The five dimensions incorporated in this section of the framework purely represents a top management perspective on TQS (see Chapter 5, sections 5.3.1.1.1, 5.3.1.2.1, 5.3.1.2.3, 5.3.2.4.6 and 5.3.2.5.7) and were not incorporated into the final quantitative questionnaire.

Section 2 embodies the core of the TQS framework. It represents the modified conceptual measurement model consisting of five constructs as presented in Chapter 6, Figure 6.17. This core section of the framework was developed based on a rigorous data analysis process that incorporated EFA followed by CFA.

The voice of the internal and external customer was incorporated into section 3 of the framework. This section is inclusive of the 11 additional service quality dimensions identified from the open-ended question analysis (see Chapter 6, Table 6.23).

Section 4 of the framework represents ‘a call to action’ (implementation). PHEIs should strive towards the continuous improvement service delivery should they wish to stay competitive and thrive in an increasingly regulated and competitive market. This requires well-choreographed moves from all stakeholders involved with regard to the measurement, management and continuous improvement of the integrated dimensions. Only by taking action, will the TQS framework come into its own and take its rightful place as a first step towards a strategic tool (model) for continuous improvement (see section 7.5, recommendations for future research).

As an integrated whole, the four sections symbolise the first unique, holistic and industry-specific TQS framework for PHE in South Africa.

7.4 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

The project outcome is a TQS framework that should benefit the service economy at large. From this study, it is evident that TQS for PHE rests on five pillars (constructs) namely reputational service leadership and operations excellence, engagement and employability, customer-centred culture, faculty and facilities, and research focus and association. With regard to the primary and secondary objectives, the significance and contribution of this research study were fivefold:

Firstly, the research filled the areas that have not been addressed by literature. A new definition for TQS in PHE in South Africa was formulated. As such, this research study was a pioneering effort in the development of a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa.

Secondly, the research addressed the current paucity of literature on PHE in South Africa. As indicated in Chapter 2, section 2.4.1, the PHE sector has received little attention nationally in the past. Bezuidenhout and De Jager (2014) confirm the notion of a very limited body of knowledge regarding PHEIs in South Africa. Dirkse van Schalkwyk and Steenkamp (2014a) support the statement by Bezuidenhout and De Jager (2014) and declare that research on PHEIs in South Africa is extremely limited.

Thirdly, where previous studies on service quality mainly focussed on the perception of the external customer, this research study provides a holistic and integrated analysis of service quality from the perspective of the internal customer, external customer and top management. In addition, the study also makes two methodological contributions. Although the use of the exploratory sequential mixed methods research design in instrument development is fairly common, the extensive literature review spanning 28 years coupled with the qualitative findings as the core of the instrument development process seemed to be a unique contribution. Furthermore, the study employed a joint display of data in the instrument development process (see Chapter 5, Table 5.15). It represented the 'building' of the instrument through the systematic merging of the literature results with the qualitative findings. It is recommended that researchers contemplate using joint data displays to integrate and epitomise instrument development processes visually.

Fourthly, this research identified unique dimensions of service quality in the organisational context of PHE in South Africa. Related to this, was the contribution of the development of the assessment instrument. It seems no other instrument appears has been published where respondents could indicate the importance of dimensions in terms of measuring, managing and improvement of service quality on a continuous basis as part of a TQS framework. The current instrument provides some evidence of validity and reliability and could possibly be adapted in future studies.

Finally, although various service quality frameworks and models exist, the entire study with the unique, holistic and industry-specific TQS framework at the core, should contribute to service quality and the eventual sustainability of PHEIs.

7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Since this was the first study in developing a TQS framework for PHE in South Africa, it provided the first step for further research to follow. Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations for future research are made:

- The framework could eventually be developed into a model, which could be utilised in industry as a practitioner tool to assess and improve TQS offered by a PHEI.
- Future researchers could consider a comprehensive (diverse) research population by approaching additional PHEIs in South Africa.
- It might be insightful to include other PHEI stakeholders in future studies, such as support staff, sponsors, industry and government.
- TQS frameworks for sectors other than education could be considered where non-profit and for-profit organisations are competitors. Such research would promote a better understanding of how to improve service quality in various sectors.
- Future studies could also consider the use of focus groups in the identification of new dimensions and themes. In addition, new dimensions could be added to the scale. This would however require new validation and reliability analysis.
- The current research focussed on the development of a TQS framework only, where the results produced five constructs. Future research could consider determining the relationships between these constructs through structural equation modelling (SEM) or path analysis.
- An ethnographic study, in which the researcher observes service quality delivery and talks to students and support staff, could produce interesting findings in terms of additional (or unique) service quality dimensions.
- As indicated in Chapter 4, section 4.4.3, the current study adopted a cross-sectional design. This provides the groundwork for further studies to conduct a similar research following a longitudinal method where a single group of people is observed over a period of time.
- The TQS framework should be more widely exposed (presented) to industry through scholarly journal publications.

7.6 CONCLUSION

The project outcome is a TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa. The framework could make a significant contribution to the PHE industry and the service economy at large.

The TQS framework will specifically contribute to the need to manage service quality of PHEIs on a holistic and strategic basis. It could also help to expand the body of knowledge on service quality improvement and sustainability of PHEIs in South Africa. In spite of the various generic service quality models and frameworks found in literature, it is well documented that only by identifying industry-specific service quality dimensions as the foundation for industry-specific frameworks and models, can service quality be truly understood and improved. It is almost impossible to find a single framework or model that integrates all aspects of something as complicated as service quality (a subjective assessment of a human experience).

It is therefore concluded that this study was a pioneering effort that bridged a specific gap with the development of the first TQS framework for PHEIs in South Africa. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations presented here will be useful and beneficial to the PHE service sector as a whole. This work therefore provides the first building blocks towards a comprehensive TQS model for measuring, managing and continuous improvement of TQS in PHE in South Africa.

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APPENDIX A

PERMISSION LETTER

PERMISSION LETTER

Request for permission to conduct research at ……………………………………………

"A conceptual framework for total quality service for private higher education in South Africa".

Date: / /

Attention:
Tel:
Email:

Dear ………………………………………………………….………,

The PHEIG meeting dated April 2013 has reference.

I am a DCom student at the University of South Africa in the Department of Business Management. The value and contribution of the research is highly dependent on your support and cooperation in terms of access and control of participants (respondents). The research design will focus on participants on three levels, namely top management (principals), lecturers and students.

The multiple challenges of private higher education institutions (PHEIs) are related to an increasingly competitive, marketing-oriented and highly regulated environment. In addition to this, these institutions have to function, survive and compete, not only with one another, but also with public institutions of higher education (HE). Hence the problem is that competition is on the increase and PHEIs need to strengthen their core business (service delivery) and find new ways to compete if they wish to survive in this dynamic environment. A total quality service (TQS) framework to manage service quality is not only critical for gaining a competitive edge in this ever-evolving environment, but also contributing to the strategic value of service quality excellence in

South Africa. Thus a TQS framework could the differentiating factor for sustainability and growth.

Practical implications

TQS implies a holistic approach (based on TQM principals) that needs to capture both the internal and external views regarding service quality. The empirical study will therefore follow a mixed-method approach (quantitative and qualitative). The survey will therefore entail the following:

- For the **qualitative** survey, a purposive sampling approach will be followed to select top managers (principals) from each campus. “Top management” (principals) will be interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire.

- The sampling procedure for the **quantitative** survey will be proportionate stratified sampling of **students** and **lecturers** from various PHEIs in South Africa. In this case………………….…………. campuses. The respondents (students and lecturers) will be approached to complete an online questionnaire.

- For **control** and **confidentiality**, the questionnaire will be pre-tested (approved) by yourselves and the names of the participating institutions and individuals **will not** be disclosed. All research data (results and findings) will be treated as confidential.

To conclude - the research proposal will have to be defended at a doctoral colloquium and approved by the College Research Ethics Review Committee (CRERC) of the College of Economic and Management Sciences (CEMS). *A precondition to the proposal being approved is consent from identified organisations granting permission for the study and access to respondents (the organisation’s staff / clients).*

The Unisa ethical clearance document and confidentiality agreement that has to be completed and signed by all post graduate students can be made available on request.

Thank you for your kind cooperation,

____

Riaan Dirkse van Schalkwyk (BCom, BCom Hons, MCom Business Management)
Lecturer: Operations & Quality Management
Department of Business Management
Unisa

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Provisional consent

I hereby give **provisional** consent for the study described in this document to be conducted on ………………………………. campuses. Provisional consent is given based on the initial project idea. Final consent for the study will be granted based on a detailed project plan (provided by the researcher) that will be to the advantage of all stakeholders involved.

____

____

[Name of the above signatory]

____

[Signatory’s position]

APPENDIX B

STAGE 1: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

STAGE 1: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

UNISA university of south africa

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Date: / /

TOPIC AND PRELIMINARY TITLE: A framework for total quality service for private higher education in South Africa.

Dear prospective participant

My name is Riaan Dirkse van Schalkwyk and I am doing research under the supervision of Prof. Rigard J. Steenkamp (professor in quality/operations management, Department of Business Management) towards a PhD degree at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in this study.

The primary purpose of the study is to develop a framework to manage total quality service (TQS) in private higher education in South Africa. This framework will be based from the perspectives of students, lecturers and campus management. A holistic approach will be used to create a TQS framework. The first stage of the study involves short semi-structured interviews with you (the college/campus principal).

[Stage 2 of the survey will encompass on-line questionnaires that will be sent to lecturers and students in 2015].

Please note the following regarding the interviews:

- This interview will be anonymous. Your name will not appear on the interview guide and the answers you give will be treated as strictly confidential. You cannot be identified in person on the basis of your responses. Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly with a transcriber and external coder. Records that may identify you will only be available to people working on the study.

- Your voluntary participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate or stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.

- Please answer the questions in the interview as completely and honestly as possible. Also, feel free to expand on the topic and provide your own views, information and insights. The interview should not take more than 1 hour of your time. Your perceptions and experiences with regards to service quality and TQS in a private higher education environment are of paramount importance in the development of a TQS framework.

- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. I will provide you with a summary of my findings on request.

- Electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to another Research Ethics Review process and approval if applicable. Data will be deleted after a period of 5 years.

- Please contact your college CEO/director/manager if you have any questions or comments about the study. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research will be / had been conducted, you may contact my supervisor, Prof. R.J. Steenkamp by email: steenrj@unisa.ac.za.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Riaan Dirkse van Schalkwyk (BCom, BCom Hons, MCom Business Management)
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LETTER OF CONSENT

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, ____

(participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature and procedure of participation.

I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a doctoral thesis.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I agree to the recording of the semi-structured interview for the purpose of qualitative data analysis only.

Participant name & surname…………………………………………………………………

Participant signature…………………………………………..Date……………………

Researcher's name & surname **Riaan Dirkse van Schalkwyk**

Researcher's signature………………………………………..Date…………………….

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview guide

1. What is your broad, general **definition** of service quality:
   - From the **student's** perspective?
   - From the **lecturer's** perspective?
   - From the **CEO's / director's / principal's** perspective?
2. To what extent is service quality **strategically managed** in your institution (e.g. by means of a **service quality system** – **integrated** or **stand-alone system**)? Is it successful? How do you know?
3. In your opinion, what are the crucial **pillars** of service quality for your institution? Why?
4. Can these **pillars** be placed in order of importance?
5. In your opinion, is **service quality more important** for **PHEIs** than for **public** HE institutions? Why would you say that?
6. What do you think are the **major advantages** of excellent service quality for your institution? Why?
7. In your view, which **basic aspects** need to be **changed** or **re-designed** to **improve** your service quality in your institution? Why? How easy/difficult would it be do affect the suggested change?
8. If the minister of education gave you **unlimited resources** to improve service quality in your institution, what **major changes** will you implement for this improvement?
9. My study therefore focus on a new **TQS** framework – how will this framework benefit your institution?

APPENDIX D

VERBATIM THEMATIC ANALYSIS

VERBATIM THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Theme	Category	Sub-category (Dimension)	
1. Contextual realities of higher and private HEI: dynamic creates dissonance	1.1 No government funding	1.1.1 Subsidies	[1] "No funding from the government." [JH] [2] "And also, sorry, the income generation, you don't get subsidy, and obviously, it should be strategically more important for privates than for publics. Yes." [JH] [3] "It's all about numbers and subsidy…" [CO] [4] "…if we say we are going to measure service delivery, what does that mean if you are going to look in relation to, let's just say, UCT or UNISA? Obviously, the outcome is gonna be different." [AS] [5] "Yes, primarily from the parents. We don't really have bursaries and all that. We've got a grant fund but it's also very selective and a process upon a process upon a process but, ja, mostly the parents are paying…" [AS] [6] "…for example, salaries, benefits, and that's all stuff that I've seen after I did my research as well. Yes you are an academic, yes you are the best, yes it's a niche market, yes we accept the best students, everybody here can walk on water. It's one of those…that's the image that we are portraying but they don't look after their staff." [AS] [7] "I would say it's even more important because we don't get funding." [AH] [8] "Do we actually have enough registrations and do we really have enough modules? Otherwise you cannot have another person. So, it's always...what comes first? The chicken or the egg. You need module numbers first but you can't because you need to actually prepare for the modules up from before the students even register. So, there's always a balancing act there." [AH] [9] "…we need resources and financial and human capital." [MP] [10] "And government...for the same term we didn't get any government funding so I had to...it was donor driver and profit driven but we had those relationships" [AJ] [11] "…because government's not able to rollout and not able to provide enough support" [GK] [12] "I think there can be more collaboration between government and independent institutions. I think right now there's a fear from government level of that...the success of independent institutions are gonna highlight the failing of government." [GK] [13] "And if the privates would be honest with you they will tell you it's financially not possible to be a research institution…. They don't get subsidy, they get support from corporate donors. I don't think they can get it from government." [CV] [14] "Elke personeellid in jou organisasie moet service quality te hart neem, dat jy vir die ou wat hier instap 'n lekker ervaring gee, want ons het nie backup van die staat nie, ons het nie…" [CV] [15] "No funding from the government." [JH] [16] "And also, sorry, the income generation, you don't get subsidy, and obviously, it should be strategically more important for privates than for publics. Yes." [JH] [17] "…they are less concerned with quality because for a lot of students they get the scholarship." [AJ] [18] "…University of Namibia and so on and the service delivery is not…the quality of the service delivery is not such an important issue." [AJ] [19] "Ons is nou besig om sterk te beweeg na die navorsing gedeelte toe. Dis maar in die privates, die groot challenge is dat jy moet...die income moet ge-generate word, en dan kan jy begin kyk na jou research." [AJ] [20] "Dit maak dit baie moeilik om in die research arena...wat beteken as 'n private...ons moet 'n sekere percentage van ons profits moet ons [ONDUIDELIK] om research te drive om voor te betaal." [AJ]

			[21] "We don't get subsidies. It's also…I can tell you it's where...I think there's also an impact on service delivery because, at a public, your research is funded or you have the possibility of funding…" [MV] [22] "So there's no exposure *[internationally]*. [MV] [23] "We've a got a huge demand for corporate training mainly. There's not a cent to get it going. I need a donor with a few million…" [MV] [24] "So we are on our own. So we need to basically ensure that what we offer is a hundred times better than what a public provider can offer." [LZ] [25] "You know where that becomes a big issue, Riaan, is for us to try and really become research focused. It basically makes it impossible because we get nothing for that published articles. We actually have to pay to get it published." [CV] [26] "…and we don't get any subsidy which makes it very difficult." [CV] [27] "All our researchers have to register on the NRF with the Department of Education but the institution can't get the subsidy." [CV] [28] "…because you don't have subsidy, you need to attract your learners with service and quality " [CV] [29] "So that would be our biggest focus if we can really spend and publish more." [CV] [30] "We do not have the backup of subsidies…" [JG] [31] "…and then of course the publications, if we can pay people for writing publications, and if you can sponsor our faculty members to attend conferences because that is such a nice thing for academics." [JG] [32] "We don't get any subsidies, we don't have fancy sports fields and stuff to spend the money on…" [CS] [33] "…we meeting tomorrow with a big shopping centre but you gotta pay for everything... We're not a household name. Career fairs, I'd love to be able to…in the [INDISTINCT] if they gave me money to set up our own huge big career fair" [CS2]
	1.2 Business model	1.2.1 Cost & Profit	[1] "And, I think that's where the biggest challenge lies with regards to delivering on the expectation that many people have, because private tertiary education also comes at a high cost." [JH] [2] "...you will hear it at every single private tertiary institution that you go to and I would even say every private school that you go to, they will…you ask them but why must I pay this amount of money?" [JH] [3] "…these are all senior working people that pay a lot of money for their MBA and they've journeyed in life, they have become accustomed to certain levels of service and they keep the institution on its toes and we invite them." [CO] [4] "…and our fees are through the roof…" [AS] [5] "…students pay sixty-five thousand rand a year to be here." [AS] [6] "…parents say we pay sixty-five thousand rand a year…" [AS] [7] "…quality and then affordability…" [AJ] [8] "It's the quality and the affordability that they look at." [AJ] [9] "…they also prepared to pay a little bit more…" [AJ] [10] "…they come to us where they know I pay for distance education, this is the price and this is fair towards me." [AJ] [11] "…parent who is generally paying more at a private institution…" [MV]

			[12] "We just charged a hundred thousand upfront because we know he [PhD] is most likely going to take five years." [CS] [13] "And they demand more. If they don't come from private schools the folks think they overpaying so they demand more… moving from universities of thirty-eight through to seventy it is a sacrifice to some people and they demand more. They say give me more and we do." [GT] [14] "So, you run as a business, you need to be sustainable, you need to be profitable." [JH] [15] "…it's what the business model is based on." [AH] [16] "And, also from a...I think it is a competitive market –" [MP] [17] "So, those types of things you can do, if you have money, and then from...so that's from a service side…" [MP] [18] "…because we are private…we have this entrepreneurial spirit, so we must entrepreneurial." [MP] [19] "...but that affects the business that we get at the end of the day." [MP] [20] "…in the private sector, we have a more business orientation." [AJ] [21] "For us we have to go after our students and we have to maintain our students." [AJ] [22] "It's my customers. If we don't have students we are not...we won't be here." [AJ] [23] "We have a lot of students that are paid for by employers and so there's also a lot of engagement with these funders and so on. So if they feel that the student doesn't get good service they also become problematic." [AJ] [24] "…we can sustain the quality based on the income that we get but if we start moving into other modes of delivery we will have a challenge to keep our prices at that level." [AJ] [25] "…this is a private institution, profit driven." [MV] [26] "…service quality is also important for you competitive edge…" [MV] [27] "We work on a corporate model." [MV] [28] "…it's difficult to be a private institute. You have to have the academic reader, the academic quality and then there's the financial side. You don't have money for research, you must work –" [MV] [29] "Yes, yes, I think it *[TQS framework]* would add hugely because it gives us a benchmark. I think it's a very difficult area, let's face it, and I've worked in the service industry all my life. It is difficult but it certainly is measureable and if other service companies…I've worked in the financial sector, they measure your service delivery so why can't we." [MV] [30] "If you have more students then obviously the bonuses happen, the increases happen so unfortunately that goes hand in hand. So that's…ja. No, I think in terms of salaries, for sure, it's just kind of like…I think you can look at that once you have the student numbers. Unfortunately marketing budget, everything depends on student numbers." [LZ] [31] "I think without service delivery we won't exist. It's the core business basically." [CV] [32] "…I will call it a hostile environment in the sense of if...you have to produce good service and you have produce a quality education." [CV] [33] "…in ons besigheid, as jy gaan swak diens gee sal dit die einde van jou wees." [CV] [34] "…remember, it's small business so everybody in the business needs to understand the importance of client engagement roles than just client service." [JG] [35] "I think to a certain extent yes because we cannot afford to make mistakes in many aspects. For instance, if you lose a client or a student, you lost money." [JG] [36] "Losing a client is losing money…" [JG] [37] "…for us with the clients, it's extremely important, that return on investment…" [JG]

			[38] "…that means growth for the institution but if we don't have money, we can't grow." [JG] [39] "Thirty-five cohorts of people, can your system sustain it? Or otherwise we going to say we cannot take on the business and it's my neck on the line to say I can support it." [CS] [40] "…as a private institution, it's a business so we sell competence, for lack of a better word. We sell competence in the same way that other people sell cars…" [CS] [41] "…students is…they're our clients and if we can't service them properly we aren't gonna get clients and we aren't gonna get the brands out there and the industry support that we need and that's very important." [GT] [42] "…because if we don't get our numbers we don't make a profit, we don't survive, we don't get capex, we don't buy equipment. So we've gotta push, push, push all the time and we've gotta make sure that we developing new ideas, new ways of working and thinking to stand out and make a difference and I think that's where the edge is." [GT] [43]"…core of your business… our students and their…what they get out of their degrees." [GT] [44] "…many companies skimp on marketing a private education college and if you don't spend money you not gonna make money and the only way you gonna make money is to bring students, bums on seats, and the only way you gonna do that is to market and advertise correctly and the only way you gonna retain them is to actually have good service delivery and the only way you gonna do that is to spend money on it." [CS2] [45] "So it's the financial sustainability of the company is a vital thing." [CS2] [46] "Just because I'm a lecturer doesn't mean that I'm not marketing the company. I'm marketing the company so that we've got bums on seats that we can have the resources we need. I'm part of that and I think everybody's got to buy in to that, that they part of the financial…or the risk if there is risk involved with it. That's a big one that." [CS2] [47] "…public's… they're our biggest competitors." [CS2]
		1.2.2 Customer centred approach	[1] "…we shifted from the teaching approach to a learner-centred approach and by having a learner-centred approach all of a sudden the awareness of what quality is, the expectation of what it should be, to a large extent shifted to a more consumer type of…and consumer-based type of approach and we do understand that quality is defined by the customer. It's not defined by the supplier anymore. [AL] [2] "…drive the business process of the institution from knowledge creation into commercialization…" [AL] [3] "…the student is the principle player in this relationship, this socio-psychological contract so to speak." [CO] [4] "Customer-centricity and that service is of absolute importance." [CO] [5] "So I would very much like to…and that's to me why the students are so important and with most of the team…and we really try to inculcate this sort of thing in people's thinking because ultimately we are here because of them, not the other way around." [CO] [6] "…a business and it's good that they have their high expectations especially when it comes to the MBAs. They are…we should treat them like private banking clients…" [CO] [7] "I want them to be happy." [CO] [8] "If we have students that are not happy, they will not come back to us and they will complain on Hello Peter and it's become our second nature. We have to make these students happy…" [AH] [9] "…we train these people with service excellence and customer service and whatever else it's called, that's one thing that…how you make the customer happy…" [AH]

