STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE QUALITY OF STUDENT WELFARE SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

By

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DECLARATION

I, **Annie Musonda** do hereby declare that with the exception of quotes and information done by others, which I have made reference to and duly acknowledged herein, this dissertation has been written and compiled by me and the work recorded is as a result of my own research. The dissertation has not been submitted for a degree, diploma or any other qualification at this or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL FORM

This dissertation of **Musonda Annie** is approved as partial fulfilment for the award of Master of Education in Adult Education by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted at the University of Zambia and it investigated students' perceptions of the quality of student welfare services. Little documented literature in this area necessitated the need for this study. The study used closed-ended questionnaires for the systematic randomly sampled of 381 respondents while semi-structured interview schedules were used for key informants.

The findings revealed that majority of students felt that accommodation offered was of sub-standard. The majority students were not satisfied with the general cleanliness of the surroundings. The safety and cleanliness water used by the students was also another service of which most students were sceptical of. Some students complained that there were times a leakage in the sewer line led to the contents of the sewer pipes finding its way into the domestic water. Moreover, students were not confident of the security provided by UNZA and they backed this up with experiences of theft incurred by them and their colleagues. On the other hand, students perceived library services provided by UNZA as of low quality. Even though UNZA is an institution of higher learning and research, students felt the material in the library was mostly out-dated and required major refurbishment. Besides, students were not adequately oriented on the use of e-resources.

 It was concluded that students perceived the welfare services they receive from UNZA as of low quality. This denoted lack of student satisfaction which may impact on their academic performance. In order for UNZA to win respect and recognition throughout the academic world, it was recommended that trained personnel in the office of the Librarian need to thoroughly educate students on how to use e-library services as well as giving them unlimited access to e-resources. To ensure prevalence of conducive living and learning environment, there is also need for regular inspections of UNZA premises by Officers-in-charge of standards in higher education at Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education.

DEDICATION

To my cherished mother Rosemary and my beloved husband Kabwe Harnadih.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DOSA   Dean of Students Affairs

DVC   Deputy Vice Chancellor

HPO   High Performance Organization

MESVTEE   Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education

PESO   Provincial Education Standards Officer

SERVQUAL   Service Quality

SS   Student Satisfaction

SWS   Student Welfare Service

UNZA   University of Zambia

UTH   University Teaching Hospital

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

This chapter provides background information on the significance of quality student welfare services in universities. Moreover, the statement of the problem, objectives and research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study are discussed in this chapter.

1.2   Background

Zambia has experienced increased economic growth in recent years (GRZ, 2011) which has seen the emergence amongst others, of public and private universities. The resultant competitive environment has made university education not only become a major industry but also an investment by the parents in the education of their children. This status quo has led to quality service quality become of cardinal importance to many stakeholders in higher institutions of learning as it forms the basis for attracting and retaining students.This is so because academic institutions offer similar goods and services which are only differentiated by the quality of service attached to the merchandise offered. According to Hasan, Ilias, Rahman, and Raza (2008), for quality assurance to be achieved, an institution must train its staff members in a way that it creates a sense of facilitation by means of coordination, cooperation, compassion and empathy. Attention should also be given to identifying the dynamic needs of the clients for purposes of student satisfaction. Students or learners are the major clients for academic institutions, and so in this research the term 'client' is used to refer to the said students or learners at academic institutions.

The last two decades have seen Zambia intensify efforts not only in university education creation, but also in ensuring that improved quality prevails in these higher institutions of learning (GRZ, 1996). Quality assessment is a major contributing factor to achieving this end. This is done to ensure academic institutions meet clients' expectations by providing good quality welfare services. This is because student welfare services are a mark that distinguishes one institution from the other. This research targeted Zambia's highest institution of learning in the country, the University of Zambia for service quality assessment as it is expected to be a trendsetter in the provision of quality client service.

Student welfare services are concerned with meeting students' non-academic needs. The main function of these services is to ensure that a student's well-being is taken care of. Simpson (2002) defines student welfare services as all activities beyond the production and delivery of course materials that assist in the academic progress of students. Thus, there is little point in providing student welfare service unless the quality of service is appropriate and valued by students. This highlights the need for university management to understand the needs and wants of their clients in areas of accommodation, health care, guidance and counselling, catering, sports and recreation, security systems, as well as library and information services (Kochlar, 1993). This approach would ensure that high quality services are provided thereby leading to student satisfaction.

Student satisfaction in university education has a positive impact on student motivation and retention. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction results from experiencing a service quality encounter and comparing that encounter with what was expected. In order to ensure customer satisfaction in institutions, Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) propose a model for measuring service quality usually abbreviated as SERVQUAL. Due to the wide application and usefulness of the

SERVQUAL framework in assessing customer satisfaction through its expectations and perceptions format, it had been adopted for this study.

1.3   Statement of the Problem

Several studies have been conducted around the world investigating students' perceptions towards the quality of students' services; assessing student satisfaction and measuring quality of services provided by academic institutions (Arambewela, and Hall 2009, Marika, 2010 and Simpson, 2002). However, little research has been conducted in Zambia prompting the need for such a perceptual study at Zambia's highest institution of learning - The University of Zambia (UNZA).

Since its establishment in 1966, UNZA has operated on the motto of "Service with Excellence" whose goal among others, is to "function in a supportive and enabling environment" (MOE, 1996:98). However, the perceptions of students with regard to the quality of services they receive from UNZA are scantily known as they are not documented.

Moreover, since its inception, UNZA has progressively increased student enrolments with no counter expansion infrastructures to cater for the welfare of the increased number of students. For instance, the undergraduate student enrolment has expanded from a total of 7,558 in 2003 to a total of 10,102 in 2007 academic year (UNZA, 2007-2012).This lack of cohesion between student enrolment levels and student welfare functional structures are a potential compromise to good quality student welfare provision. This situation necessitates the need for a study that will reveal the state in quality of student welfare services provided by the University of Zambia as well as establish ratings in perceptions by the clients of the said institution.

1.4   Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate students' perceptions of the quality of student welfare services provided at the University of Zambia.

1.5   Objectives

The objectives of this study were to:

a) investigate students' perceptions of the quality of accommodation at UNZA;

b) investigate students' perceptions of the quality of library services at UNZA;

c) identify the challenges faced by UNZA in the provision of quality student welfare services.

1.7   Research Questions

This study was designed to seek responses to the following questions:

a) What are students' perceptions of the quality of accommodation provided at UNZA?

b) What are students' perceptions of the quality of library services provided at UNZA?

c) What are the main challenges faced by UNZA in the provision of quality student welfare services?

1.8   Significance of the Study

It is hoped that this study may form part of the necessary literature review to future researchers undertaking similar studies. Since application of the model for measuring service quality (SERVQUAL) is a relatively new approach in Zambia, the study may be of benefit to academic institutions of higher learning as it will provide a methodology to use for quality assessment of the services they provide to students.

Through this study, the Ministry of Education will be made aware of students' perceptions of the quality of welfare services they are receiving from UNZA. This might help government in their planning, funding and inspection of student welfare services provided in universities.

The study will also reveal some of the challenges UNZA management is facing in providing quality student welfare services. Further, the findings from this study may help university management at UNZA to appreciate the expectations of their students before they can decide on what service is ideal to students. This information would be used to enhance the quality of student welfare services which would result in student satisfaction and an increase in student retention rates.