			[10] "…with the university where a lecturer made a mistake on the exam papers and the students have to repeat that subject. You can never do that in a private environment. It will destroy you." [AJ] [11] "…your margin of errors are not…it's almost non-existent." [AJ] [12] "So my study week I do it with them, students know about it. I don't have to maintain those facilities." [AJ] [13] "…our main focus would be the students because they are our clients and what's their expectations for us as…" [LZ] [14] "…you need to attract your learners with service and quality." [CV] [15] "…remember, it's small business so everybody in the business needs to understand the importance of client engagement roles than just client service." [JG] [16] "We sell to the client a specific product or a specific programme." [JG] [17] "So the retention…yes, the retention of clients." [JG] [18] "I think it is how we sell to the clients…" [JG] [19] "We have monthly client meetings, we give you a monthly client report, I sit in the classroom, we have...the facilitator gives a report, the students evaluates the facilitators. This is what we do, is that good enough? Is there something else that you want?" [CS] [20] "Most of that money is actually ploughed back and we give bursaries." [CS] [21] "…master's and a PhD is a VIP to me. You're a VIP automatically and I must treat you like one. So if you call I'll call you back, I'll prioritise, I'll move meetings to accommodate you, you're a VIP to me." [CS] [22] "…but it's my client." [CS] [23] "There's a significant sensitivity around quality within the Laureate framework and inevitably at *[…]* and it's a culture that we growing on campus…" [AL] [24] "Higher education is a strategic priority…or should be a strategic priority, is a strategic need in any developing environment and for that reason service quality must be as important and as much a priority in public or private." [AL] [25] "So I can continue with this argument but the principle is that there's just no way in which you can be involved in higher education without having a sensitivity for quality." [AL] [26] "…assignments when they are set up is not only set up by the lecturer. They get internally moderated, they get externally moderated and we have then editors internally to look at formatting and to look at editing and all those key things. So it demonstrates how important the issue of quality is to us." [CO] [27] "…service excellence needs to be managed in the sense that those people need to be trained and they need to make sure that they get good feedback from students. [AH] [28] "…we have an assessment or study material authoring process and it's quite stringent, in terms of whom we select to write the study material. And then we have internal editors, and formatters, and proof-readers who make sure that it's at the right level. And then it goes to the lecturer, so it's quite a long process until the material is finished. Then in terms of the assessment, we have a stringent process in terms of the fact that it gets set and it gets internally moderated and externally moderated and to make sure that the assessment is fair. And, when it go...and it also goes to the editor. So, when it goes out to the student, it needs to be a fair assessment, it needs to look presentable, it needs to portray a certain professional image." [AH] [29] "We do measure service quality currently in that we do these surveys for the students." [AH] [30] "…you will not achieve your goal at all if you don't have service quality because your student will

			not have the knowledge and they will not...ja, if you give them a product that is not quality assured and that is not properly quality managed, then the person will not acquire the knowledge…" [AH] [31] "We have surveys, we also have surveys from within our different schools that we conduct on specific aspects but that is not formalised in that we have to do two or three per annum…" [MP] [32] "Yes, we do, because we have it in our system with our check-up where I find it with, just the way in which our do our exam papers, for example. How may checks we have in place, and if I think about UCT...my lecturers do their papers, it is almost...you cannot compare the two in terms of the quality process so, ja." [MP] [33] "What I do for service delivery, every third year I have a PO evaluation where I invite universities from outside to come and do a PO review [INDISTINCT], like the CHE will do, to look at everything from admin systems right through academic." [CV]
		1.2.3 Influence of holding company	[1] "The influence of the holding company…because everybody is, ja, we are this private education facility. Yes, we are amazing. Yes, we've got this. Yes, we've got that but we get, let's just say, fifteen days' leave a year. Yes, we can't go away holidays." [AS] [2] "Exactly, because it's a corporate culture trying to run an educational facility which is a problem." [AS] [3] "…but we understand why we have to jump through so many hoops, we get that, but now they go at *[…]* where it's actually an *[…]* thing. So, *[…]* reflects on that which then reflects on the *[…]* because it's an easy target. It's much easier to say the *[…]* is doing this and the *[…]* systems, eventually they get nasty with *[…]* and they do that because they know it's not gonna help with *[…]*, and also the fact that some of our staff members resign with immediate effect every once in a while is also not helping." [AS] [4] "Now we've got the holding company. So operationally we are answering to the holding company and academically we are answering to the *[…]*. So we get our money from *[…]*, we get our academic guidance from the *[…]* and sometimes there's a bit of a disconnect because you're answering to a shareholder here and academic quality control there." [MV] [5] "We work on a corporate model… you work eight to five, with fifteen days' leave a year, four of which you have to take between Christmas and New Year. So you've got eleven days' leave." [MV] [6] "If they decide this year is student support, all the students, then that is what we focus on. Then they come and they scrutinise basically everything regarding the students from your support systems that are in place, reporting elements that are in place, how do you report, what is happening, things like that. So they decide..." [LZ] [7] "…then you have shareholders who are not happy. [JG] [8] "Satisfied shareholders, if the money comes in the shareholders are satisfied…" [JG]
	1.3 Reputation	1.3.1 Personal attention	[1] "Private tertiary institutions always have this one line that they use as a marketing tool, smaller classes, individual attention – " [JH] [2] "They will say because we're smaller, it's more personal attention, more one-on-one." [JH] [3] "We are, I think, stronger in terms of individual learning and learning facilitation." [AL] [4] "One to five, one to ten, one to fifteen, depending on what the groups are and the cell groups are and it really, really works. We timetable expensively in that we bring in two people rather than one so the groups are smaller. It's only for the big critical studies and so on that we have bigger groups." [CS2] [5] "…where research has shown where you can actually deliver… customer intimacy." [JH]

			[6] "If you can build a model where operationally you can deliver on what people expect, then your customer intimacy would be so much better and you will have the time to look at your product offering." [JH] [7] "We are, I think, stronger in terms of individual learning and learning facilitation." [AL] [8] "Customer-centricity and that service is of absolute importance." [CO] [9] "So I would very much like to…and that's to me why the students are so important and with most of the team…and we really try to inculcate this sort of thing in people's thinking because ultimately we are here because of them, not the other way around." [CO] [10] "I want them to be happy." [CO] [11] "And, because we also have our open door policies and so on, the students refer to the lecturers by name." [AS] [12] "The most important things, that I...in terms of what my engagement with the students,…" [AJ] [13] "So, at least here if they can't get the help at the front desk I am here in the back office, they can see me immediately, I can take an immediate decision how we are going to resolve a specific issue." [AJ] [14] "…but to do what we call red flagging a student as soon as possible and that means as soon as we notice non-attendance, non-submissions, low marks, a student who is not engaging, there's a problem and so high service level to actually find out what is going on, what is happening." [MV] [15] "…so creating a one-on-one relationship with students and whatever their support system is." [MV] [16] "A parent expects more individual attention." [MV] [17] "…because we're smaller and it's easier to say we actually know our students, they're not numbers, we know them by their name." [LZ] [18] "Our HODs are also directly involved with our departments because we are small enough to have it like that." [LZ] [19] "…relationship that is built so that students feel comfortable to take thing further or to have a relationship with somebody like a campus principal or the 2IC." [GK] [20] "…individualised attention, there can be further questions, it can be built upon, there can be further elaboration…" [GK] [21] "…for me very important in service quality is your whole service or customer care, customer service, how do you work with them? [CV] [22] "…how important is it, a client engagement manager has been appointed." [JG] [23] "…I expect that administrator or the key account manager to have at least one telephonic conversation with their student once a month. So besides the fact that you are coming to class we'll see you there and how are you doing? Is there anything you are struggling with?...how are you doing, how's you research going, do you need any additional support?... what's wrong? Is there a problem? " [CS] [24] "I have the luxury to say none of my students will ever be a number." [CS] [25] "…key account manager for post-grads, if you call him...if you're one of his students and you call him you don't have to say your name, he will recognise your voice and he will say hi, Andre [SP], howzit?" [CS] [26] "We have supervisors who work shifts and we tell you must meet the spouse. Firstly, you must include the spouse." [CS] [27] "…but if I think of you tonight and I say I wonder how that guy is doing I will send you an email even if you're not my client, I just met you in the...how's your research going?" [CS]

			[28] "Customer care, and the customer may be another staff member, it may be national head office, it may be the student, it may be a parent, it may be industry." [CS2] [29] "…I think customer care is the big one that needs to be changed." [CS2]
		1.3.2 Unique product offering	[1] "…there's a couple of places how you can differentiate yourself. You can do that by being at the forefront of new product development all the time. Your products that you have that you produce is just so cutting edge that it's complete different from what everybody else does." [JH] [2] "So, if we are so amazing and the *[…]* wants to stand out so much and *[…]* needs to be the…why can't our programmes just actually speak to our students." [AS] [3] "...because, also if a student phones in and they would say but...we normally put our…all our material for the next year must be done by the first of December and uploaded by the first of December. So let's say for assignments...because we have students that is only registered for the second semester of twenty fifteen but they want to start in December with their assignments because they work." [MP] [4] "Also financially, once I've completed my certificate, if I don't have the money, I can wait, I don't have to wait or worry about credits that are expiring, etcetera, etcetera. So I can do a one year thing, go and work for a year, come back, do two years, get my diploma, that type of flexibility is very important for a lot of students." [AJ] [5] "We have the advantage that we offer from a certificate up to a master's degree." [AJ] [6] "So, although we specialised at *[…]*, we are...it's broader. We teach...it sounds crazy but we teach people to think…" [MV] [7] "Ja, and we do specialise and that is part of the service as well…" [MV] [8] "So a graphic designed is our first honours programme that we are offering and we started this year." [LZ] [9] "Yes, master's in management. There is a purely research option and then we've started in June with a coursework." [CV] [10] "…I almost want to say the niche that we've built because I'm the first one to say that not all students can fit into our model." [JG] [11] "Mode two, if I can compare it to mode one, most public...all the public universities are mode one thinkers. So that means everything is built on a theoretical framework. We do not necessarily focus on can we apply the theoretical aspects? In mode two we say, yes, the theoretical framework is very important but the practical application is much more important." [JG] [12] "…we have small classrooms and small classes and we teach in a different way…" [GT]
		1.3.3 Servicescape	[1] "So, the point of entry, like the reception area or where you register or where you write exams, is also important. Very much." [JH] [2] "…even one might think that something like a lecture room is not important but, to me as a lecturer, that would be…that's very, very important…" [CO] [3] "So the look and feel of the infrastructure. I would want auditorium style classrooms with hi-tech equipment in them, ample parking, good cafeteria facilities, beautifully clean hygienic restrooms. All of these little blocks adds to the experience and which links obviously to the service." [CO] [4] "So I think, Riaan, for me at the moment the infrastructure would be very, very, very prominent. " [CO] [5] "…our classrooms are good, can't complain about that, but we can be more innovative. We've got one classroom that we're now painting with, literally, white board paint so they can write, literally,

			on the walls and give themselves more expression…" [AS] [6] "I don't think…a lot of students…most of the students, it's unimportant to them the way your building looks and so on, that doesn't play..." [AJ] [7] "This is more accessible… a lot of taxis running…" [AJ] [8] "I think we've got good facilities but we do need to move, especially in our world, into that space of more interactive classrooms, etcetera." [MV] [9] "…first of all, the campus facilities…" [LZ] [10] "I would say in terms of that it would be definitely be the facilities that you offer them that they can work with…" [LZ] [11] "I think, more focused on the facilities…" [LZ] [12] "…what we offer them in terms of support and then obviously the lecturing and the facilities." [LZ] [13] "It's the only thing that differentiates you between the next person is what you offer, is what campus looks like…" [LZ] [14] "We giving the students a new campus…Bigger PC labs. The campus is huge. " [LZ] [15] "…the campus itself, so the facilities…" [GK] [16] "The learning environment, the facilities…" [GK] [17] "…safety and security, those are important aspects and they carry a lot of weight…" [GK] [18] "…looking at again the facilities…" [GK] [19] "…environment that is good for learning and then also including social interaction, safe and secure environment, that there are enough social events that happen…" [GK] [20] "So the seating structure, I feel like there are staff that are...just because of the way that staff are situated that they may feel isolated. So they're not as connected." [GK] [21] "…conducive learning environment which means it must be a safe environment…" [JG] [22] "I think our facilities are now quite nice, we refurbished last year, and we in this big old farmhouse with wooden floors and it's, to me, gorgeous. I wouldn't want to change anything. I wouldn't want to be in Sandton or anything because that, to me, is part of the *[…]* experience that you go there." [CS] [23] "So we've got an opportunity to flip classrooms next year, we've got screeded flooring, epoxy screeded flooring." [GT] [24] "…if you have good equipment [INDISTINCT] they respect it." [GT] [25] "As far as equipment and what we've got is our new building…" [GT] [26] "…we've got to provide the best facilitators with the best resources with the best facilities…" [CS2] [27] "…have better resources within the lecture rooms… We getting a new building." [CS2] [28] "I would have vehicles, I would have some *[…]* vehicles, to be able to get to the people. You can't always bring them to you so I'd love our sales team to be able to get to the people. I'd like to have a mobile advertising bus that goes around…" [CS2] [29] "…this new building's just gonna change our lives." [CS2]
	1.4 Human resources	1.4.1 Lack of experts and senior academics	[1] "I will use that money purely to change the staff profile to get more experience into the system 'cause this is part of a new system that you must continuously build capacity…" [AL] [2] "They have more…they will find in the business sciences and the [INDISTINCT] sciences and so on you will get the people from Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe got excellent people because they've got good language skills, they come from a good school system and so on." [AL] [3] "It's difficult to attract academics in the whole of South Africa." [AL]

			[4] "…but banking is so specialised it is very difficult to find these people. And those ones that do have the knowledge, they sit in a bank in a senior position and they earn well and they don't want to be become academics. So, that is one of our challenges." [AH] [5] "…all the lecturers that they want, they can put that in, and then the overall staff to have all the necessary staff that you can possibly imagine that everybody can cover everything that they need to." [LZ] [6] "I've appointed two professors now just to work on putting these research into...research articles that we can publish." [CV] [7] "Also our facilitators also not necessarily ready to facilitate online because it's a different skill." [JG] [8] "I think research staff, to be able to bring in more staff who can do all the research for us, the analysis for us." [CS2] [9] "So for that reason if you not able to deliver quality you will not attract people into the system so you miss the access opportunity and once you have people in the system you want to retain them in the system to ensure that effective learning takes place." [AL] [10] "So, we've got very well-known founding members, and well-known lecturers." [AS] [11] "…we've got four that's busy with Masters, one that's busy with PhD, some that already has their Masters Degrees. Everybody here is very qualified. " [AS] [12] "So basically now, we…if you pay peanuts, you're gonna get monkeys. So, we want to uphold this amazing culture of we are the best but we don't want to…we want to hire the best but we don't wanna pay the best." [AS] [13] "Operational logistical, look after the people because we're supposed to be the best but we can't afford the best lecturers. And we don't want to pay for them." [AS] [14] "You need to be very industry loving and you need to have worked in the industry and you need to be a bit entrepreneurial to come up with new ideas and new programmes. It's a very different environment." [AH] [15] "If you're dealing with someone that does a PGD or an honours in finances, then for them it's important that a lecturer has spent time on figuring out the latest, I don't know, discount model or whatever it is. Whereas if you doing now you PGD in banking, then you want to be sure that university or the lecturer that you study with knows the latest in corporate banking, and what's going on there." [AH] [16] "…as ek jou nie ken nie, mense kan nou maar sê dis nepotism of dit, as ek nie vir jou of jou werk ken nie, dan teach jy nie vir my nie… Ek sien my studente een keer in a semester. So, ek kan nie in daai een keer wat ek hom sien 'n kans kom vat met iemand wat swak diens kom lewer nie." [AJ] [17] "…making sure that we have the right people here…" [MV] [18] "…the quality of lecturers that you employ…" [LZ] [19] "…the appointment of lecturers is something that is seen as being vitally important." [GK] [20] "There are appointments, there are the right people that you need to employ…" [GK] [21] "…quality of your lecturing staff." [CV] [22] …it's very difficult for us as management to attract top academics because your top academics want that freedom to publish and want that financial support to publish and when bring them…attract them to privates they are mostly involved in teaching and learning and that's a problem…" [CV]

			[23] "To pay the faculty more so...and not...and I'm not saying that money is the best motivator but money is definitely a motivator because our faculty members are often consultants and consultants…money is important for consultants. So if we can pay them more, get more…buy more of their time to develop them more and get better skills and we can go places with this to really make a difference." [JG] [24] "…our lecturers are mostly part-time people. They come in…they come, they facilitation and they go. We pay them for their services, we pay them for their time." [CS] [25] "I took a huge salary cut to come work at *[…]* but the discussion that I had is that I am passionate about this, I feel this is my life's calling…" [CS] [26] "…we have simulation sessions with our facilitators. They have to come and they do a session with people like *[…]* and myself and some of the other senior managers so that we can see if they will work for us because we facilitate the *[…]* way. So if you can't do the *[…]* way, you're out, you can't be there." [CS] [27] "So I think that we're not doing enough in terms of empowering our facilitators really…if I had more money and I could actually pay people to come sit in our workshops…" [CS] [28] "…the people that we do employ have to be looked at very carefully. So I'm pretty sticky on that because you can destroy a brand very quickly…" [GT] [29] "…you've gotta catch hold and retain lecturers because there's so much competition out there in private education… get the right person for the right job at the right time at the right salary and it's not always about salary." [CS2] [30] "We seeking lecturers who are involved in industry and that is important because you getting people that are grounded who are bringing commerce to the world to [INDISTINCT] and I think that's what makes a successful lecturer. I think we very, very, very sticky about having lecturers with the right qualifications." [CS2] [31] "…if we've had bad reviews from the students, we don't renew their contracts." [CS2] [32] "They've gotta come with the experience and they've gotta come in with the right skills that you need 'cause you might have somebody who's been involved in the industry, who's got the right qualification but what they bring to the college they may not be a good facilitator." [CS2]
		1.4.2 Lack of administrative staff	[1] "I would definitely get more admin staff… they are swamped. " [AS] [2] "…I would rather get more admin staff that can really spoon-feed the parents, because that's actually what it is about at this stage. " [AS] [3] "So, I would definitely look at systems and more staff." [AS] [4] "It does, because then you need more resources and the current people that you have cannot actually focus on providing a better service delivery to the student because they spend so much time on red tape." [MP] [5] "I think first of all I would start with employ more staff. I think it would be great if I could give every single department their own relationship coordinator…" [LZ] [6] "I could do with more support staff to do it better…" [CS] [7] "…I think more support staff." [CS]
	1.5 Ethos	1.5.1 Culture	[1] "So, you want this culture that as if you are audited every day? All the time. Every day should be audit day." [JH] [2] "A culture is a personality of the place. Absolutely, absolutely. So, ja, I think it is a challenge, it is not something that just happens because you've decided now this is…but it's a process." [JH]

			[3] "The first one, operational leadership, the second one product leadership, and the last one customer intimacy."…"All three should be your culture. " [JH] [4] "There's a significant sensitivity around quality within the Laureate framework and inevitably at Monash and it's a culture that we growing on campus…" [AL] [5] "There needs to be a culture of – Trust...trust, definitely, but something that I've also found is people need to actually do what they say they're going to do." [AS] [6] "Definitely, because you need to know exactly who is doing what and that's something that you don't expect from private education… I go to the head of programme, I can go to this one, I can go to that one. You say, here I am, contact me and then I contact you and then please hold. Please hold some more. It's not my problem, go to your campus principal. Go to campus principal, no, but, okay, let's work on this, you need to go there. It's…ja, it's frustrating." [AS] [7] "And the other thing is that we need to have a culture of training people…" [AH] [8] "…with my staff, a high level of respect, to me, is part of the service we need to deliver. We need to present good role models, we need to...again it's that human empathy, the way they are treated in class." [MV] [9] "The higher your level of service the more I trust the organisation that I'm with." [MV] [10] "The industry trusts your institution and the type of person that…the product that we're producing at the end of the day. Your parents trust you because we have a very high level of parent involvement which the publics generally don't." [MV] [11] "I think it's a holistic approach and it's a culture that you need to cultivate. It's something that…it should be part of everybody that works here that's just…this is what we do and that is what our aim is. That's it." [LZ] [12] "Relationship building, again, with the students that that's something that's of critical importance." [GK] [13] "…the culture is something which should come from the top and be given down, cultivated amongst the staff with the students but, ja, there's different levels of that but, ja, you'd certainly want a positive culture to be built into the tertiary institution and I'd say that that would be very important." [GK] [14] "…it's about a sense of community. I belong here, people know my name. So from Mawosa [SP], who bakes the scones in the morning, you walk through the kitchen to come in, he knows every student's name, every student. The receptionist knows every student's name. Chances are, if you're a student and you've been there for a year or so, the CEO knows your name. I know your name. The key account manager will come and greet you and ask you how your dog is." [CS] [15] "So what differentiates us from Regenesys and MANCOSA and whatever, I believe it's this. It's this personal…" [CS] [16] "…it's a culture that must be imbedded within the organisation, within the people." [CS] [17] "I discipline people if they don't treat my students right but I set the bar high, I discipline them but I reward them because this is the level of service." [CS] [18] "…most important thing is to keeping the integrity of the values and what we deemed as our mission to protect that." [GT] [19] "Ja, that's very important. That's very important. Otherwise it just becomes another university in a sense so that's one of the things we have to do." [GT]

			[20] "So I think if you give them good equipment they respect it, if you give them young dynamic lecturers that can communicate with them and they've been in industry, they've got experience, they respect that." [GT] [21] "…we treat them as grownups with their own thoughts and their own…we respect what they think." [GT] [22] "Ja, once again if you give quality you get it back but respect…" [GT] [23] "…you don't always have somebody who takes full responsibility and is fully accountable at the end of the day…" [CS2]
2. Multiple and diverse stakeholder perspectives and expectations towards a holistic experience	2.1 **People:** Academics	2.1.1 Quality teaching	[1] "…way that you retain and build your reputation is by the quality of the education in the class." [JH] [2] "…three modes of learning, and by that I mean if I may simplify it, the heart, the hands and the head, it shouldn't just be a mental exercise or an academic exercise. So again there the content, the syllabus, the curriculum…" [CO] [3] "…and my aids that I use in order to enrich the learning experience of the student." [CO] [4] "So I would…autonomy, decentralised approach to…and more autonomy in determining our timelines. If I can win two weeks in a semester it would make a difference…" [CO] [5] "…they would go off about admin practises and communication but it's okay because the education is good." [AS] [6] "…and you have facilitators that you need to performance manage and you need to make sure that they deliver good quality…" [AH] [7] "…one of our values is quality education." [AH] [8] "…a better industry aligned product offering." [AH] [9] "So, we do try our best to deliver the content to come up with new ideas to put in actual trends and things that are happening in the banking sector." [AH] [10] "I say is just quality education just because I think you still need to deliver quality education at the end of the day." [MP] [11] "…also somebody that has worked in the industry understands all of that and can actually provide the correct information and because it's very much dependent on legislation, tax law, and those type of things, which changes regularly, whereas the public university updates their books once every five years." [MP] [12] "…from the lecturer's side it is more in terms of the quality, in terms of the material and the teaching and learning and the provision of the learning material." [AJ] [13] "…quality and then affordability…" [AJ] [14] "It's the quality and the affordability that they look at." [AJ] [15] "…second year, their focus is far more on exactly what's happening in the classroom. What sort of feedback am I getting on my assignments? What kind of rubrics am I getting, if any? How are you accommodating me?" [MV] [16] "…but that the student fully understands briefs, fully understands what's expected, gets solid feedback, and gets...understands where he went wrong and that, for me, is providing a student with a high level of service. Obviously, your delivery in the class room…" [MV] [17] "…it's attention to detail that the detail on whatever we do must be spot on. Only with detail can you get higher service levels." [MV] [18] "I would start with the quality of education." [LZ] [19] "…also the course content, that which you basically offer to the students and what it is basically worth at the end of the day." [LZ]