1.9   Scope of the Study

This study was limited to the University of Zambia, Great East Road Campus. Sampling of students for accommodation service assessment was limited to students living within the main campus as these students experienced the welfare services provided by the institution in full. First year undergraduate students were excluded from the study as they were assumed to have not yet experienced the student welfare services provided by the institution in full. However, postgraduate first year students who did their undergraduate studies at the institution were part of the study. Therefore, only students who benefited from all the two areas of interest (accommodation and library services) were sampled.

Analysis of the collected data was restricted to the fifth gap (Gap between perceived service and expected service) of SERVQUAL instrument for measuring service quality (Parasuraman et.al., 1985). This is because the fifth gap in the model represents the difference in the way customers perceive actual services and their initial expectations. Thus, it fits well with the purpose of this study which is to investigate the perceptions of students towards the quality of student welfare services at UNZA.

1.10   Limitations of the Study

The researcher encountered the following limitations:

The proposed study area, the University of Zambia being an academic institution, many students were busy attending classes and studying for end of term tests during the time of data collection. This delayed the research process. However, as a way of responding to this limitation, the researcher exercised patience with the respondents and adjusted to conducting the research during the night when students would be found in their rooms.

On the other hand, the targeted welfare service providers were not easily available at the time of conducting interviews, either due to meetings or otherwise, which in some cases compelled the researcher to change original key informants.

1.11   Definition of Terms

The definition of terms provides the context in which they have been used in this study.

Quality: Characteristics of a service that imply excellence, human betterment and has ability to satisfy human basic needs.

Satisfaction: A level of meeting one's expectations regarding quality and non-quality service dimensions. It is possible to be satisfied with low quality if the performance meets and exceeds one's prediction of performance.

Service: Is a provision that assists students in meeting their needs physically, socially, politically, or academically.

Service Quality: This is the extent to which a service meets students' needs or expectations. It also refers to the difference between student expectation of a service and perceived service.

Students: These are the clients of institutions of higher education.

Student welfare services: All services beyond the academic studies provided by universities that contribute to the progress and wellbeing of students as they undertake their studies. These services include accommodation, registration, internet access, health-care and counselling.

University: The institution of higher learning that is larger than a college has a broader curriculum and offers degrees in various fields of study.

University Management: The term refers to the personnel at UNZA who are responsible for the provision of student welfare services.

1.12   Organization of the Study

Chapter One outlines the background of the study, the problem statement, objectives, research questions and the significance of the study.

Chapter Two reviews the literature on student welfare services and discusses the concepts of student satisfaction and service quality by giving a detailed explanation of the theoretical framework. It also gives the state of student welfare service provision at the University of Zambia.

Chapter Three presents the methodology used in the collection of both primary and secondary data and further outlines the analytical techniques used.

Chapter Four presents the results of the study based on the appropriate statistical techniques in form of graphs and tables.

Chapter Five discusses the findings and interprets the results of the study. The discussion has been organised based on the objectives of the study.

Chapter Six provides the summary, conclusion and makes recommendations based on the important findings of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Literature review is structured around a number of key areas in relation to the quality of student welfare services in universities. It proceeds by giving a detailed understanding of the theoretical framework on which this study was anchored. Literature has been reviewed under the following themes: Theoretical Framework, Concept of Student Satisfaction, Concept of Service Quality, Understanding a Student, Student Welfare Services in Universities, and Student Welfare Service Provision at the University of Zambia.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study is based on the SERVQUAL model which is a Gaps Model of Service Quality. The framework was applied to assess the quality of student welfare services by measuring student satisfaction levels in light of the dimensions of service quality through student expectations and perceptions. The SERVQUAL model was developed by Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1988). It is based on a generic questionnaire which is designed to cover five broad aspects of service quality:

Table 1: Five Dimensions of Service Quality in the SERVQUAL Instrument

Number	Dimensions	Description
1.	Tangibles	Appearance of personnel and physical elements such as hostels and equipment).
2.	Reliability	Dependability, accurate performance (ability to provide the promised service dependably and accurately).
3.	Responsiveness	Promptness and helpfulness (willing to help students and provide

Number	Dimensions	Description
		prompt service).
4.	Assurance	Competence, courtesy, credibility and security (ability of employees to inspire trust).
5.	Empathy	Easy access, good communications, and student understanding (care and personalized attention an institution gives to its students).

The SERVQUAL framework is a useful tool in highlighting specific difficulties and ensuring a high quality of service both by management at institutions and students in all situations. The model identifies five gaps where there may be a shortfall between expectations and perceptions of actual service delivery (Parasuraman et.al., 1985). These are;

Gap 1: *Gap between consumer expectations and management perception:* Management at academic institutions may think that they know what students want and proceed to deliver this, when in fact students may expect something quite different.

Gap 2: *Gap between management perception and service quality specification:* This gap arises because management may not set quality specifications or may not set them clearly. On the other hand, management may set clear quality specifications but these may not be achievable.

Gap 3: *Gap between service quality specifications and service delivery:* Unforeseen problems or poor management can lead to a service provider failing to meet service specifications. This may be due to human error but also mechanical breakdown of facilitating support goods.

Gap 4: *Gap between service delivery and external communications:* There may be dissatisfaction with a service due to the excessively heightened expectations developed through the service

provider's communications efforts. Dissatisfaction occurs where actual delivery does not live up to expectations held out in an institution or a company's communications.

Gap 5: *Gap between perceived service and expected service:* This gap represents the difference in the way customers perceive actual services as well as their initial expectations.

Interpreting the model, Palmer (2005) states that if the first gaps are great, the task of bridging the subsequent gaps becomes greater. Under such circumstances quality service can only be achieved by good luck rather than good management.   Thus, it can be stated that SERVQUAL is an important model which allows management to make an analytical assessment of the cause of poor service quality. Due to limited time, the researcher will only utilise the fifth gap (Gap between perceived service and expected service) because it is the one that deals directly with the purpose of the study which is to investigate the perceptions of students towards the quality of student welfare services provided at UNZA.

2.2.1   Application of the SERVQUAL Model

The SERVQUAL model has been applied in various service sectors worldwide. The model has been used for measuring customer perceptions of service quality across a wide variety of service environments including health-care in the United States of America (Lonial et.al, 2010), measuring of service quality in pharmaceutical companies in Georgia (Marika, 2010) and in retail banking (Abratt et.al, 2010). The results of the studies suggest that SERVQUAL and its dimensions of perceived service quality are reliable and valid across cultural and economic environments, though it may need adaptation to particular studies. Moreover, these researches highlighted the need for institutions to conduct a survey, consider the opinions of their service consumers, and improve service quality thereby achieving customer satisfaction. This undertaking calls for customized strategies and adaptation of the model based on the unique customer service expectations that exist for each institution as well as each country.

2.2.2   Reasons for Using the SERVQUAL Model

One of the main motives for choosing the SERVQUAL as a theoretical framework for the research study is its concise multiple-item scale with good reliability and validity that can be used to better understand the service expectations and perceptions of students. In addition, as Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1988) point out, the SERVQUAL instrument has been designed to be applicable across a broad spectrum of services and it provides a basic skeleton for assessment through its expectations and perceptions format, which can be adapted or supplemented to fit the characteristics of specific research needs of a particular organization or individual.

Secondly, due to its five broad dimensions such as tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy, the SERVQUAL model fits well with the research problem and consistently support the provision of accurate answers to the research questions.

Jain and Gupta (2004) assert that when the research objective is to identify areas relating to service quality shortfalls for possible intervention by the managers, the SERVQUAL scale needs to be preferred because of its superior diagnostic power. Since this study aims at diagnosing the problem and ascertains possible university management strategies for enhancement of the quality of student welfare services, the SERVQUAL framework was selected by the researcher.