			[20] "…and also the content that you give them." [LZ] [21] "…what we offer them in terms of support and then obviously the lecturing and the facilities." [LZ] [22] "…development coordinator… she does that to check what is happening in the classroom with the lecturers in terms of preparation and what they offer." [LZ] [23] "…should be something that you offer…" [LZ] [24] "So the curriculum, it would need to be of a very high standard." [GK] [25] "…be information that is new and relevant. So, ja, the quality of the curriculum should be without question. So it's gotta be of an incredibly high stand and then there needs to be a relational approach in terms of curriculum delivery from the lecturer." [GK] [26] "…but the curriculum being the most important factor." [GK] [27] "…curriculum delivery is something that's happening with the highest quality in mind." [GK] [28] "…encouraging growth of the curriculum and developing the curriculum continuously…" [GK] [29] "…that curriculum development is something that is ongoing…" [GK] [30] "Curriculum is important…" [CV] [31] "…important pillars will be programme design. Definitely assessment, assessment is of the utmost importance." [CV] [32] "For a facilitator it's important that learning has taken place but if I see a student's assignment that I can see the difference in his...the way he responds to the questions and that he has achieved the learning outcomes, so that's quite important…" [JG] [33] "In my office, the academic office, we definitely have in the quality of learning material, the quality of our assessment process, the quality of our facilitators, the academic staff; and then the quality in the research office and then from the client engagement perspective… all sorts of quality processes." [JG] [34] "…we create that conducive learning environment for the students. So there's all sorts of quality...but all integrated…" [JG] [35] "…good learning material, good facilitators and facilitation processes…" [JG] [36] "…we need to work on our material still because that's a continuous process to make sure that we're always relevant and always cut it and it's how we share the information… that information should be immediately available to students, and we're not there yet…" [JG] [37] "…we've got field navigators. They in charge of visual communication. Now, that person's job is basically to research and find out exactly what's going down locally as well as nationally and there's a lot of things that are happening in the visual communication world." [GT] [38] "So I think the most important thing, and this is crossing over to our students, number one they must have the latest information. Number two, the lecturers must understand where the latest information is coming from and that's gonna put them out in the front." [GT] [39] "And obviously it's the same as if you have a healthy brand and you teach correctly…" [GT] [40] "…if we don't teach properly, we gonna get a bad group bad mouthing us and it's gonna affect the next group and if that starts happening it's word-of-mouth –" [GT] [41] "…we've got to provide the best facilitators…" [CS2]
		2.1.2 Internal customer	[1] "From an academic's perspective it is an enabling environment to achieve…to allow the academic to achieve his or her aspirations as academic, to develop personal capacity and to be able to engage in sharing that information towards learning." [AL] [2] "…from where I'm sitting, my responsibility to firstly define effectively our purpose, in other words do we have a clear understanding of what our purpose should be? And then to create an

			environment that will enable this purpose to be realised." [AL] [3] "Secondly, over and above opportunity, is the enabling context." [AL] [4] "I will use that money purely to change the staff profile to get more experience into the system 'cause this is part of a new system that you must continuously build capacity…" [AL] [5] "…we do train our staff members to make sure that they can load forums there and they can…the students can interact with each other and these types of things…" [AH] [6] "We do have a centre of excellence where we train internal staff members and we also train our contractors, our part-time academics, that we use. So, that is done through the centre of excellence, and the centre of excellence drives our values in terms of training…" [AH] [7] "I think we need far more mentoring in order to deliver a higher level of service in the classroom." [MV] [8] "Up-skilling of teaching staff. They're not poor but to grow. So I'd love to grow the teaching staff, give them more exposure." [MV] [9] "…continuous professional development. Those would be quality aspects that we should always look at with our lecturers that they never see themselves as the finished product…" [GK] [10] "Looking at developing the lecturers, giving them a clear path to furthering themselves…" [GK] [11] "…we would, I would say, in a quality tertiary institution you would assist your lecturers to get there and to grow and, from a principal standpoint, you would always...you should always be looking at developing or growing your staff…" [GK] [12] "...I'd say we've managed to encourage some staff to consider studying further to developing themselves, furthering their careers, becoming better lecturers, having a broader knowledge and that's something…" [GK] [13] "…lot of our lecturers have to upgrade their masters…" [GT] [14] "…there needs to be a lot more training. We assume everybody knows how to deal with people and deal with complaints and sell a product…" [CS2] [15] "They're pretty good on spending money on training staff and staff development." [CS2] [16] "You are supposed to be this white collar, awesome person who dedicated your life to academia but you are treated like a blue-collar person, if I can put it like that, and that also come through in the classes. Some of the lecturers don't really prepare so well because they feel why should I? The internal customer is neglected." [AS] [17] "The salaries at *[…]* is much higher, they head hunt the best, they do the best, they've got benefits, they've got everything, salaries are really competitive and then people say, ja, but that's *[…]*. We're also part of the *[…]* brand, the *[…]* brand so why…what's going on here?... it just becomes this sore and it's bubbling and bubbling and bubbling. So everybody is very unhappy." [AS] [18] "…ensure that your staff are happy so that you have a happy student at the end of the day." [LZ] [19] "…we're very protective on our lecturers." [GT] [20] "Obviously with our lecturers they most welcome to go and see the wellness counsellor as well…" [GT] [21] "…if I can keep my staff happy my quality will flow thereafter. So if I've got the right staff and they all happy the rest looks after itself." [CS2] [22] "I think if the staff know that the company is in a good financial position, that their jobs are secure…" [CS2] [23] "We serious about our work but we seriously play. So there's a lovely, lovely atmosphere of fun, enjoyment –" [CS2]

			[24] "And most of them were not about salaries or remuneration. Most of them were actually about the low-hanging fruit, the incentives for staff, recognition." [CS2] [25] "About your happiness of your staff, your internal…" [CS2]
	2.2 **People:** Learner (and parents)	2.2.1 Managing expectations	[1] "And it's those expectations and experiences that you need to manage all the time because they come with different experiences. They come with the parent –" [JH] [2] "Delivering on what you promise and delivering on an expectation, those are the two things. If you can do that you will never have a problem. If you deliver on what you as a brand promise people that you do and you can deliver on what the expectation is, then everything will run smoothly." [JH] [3] "So, you run as a business, you need to be sustainable, you need to be profitable. So, linked to that cost comes that expectation, well, if I'm paying this amount of money…" [JH] [4] "You go to a private hospital, it comes with an expectation that it is going to be plain sailing, smooth, from the minute you walk in there, that everything is going to run smoothly, exactly the same with regards to, and that's the kind of expectation that people have when they come…when they hear the precursor, private." [JH] [5] "…because we're a private tertiary institution, people come with an expectation of more support." [JH] [6] "The word private. Yes. And because you need to manage those expectations." [JH] [7] "You always…there's always challenges, there's always things that happen that comes leftfield but it is how you manage that. How you manage expectations when things go wrong and when challenges happen. If you can address a problem and solve the problem, everybody is happy." [JH] [8] "…you manage expectations and you manage the service levels. You can also have a risk that, if you oversell and over promise your service delivery, you actually get to a point where people start holding you ransom." [JH] [9] "…the service delivery is at the level where you can manage that expectation, then you have way less internal conflict…" [JH] [10] "…a business and it's good that they have their high expectations especially when it comes to the MBAs. They are…we should treat them like private banking clients…" [CO] [11] "And also, if I look at parent involvement, that's something that we need to definitely look at. In government and bigger institutions, parents and guardians and account payers aren't really involved." [AS] [12] "And we also need to learn how to tone down on the students that's got the sense of entitlement." [AS] [13] "…the perception is created that this is a private so everything is running smoothly or supposedly running smoothly." [AS] [14] "…we private, so there's this expectations…" [AS] [15] "Ja, managing expectations and making sure what those expectations are." [AS] [16] "Sorry, the expectations are not only from the students, also from the parents…" [AS] [17] "I don't think it's more important, definitely not, but I do feel that it's expected to a higher degree in private. There is this whole…I won't say stigma, I don't really know what the right word is, there's this expectation, this specialisation, this idea of prestige. So, I am going to this and this and this institution because it's private, it is awesome. So, ja, no it's not more important but it is expected." [AS] [18] "…the expectations are so high, especially from the parents…" [AS]

			[19] "We are a private training provider and, therefore, we have to deliver exceptional quality. They won't...so they will challenge us on things which I will never find…I've never found it in a traditional university set-up because – expectations are a little bit higher." [MP] [20] "…ja, put it up there that they are paying for this, we're a private training provider and I would never...at a public university, I would never dream of phoning the lecturer up and saying, listen, my assignment is due in nine months' time, could you please hurry up and put the thing on." [MP] [21] "I also think perhaps people that are already working have slightly different expectations of studies than school-leavers." [MP] [22] "…from an institutional perspective it is about providing a framework where you bring all of this together in terms of your service delivery, in terms of students expectations…" [AJ] [23] "It's important in terms of your service delivery expectations how those three groups engage each other in terms of meeting these different expectations." [AJ] [24] "I have a new staff member this semester and some of the older students tell her that this is what we are used to. So when we come here, we expect this and so on." [AJ] [25] "It's the same with the students themselves because they're used to a certain level of service." [AJ] [26] "There are some people who definitely see...some of our students who come from the public institution and they have that perception that it's better in the private institution. I have a lot of those." [AJ] [27] "...and they have that unfair expectation…" [AJ] [28] "…parent who is generally paying more at a private institution they do have a higher expectation…" [MV] [29] "When the parents come for an open day first of all, obviously, they see the facilities and then they have a certain expectation." [LZ] [30] "…we need to keep in mind what the expectations are, whether it's from the students or wherever it's from the staff that is –" [LZ] [31] "…a student should have an expectation of the curriculum…" [GK] [32] "I'm looking a parent in the eye and saying this is what we offer, I'm going to ensure that this is delivered because I can't sit across from a parent and tell them a year from now what I told you, which is like a verbal contract, this is a promise I made to you. Ethically I can't –…" [GK] [33] "Are we giving the value for money, that return investment and return of expectations, return on expectation? What did we promise the client and what are the expectations and are we doing that?" [JG] [34] "…it's about meeting expectations or exceeding expectations [CS] [35] "What is it that the student expects, what is that the client is expecting? And we try to do that proactively. So when a new cohort comes in, I meet with them and I say what are you expectations? What are...when we sign an SLA from a client to get new students in the question is what are you expectation? How do you see this panning out and how can we actually meet or exceed your expectations?" [CS] [36] "Because what I've realised is that you have to meet or exceed those expectation. If the expectations of the client and whatever you delivering is not in sync it's a mismatch and then they complain." [CS] [37] "You hand in a chapter, that guy will give you feedback tomorrow and it think that responsiveness...we can't manage that in all cases but it's very important to just set that expectation upfront…" [CS]

			[38] "...it's about expectations." [CS]
		2.2.2 Quality learning experience	[1] "Absolutely. Absolutely, it's all about service quality. It is all about student experience…" [JH] [2] "So it's the learning experience and the opportunity to have an appropriate learning experience." [AL] [3] "…service quality would incorporate the total student experience from the moment of application." [CO] [4] "So for me that total experience." [CO] [5] "…then it goes on and it would continue with all of the interactions that they have with either the study material or the assessments or the lecturers." [AH] [6] "…there will also be a graduation, which is also part of a…part of the experience. It starts somewhere but it ends there, and the graduation is an important experience to our students." [AH] [7] "For me, it's all about the student experience. So the student experience needs to positive from A – Z from the first time they interact with us to the last time they…" [AH] [8] "…and we…to give them a good experience…" [AH] [9] "…the contact learners are also being asked about their experience and it really spans from, like I said, from the first to the last moment." [AH] [10] "Deliver a better experience to the student…" [AH] [11] "…what I usually hear from students and what they value most is, okay, quality training material that actually assist them as distance learners to work from home and to be able to guide them systematically through the material." [MP] [12] "…them it's about delivery in terms of...around the applications, around their study material. So for them it's all about being on time and that it's a clear transparent process." [AJ] [13] "…I am saying it's the thinking in the management, it's the thinking in the staff and it's also the acceptance of all of that by the students that creates a different…completely different environment." [AJ] [14] "…the experience that they have on campus. I think it's…like I say, and that needs to incorporate everything that they experience." [LZ] [15] "...our main focus would definitely be the students, their experience…" [LZ] [16] "It's the only thing that differentiates you between the next person is what you offer, is what campus looks like, it's what the experience is like." [LZ] [17] "So enabling them or giving them the tools to succeed which is being gracious and allowing them to make mistakes, which invariably they will. We make mistakes in our professional careers so we should be gracious enough to allow them to make mistakes and learn from them." [GK] [18] "…the quality is the material…" [CV] [19] "So, jy moet vir die ou 'n lekker gevoel gee." [CV] [20] "…for a student, I think it's to have a positive learning experience." [JG] [21] "In our assessment process students always get an opportunity to resubmit and improve and that, for me, is part of a conducive learning environment and there must be value for money." [JG] [22] "...this is your key account manager or that one or that one, you'll get one consistent experience, it's the *[…]* experience." [CS] [23] "So it goes through the whole value chain of where the client wants to be…" [GT] [24] "So for the student's perspective they want to know that they getting quality lecturers, giving you the…with quality resources and support…" [CS2]

			[25] "…the students are asking that they have more social life here, that they don't just come to a college or university to study, they come here to make lifelong friends. So they've also asked for more social interaction…" [CS2]
	2.3 **People:** Principle	2.3.1 Leadership	[1] "…from where I'm sitting, my responsibility to firstly define effectively our purpose, in other words do we have a clear understanding of what our purpose should be? And then to create an environment that will enable this purpose to be realised. That includes all the dimensions of our business. That includes a clear understanding of the priorities that we want to achieve and the type of capacity required to achieve that but on a level where I can do it in an effective and efficient way." [AL] [2] "It just makes for a much happier environment when people don't have…don't always complain about." [JH] [3] "…well, that's how I experience the bureaucracy, maybe it's just because I don't…but we don't have that many layers. So I think from that point of view it's much easier to change things –" [MP] [4] "…then providing a broader framework and guidance as to how all these different stakeholders, the student, the lecturer, the institution…" [AJ] [5] "…relational approach, leadership from a standpoint of guidance, support to the lecturers, finding out the challenges that they face and assisting them in overcoming those challenges." [GK] [6] "…I cannot honestly believe that any educational environment can survive in a healthy way past a three or four year time span if you don't have passionate leadership because you are going to reach those major hurdles and passion is something that carries you through…" [GK] [7] "…growing students in leadership roles…" [GK] [8] "And in that we want to help the students to develop their own leadership profile. So in the beginning of a programme and at the end of the three years to see what have [sic] changed…" [JG] [9] "And then to create an environment that will enable this purpose to be realised. That includes all the dimensions of our business. That includes a clear understanding of the priorities that we want to achieve and the type of capacity required to achieve that but on a level where I can do it in an effective and efficient way." [AL] [10] "… so we attempt to inculcate the orientation with all our staff. Customer-centricity and that service is of absolute importance." [CO] [11] "… so we attempt to inculcate the orientation with all our staff. Customer-centricity and that service is of absolute importance." [CO] [12] "So I would very much like to…and that's to me why the students are so important and with most of the team … and we really try to inculcate this sort of thing in people's thinking because ultimately we are here because of them, not the other way around." [CO] [13] "I think it's very important that we have three key people there, and that's the tuition and research person, the quality assurance and regulatory affairs, and then the executive dean, because she oversees all the different scores and she works with procedures and processes and making sure that we follow certain steps to ensure quality." [AH] [14] "The measurement. That to me…only when you have a metric have you got something concrete to work with." [MV] [15] "...so that's what I would like to see is a tool, a practical tool, that you can actually...it's user friendly…" [MV] [16] "…service quality for us is the full circle [holistic]. We need to look at everything. From facilities to your staff to your students but starting with your students." [LZ]

			[17] "Then we have a system that we implement which we call EvaSys. Now, that is focused on the students." [LZ] [18] "We've decided that quality assurance and quality issues is something that should be implemented right through the institution at all different levels. So all the managers are responsible for quality in their different divisions. So, when we look at quality, it's from where we start in advertising, what we advertise, making sure that we start there with the quality delivery right through from the student that walks in right through to the graduation ceremonies and then also your alumni. So the definition is that everything that we do should be based on quality and quality assurance." [CV] [19] "We have a…what we call a value chain where, in that value chain, all the different steps taking place is identified and then it's the responsibility of each of the managers to manage the quality in that specific division, as I said. So, again, the quality goes right through the institution and all the managers are responsible for managing the quality in their different divisions." [CV] [20] "…without service quality we're dead." [JG] [21] "…I'm interested in your head but I'm interested in your heart and I'm interested on how you like our scones and I'm interested in is the air-con too cold? And I'm interested in … I'm interested in you." [CS] [22] "…I want consistency across the board." [CS]
		2.3.2 Partnerships	[1] "…the types of services that we provide in general is of a high standard plus we have the benefit to share in the experience infrastructure and products of a global network and that opens up the opportunity to, firstly, save a lot of time in terms of developing new products and new opportunities but at the same time also learn and use…or learn from best practice across the world." [AL] [2] "Die waarheid is daar is meer navorsing geld in die industrie as wat daar in die universiteite is. So, al waarde wat ons kan toevoeg, dat ons nie totaal nutteloos raak in hierdie wêreld nie, is dat ons die kundigheid wat ons het bly ontwikkel op 'n vlak dat ons vir daai ouens kennisvennote kan bly." [AL] [3] "…it's also important that if you have a specific level of quality or whether it is real or even if it's just perceived the engagement with industry is also influenced." [AJ] [4] "…there's a big disconnect between the public institutions and the private institutions, what we provide." [AJ] [5] "…I use a lot of other service providers. Like my training rooms I have a... there's a community centre, a church community centre, that has very nice good quality training venues." [AJ] [6] "Die kostes en credibility issues van daai joernaal en so aan. Maar wat ons begin kyk is dat ons met ander privates begin werk om in sekere fields aan 'n joernaal te werk, in management spesifiek om aan 'n joernaal te werk dat ons dit, as a 'n groep, saam doen." [AJ] [7] "...you can afford very little as a private institution so you have to build relationship...partnerships and so on otherwise your students can't do...can't get anything." [AJ] [8] "…en ook om hierdie system te create waar daar meer interaction is tussen ons en die publics." [AJ] [9] "If you look at the privates, they're getting funding, the Milparks, the Hendys, they have an overseas association." [MV] [10] "So firstly I would want to engage much more with industry professionals and I would want to make it worth their while to get here." [GK] [11] "So industry professionals making it worth their while, making it something that is exciting for them to be involved." [GK]

			[12] "…I'd like to balance that off in terms of how we could reciprocate with industry to get industry professionals here. Same goes for educational professionals. So having those people, such as yourselves, coming in and addressing or engaging our students on relevant topics of interest." [GK] [13] "Independent tertiary institutions are…we need to hold hands with government and work together because, really, we taking a lot of the slack or the surplus students, ja, and it's not being provided for adequately and I don't think that...I don't have confidence in a twenty year plan from government in terms of universities." [GK] [14] "…there needs to be a lot more handholding, it sounds a bit strange, but you know what I mean is that togetherness or working together for common goal." [GK] [15] "And in cases where we work with FNB, for instance, we want to have conversations with the line manager where they can help the student identify those work based challenges where they need the solutions." [JG] [16] "because we deliver programmes for the banks…" [JG] [17] "…we have students that are paying for themselves, we call them Leonardo students, and then we've got, for instance, FNB students where the client is paying." [CS] [18] "…we don't have our own very fancy library but we have a link with the Vaal University of Technology and so we use their online library." [CS]
	2.4 **Process**	2.4.1 Accreditation	[1] "So, we have an internal process called Pulse where the *[…]* will audit all of our internal processes, which also is done as a…in preparation for when you have CHE audits and visits and stuff like that…" [JH] [2] "So, you want this culture that as if you are audited every day? All the time. Every day should be audit day." [JH] [3] "…we've got our lecture evaluation forms, which the students complete, then also we have PO reviews, which I go and do as the head of academic department." [AS] [4] "…audits which I've only had a very brief look through so the comments I could give you on that is that I believe they look at the right things…" [GK] [5] "If you don't have accreditation, then you're nothing, you literally can't operate, you're not a business, you're not an education institution, you're nothing." [JH] [6] "Well, I think, to have good service and quality control systems in place, obviously the number one benefit of that is that, if you don't have it, there's a risk to your accreditation." [JH] [7] "…because we are highly regulated and we can be audited anytime, not that a public institution will not be audited, but there's always this cloud…no, it's not a cloud, but there's always this thing hanging there, but we can get audited, so you see lots of files and lots of processes and lots of…and we have to stick the processes." [AH] [8] "…registration and accreditation of your courses to ensure that all of those things in place so that...and now that we have the BAC Accreditation as well, which is excellent, so it's just an added value for the students as well." [LZ] [9] "…look at curriculum that there needs to be very strong oversight there, that you need to have accreditation firstly…" [GK] [10] "…five year accreditation cycle. So in that five years you need to be reaccredited." [CV] [11] "…it's just gotta be accredited correctly with the right regulatory bodies supporting it and they've gotta know that it's a credible college." [CS2]
		2.4.2 Application and registration	[1] "…registration happens on a certain day… Now, that is an operational service delivery expectation that people have." [JH]

			[2] "When people come to us it is literally you walk in, you go and have a cup of coffee, somebody calls you, they walk you through the whole process, within an hour, you're out of here, you're done. Thank you very much." "The wow factor. And it can be the smallest thing, the smallest thing. Like, for instance, when…something that makes a big difference in our environment, if you go and you register… Here, there's my certification, I am a commissioner of oaths, you arrive here, you've got all your documents but don't you have a copy? Sorry, we'll just make you a copy in the photocopier quickly, I stamp it, I sign it, I'm a commissioner of oaths, it's done. Everything is here. You can actually give people – A one stop service...one stop, but they don't expect it." [JH] [3] "The whole administrative process, the way in which I am…if I now put myself as a first person into the student's shoes, the way I am handled or treated, the respect, the efficiency, the speed at…how quick things happen, the turnaround times…" [CO] [4] "And then, another touch point that we have is...and that also relates back to the contact centre, is when the students first get admitted and when they register. So, they go through their contact centre, they might also have interactions with a consultant, and they might have interactions with a programme manager. So, that's all during that initial admission and registration process. So, what is the turnaround time, are students treated friendly, do they feel supported, do they feel they're getting a good service out of that initial process?" [AH] [5] "…your back office type service that you give to the students in terms of if they phone in for a registration, if they phone in for a deferral of the exam, those type of things…" [MP] [6] "…them it's about delivery in terms of...around the applications, around their study material. So for them it's all about being on time and that it's a clear transparent process." [AJ] [7] "Particularly, when we start looking at processes like the registration process…" [AJ] [8] "…in terms of your registration process, for you to get your material and everything we try to do that within seven days…. From point of registration to a point where we call you and tell you your study material is on its way." [AJ] [9] "…first year students…the application process...So they're very aware of what service did I get in terms of coming into the institution and then they start focusing on things like social activities, etcetera…" [MV] [10] "…registration and accreditation of your courses…" [LZ] [11] "So we do recognition of prior learning, we do an internal credit…it's a very big process because we need to make sure that the students align with what we are offering." [LZ] [12] "…then interaction of other staff, so non-academic staff." [GK] [13] "The administration surrounding assessment and certification…" [CV]
		2.4.3 Technology	[1] "We live in a connected society. If you…if the student arrives here on campus with a laptop or an iPad and there's problems with the internet, then you hear it immediately." [JH] [2] "So, the minute you have that, they come with that expectation. And sometimes it's difficult to deliver on, not because we can't, but because South Africa is not a world leader in technology fields, especially when it comes to bandwidth provision but we get measured against that. We get measured against, but why is the internet so slow? And then becomes a service delivery contact point." [JH] [3] "I would want auditorium style classrooms with hi-tech equipment in them…" [CO] [4] "…because we have an online learning platform. So, apart from the pure study material and the assessments, they also have interactions on that platform." [AH]

			[5] "I would give every student a [sic] iPad with internet connection…" [AH] [6] "So, if that could be more like online or so, then it's not so much paper and we could do it online on a system or maybe that could alleviate a lot of pressures." [AH] [7] "And secondly, accessibility to the material because I have found that it's very nice to have the online systems and all of that but, if the students can't access it, then they are...it makes them really unhappy. "[MP] [8] "So you can do very nice things, I think, which will increase your service delivery immensely if we can go more online…" [MP] [9] "So, just imagine, if we can have such a service to student where they sit in front of their own computer or something and we email…they talk to us via Skype type functionality, and we email whatever they wanted to do to them straight away." [MP] [10] "…checks that they've gone online, that they have…we have online tests scheduled for them throughout." [MP] [11] "…we had a few problems with fax machines and this and that and telecom disappointing us on submissions and things so it was a little bit more problematic but we...So it was more technology issues than…but we've resolved that now…" [AJ] [12] "…the thing is now with social media it is a much bigger problem. Your students just go onto Facebook, start complaining,…" [AJ] [13] "…it becomes the cornerstone of what you are doing because you are literally on the web constantly, or you can be there in five minutes…" [AJ] [14] "…it's also as the same thing with the social media. The information is out there about you. So if it's negative you don't get the students." [AJ] [15] "…one of the things that I would like to change is where I would like to move away from some of the little manual processes because I don't...I dislike these manual little processes…" [AJ] [16] "…if you run things on proper IT based systems, it's a lot faster to respond to students, it's a lot faster to track your communication with students and to track progress of a student through your processes." [AJ] [17] "Ja, so you get your email accounts, student email account, you can download, you can go into the online library, you can have blogs and chats and whatever, you can download additional material, the lecturer can post additional material to you, and so on. You can access certain things. If your payments are up to date, you can access your results and this and that." [AJ] [18] "...if you do not have this access think about what you are doing, think about whether distance education, from any institution these days, whether it is really the mode for you because very few institutions these days you can still do distance education without having some sort of electronic interface." [AJ] [19] "…for us at the master's level, this is what we do. A student will get all his material on a tablet… Everything is preloaded on that tablet. They get it, it's already set up for *[…]* and everything is done. So when he received it, it's linked, it's ready for him to start with his studies." [AJ] [20] "...the other thing that I would really like to spend a lot of money in, for me, it's the IT infrastructure so that I can service students better and provide...give them that access." [AJ] [21] "…the internet has gone down once in three months for twelve minutes at midnight but they're too lazy to actually log in properly. Never went to get my password, never went to IT. So we get that particularly with the second years. Any little thing they are too lazy and now we're not getting service." [MV]

			[22] "...what we have is each department has got a Facebook page." [LZ] [23] "Everything that we're implementing…we have Wi-Fi on the campus but it's not good enough. So the next...the new things that we're implementing is gonna be wow…So every classroom now will have projector, we won't use manual only for backups if something is broken. So every classroom will have ceiling mounted projectors and screens and, like I say, the students will have Wi-Fi…" [LZ] [24] "I think in terms of computers and labs and thing like that we were up to scratch, we have the latest software every year and things like that so I don't think that is a problem." [LZ] [25] "…a really valuable tool to me, and I think it's underutilised in education at this point, is something like LinkedIn where there's a great deal of...there's a lot of trends that emerge and when you're connected to academics or people who are in your particular professional field you can get a lot of different viewpoints and become aware of trends." [GK] [26] "We've got the *[…]* similar to myUNISA but you won't believe…we put everything on there, we have DVDs for them, we have all lecturing PowerPoints…" [CV] [27] "…a tablet with all the study material uploaded and what have you." [CV] [28] "As I said, the challenge is between purely electronic or technology driven, we need some…we still have some challenges there. How do we ensure that our learners have the access that we want them to have to make the whole support thing better?" [CV] [29] "…we also have e-learning on Moodle so there's all sorts of activities and interaction that needs to happen to help them, to guide them through the process but that is the mould." [JG] [30] "So, it is really a [sic] e-learning platform where we upload material for students and they upload their assignments there as well. So it's all online. It is not the ideal online learning platform that we want, we're still working on that, but that's the start of it." [JG] [31] "…especially the older generations, find it extremely difficult to go Moodle because they still want the books and the printed copies." [JG] [32] "…we can do with the online resources for students, technology that we can use." [JG] [33] "I could improve distance learning tools because we're supposedly distance learning, so we have this Moodle, it's not very interactive. I think that if you have to do e-learning, you might as well make it very exciting. We video our facilitators, we put them…the videos on Moodle but it's not properly edited…" [CS] [34] "I would spend a lot of money on IT. IT is like a black bottomless hole. One can always throw money at it. It will make my live better and easier if I could do that." [CS] [35] "I think we'd have to become more techno-savvy…" [CS2] [36] "I would like more Apple Macs." [CS2] [37] "I would like more interactive boards, I would like more…every single one to have all their notes…every single student to be able to have their own little iPad. I'd like to be able to have every single lecturer to have iPads. I'd like cameras so that…we so much about communications and advertising, I'd like more cameras to be around the college…the campus so that we capturing everything and pictures write stories." [CS2]
		2.4.4 Teaching and Learning	[1] "…appoint more professional experts as technocrats to assist with the quality of you curricula, quality of your teaching and learning approaches and to stimulate the growth of research." [AL] [2] "…and then even…what happens in the classroom, the study material, study guidelines, student support, right through the whole process up to the end that I cross the stage and I'm capped and I'm sashed." [CO]

			[3] "…teaching and learning space, a crucial pillar…for me, the teaching and learning support is a critical pillar" [MV] [4] "...don't forget to service that learner that wants more electronic service because you will alienate them if you do not move with the times. So it's a challenge, it's basically a two...double strategy that you need to do." [CV] [5] "How will you keep your learners happy if they want the face-to-face often?" [CV]
		2.4.5 Student support	[1] "…because we're a private tertiary institution, people come with an expectation of more support. Private tertiary institutions always have this one line that they use as a marketing tool, smaller classes, individual attention – " [JH] [2] "…there's interaction that the student might have with something like a call centre or a contact centre for enquiries. " [AH] [3] "…if the students do have content related queries, then we do have a tutor line and so they do get…some of the queries do come to the lecturers." [AH] [4] "…your back office type service that you give to the students in terms if they phone in for a deferral of the exam, those type of things...although we do think about as sort of secondary, or support services, do play an immense role in terms of the student's perspective or perception, then, of the training that they receive." [MP] [5] "We are more flexible because we have identified the fact that we need to accommodate the students that are full time. And many of our students are women, single moms, or moms, or whatever. They have their family responsibilities. So, we need to accommodate them in that. So, we have actually moved our processes four months up to accommodate them." [MP] [6] "...in many aspects, so you should be able to...and especially if you want to work with a broader market than just your school-leavers, then you must be able to accommodate the students as well." [MP] [7] "We have…from the moment that you first submit your registration online, we have basically ten working days, two weeks, to get you registered and send out your material so that you have your material with you. Then we have a tutor service online which needs to be a twenty-four hour response time and we have an email system with a forty-hour turnaround response time and we have people that manage that, the lady sits here." [MP] [8] "So what we do get, again, there is students that study with a specific public university distance learner, also on a distance learning basis, but they cannot...just based on the support that they get there, they cannot pass their modules." [MP] [9] "…we have a…almost a twenty-four hour, every day at least, let's say, somebody that's allocated to that programme that provides students with the information that they need, who manages them…" [MP] [10] "So, it's sort of a project manager for that specifically. And, based on the response time again, because we have somebody allocated to that…" [MP] [11] "…if all of these things [IT] are in place, it's a lot easier to respond to students because student gives his number, he wants his results." [AJ] [12] "…third year student, I think when they look at service it's very much now shifts into the how are you helping me to be the best I can be beyond just passing?" [MV] [13] "…in terms of teaching and learning that support function and I don't mean one-on-one support necessarily…" [MV]

			[14] "We do have counsellor...we have a counsellor here and then we have specialist counsellors. So a drug counsellor, for example…" [MV] [15] "…so we have a system here of relationship navigators. So we have a person, and it's a qualified...somebody with a degree…" [MV] [16] "They'll have about a hundred and twenty students and they are fully responsible for those students." [MV] [17] "…what we offer them in terms of support and then obviously the lecturing and the facilities." [LZ] [18] "We've just newly appointed out student relationship coordinator, which we are very excited about because they are now really focused on the students, and their experience and what they will...when they start with design school, the first day to when they graduate, they walk the journey with them and all the concerns and the complaints and all the support that they need and the student relationship coordinator will now, from there, make sure that the relevant people are in touch with what needs to happen here." [LZ] [19] "…with our student relationship coordinator that we've got now, student support will be even better and more focused…" [LZ] [20] "…ja, building a team mentality when it comes to being involved in a student's careers that it's not just about one lecturer being involved, that they are available to them from an emotional aspect as well. So helping them from that standpoint and collaborative decision making in terms of the student's academic careers." [GK] [21] "…the support base that's available to the students." [GK] [22] "Curriculum is important for learners but it's not as important as the student support mechanisms that you put in place." [CV] [23] "Student support, again, vital and then a basic...for me very important in service quality is your whole service or customer care, customer service, how do you work with them? " [CV] [24] "If there's something we can do better and more of, student support. So we do a lot, I think, in terms of student support." [JG] [25] "…help them through the learning journey, problems with assignments, understanding, those types of things but I think, if we have money, we would have done more." [JG] [26] "…the intention of the institute was to take a more proactive stance towards client service and student support in particular. [CS] [27] "So every student has a key account manager…. So, ja, so in our case the key account manager is actually more important from a client perspective than the facilitator in terms of relationships with the students." [CS] [28] "… anything that I do to support a student to me is student support… So this...the key account managers, the administration, whatever we do to make sure that you get your marks on time, that we know what's going on in your classroom, that we give you extension on an assignment or whatever, I see as student support because we're holding your hand…psychologists, who's available and we started with the BCom programmes and they see each BCom student as compulsory, you don't have a choice, four time a year and if you have nothing to say you can come and sit there and say I have nothing to say but you have to attend those sessions." [CS] [29] "…if they're struggling, if they report any issues, if they fall behind, I will say I think you need a pep-talk and I'll refer you to the student support specialist…. They feel that they get support there." [CS]

			[30] "When we see that English is an issue the professional writing skills...it's part of our induction, they have a short session on professional writing, but if we pick it up with a student that they are doing...they're actually clever but they're struggling with the writing we can now refer them to the writing skills person for a one hour session." [CS] [31] "…proactive engagement…but proactive engagement we don't wait until the student calls us to say I'm in trouble, we call them." [CS] [32] "How quickly do we respond on your email, on your phone call? How quickly do we deal with your issue?" [CS] [33] "…proactive engagement, communication, and responsiveness." [CS] [34] "If their marks are good and all of a sudden they aren't good, they're not meeting deadlines, they're red flagged and they're brought into the office with our relationship navigators and spoken about." [GT] [35] "…well-being, etcetera, and if it gets too serious they go and…we've got a wellness psychologist that we send them to." [GT] [36] "…relationship navigators, and they are constantly on email, on Facebook, on Whatsapp with the students and they linking all the time." [CS2]
		2.4.6 Policies	[1] "…most education institutions many things are driven or determined by policy and procedures…" [CO] [2] "So that [people] would be probably the prominent pillar. The other would be institutional policies and procedures." [CO] [3] "I don't think we have a specific service quality system, but we have a policy to look at that and we have very regular discussion around the issue of service…the quality of the service that we provide to the students and how we relate that to our own teaching and learning strategies and other related strategies and policies." [AJ] [4] "…what I have on a personal level in the office here is that I have a working document where we set out every activity, what happens in January, February so a very structured process because it is cyclical; it happens every year. So every year when...after every process we have a post-mortem and we see what worked, what didn't work, what can we improve, how can we improve it?" [AJ] [5] "…it's important for us where we measure and each process we go through it every time until we get a clear workable process and only then do we do a policy because my experience is that if you start out with an institution and you develop all these grand policies and then students use those policies and if your practise and your policy is not on par, or doesn't run parallel, then you have problems…" [AJ] [6] "We have twenty-three *[…]* policies that we need to adhere to." [LZ] [7] "So there's policies for everything and I think within those there are systems that we need to implement to ensure the quality." [LZ] [8] "Standard operating procedures does not bring passion, it doesn't bring that care and attention that you want. If it says you have to call the student once in two weeks they may make the call but it may not add any value." [CS] [9] "…it all goes down to policies, procedures and guidelines is basically setting parameters… something that we also are having to work on here is formalising all policies, all procedures, all the guidelines and make them working documents, not just something that sits in a file." [CS2]

		2.4.7 Communication	[1] "Well, I think the biggest thing that sometimes becomes the reason for perceived breakdown in service delivery is communication. So, I think that, if you have a robust communication system in place that can keep people informed about what is happening and how it is happening and what they should expect with regards to how things are going to happen, then that's the one thing that I think we…whether it is private or public, I think that's the one place where we sometimes fall flat. So, I would think, ja, I would want to come up with really good transparent communication systems." [JH] [2] "…how changes of processes and systems are introduced, and the way that it is internally communicated, because without that internal communication, everybody is…it is like soup in a tumble dryer." [JH] [3] "I would say communication, first of all, because I've seen, from ourselves as well, every once in a while there's a change that happens and so on and we email it out to the students but they don't necessarily understand why the change is made or the context within it. So, first of all, definitely good communication, whether it is via email and so on." [AS] [4] "…definitely ensure that everybody is on par with everything that's happening." [AS] [5] "But here, we have to email the account payers, you have to email the parents, we have to phone the parents." [AS] [6] "Yes, but why didn't you...why couldn't you work this out in January already? Because it happened now. What exactly do you want me to say?" [AS] [7] "Well, no, communication is very important, vertical as well as horizontal communication. Transparency, definitely, transparency is very, very important, that you can know exactly what is going on and why is it going on." [AS] [8] "…transparent system in terms of what the student expect from the institution and how they can engage the institution in terms of that process." [AJ] [9] "…it's one way of standardising your responses to students, it's one way of getting everybody in the office to understand different processes in the same way, and how to implement those processes in a standard format." [AJ] [10] "Communication and for the staff it's also...for me it's important that they understand…it doesn't matter at what level you are, they need to understand that total company." [AJ] [11] "…it's important that we start to inform the students on that…" [AJ] [12] "…that they also perceive to be part of the service and do you actually communicate with me when my tests are...and do I get my timetable on time…" [MV] [13] "Communication, that's what I would expect, is very solid communication…" [MV] [14] "…very high level of communication, very high level of transparency…" [MV] [15] "…a critical pillar…communication." [MV] [16] "…communication is also a big part of it… of service quality…" [LZ] [17] "Feedback from the lecturers happen on a daily basis… So if there's something in the classroom that's not functioning we sort it out immediately. So, that is a daily basis thing that happens." [LZ] [18] "So I think people...you need to take it very seriously when you get some sort of comment on Facebook if that is...you need to take serious what happens or what students are saying or what parents are saying." [LZ] [19] "...what we have is each department has got a Facebook page. So the HODs communicate." [LZ]

			[20] "Communication…effective communication in terms of consistent meetings, engaging with staff on relevant issues, following up debriefing on issues that have been raised or points on the agenda that have been raised at a previous staff meeting and then painting a picture of unity…" [GK] [21] "…communication is the thing I would change and working towards changing immediately." [GK] [22] "I said effective communication, and I almost want to say effective continuous communication…" [JG] [23] "Communication, all the time. So we communicate, we send general communication…" [CS] [24] "So there's constant…there's people whose jobs it is to communicate with you and then there's the rest of who's just really interested to know how you're doing. So you will not only get an email from one person whose job it is, there a community who is actually interested and say, how's you research going?... It's proactive engagements, it's communication and then it's responsiveness…" [CS] [25] "So I feel it's a constant communication. You must know that somebody is working on your stuff." [CS] [26] "They [lecturers] can communicate with them." [GT] [27] "…unless there's sound communication it will all fall apart." [CS2] [28] "…think probably the biggest complaint that comes from lecturers is communication, they want good communication, they want good support and they want good turnabout time." [CS2] [29] "Communication, absolutely vital" [CS2] [30] "We want to bring in newsletters, we wanna bring in things like that that they get each month just so that the parents, the people who are paying the fees, know what's going on 'cause students don't always let their parents know what's happening." [CS2]
	2.5 **Product/outcome: Learners / contributions**	2.5.1 Contribution to society	[1] "From a student's perspective it's an opportunity to engage in learning effectively, to be successful in terms of meeting the outcomes of the programme and to be effectively prepared for the world of work and society." [AL] [2] "…one would expect that there has been fundamental shifts in the way that that person thinks and acts and reasons and ultimately the marketplace is the judge if you were successful in that." [CO] [3] "…if you give them a product that is not quality assured and that is not properly quality managed, then the person will not acquire the knowledge and they won't be able to function in the workplace." [AH] [4] "I think it's competence in the workplace. Are they able to apply the relevant industry related knowledge? So if they've done a degree in brand leadership is that...how applicable is that in the workforce in a related field?" [GK] [5] "...*[…]*'s dream is contribute to social transformation and if we can see that happening then there will be a difference." [JG] [6] "And achievement of strategic goals and, for us in our world, it's making that difference, social transformation." [JG] [7] "…is a private business but the amount of money that they actually plough back into the business and into the community and that sort of a thing, I must say, I take exception to people that says we're just in there for the money." [CS] [8] "…Zimbabwean students… and we take them on and they are our corporate responsibility students because they can't afford to pay what the South African students pay. So we basically take them in at cost price." [CS]

			[9] "We do a lot of social relevant stuff, competitions, campaigns and we always getting people in on a social cause." [GT] [10] "I think that's very important and being able to give people an opportunity that have got the ability and I've proven it. I think Durban's graduated fifteen students from KwaMashu that would never have had a chance." [GT]
		2.5.2 Employability	[1] "Die kennis samelewing soek 'n ou, selfs of die laagste vlak wat probleemoplossing kan doen, wat kreatief kan nuwe kennis genereer en oplossings genereer." [AL] [2] "The way in which this content is applied in shaping and shifting the views of…or the knowledge of the students" [CO] [3] "But a lot of people do study because of employability because they are in a bank but they don't want to be where they are currently. So they want a career path. So they now a teller and they want to become a credit manager and they study towards that." [AH] [4] "…the main reason why these people study with us is really to take another career step in the bank." [AH] [5] "And that helps with the employability." [AH] [6] "I expect a service level of helping me in our space, certainly with my portfolio, with contacts in industry." [MV] [7] "Ja, and we do specialise and that is part of the service as well…So it will give you the edge, it's not just another BCom…" [MV] [8] "…are different because they're creative but all the departments are different." [LZ] [9] "So our students need to be employable when they walk out of here; that's very important." [LZ] [10] "…grow the students holistically…" [GK] [11] "…quality of the graduate that enters the workforce." [GK] [12] "For us it's a prerequisite [employability]. Very important because, in all our programmes, the students need to identify a work based challenge and, through the learning process, find a possible solution for that work based challenge. So that's an important one." [JG] [13] "if you're a student at *[…]* you'll find your voice." [CS] [14] "…students will get employed and that's very important to the folks. We have an eighty point…eighty percent employment ratio with our first of our third year students and a hundred percent employment ratio for honour students. So there's a demand for them. It's simply longevity." [GT] [15] "…when you can come up with ideas and therefore your longevity of creativity with strategic intent is higher. So that I think is…if we can give that to the students…" [GT] [16] "…when the student leaves here and he goes into the industry he can solve problems by himself." [GT] [17] "You develop your style and we'll guide you from that, be it the greatest style or if it's exploratory or if it's a following of mentors, a mishmash of mentors work okay as well but they develop their own styles, not the lecturer's styles." [GT] [18] "The one is basically what I spoke about is not cocooning the student, giving them the freedom to play, the freedom to fail with their concepts and ideas, I would prefer that rather than being mediocre and safe." [GT] [19] "Hundred percent employment ratio…" [GT]
		2.5.3 Practical application	[1] "The new generation university and talking about the entrepreneurial university, these two concepts come together but firstly in the new generation university our view is that industry say we don't

			want graduates anymore that they're either strong in theory or in application. We are looking for people that mastered both parts of the world." [AL] [2] "…instead of sitting down and writing a three hour proctor examination, in my humble submission is it means nothing. I will actually see this guy live pitching to venture capitalists. So we use that kind of approach to really bring the real life experience as close as possible to what they're experiencing." [CO] [3] "…we do make sure that our assessment processes are very stringent and that our assessments are practical. So, that is very important because ninety-five per cent of our students are employed and it's very important…it's a very important differentiator for us that we're not just giving the theory." [AH] [4] "…spend more time on making sure that the theories link to the practise." [AH] [5] "…more interaction with the employers, even more, so that whatever you study actually links back to your work environment, that's what we're trying to do." [AH] [6] "...it's the theory versus the more practical side..." [AH] [7] "…when it comes to the…really the application side where they must do case studies and case analysis and all of that, they struggle…" [MP] [8] "Something that I would also like to see is for our students have more access to internships that relate specifically to what they are studying." [AJ] [9] "Yes, so there we have organised a lot of what we call agency days, etcetera, where guests come in, they present to them, they have a lot of lectures from industry people, brand managers from big companies because that's what they now expect at that level…" [MV] [10] "…to make sure that we are industry relevant and so we don't work with the good old textbook." [MV] [11] "…because our courses are basically industry focused and that is what we focus on. So it's a good balance between theory and practical." [LZ] [12] "…opportunities to showcase the work of students to parents outside as industry professionals…" [GK] [13] "We do not write exams but our assessment process, our assignments, is as important as an exam because in that the student needs to demonstrate to us I can apply the theoretical aspects that I've learnt, the new knowledge, and if they can't they have to redo and redo until they get it right." [JG] [14] "…if we can do more with practical activities that if we say...if offer entrepreneurship as a module that we can really take the students and go do an entrepreneurial project somewhere in a rural area." [JG] [15] "…they do an alchemy paper which is not a research paper. An alchemy paper is actually they have to take it through into an action." [GT] [16] "We have a five week brand challenge and I get clients, real clients, who basically have to pay an extra seventy thousand rand, that's what it would cost for one person, to have three teams working on his brand for five weeks which they can use and it's very good." [GT]
		2.5.4 Operations management	[1] "However, the one place where I find where the biggest expectation, with regards to service, comes is on operational management, academical operational management, and that's where people have a high level of expectation." [JH] [2] "…when somebody complains, I would say ninety percent of the complaints that I have to deal with is because of operational processes, systems, and effectiveness." [JH]