2.3   Understanding a Student

Academic institutions are in a business of selling academic services. The clients of higher learning institutions are adult learners called students. Kamwengo (2000) defines 'adults' as persons who are biologically and psychologically mature and perform socially productive roles. On the other hand, 'learners' are defined as persons in pursuit of information which should bring about change to their personality (Kidd, 1973). Therefore, Mtonga (2008:4) explains that an adult learner is a person whom the society has accepted to be mature and responsible and is in pursuit of information which would bring total change to his or her behaviour and personality". From this, it can be deduced that students

have perceptive powers of distinguishing right and wrong, quality and non-quality service. Hence, students make a good target for a perceptual study on the quality of student welfare services.

In addition, since university students are adults, they are a product of vast experiences acquired from the home environment, peer associates and educational experiences in addition to own self-concept. The varied backgrounds by students enrolled at academic institutions such as UNZA, pose a challenge for management of these institutions to provide services that fully satisfy all the students. However, since academic features provided by institutions are fairly standard, the characteristics of an institution are best seen through the student services it provides to the satisfaction of its clients - the students (Miller et.al, 1983). This entails that students' differing needs have to be put into perspective. For instance, an academic institution can have students on part-time, full-time, distance, home and international students, differently-abled students as well as those with family responsibilities (Avramidis and Skidmor, 2004). Whether or not an academic institution puts these into perspective will be seen through the student welfare services emphasized by an institution. Meeting and exceeding students' expectations in the provision of students welfare services will not only improve the quality of university education but also improve student retention rates.

2.4   Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction in university education has a positive impact on student motivation, student retention, and recruiting efforts. According to Oliver (1980), customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction results from experiencing a service quality encounter and comparing that encounter with what was expected. Students generally form their expectations through their previous education experiences, while searching information about the institution, observing what is provided at other academic institutions and discussing with other people who have been studying there. Moreover, student satisfaction is continuously shaped by repeated experiences in the learning environment (Elliott and Shin, 2002). In light of this, Oliver (1993) proposes a model to integrate the satisfaction and the service quality dimensions. He states that while service quality is formed by a comparison between

ideals and perceptions of performance regarding quality dimensions, satisfaction is function of disconfirmation of predictive expectations regarding both quality and non-quality dimensions. Therefore, care should be given to identify learner changing needs and what is important to students.

2.5 The Concept of Service Quality

The notion of quality generally refers to excellence in respect of a particular characteristic that is thought to be valuable. Quality can thus imply efficiency in meeting set goals, relevance to human and excellence to human betterment (Hawes and Stephens: 1990). This means that for a service to be appreciated, it must be rooted in a society and culture that students can comprehend and not alien or foreign. Kotler (1994) defines quality as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. Service quality, therefore, is a function of the differences between expectation and performance along the quality dimensions such as Reliability, Responsiveness, Competence, Access, Courtesy, Communication, Credibility, Security, Understanding, Knowing the customers and Tangibles (Parasuraman et. al., 1985). This is because students do not perceive quality in a one-dimensional way but rather judge quality based on multiple factors relevant to the context of service.

This study will examine only five attributes of service quality; tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy in measuring quality of accommodation, health care, counselling, library and information services.

2.6 Student Welfare Services

In all universities, the quality of teaching is critical to student satisfaction, and is closely associated with the provision of student services. While a 'service' entails a system that provides something that the public needs (OALD, 2004), the concept of 'student welfare service' in this study refers to services provided to students that ensure their well-being on campus. However, some studies have referred to these services as 'student services,' 'student support services,' 'student support systems'

or 'student development services' (Kochhar, 1983, Arambewela, 2009, Hill et. al*., 2003 and Miller et. al., 1983). For purposes of this study, the term 'student welfare services' has been adopted.

The student welfare services are concerned with meeting students' non-academic needs. The main function of these services is, therefore, to ensure that a student's stay at a university is intellectually, economically, ecologically, socially, politically and religiously conducive in all aspects. It is no wonder Simpson (2002) defines student welfare services in the broadest terms as all activities beyond the production and delivery of course materials that assist in the academic progress of students.

The need to provide quality student welfare services was amplified by Simpson (2002), who states that there is little point in providing a student welfare service unless the quality of service is appropriate and valued by students. This highlights the need for management to understand the needs and wants of the students.

2.7 Selected Types of Student Welfare Services in Universities

There are a number of student welfare services which universities provide and these vary from one institution to the other. They include the following;

2.7.1 Orientation

The orientation service helps the new student to become established in his or her university environment, social adjustment and academic expectations. The student is provided with every type of information such as university routine, its traditions, rules and regulations, facilities and personnel through a leaflet, time-table or student handbook.

2.7.2 Guidance and Counselling Service

The service is intended to establish a trust relationship between guidance workers and the students in which the former attempt to assist the latter in achieving educational, vocational and personal-social

development. Counselling service involves an interview or a series of interviews in order to help crystallise the problem at hand and reach a reasonably satisfactory solution.

2.7.3   Student Information Service

This service intends to assist the student to obtain a realistic picture of his or her abilities, interests, personality characteristics, level of aspirations and also provide a record of the students' academic progress.

2.7.4   Health- Care Service

This service is an asset in the learning process as it ensures sound health (wellness) of an individual. For the smooth progress of students, medical assistance is generally provided to students at academic institutions. This is mainly done through periodic medical examinations, developing a programme of helping students in physical hygiene, providing remedies to patients and maintaining the health record of students.

2.7.6   Library Service

The Library service plays a vital role in the circulation of latest information material and provision of relevant materials by means of books, journals, magazines, or newspapers to teachers and students.

2.8   Student Welfare Service Provision at the University of Zambia

The provision of student welfare services at UNZA is shaped not only by the university's current mission- '*promoting excellence in teaching, research and community service'* but also by the dynamic states and needs of its student populace. The diversity in age, academic preparation levels and life circumstances as well as increasing numbers of UNZA students has propagated the university to come up with a strategic plan aimed at expanding and diversifying student services (UNZA, 2013-2017).

The main student welfare services at UNZA are delivered through the following major departments;

a) **Dean of Students**;

The Dean of Students Affairs (DOSA) ensures that students' stay on campus is both academically and physically conducive. This office is responsible for handling discipline cases, assignment of rooms and ensures that accommodation is habitable; surroundings are hygienic and taken care of for the general well-being of students. Besides, the office of the Dean of Students has several units and among them is the Counselling Centre. This unit is responsible for offering guidance and counselling services to students.

b) **UNZA Main Library**;

The main library at UNZA Great East Road Campus is responsible for the following; it archives data, provides literature in different forms such as hard copies (books, journals, newspapers, magazines), and soft copies through its subscription to online libraries, for example, Wiley, Springer and Amazon. It also provides data bases through its e-resources which include Agora and Hinarii. Besides, UNZA Main Library plays a vital role in helping students to do online research by providing periodical lessons to students.

c) **UNZA Health Services**;

This department is responsible for providing all health-care related services to students, members of staff and their families. These services include general outpatient consultations, children's clinic, free counselling, Family Planning, Antenatal Clinics to expecting mothers, Male Circumcision, Pharmacy/Dispensary, Laboratory, Counselling and Admission services. The clinic also offers medical examinations, HIV awareness, Care, Treatment and Support including handling emergencies and make referrals to bigger hospitals such as Levy Mwanawasa General Hospital and University Teaching Hospital (UTH).

d) **Computer Centre**;

It is responsible for ensuring the provision of internet services and ensures online registration through student information system. It is also concerned with general maintenance of computers.

Due to limited time and resources, this study will only be limited to assessing student satisfaction with regard to the quality of accommodation and library services at the University of Zambia.

2.9   Chapter Summary

This chapter was structured around a number of key areas in relation to the quality of student welfare services in universities. It proceeded by giving a detailed understanding of the theoretical framework on which this study was anchored. Other themes that formed the focus of this chapter were: concept of student satisfaction; concept of service quality; understanding a student; student welfare services in Universities; and student welfare service provision at the University of Zambia.

The next chapter presents the research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology in relation to research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, details of research instruments as well as data analysis. Methodology refers to 'a systematic process of collecting data' for the purpose of meeting objectives and providing answers to research questions raised by the researcher (Kumar, 2005).

3.2 Research Method

A broad definition of research is given by Shuttleworth (2008) who defines it as any gathering of data, information and facts for the advancement of knowledge. Thus, a research method is a process of steps used to collect and analyse information in an attempt to increase understanding of a topic under study. There are two main approaches to research and these are qualitative and quantitative designs.

Qualitative research is a type of research that generates non-numerical data. It is a descriptive and analytical tool for research. It describes and analyses the problem deeply and broadly. In general, it generates rich and detailed data that contribute to in-depth understanding of the problem being studied (Bandolier, 2007).

On the other hand, quantitative research deals with numerical data. It is used to quantify the size, distribution and association of certain variables in a study population (Creswell, 2003). Comparatively, quantitative research is deductive and focuses on the measurement and testing of theory, whereas qualitative research is inductive and focuses on theory generation (Thomas, 2003).

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative methods were integrated in order to allow the researcher to triangulate the data that was collected. Cohen et al. (2007) support the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in research to enable the researcher to cross-check research findings. It is assumed that a combination of qualitative and quantitative research designs helps to explain more fully the richness and complexity of a given phenomenon by studying it from many angles.

3.3   Research Design

A research design is defined as a systematic plan of the proposed research work. It is a process that is described as research management and involves planning of any scientific research (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995). On the other hand, Ghosh (1992: 20) indicates that "a research design is the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data" which "aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure." This entails that any research design is tentative due to new facts, ideas and conditions which may necessitate a change in the original paradigm. In this study, research design can be described as a flexible framework which guides a researcher in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. This study employed the descriptive research design. Kombo (2006) defines a descriptive research design as a way of describing events as they are as well as classify, analyse, compare and interpret data. This entails that a researcher describes the state of affairs as they exist, reports the findings as well as formulates important principles of knowledge and solutions to significant problems.

In addition, a descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. It can be used when collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of environmental and social issues.

In light of this, a descriptive research design was used because it is the most appropriate when describing the state of the student welfare services at UNZA as well as comparing their current state with the expected state.

3.4   Pilot study

A pilot study is a small scale preliminary study conducted in order to evaluate feasibility, time, cost and adverse events prior to performance of a full-scale research project (Hulley, 2007). In an attempt to test data collection instruments, predict an appropriate sample size and improve upon the research design, a pilot study was conducted in Lusaka District. It was conducted among students at Cavendish University which was not part of the main study area. This sample comprised both female and male students pursuing studies in different programmes of study. The number of participants sampled for pilot purposes was 15. The purpose of the study was explained and instructions were given to the respondents.

The questionnaire was self-administered to the majority of the respondents. The observations on the research instrument, particularly, the questionnaire were that it managed to address the main issues of the study guided by the research questions. However, some questions were misunderstood by the respondents. Therefore, corrections were made to ensure that the questions were clear in order for the respondents to answer them correctly.

3.5   Main study

The main study was conducted after evaluating the appropriateness and clarity of the data collection instruments obtained from the pilot study. The main study area as already explained in chapter two was the University of Zambia, Great East Road Campus.

3.6   Population

Population is the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing the conclusions (Castillo, 2009).

The universe population for this study consisted of students from UNZA Great East Road Main Campus, university management and personnel in the office of the Librarian and Dean of Students Affairs. In addition, the Higher Education Liaison Officer in the Directorate of Standards and Curriculum Development at Ministry of Education Headquarters formed part of the universe population.

The total population for accommodated students at UNZA as indicated on the list collected from the Dean of Students was 3700 (assuming a single bed space accommodates one student), although the number is likely to be higher as there are many more who were staying with fellow accommodated students on bed spaces intended for one student. For purposes of this study, the 3700 was taken as the official number of accommodated students as it was difficult to establish an all-inclusive number as no official list of squatting students at UNZA exist.

The total population for student library users was taken to be the entire population of UNZA students as this welfare service is open to all. At the time of data collection (November - December 2013) the total population was 20,348. However, during the time of data collection, distance students were not in residence and so the population worked with for library users was 16, 290 students.

3.7   Sampling

Sampling is defined as 'the use of a subset of a population to represent the whole' (Singpurwalla, 2013:16). This implies that sampling involves a process of selecting persons from the target population. However, to ensure a representative sample, a complete and correct sampling frame

was used. Kombo (2006) refers to a sampling frame as a strategy that a researcher uses by listing all units from which the sample is to be drawn. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:88) define sample as 'a subset of the population that best represents a population so as to allow for accurate generalization of results'. On the other hand, Kulbir (2006) describes sample size as a small proportion of the entire population selected for observation and analysis.

Sampling for the study began with the selection of a university from which to select the respondents. The University of Zambia was purposively selected for this study as it is the largest university in Zambia boasting of 20, 348 students and has been the oldest institution of higher learning in the country (UNZA, 2013). As such, the institution is expected to be a trendsetter in the provision of quality student welfare services to the satisfaction of its clients - the students. The high number of students enabled for a high diversity in levels of satisfaction hence the institution could have been used for a baseline study representing higher learning institutions in the country

3.7.1   Sampling for Accommodation Welfare Service Assessment

In assessing the perceptions of students towards the quality of accommodation, systematic random sampling was used to interview a total of 192 accommodated students. This was out of a total number of 3700 accommodated students.

According to Ken (2004), systematic random sampling is a statistical method involving the selection of elements from an ordered sampling frame. A sampling frame is a list of all those within a population who can be sampled, and may include individuals, households or institutions (Carl-Erik et al., 2003). This means that when using systematic random sampling, a sampling unit always has to be calculated. A sampling unit is the total population divided by the sample (Bryman, 2006). This shows the number of units to be skipped before interviewing the next. The sampling starts by selecting an element from the list at random and then every k^{th}

element in the frame is selected, where k is the sampling interval or the skip, n is the sample size, and N is the population size. This is calculated as:

$$k = \frac{N}{n}$$

In this study, the sampling procedure was carried out as shown below:

Table 2: Population and Sample Characteristics

Hostel	Total Number of Rooms per Hostel (N)	Total Number of Rooms Sampled(n)	Sampling Unit (N/n)
NEW RESIDENCES	785	100	8
OLD RESIDENCES	520	78	7
LEVY MWANAWASA	120	22	5
Total	**3302**	**220**	

3.7.2 Library Welfare Service Assessment

On the other hand, a total of 189 students were sampled to help assess the perceptions of the quality of library services students received from UNZA. Selection of the sample was done purposively. The researcher targeted student library users and these were interviewed when they were either entering the library or leaving the library. The total student library users were taken to be the total for full-time and parallel students (16, 290) who were available on campus during the period of data collection.