			[3] “However, what I do believe where an internal system can make a big difference is where you deliver on touches of service delivery that people don’t expect.” [JH] [4] “It’s just something that’s in place that you didn’t expect that just makes everything run smoother. And you can build thing like that into an academic operational system that gives people that.” [JH] [5] “The approach currently is a blanket approach from a system perspective and to me it, at some point, feels like the dog is…the tail is wagging the dog. In other words, the system prescribes everything.” [CO] [6] “…the knock-on effect is to my customer, to my student and it irritates the…I wanna satisfy them but I’m banging my head against a system.” [CO] [7] “I’ve got seven million forms that I need to fill in for every single lecturer, then I have to write reports, and then I have to write reports about the reports, and all of that. And, ja, so we do take it seriously but I’ve also seen that it’s very standardised, which is also a problem because, if we take from ourselves – not flexible at all.” [AS] [8] “…because we need to have a generic benchmark, which is not really relevant to us because we’re *[…]*, we do creative things.” [AS] [9] “People don’t really realise that a lot of the things that goes south on this campus, or actually around the country, is the fact that, yes, we are part of the *[…]* and we have systems like *[…]* and *[…]* and all our capturing systems which aren’t really doing what they say.” [AS] [10] “And then by the end, this has been reassigned to this person, then that person makes comments and reassigns to the next person who makes comments and reassigns it to the next person. In the end…five years down the line, ping, your research leave is approved.” [AS] [11] “…through this student life cycle, we call it.” [AH] [12] “…we have to follow these processes, we don’t have a choice. So it becomes human nature. You do these things and following all of these processes leads to a situation where you do have a good service quality, automatically.” [AH] [13] “…all of these processes that I was pointing out as being positive, they are positive, but for the academics it’s sometimes…it is schlep to fill out fifteen forms of this, now I’ve moderated this and I need to tick here and tick here and sign it and sign this one and sign. It takes them forever. So, ja, it’s a bit of a balancing act with the paperwork. Not that we must drop the procedures, but the paperwork.” [AH] [14] “...which some of our processes, we need to follow. A silly example, we need to…for the verifications that we may become subject to, we need to print things, which is silly because if it’s online –“ [MP] [15] “…it’s about providing a standardised process to make it as easy to implement as possible and I think, in view, what also drives that standardised service culture towards the student…” [AJ] [16] “So, yes, we have like the *[…]* System of evaluation…” [MV] [17] “…admin is an ongoing nightmare in terms of what actually is the service delivery because we don’t really know; we have the most user-unfriendly systems, the *[…]* and *[…]* and whatever. They don’t encourage…they’re too complex.” [MV] [18] “And it’s not conducive. It’s supposed to be so that you can see exactly what’s happening but, because it’s so cumbersome…” [MV] [19] “...there are a lot of systems in place and I think again, like any system, it’s living.” [GK]

			[20] "The system is built around the human beings that work there. We don't have a fancy IT system… You can have a very fancy system that nobody uses, and I've seen that most often. So mine is a human being system…it's just the human contacts, it's not a system." [CS] [21] "…there are blockages in the system that you gotta go to this one and she's gotta ask this one and this one's gotta go sideways and ask this one and then they gotta go up and ask that one and it sometimes takes time whereas I think if sometimes your national, your head office, didn't have so much authority, didn't have so much say and power in decision-making, if it was maybe filtered down a little bit more." [CS2]
		2.5.5 Ethical practise	[1] "…the big one, is being ethical If you go into the industry you are a mindbender in a sense and as long as you ethical about it…" [GT] [2] "…we very strict on plagiarism and looking at plagiarism and art on the creative side it's very difficult because your creative idea's always been done before." [GT] [3] "…I say is just quality education just because I think you still need to deliver quality education at the end of the day. I don't think that you can, from an ethical point of view –" [MP] [4] "So diens en die diens omgewing is eintlik maar 'n ander woord van die leer omgewing wat ek vir hierdie ou skep. So ek is eties verbinde om dit te doen. Deurdat ek hierdie ou suksesvol maak in my omgewing ontwikkel ek my kredietwaardigheid, versterk ek my handelsmerk en [ONDUIDELIK] more, so dit ewe belangrik vir besigheid as wat dit belangrik is vir die etiek van wat ek tot stand moet bring." [AL]
		2.5.6 Reputation	[1] "…way that you retain and build your reputation is by the quality of the education in the class." [JH] [2] "…the value of your education is shocking, then it absolutely destroys your reputation and you put into the industry people that can't really stand up to the challenges." [JH] [3] "... ja, maar dit is ook die enigste manier hoe jy werklik jou reputasie, ook op akademiese vlak, kan groei." [JH] [4] "I sell all this everywhere but they tell other people, it's referrals and things like that about their experience, and if one doesn't get that right it…reputational harm." [CO] [5] "Cause reputation is very important. Reputation, brand and repeat business." [CO] [6] "…the *[…]* Qualification is well received by the industry as well." [AH] [7] "…because if you deliver good service...we actually have students that transfer from other universities to us because it is easier for them to get into contact with us…" [MP] [8] "…but with us it is actually quite a threat because we do depend on the reputation in there quite immensely." [MP] [9] "…well they actually come to us and say, well, I haven't received my books within the two-week turnaround time and then, because they are working and because of their reputational issues, there are always repercussions to some way or the other which we, from an academic point of view, don't want…" [MP] [10] "…people perceive us as providing a certain level of quality in terms of service that drives part of our growth because we have students from other institutions coming to us because of that issue that they don't like the experience they've had with other institutions so they coming to us. " [AJ] [11] "…if there's a lot of complaints and if you have a bad reputation, this person calls you and he is ready to fight with you. So that engagement with you industry stakeholders and so on is already sort of compromised…" [AJ] [12] "…if they get employed based on that, how recognised are the degrees from *[…]*? Does it carry weight in the industry?" [GK]

			[13] "…what we've seen is students take decisions or refer fellow students based on student support that they receive from an institution." [CV] [14] "Ja, definitely, but because it's a public university the student accepts there will be quality where the privates, with all this fly-by-night words that they use –…" [CV] [15] "...in the media, you have to battle and show the whole time you offer a quality offering." [CV] [16] "...research –for the credibility…" [CV] [17] "En dan die tweede ding is, as jy vir daai 'n *[…]* kwalifikasie gee, moet hy kan uitstaan in die werkplek, anders loop jy ook dood." [CV] [18] "…we always need to prove ourselves compared to UNISA." [JG] [19] "We don't advertise. So…but…and that's that service level thing, you have to balance it." [CS] [20] "We have to sort of make name for ourselves still and then...and where we have to please clients where, actually, they'll accept a whole lot of nonsense from a public, we don't have that luxury because we're still making name for ourselves." [CS] [21] "It's about our good name because you don't build a university in ten years. You don't build a reputation in ten years. So we constantly working on our reputation. We're building...and I want to feel proud." [CS] [22] "If the service level and everything is there and everything's up and running, and if all the systems and people know that there's the whole quality systems in place that is the reputation of the college, the campus." [CS2] [23] "It just…it's the roots of our success [SQ]. If you don't have that it's…you'll wilt. If you don't wither…it's like planting a tree without roots, it's gonna fall over." [CS2]
		2.5.7 Repeat business	[1] "If you deliver on what you as a brand promise people that you do and you can deliver on what the expectation is, then everything will run smoothly." [JH] [2] "…strengthening of the brand is another and then reputation…" [CO] [3] "…it also adds to the credibility of the brand." [AS] [4] "…it translates into the credibility of the brand now in many spaces." [MV] [5] "Ja. Our honour's programme is very strong, they come from...a lot of parents want you to go to the traditional university and then you can go to this place called *[…]*. So they come from UJ, UCT, UP. We've got a very strong honours." [MV] [6] "…enough opportunities to create awareness of the brand and the quality of the curriculum and the outcomes would be, for example, a piece of work that a student produces." [GK] [7] "...because it's become a brand but you know the pride that would come from somebody from Harvard or Oxford and universities want to...they want that...they want the alumni to carry that forward and to have pride in that place where they studied…" [GK] [8] "En dan die tweede ding is, as jy vir daai 'n *[…]* kwalifikasie gee, moet hy kan uitstaan in die werkplek, anders loop jy ook dood." [CV] [9] "…I think it's a brand promise. Are we doing what we promised clients and students?" [JG] [10] "The public universities have names that they can use. We still need to build that." [JG] [11] "So building a brand takes seven years… We building it. We haven't destroyed it as yet and it's so easy just by…just not operating correctly or doing something totally wrong…" [GT] [12] "The other, obviously with regards, is that it creates ambassadors for you." [JH] [13] "…creates word-of-mouth, positive." [JH] [14] "…it's creating this wow experience for a student because ultimately I think they become our evangelists." [CO]

			[15] "So it's one person, it's…that I know is spreading the good news about us wherever he goes and that's what would I want all our students be but, as I said earlier, it starts the moment…from the moment of application." [CO] [16] "Repeat business and, if I now talk from a commercial perspective…every MBA alumnus works somewhere. It's a potential entry to a company. So if he or she had a wonderful experience here that could also serve as a warm introduction to the company…" [CO] [17] "So, we do get students that literally phones in and say we have spoken to this and this colleague and, because of that and that reason which is usually around turnaround times and response times, they want to move from public universities to us." [MP] [18] "…but we do get business in if our pass rate are rates are good and…but that's also again a word of mouth type of thing because then the one business unit will tell the other business unit, so that's all of that." [MP] [19] "…lot of students that tell us that I heard about you from my colleague or a lot of word-of-mouth marketing that is happening…" [AJ] [20] "If you have an overall good experience, like we mentioned before, at the campus or at the institution word of mouth, that is basically…that leads to the next thing." [LZ] [21] "If you deliver a good service, you keep those client." [JG] [22] "…for instance, a client like FNB. They just keep sending us BComs. They have over two hundred students just from FNB because if they're happy they send more and they're happy and now we adding other banks because our banking…we have a BCom specialisation in banking that is fantastic, people love it. So they keep sending us students." [CS] [23] "…students' throughput and retention." [CS] [24] "The students are our ambassadors and we invest money in them. So that's how important they are, hugely important." [GT]

For anonymity, all references in the verbatim quotes to names of people, PHEIs, holding companies of PHEIs and company specific software packages have been replaced by "[…]".

APPENDIX E

FACE VALIDITY LETTER

UNISA university of south africa

FACE VALIDITY LETTER

FACE VALIDITY MEETING FOR DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROJECT: "A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR TOTAL QUALITY SERVICE FOR PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA"

Date: / /

Dear XXX,

Hope you are well.

Following our meeting in 2014, I have completed the first stage of my research project namely the qualitative analysis.

I am currently in the start-up phase of the second stage of the research project namely the development of a questionnaire. Since this is a very important part of the project, your input / feedback for the compilation of the final questionnaire is fundamental to the empirical survey and successful project completion.

If possible, we would like to meet and present the questionnaire to you for improvements and face validation in the …… week of …….. 2016. Hopefully we can then also discuss a suitable time in terms of operational requirements for the final questionnaire to be distributed to your students and lecturers.

I am looking forward to your response.

Have a blessed festive season!

Kind regards

____________________________ Project manager **Riaan Dirkse van Schalkwyk (BCom, BCom Hons, MCom Business Management)** **Lecturer: Operations & Quality Management** Department of Business Management Unisa AJH van der Walt Building 4-50 Muckleneuk campus Tel: +27 12 429 2109 / 082 466 0407 Fax: 086 622 2654	____________________________ Project promotor **Prof Rigard J Steenkamp** **Department of Business Management** Sections: Operations management Centre for Business Management: Programme leader: PTQMPR Office 4-62 AJH van der Walt building, extension x4842 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA / MAIN CAMPUS

APPENDIX F

STAGE 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

STAGE 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

UNISA university of south africa

A FRAMEWORK FOR TOTAL QUALITY SERVICE (TQS) FOR PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

You are hereby invited to participate in a brief online survey.

This survey is being conducted for a research project for the fulfillment of the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Management Studies (Operations Management) within UNISA's College of Economic and Management Sciences. The main objective of the research project is to develop a framework for total quality service (TQS) for private higher education institutions (PHEIs) in South Africa.

Please note:

- Responses to this survey will be strictly confidential and will be analysed solely by the researcher. The results of the survey will not be distributed to your PHEI or any single individual.
- It is important to collect a representative sample from your institution, so your participation would be greatly appreciated. This questionnaire is scheduled to be available until 30 September 2016.
- Should you experience any technical difficulties with the survey, please contact me or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
  http://survey.unisa.ac.za/index.php/673353/lang-en

The structure of the questionnaire

Section A: Demographical information

This section requires information on your demographic/biographic profile. Please indicate and tick the relevant box pertaining to you.

Section B: Service quality dimensions (items/constructs) for a TQS framework

Please indicate the ***importance*** of each dimension (item/construct) in terms of *measuring, managing, and improvement* of service quality on a continuous basis as part of a TQS framework. Remember there are no right or wrong answers. If you think a dimension (item/construct) is very important for a service quality framework, tick number 5. If you think a dimension (item/construct) is not at all important for service quality, tick number 1. If your feelings are less strong, tick a number in between.

Section C: An open-ended question

This section contains one important open-ended question. Here you will be able to provide ***additional input*** (any unique suggestion in your own words) what you think is important that will contribute to excellent service quality in a PHEI.

Please note the following:

- This study is an ***anonymous*** survey. Your name will not appear on the questionnaire and the answers you give will be treated ***strictly confidential***. You cannot be identified in person on the basis of your responses.
- Your ***voluntary*** participation in this research project is vital. The results will contribute to the development of a TQS framework to measure, manage and improve service quality on a continuous basis.
- Please answer the questions in the attached questionnaire as ***completely and honestly*** as possible. This should not take more than 15 minutes of your time.
- The results of the study will be used for ***academic purposes only*** and may be published in an academic journal. If needed, I will provide you with a summary of my findings on request.
- Please complete ***all sections***.
- Tick the box that best represents ***your*** view
- Please complete by ***30 September 2016***.
- Please contact your campus principal if you have any questions or comments about the survey.
- Once you have completed the survey, please click on the **"Submit"** button on the last page for your responses to be captured.

Thanking you, in advance, for your contribution to this research project.

Riaan Dirkse van Schalkwyk (BCom, BCom Hons, MCom Business Management)
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Please note: If you agree to participate in this survey, please click on "Next". If you do not wish to participate in this study, please click on "Exit and clear survey" to end your participation.

Exit and clear survey | Next

UNISA university of south africa

A FRAMEWORK FOR TOTAL QUALITY SERVICE (TQS) FOR PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

0%

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

This section requires information on your demographic/biographic profile. Please indicate and tick the relevant box pertaining to you.

Note: this section distinguishes you as respondent:

Please indicate if you are a:

- (•) Student (external customer)
- ( ) Lecturer (internal customer)

a. Gender

This question is mandatory

Female | Male

( ) Female ( ) Male

b. Ethnic group

This question is mandatory

- ○ African
- ○ Coloured
- ○ Indian
- ○ White
- ○ Prefer not to indicate

c. Type of qualification you are currently enrolled for:

This question is mandatory

- ○ Certificate (undergraduate)
- ○ Diploma (undergraduate)
- ○ Degree (undergraduate)
- ○ Honours / postgraduate qualification
- ○ Masters
- ○ Doctorate

d. Year of study you are registered for

This question is mandatory

- ○ Second year
- ○ Third year
- ○ Fourth year
- ○ More than four years

e. Private higher education institution you are registered with

This question is mandatory

Please choose...

Exit and clear survey | Next

UNISA university of south africa

A FRAMEWORK FOR TOTAL QUALITY SERVICE (TQS) FOR PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

33%

SECTION B: SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS (ITEMS/CONSTRUCTS) FOR A TQS FRAMEWORK

- Dimensions (items/constructs) related to service quality at a PHEI are listed below.
- Please complete this section by indicating the importance of each dimension (item/construct) in terms of measuring, managing, and improvement of service quality on a continuous basis as part of a TQS framework. It is important to be as accurate as possible in your responses.

Remember: You must rate the level of ***importance*** for each dimension (item/construct) on a scale from 1 to 5 (see below). Your response is ***your*** perception of whether you think a dimension (item/construct) is important to be included in a TQS framework to **measure, manage and improve service quality on a continuous basis**.

PLEASE INDICATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DIMENSIONS (ITEMS/CONSTRUCTS) LISTED BELOW IN TERMS OF MANAGING, MEASURING AND IMPROVEMENT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON A CONTINUOUS BASIS TO BE INCLUDED IN A TQS FRAMEWORK.

Dimensions (items/constructs)
Note: the aspects mentioned in brackets below are ONLY for clarification purposes

	Not important 1	Slightly important 2	Fairly important 3	Important 4	Very important 5
Cost *(this relates to the affordability of enrolling at a PHEI)*	○	○	○	○	○
Quality teaching *(this relates to content and knowledge transfer)*	○	○	○	○	○
Technology *(this relates to modern and innovative equipment)*	○	○	○	○	○
Student support (services) *(this relates to additional teaching and learning support to students)*	○	○	○	○	○
Customer centered approach *(this relates to the student being treated as a customer)*	○	○	○	○	○
Faculty expertise and senior academics *(this relates to good faculty reputation)*	○	○	○	○	○
Servicescape *(this relates to modern, functional facilities)*	○	○	○	○	○
Communication *(this relates to frequent, transparent, verbal and non-verbal contact with all stakeholders)*	○	○	○	○	○
Personal attention *(this relates to addressing the unique needs of the external customer e.g. students)*	○	○	○	○	○
Internal customer focus *(this relates to addressing the unique needs of the internal customer e.g. lecturers)*	○	○	○	○	○
Reputation *(this relates to the image and reputation of the institution)*	○	○	○	○	○
Leadership and top management commitment *(this relates to the efforts of the campus principal and senior staff to achieve process excellence)*	○	○	○	○	○
Operations management *(this relates to productive, efficient and effective systems)*	○	○	○	○	○
Employability *(this relates to the value of the qualification in terms of recognition by industry)*	○	○	○	○	○
Institutional partnerships *(this relates the cooperation of a PHEI with industry, government and other higher education institutions)*	○	○	○	○	○
Student partnerships *(this relates to assisting high performing graduates)*	○	○	○	○	○
Practical application *(this relates to the vocational value of the learning material)*	○	○	○	○	○
Culture *(this relates to the values and beliefs of the institution)*	○	○	○	○	○

	Not important 1	Slightly important 2	Fairly important 3	Important 4	Very important 5
Application and registration *(this relates to an effective process with short lead times)*	○	○	○	○	○
Unique product offering *(this relates to market differentiation, specialised qualifications)*	○	○	○	○	○
Accreditation *(this relates to national acknowledgement of the qualifications offered)*	○	○	○	○	○
Contribution to society *(this relates to adding value to the broad community)*	○	○	○	○	○
Information management *(this relates to access to accurate data records)*	○	○	○	○	○
Continuous improvement *(this relates to better quality incrementally)*	○	○	○	○	○
Benchmarking *(this relates to seeking new or best practices for improvement)*	○	○	○	○	○
Service quality standards *(this relates to setting of improved standards)*	○	○	○	○	○
On time performance *(this relates to punctuality to meet deadlines and quick responses)*	○	○	○	○	○
Assessment, measurement and feedback *(this relates to fair assessment and customer feedback)*	○	○	○	○	○
Trust *(this relates to customer respect and confidence)*	○	○	○	○	○
Library quality *(this relates to the access and comprehensiveness of learning materials)*	○	○	○	○	○
Recreational activities *(this relates to on-campus extra-curricular facilities such as health and sport facilities)*	○	○	○	○	○
Research *(this relates to knowledge creation and management)*	○	○	○	○	○
Loyalty *(this relates to a sense of belonging to a PHEI)*	○	○	○	○	○
Accommodation *(this relates to hospitality facilities for students)*	○	○	○	○	○
Managing expectations *(this relates to knowing and honouring customer needs)*	○	○	○	○	○
Administrative capacity *(this relates to efficient administrative services to internal and external customers)*	○	○	○	○	○
Ethical practice *(this relates to institutional integrity)*	○	○	○	○	○

Exit and clear survey   Next

A FRAMEWORK FOR TOTAL QUALITY SERVICE (TQS) FOR PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

66%

SECTION C: AN OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

Please provide ***additional input*** (any unique suggestion in your own words) what you think is important that will contribute to excellent service quality in a PHEI.

Exit and clear survey

Submit

APPENDIX G

OPEN-ENDED QUESTION RESPONSES

OPEN-ENDED QUESTION: VERBATIM RESPONSES

"Please provide ***additional input*** (any unique suggestion in your own words) what you think is important that will contribute to excellent service quality in a PHEI."

Respondents: 647

Open-ended responses: 499

	Open-ended responses	Themes
1.	Contact sessions	*Lecturer contact*
2.	The most important aspect for me is the support from lecturers every step of the way.	*Lecturer support*
3.	The institutions must produce confident graduates that wont feel small when interacting with graduates from reputable institutions offering the same qualifications internationally.	*Reputable qualifications*
4.	Industry experts should give lectures	*Industry lecturers*
	None	
5.	Some technical issues need to be sorted out with reference ot the online delivery system.	*Online delivery*
6.	Employing lectures permanently and stopping discrimination in terms of nationality or ethnicity but in terms of ability.I notice they is too much unqualified admin staff and everyone has the title manager which real at sometimes confuses.instead we need more staff in the area of academics and they can also manage to do a little bit of admin. With the current system it seems Lectures are least in the line of importance.Lecturers come in contact with students so if we can have consistency there the better.Now since we do not have permanent lectures and always changing lectures every year because they do not have job security .	*Lecturer appointments on merits / unqualified admin staff / more academic staff / more recognition for academics / academic job security*
	All has been answered already in survey	
7.	In house training / further studies of lecturers	*Training/education (lecturers)*
	No suggestion at this point in time.	
	CPD	
8.	In South Africa quality of service levels has dropped severely. It is imperative that higher education institutions take the lead to restore quality to international acceptable standards.	*International HE standards*
9.	Understanding the market needs and student expectations = creating a marketing orientated offer	*Industry aligned qualifications*
10.	the institute needs to develop some criteria or method to evaluate group work effort as some members in a group do not put effort but still gain the credits.	*Improved group work assessment practice*
11.	Being relevant in terms of current issues that requires solutionsKeeping abreast with technology and making access easy for students	*Access to latest technology*
	Nothing thanks	
12.	1. Adequate institutional capacity, in spite of budget constraints. 2. Resisting the relentless and often unethical pressures to 'fabricate'higher pass rates.	*Institutional capacity / ethical pass rates*
13.	Support to both students and lecturers (full time and part time)..	*Lecturer/student support*
	None	
14.	Institutions should conduct surveys for each subject, at the end of each semester. This will enable students to provide valuable feedback and input into the way the subject was conducted, received and can be improved.	*Request student feedback and input*
	N/A	

15.	I have studeed at numerous higher education facilities and […] structure, support and guidance as well as processes are exceptional!	*Positive feedback*
16.	The cost and quality of service delivered to all students within the campus	*Cost/service quality*
17.	Perhaps more online help for distance learners as well as adhering to the turn around time, does not help if your question is only answered after an assessment	*Online support / speedy turnaround time*
18.	1. Course should be clearly defined - not change subjects every year.2. Content of study material should be excellent (error free)3. Test knowledge in exams (do not try to catch student out)3. Exams out of a 100 marks covering huge amounts of work, is ludicrous!	*Quality courses and material / outcome based assessment / fair assessment*
	nothing further	
	None	
	x	
19.	The ability to successfully work with a student who is a full time worker and part time student-and one who may may be constantly moving countries as a result of work- meeting the unique needs of these students	*Student support (unique needs)*
20.	service centered	*Service centered*
21.	institutions needs to provide exam revision classes which prepares students with relevant information that pertains to the exam and not just give them a guideline which makes them still have to study the entire book.also classes should be available to all students and not those just based in JHb .	*Nationwide exam preparation classes / lecturer contact*
22.	Important to be learner focused, providing quality learning material and learner support.	*Student support / quality material*
23.	The quality and caliber of educators is very important to me.	*Quality lecturers*
24.	There is a need for improving the electronic communication for distant learners, mechanism or ways to share ideas and engagement with other students to exposure them to diverse industries than one they work. Class discussion for contact students were quiet enriching and exporative.	*Engaged online communication / contact classes*
25.	provide students with employment opportunities after completion of studiesr	*Industry link / employment*
26.	There should be open transformation and communication	*Transformation and communication*
	All input given.	
27.	To revisit their postgraduate, it has many modules and takes long , other institutions offer one year postgraduate	*Post graduate-offering*
28.	face to face lecture sessions are important	*Face to face tuition*
29.	Study week should attended during at a convenient place.	*Convenient location*
30.	The quality and the reputation of the qualification will always be to most important aspect.	*Quality qualifications*
	NOne	
31.	The […] new website is not user friendly i preferred the old one best, when you go into a specific qualification it does not give you the subjects for that qualification	*Quality website*
32.	A flexible fee structure that can be afforded by many.	*Fee structure*
33.	[…] Namibia to have fulltime classes rather than Distance education.	*Face to face preferred*
	N/A	
	Nothing.	
34.	effective communication	*Communication*
35.	Establish partnership with all post offices and other private couriers.	*Material delivery*
36.	By providing study week lessons to students with all the subjects regardless the type of subjects. and if the subjects is written the supplementary there is no need for assignment to be written again.	*Study week sessions*
37.	Internet site should be user friendly. Prompt turn around times to quieries. Technology should be up to standard and staff should be able to work effiecntly on it.	*On-line quality / turnaround times*
38.	I think that excellent service quality in PHEI would enable students to	*Manage entire student life*

	experience a very different environment as compared to public institutions. The entire life-cycle from pre-enrollment to employability should be monitored and managed.	*cycle*
39.	There should be equality between students and lecturers. The one should not be viewed as more important than the other. Quality lecturers are required in order to build an institutions reputation. If lecturers are treated unequally (their needs put below the needs of the students) then you risk losing quality lecturers.	*Equity in power relations / quality lecturers*
40.	Only when the university its been run smoothly by the management, by have qualified lectures, students are having access to latest equipment on campus and have a library with enough books.	*Management / quality lecturers / access to resources*
41.	Academics and academic goals should lead the way, not administrators and administrative goals.	*Focus on academic issues*
	no additionaly input	
42.	Language problems helpdesk??	*Language*
43.	Recognition of individuals	*Recognition*
	NO COMMENT.	
	None	
44.	Increaaing the amount of recreational activities that take place at the campus which includes all members of the faculty and the student.	*Recreational activities*
45.	Degrees need to be applicable in other countries	*Internationally recognized degrees*
46.	*Updated, sufficient (enough for everyone) and properly working resources, e.g. textbooks, computers etc. *No tolerance of any criminal activity, extra surveillance and security should be added.*Provision of assistance or better yet, guaranteed employment by any available institution related to qualification of student after graduation.*Increased international communication regarding education, increase in educational standards to gradually level up with the educational level of first world countries.	*Access to resources / security / guaranteed employment / better communication / quality education on international standards*
	No comment	
	N/A	
47.	Having more than one study weeks or smart board	*Study weeks / technology*
48.	There should be continuous feedback to students on the work they submit in order to guide them in earlier stages of their studies	*On-going feedback*
49.	If traditionally public institutions (TUKS, UFS, UCT etc.) are competetive and strong institutions it will force PHEI's to be competitivie as well. So a stronger and more competitive public sector is needed.	*More competitive public sector*
50.	I believe if the service is excellent and affordable means more education for all	*Quality education for all*
51.	annual feedback from students	*Feedback to students*
52.	The institution being client oriented to provide the highest quality of service to customers; working with the students and accepting their visions as initiatives to consider for possible improvement.	*Client focus*
53.	[…] must start giving Supplementary examinations to allow students a chance to redeem themselves	*Assessment*
54.	Communication is key as it pertains to the roll-out and quality of any environment. It is also the golden thread that holds all elements together and ensures accountability and transparency.	*Transparent communication*
	NOne.	
55.	Assist with research methidology aspects	*PG assistance - research*
56.	Flexible contact sessions prior to exams	*Exam preparation*
57.	Better learning materials , more practice exam less class time	*Exam preparation / quality material*
58.	There should be more permanent staff available to teach the students. There are too many contractors that are only available per semester which can	*Full-time staff*

	lower the quality of teaching and education for the students.	
59.	Better acknowledge	*Recognition*
60.	The issue of the student consultation times must be extended so as to accomodate students for distance learning.	*Individual student consultation*
61.	Useful and timely feedback from lecturersCommunication from school and all clubs, societies and services on how to stay engaged and extra-curricular opportunitiesBroader career fair...not just filled with companies who want IT and accounting studentsSWIMMING POOL!	*Feedback / communication / extra-curricular*
62.	Social and cultural experience at schools	*diversity*
63.	Its important to know how to use and take care of physical books but the direction is towards a virtual space in this day and age	*Teaching in a virtual space*
64.	Ability of the lecturer to actually lecture	*Quality of lecturers*
65.	An honest interaction/communication between the PHEI leaders and the students concerning ongoing developments or suggestions of improvements.	*Transparent communication*
66.	A high student to staff ratio would increase service	*More lecturers*
	none	
67.	Constantly improving the campus not only the material used during teaching but also improving the technology and campus facilities.Being aware of the diversity of the student body and the employees of the campus and immediately addressing issues of race and unethical behaviour when it arises.	*Technology and facilities improvement / diversity / ethical behaviour*
68.	During the open day, there were very little businesses offering internships to students that are not either IT or accounting students. I found this very frustrating. Moreover, the lack of parking on campus is highly frustrating and the security gaurds sometimes block off the top section of the parking facilities (located by building C) when there is still numerous parking areas available. Lastly, the general bathroom maintainance is crucial. Numerous times Ive found the restrooms in appalling conditions.	*Internships for all / domestic issues – parking, bathrooms etc.*
69.	It should be hands on for the student	*Pragmatic approach*
70.	PHEI such as […] treat students as customers. They do not care about students, all they care about is making money; profit. It's all about numbers. This needs to stop! We are students not customers. They are ruining the name of […].	*Focus on profit vs quality student experience*
71.	A clear vision that is aligned to the context in which the institution operates.	*Clear vision*
72.	The academic aspect is highly vital in my opinion	*Academic focus*
73.	Good facilities and management	*Leadership and facilities*
	None	
74.	Feedback to be directed by relevant department in the same way it was submitted by the student.	*Feedback*
75.	Making sure systems are upband running 24/7. Service delivery must be of exceptional standard	*Continuous operational systems*
76.	Having a god reputation and being accommodating in the sense of the institutions staff going out of their way and above and beyond is something that influences a student greatly, as well as the finished goal of being able to succeed and become employable once studies are completed.	*Reputation / student support / employability*
77.	Communication is key in this modern error where knowledge is easily accessible	*Communication*
78.	Full-time, committed academic staff will impact excellence in many of the areas previously marked as 'very important'.Helping (especially first-year students) to develop self-efficacy, so that they are good self-regulated learners develops not only better students, but many of the other areas previously marked as 'very important' will be positively impacted too.The student experience from application to graduation, and beyond, should be a smooth process (academically and administratively) - you as an institution	*Full-time committed academic staff / student experience (life-cycle)*

	get to decide whether or not your participative customer (the student) is your best advert or not.	
79.	Need to consider ratio of student and lecture.I m studying post graduate diploma currently we are close to 150 in one class.	*Student – lecturer ratio for PG offerings*
80.	The supervisors in general should try and respect the students (customers) by helping them in their study journey. Supervisors have a culture of expecting students to come to them with their tails between their legs, why? Supervisors vs students relationship should be equal in both directions just like business and consumers. Private institutions need to employ people who are willing to serve their customers and strengthen their bond with their institutions, for example, referrals of customers by their customers.	*Respect – relationships / customer centricity*
81.	Certain small things can greatly contribute to excellent service quality in a PHEI such as a neat campus with clean facilities (restrooms, classrooms, etc.) or having adequate parking space for students so that vehicles don't have to be parked off campus in dangerous or high risk areas. Also, having lecturers that prefer an informal and casual teaching environment can help students feel more comfortable and encourage students to ask more questions if they don't understand something.	*Clean facilities (domestic issues) / informal teaching environment*
82.	I believe that PHEI's are focused on simply providing an education. This is not a negative thing, however iv'e always felt that people(my friends) studying at other universities receive a better overall experience, for example(better student life, traditions, more intense/meaningful orientation weeks, res activities and are overall just more unified.	*Focus should also be on extra-curricular activities (as in publics)*
	none	
83.	STUDY WEEK PRESENTATIONS!! THIS IS ONE OF THE IMPORTANT SERVICE THAT […] NORMALLY OFFER TO ITS STUDENTS BUT, TIME ALLOCATION TO THE SUBJECTS IS NOT AT ALL ENOUGH. THIS IS THE PLATFORM WHERE STUDENTS TEND TO MEET EACH OTHERS, GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER ACCORDING TO THEIR STUDIES AND THEIR COURSES WITH REGARD TO IMPROVE THEIR PERFORMANCE BY HELPING EACH OTHERS THROUGH FORMING STUDY GROUPS.IT IS A CORE VALUE THAT […] NEED TO REALIZE THE NEED FOR ITS STUDENTS ATTEMPTING DIFFERENT COURSES AT ITS INSTITUTION, WHEREBY SOME OF THESE STUDENTS IS THEIR FIRST ATTEMPTS ON THE FIELD OF STUDIES THEIR ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLED. IT IS THEREFORE IMPORTANT […] MAKE THIS FACILITATION PROCESS MORE INTERESTING AND BELIEVE ME; THE PERFORMANCE WILL ALWAYS YIELD GOOD RESULTS.THANK YOU.	*Study weeks and facilitation with adequate time allocation per module*
84.	By opening more exam centres close to where the students stay and not look at the numbers, because some students want to pay for the courier services and the invigilator is being paid by the government. There is no financial burden on […]. We have to travel 140 km just to write exams and ensure that our tuition fees are paid, this is too much.	*Access to exam centers*
	satisfactory	
	n/a	
85.	Proper engagement channels to determine challenges, needs and expectations of fellow students as well as feedback platforms are key .	*Engagement and feedback*
86.	frequent interaction between the students and the school authorities this will allow for both parties to constantly address their expectation	*Student interaction*
87.	The lectures should have more one on one time with the students	*Individual student attention*
88.	Quality service is imperative for the sustainability of a higher institution.The development of lecturers and academic staff plays a integral part in quality service.	*Academic staff development*

89.	Changing protocol during a semester and expecting students to adhere to it is really unfair. Any and all new implementations should not affect current students as all the necessary procedure precautions and steps have been followed and adhered to. It messes up and confuses the focus on studies.	*Consistent protocols*
90.	It should house constant seriousness to the task.Valid and authentic principles of assessment should be strictly upheld. real remarks and comments pertaining to student work. Supportive staff is needed.	*Fair assessment*
	none	
91.	Efficient student services and administration helps ensure security and minimise complaints. A well stocked book store also improves the campus.	*Efficient student services and library*
92.	Higher Entry Requirements.	*Higher entry standards*
93.	proper communication between students and lecturers and good understanding of all what is required form students.	*Communication*
94.	Fast acting management with regards to student services.	*Timely action*
	none	
95.	Continuous communication between internal and external customers involving the PHEI in question as it may directly or indirectly harm either parties if things are left unsaid	*Continuous communication*
96.	keeping the good work by exercising Batho pele principles	*Service standards. ...* *Access. ...* *Courtesy. ...* *Information. ...* *Openness and transparency. ..* *Redress. ...* *Value for money*
97.	In my opinion, there should be an emphasis on how students should be handled or treated at university. I have noticed that in many private higher education institutes, students are treated only students and not as customers as well; even though us students are there to learn, we should still be taken into consideration in terms of certain decisions that take place in the university environment (such as course changes).	*Student consultation (stakeholder)*
98.	A strong focus on subject matter and interesting ways to teach them instead of lecturers just reading off slide some creativity would be nice	*Interactive lecturing(blende approach)*
99.	Student Support should be readily available in terms of academic and social support	*Academic and social support*
100.	I believe that both student and lecturer expectations need to be met. Students need to be engaged in their studies and not expect to be "spoon-fed"	*Adult learners*
101.	more sense of security, not only against perpetrators, but also for students on on campus against other students that abuse others and that bully other people. sanitary facilities should also be improved, and a 24 hrs medical facility.	*Security / medical facilities / sanitary facilities*
	n/a	
102.	All has been said and covered by the survey already although I feel that open, clear and transparent communication is very important and can prevent many problems and promote quality service.	*Open clear transparent communication*
	None	
	N/A	
	N/A	
103.	Ensure that results for assignments / test are submitted as soon as possible. Many times students rely on these result for refunds. Like a student has a set deadline for submissions, so should the institution.	*Meeting deadlines (institution)*
104.	Affordability of fees can be problematic for student who are financing their own studies. Need to look at sponsorships for those students may by	*Grants / subsidies*

	getting grants from industries/companies.	
	.	
105.	Ensure that the lecturers are the same from Year 1 to Year 3	*Academic staff turnover*
	none	
106.	PROVIDING RECOMMENDED READINGS FOR MODULES, AS WELL AS EFFICIENT AND RELIABLE STUDENT SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATION.	*Recommended reading / support and communication*
107.	Proper communication and interaction with distant learners.	*Communication*
108.	In my opinion getting more insight into the accreditation of the degree and knowing where about i can move around will help motivate	*Qualification mix and transportability*
	none	
109.	The platform to express ones own ideas.	*Discussion platforms*
	None	
110.	focus on creating critical thinkers (quantum thinking)	*Teaching and learning* *Higher order thinking*
	No suggestion	
111.	My personal opinion is that of continuous improvement and a learning environment.Focus should also be on 3rd parties, which can enhance the service qualityI thank you	*Continuous improvement / external links*
112.	Efficient time management which allows the leaners suffient time to study and submit assignments	*Time management*
113.	Needs to maintain uniform standards.	*Standards*
114.	Structuring modules, submissions etc. to accommodate the higher education student who is normally also an employee, parents and partner	*Accommodate adult learners*
115.	Student support	*Student support*
	Nothing to add	
116.	The university should seek/provide internships for it's graduates. It needs to provide more support for third year students and guide them on the paths to take after they complete their bachelors degree.	*Internships*
117.	At postgraduate level the accessibility of lecture staff both before commencing and during the degree is vital. Systems for connecting students are also very helpful - both online and in person.	*Accessible staff* *Interpersonal connection*
	n/a	
118.	The most important aspect I would say is that the degree or academic institute needs to be SAQA approved and it's even better if it has international partnerships or accreditations.	*international partnerships or accreditations*
119.	The identification of student who are not performing according to expectation, better understanding of problems they encounter and to seek best way of ensuring that every student's needs are catered for in the sense of quality education and improvement personally.	*Student support*
120.	I believe that one of the biggest contributing factors to being engaged in my studies is the feeling of being welcome at the institution. Knowing that students are individuals and not numbers is a tremendously motivating factor. Students are valued for their input in the institution, with ideas actively pursued and implemented.	*Value students as individuals – whole person approach*
	none	
121.	i think it will be beneficial for students to have combined assessments with students from different universities ...as a way to combine different university cultures, intel and creating a platform to practice virtual teams.	*Inter and intra collaboration*
122.	The reputation and quality of education is the most important. There is a perception that private higher education is 'second best' and we need to actively fight that perception as the quality is just as good or even better than public institutions.	*Managing image*

123.	Mode 2 universities such as DaVinci must be closely monitored. As a student at said establishment, I cannot say that they meet many expectations of a lot of students.	*Managing expectations*
124.	Good marketing would help with expansion and popularity	*Marketing*
	No additional comments	
	I have no additional input	
125.	A good support structure for a student is essential to be successful in qualifying	*Student support*
126.	More attention should be considered for long distance students, considering the kind of environment they try to adapt in in order to cope with every day's expectations of the institution.	*Distance learning support*
127.	More support with some subjects, especially the ones you have difficulties with.	*Learning support*
128.	There must be consistency with general requirements for assessments and submissions amongst lecturers. We experienced a constant changes in accounting management staff into the first two years this was extremely frustrating and unprofessional.	*Consistency – lecturing staff*
129.	study weeks to be more accommodating to learners in other provinces.	*Logistics – study weeks in other provinces*
130.	When it comes to distant learning it is very important to ensure that the distant learners receive the same attention as full time learners. On a few occasions one does not receive the material on time or does not receive the same material as those attending full time lectures.	*Logistics of distance learning*
131.	Follow up sessions with students such *as one on one sessions* are Important for developmental reasons.	*Need for one on one*
132.	It should really just focus on providing enough resources for their customers and support as well.	*Adequate resources*
133.	In Namibia, to have offices all over Namibia with workers that knows the organization rules and regulation. decision to be taken at the management level must not take too long as its happening now.	*Accessibility* *Timeous management decision making*
	no additional input	
134.	Goo quality education by subject experts committed to the upliftment of students.	*Subject experts* *Committed staff*
135.	Offering student bursaries or scholarships is extremely important, as is recognising students for their high academic achievements.	*Bursaries-funding issues* *Recognizing achievements*
136.	Building in service learning units	*In-service learning*
137.	all items requested are needed but we can not manage to get it all at once but priority should be given to those which we saw as very important.	*Meaning unclear*
138.	Consistency is extremely important. All lecturers must be consistent in teaching and marking of assignments.	*Assessment- consistence*
139.	I think if the Institute will organize practicals and employment for students with other small and big companies,and if companies are happy about them it will be a benefit for both parties.I hope my Ideas will be taken serious and will add value in increasing the Image of the organization.	*Practical component / link with industry / employment*
	Nothing to add	
140.	Be consistent when marking assignments because it is a subjective view.	*Assessment consistency*
141.	Extra mural classes on certain modules e.g work based challenge	*Extra-curricular activities*
142.	Consistency is critical in any degree because you do one thing for one lector, and then another lector request something else?	*Consistency*
143.	Providing educated and qualified teachers/lecturers to relay information in a manner that is easy for a non-PhD graduate/student to understand.	*qualified teachers/lecturers*
	Nothing extra that I can think of.	

144.	In my View, [...] is doing an excellent job just by the way we (Students) are being handled especially the way communication occurs between the two parties. I know that not all lecturers or teachers are the same but i would like to see of of them follow standard procedure and make sure that Students understand the subject before they can enter the exams, maybe just a quick follow up or maybe a test session to m ake sure that everyone is on track.I also encourage communication via cellphone's as students that are currently working and learning has a very tight schedule, reading on your cellphone saves time and makes life simpler, Obviously it will be a little risky when the cell gets lost. life with out a cellphone is much harder, but easier to communicate or even send a chapter to the cell number.	*standardise procedures assess student understanding technology and communication*
145.	Career/Job Facilitation	*Extending the life-cycle*
146.	I must be honest and say that it has been the best learning experiance I have had with FNB and proud to be apart of the event. You guys rock and I can only see greater and better things for the future. P.S more learning classese required over weekends wil be beneficial	*Student support*
147.	Obtaining feedback from post graduates regarding their viewpoint on what their experiences were. Utilising that information to improve on the quality in a PHEI for future candidates to experience the best quality service (from an institute that is benchmarking service excellence)	*Feedback cycle*
148.	Keeping to commitment dates such as date when marks will be released	*Commitment to time-lines*
149.	Individualised, in person, service for each student	*Student service*
	N/A	
150.	More regional interaction with part time students.	*Regional interaction*
151.	More attention to the students, more support.	*Student support*
	None	
152.	-The survey does not seem to address anything new, all the values are that of a proper quality system hence the purpose of the survey to me is obscure. These values are obviously important thus asking me if they are important does not serve any purpose.-From my perspective, access to an effective and un-restrictive E-Library is essential especially when partaking in distance study.	*Access Resources- e-library*
	NA	
153.	Proper Support, motivation and assistance is very important.	*Student support*
154.	Student/ tutor support	*Student support*
155.	consistency and reliability	*consistency*
	none	
156.	More exposure to materials and methods	*exposure*
	N.A.	
157.	The understanding of policies, procedures and processes are key in the contribution	*Policies, procedures and processes*
158.	If classes have to be attended it must be considered that we are full time employed and this should allow flexibility of class attendance or remote video conferencing should be offered.	*Virtual teaching*
159.	Support to students	*Student support*
	I do not have any additional comment to make.	
160.	Competency of service providers to be qualified in their respective fields and to either have extensive work experience or supervised training that will enable providers to fully encompass the totality of effective service delivery and quality	*Competent and experienced staff*
	No comment.	
161.	Quality teaching and learning is important as well as quality service	*Quality teaching and learning*
162.	practical application is critical for competency assessment and it is my view that it should at all times be included in the framework	*Practical application / pragmatic approach*

163.	Current modules that consider the new student and incorporate their learning styles through the use of technology	*use of technology*
164.	Support from the PHEI. When you facing challenge that is affecting your studies / education, support from the PHEI is needed i.e. communication / assistance.	*Student support / communication*
	none	
165.	Alumni relations	*Beyond the programme*
	N/A	
166.	Teaching aid	*use of technology*
167.	the private institutions must maintain their good reputation especially […] and UNISA	
	n/a	
168.	Working together with the student body to organise functions such as career day and out school work that prepare the student for life after university.	*Beyond the programme cycle*
169.	It would be extremely helpful to have access to online memorandums to past tests and exams from the PHEI, as we currently do not have access to them at […] Cape Town. This would help a lot with exam and test preparation, and just a general understanding of the academic material. Another thing I would like to be addressed is the communication of lecturers who are late. I have seen a slight improvement of this though. Thanks	*Online access* *Punctuality of lecturers*
170.	Nothing much actually just that the communication between campus and students need to be a bit better..	*communication*
171.	I think regular career days with companies from all fields related to students as well as guest speakers to share their expertise and share what they have learnt.	*Beyond the programme cycle / industry interaction*
172.	more placement and field opportunities to practice skills taught in classrooms	*Pragmatic , apprenticeship model*
173.	Private institutions must be providing quality services at an affordable to meet the needs of the society and world class as well.compliance and commitment to and finding solutions the challenges facing Africa as continent	*Affordability* *Compliance and commitment*
	n/a	
	.	
	-	
174.	Being organised and well-prepared is of vital importance. Students cannot reach their full potential if an institution is disorganised and makes students wait for materials, resources, supervisors and access to databases necessary for their course.	*Management process- proper planning, organising, implementing and feedback*
175.	Attending a PHEI is very expensive, the PHEI should provide more benefits for its students.	*Financial aid / benefits*
176.	Flexibility within the CHE accreditation system, to allow for more fast-moving creative teaching & learning and assessment strategies. Innovation is often hampered by the inherent fear that accreditation might be withheld when trying something new.	*Innovation and flexibility*
177.	The employment of high quality and experienced lecturers	*Quality and experienced staff / employability*
178.	The quality of the content must match that of other institutions, be they private or public. This will give the student comfort that their studies are on par with what other institutes offer.	*Content quality*
179.	any and everything above any regular institution, the point of attending a PHEI is to get incredible education as well the best support to help students deal with the challenges of being in such an "advanced environment"	*Perceived needs 'over and beyond'*
180.	improve on Branches launching nation wide for walk in assistance...	*Increase satellite campuses*
181.	all has been attributed.. I would add constructive and more contact classes to distance learners.	*More contact for distance learners*
182.	They need to put in professional key managers	*Professional managers*

183.	the customer service is extremely important and meeting the expectation is of utmost important . I still believe that the facilitator should be the marker and not have different people to mark as they are sometimes bias and not reasonable , we respond to questions as per what we were taught but the facilitator	*Meeting expectations* *Fair assessment*
184.	Student should be learn how to practical implement what they have learned.	*Pragmatic learning approach*
	None	
	.	
185.	needs to be accredited and student support is very important	*Student support*
186.	Relationship between input(Private education) and output (improvement f recipient quality of life) must be demonstrable.	*Beyond the educational offering – quality of life (balance)*
187.	Being able to apply and know your degree carries weight locally and internationally.	*International standing*
	Nothing I can think of right now	
188.	Clear instruction on the assignment and fair making is also important	*Instruction and assessment*
	none	
189.	It is important that when study material is given to students, all items that is mentioned in the study guides or assignments instructions are present. I received assignments and the isntructions were that assignment cover books are in my SMS student mailbox which wasn't and I enquired 27/07/2016 and up to today 10/08/2016 no response on this has been provided.	*Teaching and learning- study material*
190.	Consider lecture times for those who stay further from the institutions premises who may not afford living in the provided apartments for students.Let there be a fair share of lecturers of different races and nationality.	*Student /lecturer ratio* *access*
	N/A	
191.		
	-	
192.	International lecturers with different viewpoints.	*Expert lecturers with broader perspective*
193.	information that could assist student with their studies should be accessible to all students whether the student enrolled for that subjects on not. for example with […] if you didn't register for that specific subject or you completed that subject; they will block you from accessing any information shared on that subject group.	*Access to resources*
	no additional input	
194.	For honours student especially part time, sstructure from lecturers needs to be above par	*Quality lecturers to all*
195.	Greater communication	*communication*
196.	Continual alignment with technological advances in the way learning takes place.	*Technological relevance*
197.	[…] is not a full time learning institution hence the question on extra mural activities is scored so low.	*xxx*
198.	It's important to create a "campus lifestyle". This relates to in terms of having space to "chill". I think it is very important to have grassy areas on campus, creating a space that the students actually enjoy. I also think it is worth incorporating more sustainable options around the campus, this would be inclusive of recycling and switching to greener alternatives.	*Beyond the life-cycle* *"Green" campuses*
199.	[…] needs to communicate better	*communication*
200.	Consistency	*???*
	No additional comments.	