The selected sample was sufficient to enable effective quality assessment of both accommodation and library welfare services provided by UNZA as it satisfied the criteria for

assuming statistical normality of $n \geq 30$ (Ebdon: 1985) of which n is the selected sample. This makes it possible to generalize the finding to the entire UNZA populations. To ascertain the sufficiency of the sample, a statistical software G*Power 3.1.9.2 was used and it gave a Power (sample confidence) of 0.999 implying that the sample size chosen was 99.9% likely to give the required results.

3.7.2   Sampling for Key Informant Interviews

The selection for sampling of key informants was purposefully done. This approach ensured that only those with knowledge of particular issues were interviewed.

Key Informant Interviews were conducted with the Higher Education Standards Officer from the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) and UNZA Management (personnel from the Deputy Vice Chancellor, UNZA Main Library and the UNZA Dean of Students). These key informants are either the custodians of the student welfare services in question or have in-depth knowledge of these welfare services provided by the institution.

3.8   Data Collection Procedure

Three procedures of data collection were employed. These are; Secondary data sources, Primary data as well as through Observation.

3.8.1   Primary Data

Primary data was collected through interviews by the use of semi-structured interview schedules prepared for key informants as well as students. Furthermore, a survey questionnaire was formulated by the use of a 5-point likert scale to collect information on students' expectations of the welfare services provided as well as their perceptions of their ideal student welfare services. Data on challenges faced by the institutions as well as management strategies partly obtained

from secondary sources was enhanced by the use of interviews of key informants including the UNZA management and personnel from the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education.

3.8.2 Secondary Data

This study was premised on the SERVQUAL model of establishing service quality developed by Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1988). Material on the model was sourced from document analysis which includes books, Journal articles as well as Theses which have utilised the same model. The internet was also a useful tool in giving the researcher an overview of the model. Data on student welfare services provided by UNZA was partly obtained from a review of the UNZA Strategic Plan for 2013-2017 and other reports published by the institution which gave a clue to the different management strategies employed by the institution in its quest to provide quality student welfare services. Furthermore, reports from the Ministry of Education were useful in determining the Zambian government's vision of the expected services as well as the quality to be adhered to by all academic institutions.

3.8.3 Observation

The researcher used observation to confirm the state in quality of some of the student welfare services claimed to be provided by the institution. The services that were ground-truthed by observation are accommodation and library services.

3.9 Research Instruments

In order to collect both qualitative and quantitative data, two different instruments were used. These are a closed-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedule.

3.9.1   Questionnaire

In order to achieve success in collecting reliable and dependable data, a questionnaire was administered. A questionnaire is a method in which a number of printed questions are used for collecting data. Use of a questionnaire helped the researcher to 'secure standardised results that were tabulated and treated statistically' (Ghosh, 1992).

Data from student respondents was collected using a closed-ended questionnaire which was designed based on the original 22-item instrument for assessing customer perceptions of service quality described by Berry et.al (1988). The questionnaire was carefully structured and each service quality attribute was rated using the five point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section entailed the questions about the demographic characteristics of the students. The second section l measured the expectations (E) about the service quality of universities in general, whereas in the third section respondents were asked to state their perceptions (P) towards student welfare services in the light of service quality attributes provided specifically by UNZA.

3.9.2   Interview Schedule

An interview is a method of getting people to express their views on a certain issue (Kombo, 2006). This involves direct personal contact with the research participants where the researcher focuses on getting information by asking the research participants questions related to the topic under study.

Data from key informants was collected through a semi-structured interview schedule. This enabled the researcher to probe for more details in cases of inadequate information given. As a result, a point of saturation was achieved where the researcher got no new information from any additional respondents interviewed. These two reasons convinced the researcher of the sufficiency of the sample selected.

3.10   Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modelling collected information with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making (Adèr and Mellenbergh, 2008). In order to come up with information that answers the research questions, analysis of the data proceeded in two ways based on the nature of the collected data;

3.10.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to analyse quantitative data and results were presented either as percentages, tables, graphs or charts. These operations were done with the help of The Statistical Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel 2010. This method was based on an implicit cardinal interpretation of the Likert scale (Gce, 2007). For each respondent, expected and peceived scores were calculated and the results were presented as either tables, graphs or pie charts in the result section.The gap was estimated as the difference of perception scores and expectation scores.

3.10.2 Qualitative data Analysis

Qualitative analysis of information from the semi-structured interviews with the key informants was analysed by summarizing the data into key themes, recounting some given experiences and views. This type of qualitative data analysis is called thematic analysis. Th researcher groups the responses in classes of similarity. The emerging themes in these classes portrayed the prevailing view of the majority of respondents who in this case were the students.

3.11   Ethical Considerations

Before undertaking this study, consent was sought from all participants who took part in this study. An introductory letter was obtained from the Assistant Dean of Students (Postgraduates) in the School of Education at UNZA. Thereafter, the copies of the letters were taken to the

Ministry of Education, the University of Zambia at Dean of Students Office and key informants, seeking permission to conduct this research at UNZA Great East Road Campus. Moreover, the Deputy Dean of Students prepared an introductory letter indicating that permission had been granted for the researcher to conduct the research among UNZA students. From the respondents, consent was sought in person for their willingness to take part in the study. All participants were told that the information they would provide was purely for academic purposes and their participation should be solely voluntary, and should they wish to withdraw from participation, they should be free to do so at any point in the research. In addition, respondents were requested not to reveal their bio-data.

3.12   Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the research methodology which was used in the study. It employed the descriptive design which allowed the researcher to gain insight into the research problem and describe the state of the student welfare services at UNZA as well as comparing their current state with the expected state. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in collecting data. This allowed the researcher to triangulate information provided by the respondents which subsequently helped to obtain accurate information on the subject under study. The total sample was 388 which comprised 381 students from UNZA Great East Campus, 6 UNZA Management personnel and one Officer from the Ministry of Education in-charge of standards in Higher Education in Lusaka Province. A questionnaire and an interview guide were employed in the collection of data. Data collected quantitatively was analysed using descriptive statistics involving generation of graphs and percentages with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Microsoft Excel 2010. Qualitative data was analysed by grouping and summarizing the responses into emerging themes. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the study on students' perceptions of the quality of student welfare services provided at the University of Zambia. The findings were based on the following research questions:

a) What are the perceptions of students towards the quality of accommodation services provided at UNZA?

b) What are the perceptions of students towards the quality of library services provided at UNZA? and

c) What are the main challenges faced by UNZA in the provision of quality student welfare services?

The responses to these questions are presented in three sections. The first section presents the demographic characteristics of respondents; the second section presents the findings on students' perceptions on the quality of accommodation and library services while section three presents findings on the challenges faced by UNZA in the provision of quality student welfare services.

4.2   Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study utilized 381 students as respondents from UNZA Main Campus. Thus, the demographic characteristics of respondents is presented as a combined total for accommodation service respondents (192) and library service respondents (189), hence the total of 381 respondents. The respondents were defined by gender, age and level of study.

4.2.1 Gender

The respondents interviewed were 178 females and 203 males representing 49% and 51% respectively as is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	178	47
Male	203	53
Total	381	100

4.2.2 Age

The respondents' ages ranged from 15 to over 46 years, see Table 4 below.

Table 4: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Class	Frequency	Percentage (%)
≤ 25	286	75
26-35	45	12
36-45	31	8
≥46	20	5
Total	**381**	**100**

The respondents in this study were mainly 25 years old and below (75%) which is the predominant age for undergraduate students at UNZA.

4.2.3 Level of Study

The respondents were categorized into either undergraduate or postgraduate level of study. The respondents included 325 or 85% undergraduate students and 56 or 15% postgraduates from the University of Zambia Great East Road Campus as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Level of Study of Respondents

Level of Study	Frequency	Percentage
Postgraduate	56	15
Undergraduates	325	85
Total	**381**	**100**

4.3   Students' Perceptions of the Quality of Accommodation at UNZA

This section is based on the first research question which aimed at finding out the perceptions of students on the quality of accommodation at UNZA. The presentation of the findings follows the path of the five dimensions of service quality, namely; tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

4.3.1   Tangibles

Tangibility is the dimension for measuring service quality. It is concerned with the appearance of personnel and physical elements such as hostels, surroundings and equipment. The tangibles the researcher focused on to assess the quality of accommodation are cleanliness of surroundings,

sanitation in students' hostels and safety of water usage. These attributes were selected as they had the most physical and hygienic effects on students.

4.3.1.1 Cleanliness of Surroundings

A total of 192 students were interviewed as regards to their expectations and perceptions of the cleanliness of UNZA surroundings. Cleanliness in this case involves a lack of litter, sound and appealing surroundings with well-maintained lawns. Of the total interviewed, 180 (94%) expected to find clean surroundings at UNZA, only 7 (4%) expected that UNZA surroundings would not be clean. From the same number interviewed, 103 (54%) perceived the surroundings to be in poor sanitation currently as compared to the 67 (35%) who felt that the surroundings were clean as. Figure 1 below shows the responses obtained to this question.

Figure 1: Student's Expectations and Perceptions of the Cleanliness of UNZA Surroundings
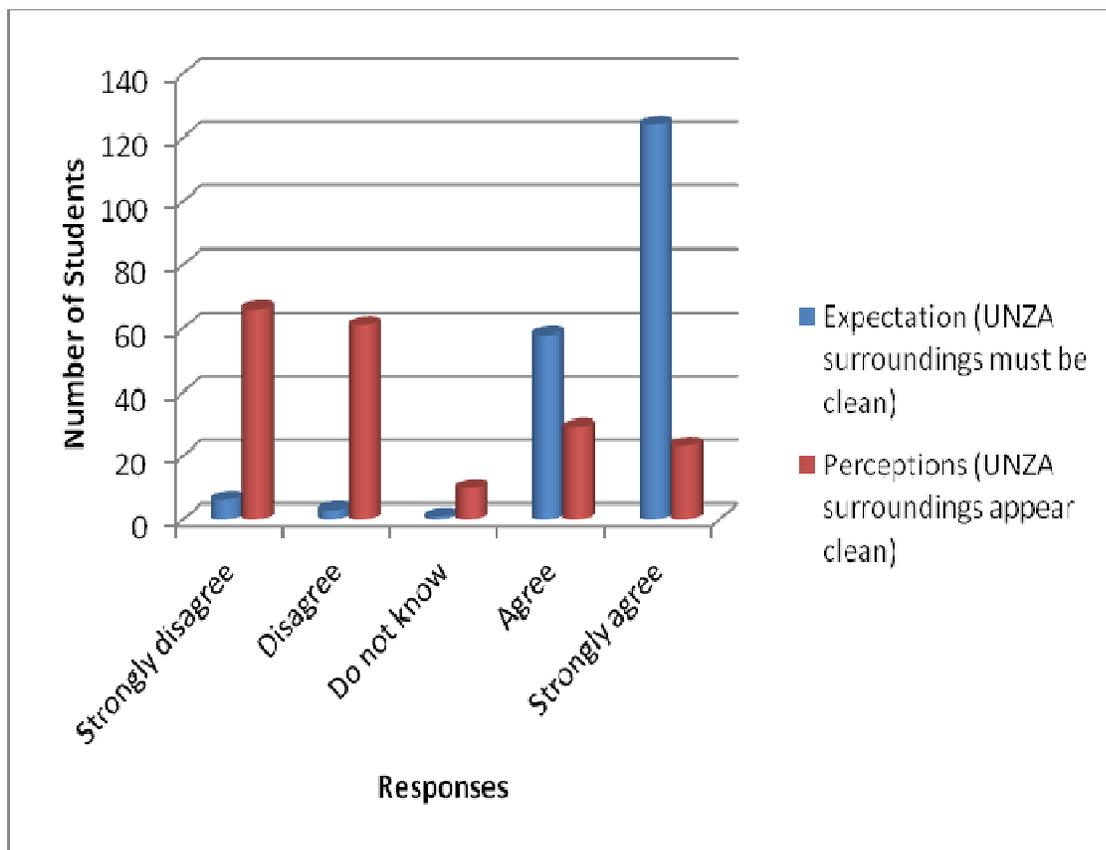
4.3.1.2 Sanitation in Students' Hostels

A total of 192 students were interviewed as regards to their expectations and perceptions of sanitation in students' hostels. Out of this total, 185 (96%) students expected to find good sanitation in hostels while 5 (3%) expected unhygienic students' hostels. From the same number interviewed, 137 (71%) perceived the hostels to be in poor sanitation as compared to the 45 (23%) who felt there was good sanitation in the students' hostels (Figure 2 on the next page).