201.	Lecturers should be paid at rates that are competitive as they put in more effort than is required from government institutions. Currently these rates are poor.Lecturers should not be pressured into marking leniently, just because it is a private institution.Poor attendance from students should be researched and addressed.	*Lecturer remuneration* *Good assessment practice* *Student attendance*
202.	I am very happy with the service provided by […].	*xxx*
203.	More scholarship offering. Engagement with big private companies to work part time during holidays or free time with the students from private institutions.	*Industry interaction/ WIL*
204.	the evaluation of tests,assessments and exams should be marked fairly and not marked with the notion of the gender/ or based on the colour of their skin.	*Fair assessment*
205.	Recognition of the qualification	*Recognised qualifications*
206.	the ability to understand your lecturers so that you will be able to complete your assignments	*Quality teaching*
207.	Higher education institutions must realise the importance of treating students like human beings and not just as numbers. The support that students receive must be tailor-made to suit their needs, especially in the case of non-traditional (adult, working) students.	*Student support* *Needs of working / adult students* *Tailor made support* *Teaching and learning is a Human endeavour*
208.	The emphasis of this study is on private higher education institutions (PHEIs) in South Africa to improve the quality of service offered to students and lecturers. It would also be important to place some emphasis on the sustainability of the offering of the institution, with specific reference to creating a workforce as an outcome to studies at PHEIs that is ethical, less materialistic and conservation centered.	*Sustainability of offerings* *Output – ethical workforce (graduates)* *Sustainability and Conservation centeredness*
209.	as exams are not written, it would be advisable to have a curiosita session for all levels of degree programme. all students be invited to participate in it. in this way students can evaluate how much they have learnt from their first to the third year.Do catch up sesseions for Work based Challenge from the first year not only for third year so that a student can focus soley on the topic that they have chosen. this will enable them to do continues research on it. it will also improve students confidence in their research methodology.the institute must strive to provide continues feedback to students and keep them updated on any topic that affects their studies, especially on innovation and technology.	*WIL from 1st year* *Feedback innovation and technology* *Innovation and technology* *Post graduate issues* *Continuous review and feedback*
210.	Closer knowledge and understanding of specific employer community needs and from graduating students. Forging strong collaboration partnerships with consumers of the educational product being offered.	*Industry interaction* *Building strong collaboration partnerships*
211.	I feel like In an PHEI students get more time with their lectures to get advice and tips for the betterment of the students understanding	*Student support* *Building strong collaboration partnerships*
212.	I believe it is imperative to employ ethical approaches to every aspect of an institution. User centered design is an important theory to apply, based on user needs as per guidance through market research.	*Ethical approaches* *User centered design*
213.	*Degrees should be recognised* worldwide	*International recognition*
214.	the information should be delivered as the are required	*Timely delivery*
215.	to produce quality students.	*Quality outcome/ product*
216.	Research and the quality of the online library is of extreme importance to me. I also see feedback from lecturers and understanding of personal situations as important topics.	*Research* *Access to resources (online)* *Human centered approach*

217.	Attracting a better quality lecturer means paying them more. Better paid lecturers are more likely to prefer lecturing over being in the profession because of the remuneration. Lecturers from the profession are a better source of education than academics.	*Quality lecturers* *Remuneration issues of staff* *Industry professionals as lecturers*
	N/a	
218.	FACILITATORS TO SPEND MORE TIME ON THE ASSINGMENT QUESTIONS.	*Quality teaching* *Developmental support*
219.	to give back assignment scripts to the students in time so that they will prepare themselves in the coming exams	*Feedback timeous*
220.	PHEI should be academic partners in the provision of higher education not merely business/ profit interests...	*PHEI/student partnerships* *Academic partners vs for-profit*
	ñ/a	
221.	Since I started studying at […] Business School it is been helpful towards understanding my work environment as I am studying to improve my knowledge in a field I am in	*Helpful experience*
222.	About the assignments. The lectures must give a honest opinion and if the customer enquires about her/his assignment, She must get the direct and benefiting answer. If the assignments are late, they must being considered even if the marks can be deducted instead of the assignments being returned and not getting a straight answer.	*Communication* *Honest and timely feedback* *Assessment practices*
	N/A	
223.	The important task that the management of the institution should look into the matter of providing answers for the previous exam, that will be helpful important.	*Student support* *Library with examination answers*
	N/a	
	None	
224.	Provide more face-to-face sessions over weekends - perhaps move to a more structured distance learning in the form of block semesters	*Contact sessions* *More structured distance learning*
225.	Students needs to feel that there best interest is put first.Make us feel important dont treat us like kids .Lectures needs to be able to identify students that are struggling quickly and assist them.	*Student support / customer care* *Human centered-adult learners*
226.	Affordable costs of subjects	*Fee structure affordability*
227.	The culture , ethics and vision builds reputation. This leads to on going research of latest international trends in the communication industry as well as teaching methodology, such as FLIP CLASSROOMS to produce creative and innovative students that solves problems and are distinctive in their area of study.This leads to students that are, creative thinkers with strategic intent. Highly sort after in the communication industry be it design, branding or business.	*Culture / Vision / ethics – reputation* *Innovative teaching* *Branding*
228.	This institutions are contributing to the capacity building of both Government and Private sector employees and thus Quality service delivery is the end product.	*Capacity building*
229.	Continuos benchmarking to ensure the institutions are up to speed with the quality and reasonableness of the cost.The private institutions should have professional associations with local and international universities to ensure wider access of facilities such as libraries. For example, I would have liked […] to assist me to register to be able to access the library at Unisa since […] does not have their own library.	*Benchmarking* *International associations* *TQM*

230.	Not all students get on-campus accommodation, or off-mine accommodation that is controlled by the institution. These students have to make use of private accommodation. This comes at a high cost and little comfort as up to 15 students have to share kitchen spaces. Some homeowners promise things like free wi-fi, only to find that there is none. Home owners only concern is to make money and they don't care about the students. This is a huge problem and requires better regulation.	*Extending offering-Accommodation*
231.	The lecturers give topics to students for study, but these students do not understanding these topics and asking the lecturer about the topics, but the lecturer answering that for example, this is a HONS level, you must look at your prescribed book and study guide. when the results exams come out, the results came out with failed.is this a customer care?	*Lecturer assistance* *Supporting adult learners*
232.	Number of subjects to be excepted should be increased, because students who have already done Labour Law majoring on Human Recourses are forced to take business Law that has no benefit in their field of study.	*Focused curriculum* *Revision of subject scope*
	N/A	
233.	skills and education	*Skills development*
234.	Decrease in subject costs	*affordability*
235.	they should offer speciality degrees not just general core subject,	*Specialist offerings –specialty degrees*
236.	Service delivery is very essential to any institution of learning, that will enable the have full confident in the institution. Student should be regarded as a very vital component of the institution.	*Student as customer* *Student centered approach*
237.	Various ways of communication or interaction with students must be used to accommodate people from rural areas where there is no access to the internet	*Different communication means* *Access to internet*
238.	The assistance from a good lecturer will add instant value	*Quality faculty*
	None	
239.	Affordability of Private Higher Education Institutions need to addressed.	*affordability*
240.	LECTURERS HELP STUDENT TO UNDERSTAND	*Lecturer assistance* *Developmental support*
241.	Communication is very important. Some institution don't take seriously, student will wait long to get feedback.	*Timeous feedback*
242.	The institution should allow to register more than 3 subejects per semester	*Simultaneous module registrations*
	n/a	
243.	I think by keeping the learning standard on a high level so no studentsuch integrity can be questioned.	*Maintain high standard*
244.	A relationship with students where students feel open to discuss subject matter with lecturers.	*Student/lecturer relationship*
	No questions	
245.	Teaching staff (Lecturers) to avoid targeting students who question (seek clarity) the assessment method in mark allocation or progress reports	*Fair treatment of students*
246.	Qualified, knowledgeable, committed and ethical lecturers.	*Quality faculty* *Lecturers- knowledge, skills and values*
247.	We request that the classes be made available in Polokwane and any other venues whereby students can be able to attend.	*Access to contact sessions* *Extended venues*
	nothing	
248.	Study materials should be made available to students on time.	*On-time delivery*
249.	Affordability	*affordability*

250.	I think work-based learning is going to become the new normal in private education institutions. There is also perhaps a need to consider online platforms and accessibility from multiple regions (smaller campuses in many regions) rather than having centralised canpuses.	*Work-based learning* *Online platforms and accessibility*
251.	must ensure that quality students are admitted onto programmes	*Proper entry requirements*
252.	I would like lecturers to be able to reply to emails when you need their help for assignments and for them not to just ignore your emails.	*Student support / communication*
	no additional input	
253.	the South African PHEI industry is beginning to compete with its American and EU counterparts. Good work, well done.	*International competitiveness*
254.	Job attachment after studies would be a Privilege.	*employability*
	None	
255.	I suggest if you can arrange study week before writing assignments and the other one before exams as it is difficult to write assignments without any guidance from the lecturers	*Contact sessions* *Developmental support*
	ALL CRITICAL ASPECTS COVERED IN THE SURVEY.THANK YOU!	
256.	The most important aspect is to create a culture and learning environment will ensure that the students receive a grounding which will allow them to make a meaningful contribution to society.	*Culture* *Contribution to society (graduates)*
257.	Knowledge, strategic	*Knowledge creation*
258.	Mentoring and coaching from previous learners / facilitators on a more regular basis.More time during study weeks to interact with other learners and with the facilitator.	*Mentoring and coaching* *Lecturer / student interaction* *Developmental support*
259.	student academic needs ito study material,resources must be updated on a regular basis to keep abreast with the practical environment.	*Resources -updated*
260.	good quality tutors and lecturers	*Quality faculty*
261.	The domains raised in the questionnaire are all important. Cost, in our country, is a particular issue of concern given the need to raise the education level of the general population. However, post qualification employability and application must be the greatest concern or all is lost. What is the point of acquiring a qualification that cannot get you employed? A general education is great but doesn't help to put bread on the table.	*Affordability* *Employability* *application*
	I don't find any of the topics in this survey less important, they are all important if not very important.	
	None	
262.	Provide lecturers to mentor students more specially on research	*Research mentoring* *PG Developmental support*
263.	Practical application and industry experience before final assesments	*Practical application and industry experience*
264.	its important for this kind of survey to find how student feel about their institutions.am also happy that i contributed in pointing out the importance of education in our society.	*Sense of belonging*
265.	Team work and respect toward both students and institution officials	*Teamwork and respect*
266.	Availability of text books. some text books are impossible to find.	*Availability of resources*
267.	- Consistency among the lectures to ensure they are able to translate the theory into practical application in accordance with the courses description- Consistency in the assessment process	*Theory to practice* *Consistency in the assessment process*
268.	Awareness of global educational landscape	*Awareness of global educational landscape*

269.	The focus must always be on the quality and applicability of the education, with an emphasis on adaptation to unforeseen future changes. A meritocratic environment where merit is rewarded and nourished and lacking performance is improved with a well-considered and tailored methodology.	*Applicability of education flexibility*
270.	Fees must fall.	*Affordability* *# Fees must fall*
271.	High quality educators with passion and strong *administrative support* structures.	*Quality faculty* *Admin support*
272.	Perhaps, a canteen with healthier options for those individuals who have certain allergies.	*Domestic issues –canteen* *Extended offerings*
273.	Student suggestions	*Student suggestions*
274.	Decrease in fees	*Affordability* *# Fees must fall*
275.	Administration. Recreational activities.	*Admin support / recreation* *Extended offerings*
276.	I am quite happy with some aspects of the service that I have currently received while studying at […]. There has been one error for me which was not resolved and still remains unresolved but no system that is run by people is perfect.Above everything the registration processes, communications and the assistance from this institution is excellent.	*Registration / communication / general assistance*
277.	The lecturer student interaction should be improve in order to accommodate the need of students on the daily basis.	*Student / lecturer interaction*
278.	the website is not user friendly	*User-friendly website*
279.	it is very important for quality service delivery and quality attention giving by students	*Student support*
280.	access of study material on line.	*On-line resources*
281.	Lecturers should be highly qualified	*Quality faculty*
282.	Agility	*Of what??*
283.	Trust is vital. Trust starts with Admin, and then students get to lectures. Admin must work efficiently. That means students start their first day feeling secure. Many schools run very efficient ships and students are often quite horrified by the slack admin that they get at tertiary institutions. Lecturers should also know their industry and ensure that the trust continues into the daily classroom activities. Students respond better to a trusting environment than to the internet and videos and fancy gimmicks designed to keep their attention. At this level they want to learn and they want a teacher. The videos and gimmicks they will access later in their own time but my experience is that they don't want it in the classroom (despite what adults think). Someone with ADD finds it just as hard to concentrate on a video about a Commerce subject as they do to concentrate on a teacher. But at least they feel that the teacher is doing what they are paid to do when they are teaching.	*Trust* *Admin support* *Student / lecturer interaction* *Security*
284.	Maintaining Brand Identity and Loyalty through service delivery and creation of a healthy culture.	*Brand identity* *Culture and loyalty*
285.	Listening to what consumers want and need and implement it	*Voice of the customer*
286.	Provide a campus which is of a good quality in order to encourage students to attend. If there is bad infrastructure students will not feel compelled to attend.	*servicescape*
287.	Communication and service needs to be a big factor. Creates a trustworthy environment.	*Communication* *Trust*

288.	Definitely accommodation, a lot of students are not form the campus area therefore have problems attending classes. Extra mural activities that involve students will help us relax out of campus but still be in contact with fellow students.	*Extra mural activities accommodation*
289.	Improve the relationship with RN's and students	*Student / lecturer relationship*
290.	quality lectures, quality material, quality admin staff, lecture and learner integration needs to be possible at all times. the learners come first	*Quality faculty* *Admin support* *Student / lecturer interaction* *TQM*
291.	Service is very important so we can speak to people	*Service delivery*
	NO additional input to contribute	
292.	Focus on student. Be more empathetic	*Student support*
293.	good lecturers	*Quality faculty*
294.	I feel as though good communications is MOST important so that both students and lecturers are able work effectively in a comfortable and productive environment. There is consistency in terms of messages.	*communication*
295.	fast internet connections and quality student advisors.	*Fast internet / admin support*
	Its Ok	
	-	
296.	Listen and support students, employees, and customers. Always go above and beyond for them, to show you care which will improve how the brand or education facility itself, and enable recommendations and suggestions.	*Student and lecturer support (from the PHEI)* *Internal/external customer focus*
	No	
297.	Put emphasis on what the customer needs and try accommodate them therefore people will be satisfied with the quality of service they are receiving.	*Customer needs*
	no	
	na	
298.	EfficiencyTransparencyOrganizational Culture (positive and inclusive)Human-Centered Approaches to solving problemsRespect	*Positive culture / human-centered approach*
299.	Bridging the gap between an education and employability. Consistent demonstration of work happening WHILE studying rather than waiting for graduation as a passport.	*Employability / WIL*
300.	Open communication channels between the faculty and its students to ensure that any critiques or feedback is heard. A council of students to represent these needs and ensure that changes can be made and students are not ignored. A balance between what students want and what is realistically feasible so that the faculty is not forced into corners that do not produce positive results for any party.	*Communication* *Balance between student wants and what can be provided – win-win situation*
301.	good quality	*Quality*
302.	Better connection/communication with the students is vital to improving a PHEI. The students need to understand what is happening. The lecturers need to be up to date on deadlines and information as well.	*Communication / Quality faculty*
	None	
303.	I think they should offer outside activities such as sport, I know our institution doesn't do that and it sucks	*Extra-curricular activities*
304.	Institutions should try help and understand family backgrounds of the student and try help them financially so that they can continue with their studies whether it be private or government and not just turn your back on them	*Empathy* *Financial assistance* *Human cantered approach*

305.	making sure that students are healthy and ready to study, having some sort of medical assistance in the universities ensuring that they are well and ready to continue with their studies.	*Domestic issues - clinic*
306.	The understanding of each customer/student. Therefore doing research to find not only about the customer but also the environment they are exposed to in order to gain more knowledge about them.	*Customer centricity* *Human cantered approach*
307.	It is important that the health of students is considered, and that the staff of the college ensure that each student is healthy mentally and physically.	*Student wellbeing*
308.	When the faculty care about the students mental health just as much as their education	*Student wellbeing*
309.	Highly educated,informative & engaging lecturers who provide interesting lectures and are fully supportive,give good advice and are willing to assist student.Admin staff who are organised and up to date with student information at all times.Events and gust lecturers contribute to a fun learning environment.	*Quality faculty* *Student/admin support* *Conducive learning environment*
310.	Feedback and advice is vital to ensuring good student performance. Let the students have a voice	*2 way communication*
311.	Reliability, and commitment from lecturers who are of a good standard is very important. Good communication is vital where students are able to bring queries or concerns to the table and be reassured that these will be answered or an attempt made to solve any issues.	*Lecturer commitment* *2 way communication*
	its ok hey. not great	
312.	Better student to navigator interaction on the […] Durban Campus, often students are left waiting for assessment marks for months whilst students on other campuses such as the Cape Town […] already have their marks. […] previously had the status of priding itself by being a creative yet serious higher education place, but recently […] has lost its feel and has turned in a corporate business college for people who can afford it...	*Lecturer interaction* *Protection of PHEI identity* *Fair assessment practices and feedback*
313.	Knowing the needs and wants of the consumers and delivering these to them in a cost-effective manner	*Customer centricity* *affordability*
314.	Marks being out on time. Being efficient in responding to emails from students.	*Timely delivery* *Communication and feedback*
315.	individual student support and a sense of belonging	*Student support / belonging*
316.	An excellence of any PHEI sits in helping the students achieve, and assisting them in doing so. Word of mouth is a big factor, and if the students aren't happy with the value of education and assistance for something they are intentionally paying for, that will not be a good result for the PHEI, students will talk about their experiences, this needs to be kept in mind.	*WOM*
317.	To provide advanced technology to students as the industries is is moving into more techno ways of developing career choices. High quality education, therefore well qualified lecturers who can speak fluently to their students.	*Technology* *Quality faculty*
	N/A	
318.	Communication from high up to the students need to be clear.	*communication*
319.	[…] should not be run like business. The students needs should be put first. Administration is lacking as well as communication between relevant staff members and the students.	*Customer first!* *Admin* *Communication* *Student centered approach*
320.	Give a professional first impression	*Professional perception*
	i think the previous questions covered that	
321.	To build stronger internal communications with the students, as well as giving better access to facilities. Getting quality for the amount you pay	*Communication* *Facilities* *Value for money*

322.	A decent librarian is ALWAYS important. Certain places of education, like […] Durban have a TERRIBLE one who refuses to help you and makes you waste your time and printing money. This makes me ANGRY! Also, education institutions should inform new students of the possibility of moving campuses before enrolling them as I would not have come to […] if I had known they were moving so DAMN far from my home.	*Library services* *Transparency* *Communication*
323.	It is important for private institutions to provide a higher standard of facilities than what is currently offered; such as quads for students, sporting grounds and housing facilities. Private institutions. Not all students can afford to attend college based on the distance from home to campus therefore institutions should provide transport. [surely this won't be an inconvenience in budget as college eg: […] requires a total amount of R70 000 therefore a private bus transport won't break the bank.] As a college, computer facilities should not go below a certain standard which it has.	*Service scape* *Domestic issues – accommodation /sporting facilities* *Student transport* *Resources*
	N/A	
	n/a	
	n/a	
	nothing everything is perfect	
324.	When it comes to studying at a PHEI, you don't just go there for because its is private... You expect excellent service and want to see where your money is going to...Administration is a big deal... If they cannot handle and master that...then they should quit. As a student you also expect to be treated well... Because you paid a lot of money to be there... Therefore their service can't be bad... Its like going to a 5 star hotel and the towels are facilities are unsanitary!One thing I have noticed about these varsities is that they don't want to accept it when they are wrong... But the whole point of being in a PHEI is the trust and fellowship you have with your external stakeholders... If they mess up they should atleast own up to it... They suck when it comes to dealing with issues therefore they become a crisis. They forget that the little things matter as well!	*Expectations* *Customer centricity* *Trust and fellowship* *Support services* *Value for money* *Ownership* *Small things matter*
325.	I believe PHEIs should be at the forefront of spearheading communities of practice in the disciplines they're involved with. These should involve all stakeholders from Govt, private industry, basic education,etc. The purpose is to create an environment in which those disciplines can thrive and to create an alignment in terms of the skills needed and what the overarching expectations are. One such similar initiative is NASSCOM in India. This is a trade association for any and all IT services which have a footprint in that country.	*Stakeholder involvement(industry/Gov/basic edu)* *Skills development*
326.	Academic rigour in all the courses the institution may provide.	*Quality tuition*
327.	Cant really think of anything extra as the the above options covered most of the important aspects in delivering quality service. I would just like to emphasise the quality of service that I have experienced at […] Business School and would recommend them to anybody as they have have always assisted me when I've needed them. Thank you and keep it up!	
328.	Build a framework with a customer service index that measures service excellence for different units/ entities in order to identify the root causes for poor service delivery	*Metrix to measure SQ* *customer service index measurement*
	No input this time	
329.	The interaction between the lecture and student as it effects the working attitude of the student	*Lecturer/student interaction*
330.	The lecturer student relationship health.	*Lecturer/student relationship*
331.	Interaction between the different university students and fun days where all university students meet.	*Inter college interaction*
332.	Recreational activities	*Recreational activities*

333.	Study material if provided must be given prior to actual lectures or classes to help student read through info to prepare for the lecture.	*Timely delivery* *Providing material in advance`*
334.	Lectures must make more time for studentsHelpfulnessExpensive	*Student support* *Affordability* *Developmental support*
335.	having lecturers who can offer mentorship or tutoring	*Mentoring* *Developmental support*
336.	Please communication lines	*communication*
337.	Most important Is that the qualification is accredited and that study material is easily available and accessible. Student support especially for distance learners like myself are essential in completing a qualification successfully.	*Accredited offerings* *Resource availability* *Student support*
	It seems to me that most aspects have been covered in your questions	
338.	From my experience in teaching both in the public and private sectors of higher education, the need to teach and cultivate a cutlure of critical thinking, is imperative.	*Culture of critical thinking*
339.	Integrity, transparency, diversity commitment to all stakeholders are all important characteristics	*Integrity, transparency, diversity* *Value based*
	...	
340.	In regards to the library and information access, it is strange that students want to feel they have special access to something, but when you give it to them they rarely use it.	*Library/information access* *Wants vs usage*
341.	Fix printing process to add credit and the cost is too high. Lectures to give more examples of what is expected from projects as the briefs are often not clear for us students and often have grammatical errors.	*Affordability* *Quality teaching* *Developmental support*
	n/a	
	There is nothing I feel I need to add in as additional input, The […] Durban does a fine job in educating students and helping us build ourselves and our skill as designers.	
	All of the above mentioned is very important but only about 1/4th of it is applied unfortunately.	
342.	Clear and continueos communication with students and accommodate them when it comes to study fees,maybe create an account for the students that doing well and employed by state or any other institutions where the repayments can be guaranteed.	*Communication* *Affordability / bursaries*
343.	Email and communication services between student and lecturer	*communication*
344.	A reasonably constant check up on the internal customer's performance levels as well as the external customer's (students) health should be a high priority as none to little of the above apply without these aspects being looked into.	*Internal/external customer well being*
345.	Respect for fellow employees. The manner in which the team works together will impact how the staff treat the students.	*Respect* *Team*
346.	Better teachers make for better service quality	*Quality faculty*
347.	When picking students for a SLB they need to consider that some students are not financially stable to take part in donations a basic allowance for slb is a good idea in future	*Affordability* *Financial support*
348.	flexibility in working with and with industry practitioners	*Industry interaction*

349.	Understanding and relating to the industry needs and practicesreal-world experience through the nature of the projects (application and real-client/real-world opportunities = authenticity of assessment and learning)	*Pragmatic approach/ industry interaction*
	None. Please note - many of us teach at Degree and Post Graduate level. could only click on one. Look forward to the results.	
350.	Feedahead	*External customer well being*
351.	I think adding extra curricular activities or sports to […] would be beneficial	*extra-curricular activities*
352.	I believe virtual info session for first years would be awesome in helping them find their feet. One feels lost and very unsure in your first few months.	*Virtual info sessions* *Orientation*
353.	Provide more programs and incentives to help students with ever increasing tuition fees	*Bursaries / affordability* *Financial support*
	Nothing I can think of right now.	
	Happy	
354.	The college should not hesitate to invest in all necessary equipment needed for the course, especially practical courses, and all equipment should be replaced when broken as soon as possible.	*Access to resources*
355.	Something that is of extreme importance is the ability to cater to each individual's needs and circumstances. Certain rules and regulations are carried out in such a way that there is no room for special circumstances and that could hinder the progress of certain students. Flexibility is key in certain situations as it is a form of hospitabity. Also, technology cannot be completely relied on and provisions for the use of actual pen and paper under special circumstances in order to attain marks is crucial. We need to remember that this is a transitional stage only.	*Personalised attention* *Mixed tuition methods* *Human centered approach*
	Everything was arranged in a form that I would use, thank you for the survey.	
356.	Development of staffCorrect employment of staff who are passionate about teaching and development not just to do researchIncreased administrative capacity (marking)	*Internal customer workload* *Staff development* *Values-passion* *Support staff capacity*
	no comment	
	N/A	
357.	Global applicability of qualification. Recognition of contribution of internal stakeholders	*International recognition*
358.	An emphasis on self study needs to be stressed to students as I feel that there is a perception that all we need to learn is in our lectures when in actual fact our lectures are enablers of further self study in the right direction. I have tried to expand my abilities through extra study, tutorials and practice I would like to see more appropriate links to sites that provide this although there is already a fantastic subscription to Lynda.com for all students enrolled in my degree. I do feel that we need to have a little more information on how to further our knowledge and be able to disseminate useful information in our degree that is relevant.	*Access to additional resources* *Adult learner- self-management*
359.	student mark standing is important in the fact that students need to be shown where they stand against the average marks of the class this should be a factor of every assignment and exam so the student and faculty can see which students are going wrong in which sections compared to the majority.	*Student comparison for improvement* *Feedback and assessment*
360.	Listening to the needs of studentsKeeping learning materials current Dedicated key accounts managerSubject matter experts facilitating the modules	*Student support* *Quality learning materials* *Faculty quality*
	Satisfied	

361.	If all required expectations are put in place thats relates to excellent service quality in a PHEI,it will proper.	*Managing expectations*
362.	Digital lectures would go a long way in assisting distance learners.	*On-line lectures (distance students)*
363.	Activities that can students on campus communicate with one another so that shy students won't feel left out and for networking.	*Chat rooms*
364.	Staff: Fairer remuneration, whether monetary, benefits or time.Sufficient time to prepare - teaching 20 hours per week plus managing additional portfolios with increasing marking loads without assistance is taking its toll on lecturers which in turn affects the quality of the teaching experience for students.Managing student expectations:One should take car to force business constructs onto education, e.g. referring to students as customers or clients. Students and their parents often focus on the transactional aspects in terms of how much they pay and this mindset needs to be addressed at the beginning of their studies. We don't sell degrees, they become part of the institution and should take pride to be part of the institution; there shouldn't be an 'us and them' mindset. My point is therefore that from day one and throughout their studies students and parents must be reminded that we are professionals at […] and will manage queries via the right channels (they just need to know wh	*Internal customer support* *Managing student expectations* *PHEI/student/parent partnerships*
	N/A	
365.	There seems to be a culture with the students which appears unreasonable, I have had no issues with the internal services here but the students complain about it relentlessly. This should be addressed as the students are central in all that we do and they need to buy into the brand as such.	*External customer buy-in* *Managing student expectations*
366.	Being different than any other institution in your field, can't just offer the same boring stuff. Students need to get more experience and less theory.	*Practical application*
367.	Imperative that the lecturer stays up to date with current market trends and best practice.	*Faculty quality*
368.	dedication to the studies by students	*External customer dedication*
369.	Strong internal communication culture.Connecting the various departments that work together to ensure we work as a cohesive unit.	*Communication culture* *Unity*
370.	Open, punctual and accurate communication, internally and externally, is a very important element in excellent service delivery. Young people engage with media that is instant and they expect the same in the service delivery of their academic institution.	*Communication* *Expectations around media*
	..	
371.	Good morning;Thank you for the opportunity;I think higher Education needs to latch on to the levels of inequality in our country and really start understanding the backgrounds that some students come from to be better able to promote transformation and quality of graduates. 1. Students in the rural areas are warranted to wait in long ques to register; often having to travel long distances to a central office. This often leads to frustration and many students missing the deadline to register. 2. The quality of the personal who are tasked to deliver the information and advice to prospective students are often unsure themselves. This further strangulates the process.3. Once students are registered for distance learning; a continues engagement process should be in place allowing students to express there opinions and needs. I have too often seen distant university students drop out because of the lack of support.4. Universities need to work in conjunction with the Private Sectors Corpora	*Understanding the external customer* *Quality admin support staff* *Continuous engagement (distance earners)* *Student support* *Industry interaction*
372.	More recognition when compared to traditional Universities.	*Degree recognition*
	No additional input	

373.	continuous research on relevant and current aspects against the curriculum	*Research* *Curriculum relevance*
374.	Timely distribution and feedback of course material and assignments	*Timely delivery*
375.	Courses should be structured in a way they reflect labour market demand. This should be done through having forums with these employers from time to time.	*Market related offerings* *Join forces with industry*
	.	
376.	In my opinion, I think more lectures should be done on Adobe Classroom. Being a distance learner, it really helps a lot and I'm sure it is more cost efficient for lecturers to teach that way instead of paying for classes once a week. (This would only apply to distance learning students)	*On-line tuition (distance students)* *Enhance distance learning offerings and experience*
377.	Interactive activities and personal tutoring	*Interactive personal attention*
	N/A	
	,,	
378.	I believe that communication between the staff and the students is the key to an effective PHEI.	*communication*
379.	Books could be delivered on time to enable student to follow study plan.online presentations should be multiplied, once a lecture give practice question for exam preparation at least he/she could choose some similar/question from the practice question given.	*Timely delivery* *On-line presentations* *Formative/summative assessment alignment*
	none	
380.	The good quality of learning materials and good customer service From the staffs	*Quality resources* *Student support*
381.	Sports would be a big improvement	*Extracurricular activities*
382.	My institution recently started outsourcing the cleaning staff. There's something horribly wrong with a system that claims to be and teach ethical, righteous and progressive thinking, while simultaneously advocating practices such as outsourcing. Even if private education is a business, how that business treats its employees and associates says a lot about it.	*Ethics* *Outsourcing*
383.	Better payment options and consideration for students who fund their own studies compared to those paid for by their companies. The deposits and monthly installments could be better structured	*Financial assistance* *Fee structuring*
	x	
384.	Management of Lecturer specialties and workloads in order to provide the best service to students. Pro-active assessment of student attendance and performances.	*Internal customer support*
385.	I once registered with UNISA their service is terrible and very frustrating, not sure about students who are still owing them or registered with them. very disappointed.	*xxx*
386.	The progress at which education is being taught is above substantial and has meet the requirements. To add it would be nice to be able to participate in *social sports in* the institution as we currently have none.	*Extra-curricular activities*
	Nothing further	
387.	Some corporates do have internal bursary schemes. Look into B2B partnerships in terms of continuous professional development with professionals in various industries.	*Industry interaction* *bursary schemes*
	.	
388.	Providing value for tuition	*Quality tuition* *Value for money*
389.	Better communication with students	*communication*
390.	Accreditation of short courses	*Accredited SLP's*

391.	I believe that everyone at […] works hard but not everyone knows what is going on . a clear commuinication needs to be set.	*communication*
392.	More skill development	*Skills development*
393.	Transparency regarding remuneration bands and gender equality. in general it seems as if profits are the main driver of, direct input and increasing work load on lecturers are not rewarded with corresponding increase in salaries.	*Transparency* *Internal customer focus* *Remuneration* *Equality* *Reward structure*
394.	Increased transactional communication with ALL stakeholders needed (students, lecturers, account payers, etc)	*communication*
395.	It is highly important that lecturers teach students in a structured and educational manner, following the module guides point by point and only going off script to help the students better understand the subject and or module. Playing games in class keeps kids entertained, yet it doesn't teach them anything.	*Quality tuition*
	N/A	
396.	Internal organisation and effective communication from the top down (that staff and students know what is going at all times)	*communication*
397.	Smaller classes. For the most part classes are pretty small but there are classes that are on the bigger side (50-60 people). Generally, people feel more comfortable in smaller classes than in bigger classes and are thus more likely to participate in class and ask questions.	*Personal attention* *Class size*
	.	
398.	Having past paper with memos for students.Having parking for students on campus.Have lecture recordings which students can access online.	*Domestic issues* *On-line presentations*
399.	Care	*Student support*
400.	additional parking facilities.	*Domestic issues*
	x	
401.	The administration side of […] needs to improve, it seems as if the staff don't really know what their duties are or too lazy to do them.	*Admin support*
	Everything seems to be covered.	
	na	
402.	Lecturers need to have bought into the vision of the institution.	*Internal customer buy-in*
403.	That they are accredited and not just a fly by night college.	*accreditation*
	N/a	
404.	Transparency	*transparency*
405.	Quality lectures	*Faculty quality*
406.	giving support to contact employees - benefits and security	*Employee benefits – internal customer focus*
407.	Timely responses from administration helps increase the quality of service.	*Timely delivery / response (communication)* *Quality- Support staff; administration*
408.	communication and quality management systems must be implemented so we get accurate information on time.	*Communication* *QMS*
409.	I suggest that our administration should fairly working and stick to there work and not as what is happening sometimes they don't work on Friday's and there line is not even to be answered.	*Admin support*
	N/A	

410.	Online registration needs to be incorporated in all south African institutions.	*Online registration*
	I am interested in Total Quality Management (TQM) in relation Total quality Services (TQS) further on the types of leadership style has been used, with referenced to the 7 highly effective people in Leadership	
411.	Please assist learners more that is doing distances learning.YOU HAVE STUDY GROUP IN ALL REGIONS NOT JUST IN Johannesburg.	*Study groups for all (online?)*
412.	Institution to have prescibed texts books where we can be able to buy easily and quickly without any delay	*Resource availability* *Extend educational offering*
413.	Institutions must reach out to students who have a will to study, yet battling to achieve good results	*Student support*
414.	If there can be branches in every province to improve on learner /lecture interaction..	*Lecturer/student interaction* *equality of support*
415.	All learning material should be up to date and relevant.	*Quality tuition / resources*
416.	[…] Business School's support and communication is really top notch. Well done […]!	*xxx*
417.	Cross communication between all sectors of the institution so that a united, well-informed staff may project the PHEI's image of quality	*communication*
418.	Personal integrity and work ethics are highly recommended to each individual. The time-frame for every qualification should be reasonable (give adequateness time for studying). Good interpersonal between lectures and students.Reduce the institution funds and Make education affordable to everybody, especial to marginalized people.	*Integrity / ethics* *Lecturer/student relationships* *Affordability* *Access*
419.	Be a transparent educational facility	*Transparency*
	No comment	
420.	Motivation of the students to attend classes on a regular basis is very challenging. Measures should be put in place to cater for attendance and reprimand students that don't meet the minimum attendance quota.In a case that it is not a distance education, students must interact with one another, learning occurs in different forms. Reading and passing a test or examination with only 25% or less on attendance should not be encouraged especially if it is not a distance education institution.	*Motivation* *Student interaction*
421.	Technological advancement with assessment results	*Technology*
422.	providing extra classes on Saturdays	*Extra contact sessions*
423.	customer service improvement is needed.	*customer service improvement*
424.	Should try to improve on a regular basis (improvements annually). Maybe by conducting surveys at the end of each school year and actually looking at and using the results. It might cost a lot. But will be beneficial in the long run through positive word-of-mouth as students feel they get value for the lots of money paid.	*Continuous improvement* *Customer feedback*
425.	1. Please ensure that prescribed textbooks are readily available and affordable.2. Time allocated for the completion of assignments should be evaluated to accommodate working students and their commitments. The loyalty of working students lie firstly with the employer and working on our own dreams starts after working hours.	*Resource availability* *Affordability* *Adult learners*
426.	transparency, and on time delivery of services, attending to student complains on time.	*Transparency* *On time delivery*
427.	All schools need water dispensers,some of us can not afford to buy water and this is an essential need...	*Student wellbeing*
428.	please try to provide us with the vacation school in all the subjects.	*Contact sessions* *Learner support*

429.	Most important is the quality of learning and skills obtained to be applicable in future careers.	*Quality tuition* *Skills development* *Employability*
430.	More centers should be established	*Satellite campuses* *Access*
431.	Different approaches to assessing. Different people learn differently.	*Mixed tuition methods*
432.	The systems should be updated, emails and correct telephones numbers should be correct and relevant, because we find it sometimes frustrating when you need help but you do not get it.	*Information management*
433.	Industry relevant content.	*Industry aligned offerings*
434.	a good teaching structure	*Quality tuition*
435.	Good management and leadership in a good framework of a teaching structure.	*Management and leadership*
436.	Open Libraries which designed specific fo private institutions in certain metropole regions	*Library services* *Access to resources*
437.	I am enjoying my time as a student at […]	*xxx*
438.	I think context is everything. If I am attending an institution in Africa, I expect to be given knowledge and information relevant to that context. The eurocentrism rampant in the majority of academic information is highly problematic in an African institution. Decolonization is of the utmost importance!	*Context* *Decolonization* *African epistemology*
	none	
439.	Focusing on employ ability and managing the expectation gap created by the fees paid vs. the ability of students	*Employability* *Managing expectations* *affordability*
440.	medium of communication that is used must be responded to the same way is handed especially when is a directive.	*communication*
441.	free classes to be offered in Namibia	*affordability*
442.	At least students should timely get their assignments from lectures before exam's for us to rectify our errors and perform better, meaning we should not repeat same mistake we did in the assignment.	*On time delivery*
443.	The school should provide the books	*Resource availability*
	None	
444.	The most important thing is for the institution to have more connections with student after graduating because some government and private companies failed to absorbed this graduate and this result in them be frustrated and hopeless in searching for a work.	*Beyond the life-cycle* *Industry linkage* *Employment*
445.	dealing with clients as individuals with unique special needs.	*Personal attention*
446.	Please let us know via sms when there are emails in our inbox. Not all of us have daily access to internet.	*Communication (various methods)*
	nothing to add	
447.	Qualifications need to be more real world, career focused.	*Industry aligned offerings*
448.	Good and functional support services (e.g ITS). Type of strategy followed by support services (These services are there to support lecturing and not their own agenda)	*Student support*
449.	When an institution keeps their word and accredit students who are doing well.	*Honesty*
450.	good customer care and early provision of students study materals	*Customer care* *Resource availability*
451.	Placing students in a working environment to give them experience for life after university.	*WIL* *Industry interaction*

452.	Is to keep up with the standards and changes in the market technologically.	*Current industry aligned offerings* *Technology*
453.	Technology and Employability is extremely important	*Technology* *employability*
454.	fairly treatment and good teaching skills to students	*Quality faculty*
455.	love […]	*+ Feedback*
	na	
456.	I think that instead of students trying to abolish fees, it should be incentive based, so say that students will pay for the first year of education and those that excel in their academics should be offered a discount at the end of the year. This would be important because then people are motivated to work rather than just expecting to be given things at no additional costs for achieving minimal standard.	*Incentive based fee structure* *Motivation*
457.	I would appreciate it if they could add some sports, small ones such as volleyball	*Extra-curricular activities*
458.	Qualified lecturerers	*Quality faculty*
459.	Structure and set deadlines	*On-time delivery* *Structured approach*
460.	Things could be better in the sense that, we could have a radio station (as recreational activity) because at the moment, the campus is too small for a sports team - which I understand. But really, there are other things that could be included as recreational.	*Recreational activities*
	N/a	
	Nothing	
	.	
	None	
	n.a.	
461.	Not to see a teaching as just a job that needs to be over and done with, not to just read from slides or the text books but to engage with the material and students, give practical examples	*Engaged learning* *Passion and interest in lecturing*
	N/A	
462.	More engaging lecturers	*Engaged lecturers*
463.	The environment needs to feels positive and encourging so that students feel like they are getting the additional support they need in their education.	*Student support*
	N/A	
464.	Better facilities	*Facilities*
465.	extra activitiies such as sports and events.	*Recreational activities*
466.	communication above everything.	*communication*
467.	proper communication between campuses	*communication*
468.	Considering the importance of not learning theory but also putting it into practice. The university must supply that opportunity.	*Theory to practice*
469.	Environment and study group sessions	*Study groups*
470.	better online services.	*On-line services*
471.	Better communication and Organisation.	*communication*
472.	Cleaner sanitary products as well as cleaner bathrooms.	*Domestic issues*
473.	better sanitation services	*Domestic issues*
	-	

474.	quality education and necessary support to student when experiencing challenges on certain models	*Student support* *Quality teaching*
475.	Focus should be placed on the the ease of registration and studying, with reference to material collection and delivery, assignment submission and results, exams, etc as many students are also working and this will make the process that much easier.	*Admin support* *Ease of navigation through the life cycle*
476.	Communication in the institution over everything	*Communication*
	No comment	
477.	I don't know whether the survey is for […] or Unisa. Anyway sometimes it helps to have T-shirt, Track suits, rain jackets, Hats etc. with the Institutions emblem and name on it, for marketing purposes. Many qualifications require a student to attend once or twice a week. I feel they should be opened for distance education 100%. With the fees must fall campaign more students will go for distance education and take a temporary job to pay off study fees.	*PHEI branding* *affordability*
478.	well structured study materials	*Quality resources*
479.	The PHEI need to be given opportunity equal to public institution in a sense that marketing, and promotions in rural areas .i.e. Unisa is well known in all spheres of communities.	*Visibility of PHEIs* *equal to public institution Expectations-*
	no suggestion	
480.	IMPROVE ON CUSTOMER RELATIONS AS WELL AS ADDING A HOMELY ENVIROMENT FOR CUSTOMERS. CONTINOUS REMINDER THAT THE CUSTOMERS ARE VALUED SHALL BE APPRECIATED.IMPROVE ON THE AVAILABILITY OF PRESCRIBED BOOKS TO THOSE WHO CANT AFFORD	*Conducive environment* *Resource availability*
481.	FEES MUST BE AFFORDABLE	*affordability*
482.	A conducive, crime free learning and teaching environment as well as proper/well structured examination venues with enough, clean convenience rooms for males and females.	*Safety* *Domestic issues*
483.	Smart board learning as it makes a broader mind to do better in exam	*Technology*
484.	Second hand bookshopse-books	*Resource availability*
485.	I might have completed this before.I need an institution that is having an education that will allow an individual study with other institutions either for higher studies or lower.In particular I want to do a PhD from the same department as yours, may you personally respond to this, I am doing full research based management master degree at […]	*Articulation*
	None whatsoever	
486.	To start discussing the importance of education from early age, showing the benefits of education, one of the challenges to add on triple 3 challenges to make them 5 its Education and corruption.	*No corruption* *Early emphasis on the value of education*
487.	SCHOOL MUST START GIVING CLASSES STUDY WEE IS TOO SMALL .	*Contact sessions*
488.	Quality and excellent service	*Service*
489.	Interactions with lectures should be in realtime systems like e tutors	*E-tutors* *Real-time interaction* *e-interaction*
490.	Some werk team work	*Teamwork*
491.	excellent service provider	*Services excellence*
492.	One of the biggest factors in good customer service is speed, especially when a client is requesting something that's time sensitive. Don't put customers on hold because it is their biggest frustration. Make sure you don't leave customers waiting.	*Timely delivery*
	No comment	

493.	During presentations week at different venues like in October we need to have personal presentation not online presentation.	*Face-to-face tuition*
494.	I have lectured at at different departments at up,at UJ and at […] (Pretoria). I am so surprised and so inspired by the organisational culture, vision and operations of […].	*Culture* *Vision* *Operations*
	None	
	No Comment	
495.	Focusing on excellence in teaching.	*Quality teaching*
	I don't have any additional comments	
496.	I really appreciate the service i received from […] Business School, This is the only University i came across that contact its student almost weekly to inform them of any incoming event or to remind student about example assignment due dates, or any important documents attached to our mail. And this communication done via cellphones. Keep it up […]	*Communication*
497.	communication with the student on time , and give feedback to the student on time will allow them to improve on they performance .	*Communication*
498.	consistency in the prescribed text books,	*Quality resources*
499.	The students should feel that their requests have been heard and acted upon. Should their requests not have been fulfilled according to their desire,they would need to receive proper feedback regarding how the reported situation has been dealt with. Lecturers should undergo continuous development and should feel secure and valued in their lecturing positions.	*Communication/feedback* *Internal customer support* *Continuous development-teaching staff*

For anonymity, all references in the verbatim quotes to names of people, PHEIs, holding companies of PHEIs and company specific software packages have been replaced by "[…]".