4.3.1.3 Clean and safe water for usage

With regard to water at campus, 183 (72%) expected to find clean and safe water out of a total of 192 students who were interviewed while 9 (5%) did not expected clean water. After spending time at UNZA as students, 111 (58%) felt that the water was not clean as opposed to the 57 (30%) who felt that the water provided to students at UNZA is safe and clean (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Student's Perceptions and Expectations of Sanitation in UNZA Hostels
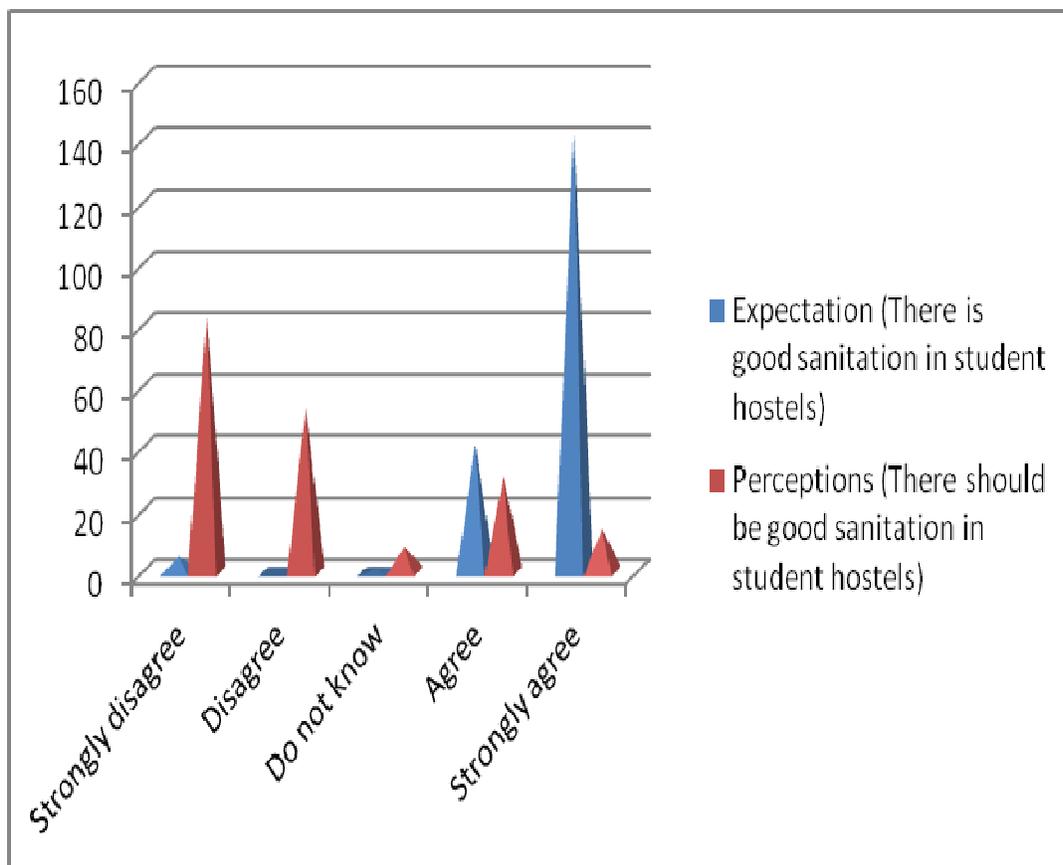
Figure 3: Student's Perceptions and Expectations of Clean and Safe Water
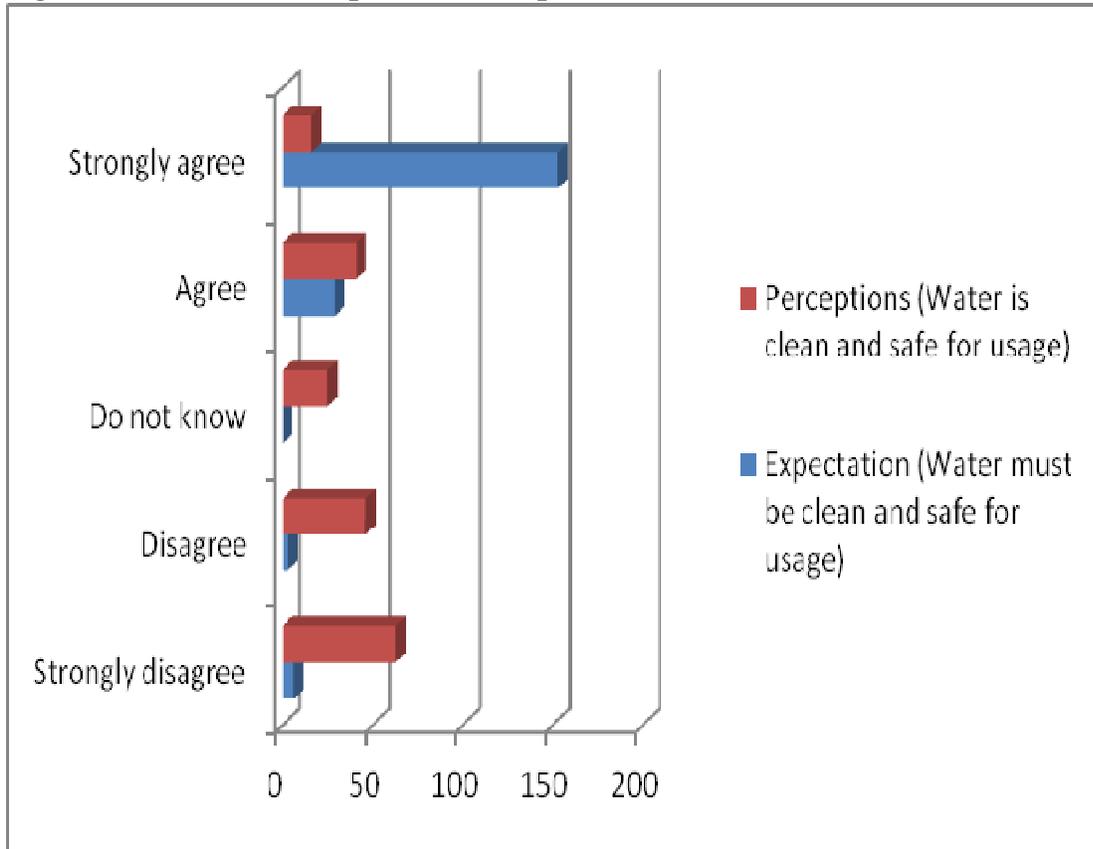
4.3.2 Reliability

This dimension of service quality implies the ability of an institution to provide the promised service dependably and accurately. This dimension of service quality was investigated by students' perceptions of the possibility of an erroneous room allocation process (attribute) as well as favouritism.

A total of 192 respondents were asked if they perceived errors during room allocation at UNZA. The responses show that 7 (4%) expected errors, 7 (4%) did not know as to whether they would be errors or not, while 179 (93%) did not expect to find any errors. However, after their encounter with accommodation service provided at UNZA their views of room allocation changed. Those who perceived errors in room allocation were 57 (30%), 40 (21%) did not know while 91 (47%) did not perceive any errors in room allocation as shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Students' Perceptions and Expectations of Room Allocation at UNZA
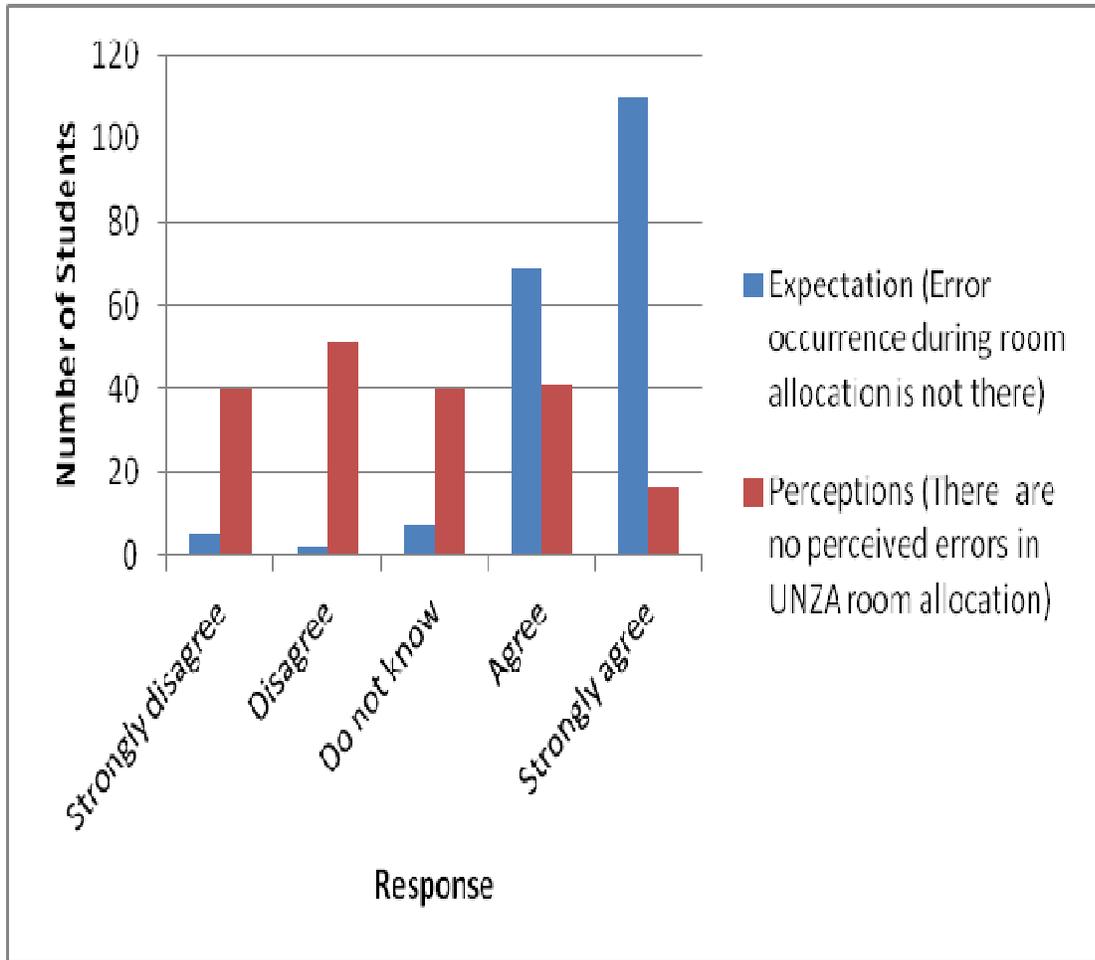
4.3.3 Responsiveness

This dimension of service quality implies the promptness and willingness of members of staff of an institution towards helping their students when they encounter difficulties during their period of study. The attribute used to investigate this dimension of service quality was efficiency of the accommodation service personnel in handling students' queries.

The respondents were asked to state their expectations and perceptions of UNZA accommodation service personnel's effectiveness in handling students' complaints. Figure 5 below shows these findings.

Figure 5: Students' Perceptions and Expectations of UNZA Accommodation Personnel's Effectiveness in Handling Complaints
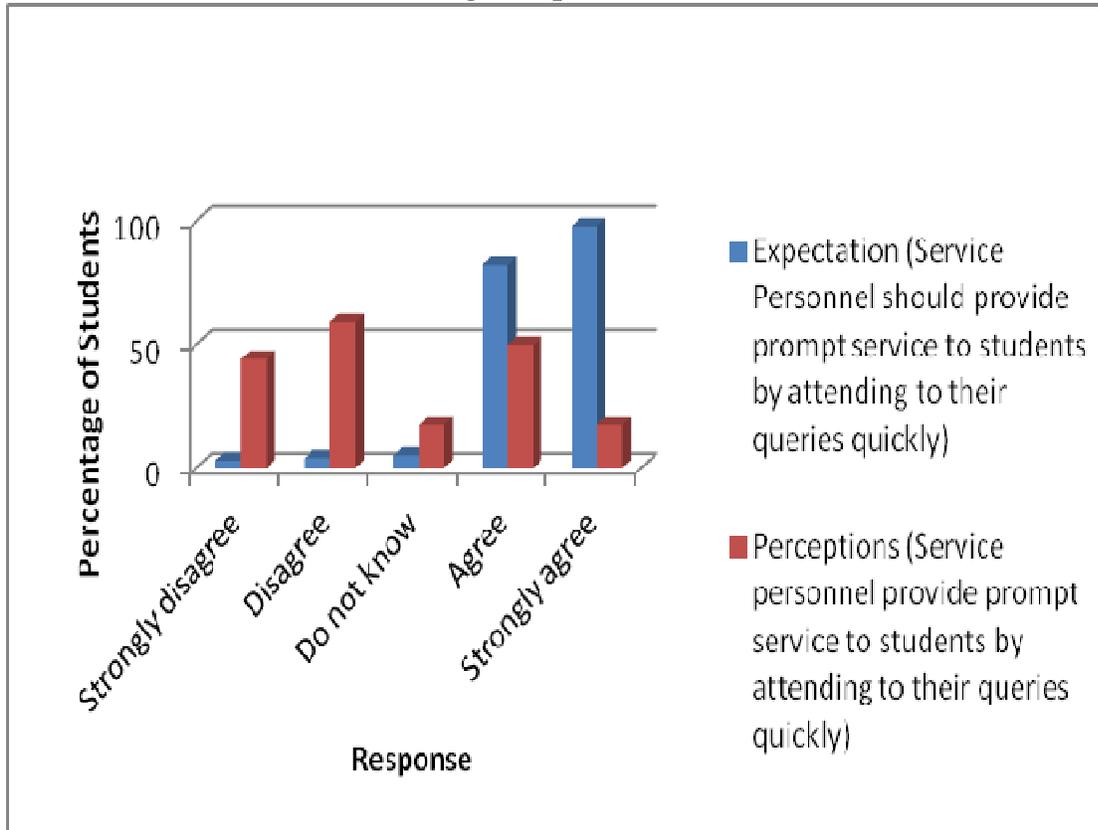
A total of 93% (179) respondents expected quick and effective responses among accommodation personnel in handling students' complaints. However, after their experiences with accommodation service personnel at UNZA, 52% (91) felt that students' complaints were not effectively and promptly handled while 34% (57) felt that the accommodation personnel were willing and quick in responding to students' complaints.

4.3.4 Assurance

This dimension of service quality refers to the ability of the environment in which a particular service is being provided to inspire trust in the clients or customers. Thus, the security system at UNZA was the attribute used to determine students' levels of assurance in this regard (see Figure 6 below).

Out of the total number of 192 respondents who were asked about their expectations of UNZA security on campus, 92% (178) were confident of the security UNZA provided to students. However, after their encounter with this service only 25% (48) perceived that both they and their property were safe on campus. A total of 125 (65%) felt that they would not entrust their lives and their property to UNZA security.

Figure 6: Students' Expectations and Perceptions of Students' Security of Property on Campus
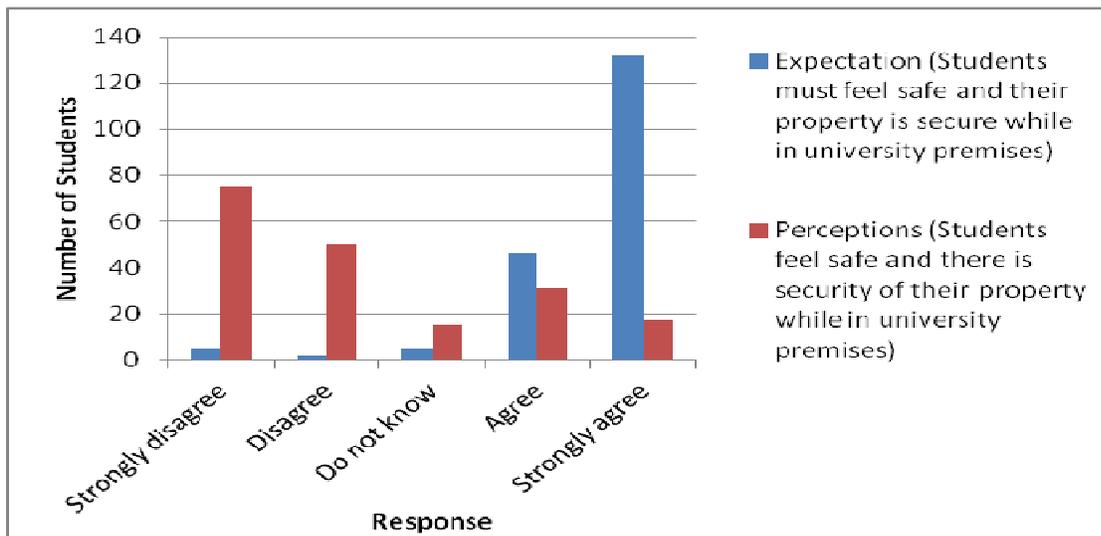
1

Figure 7: Students' Perceptions and Expectations Regarding Empathy from Accommodation Service Personnel
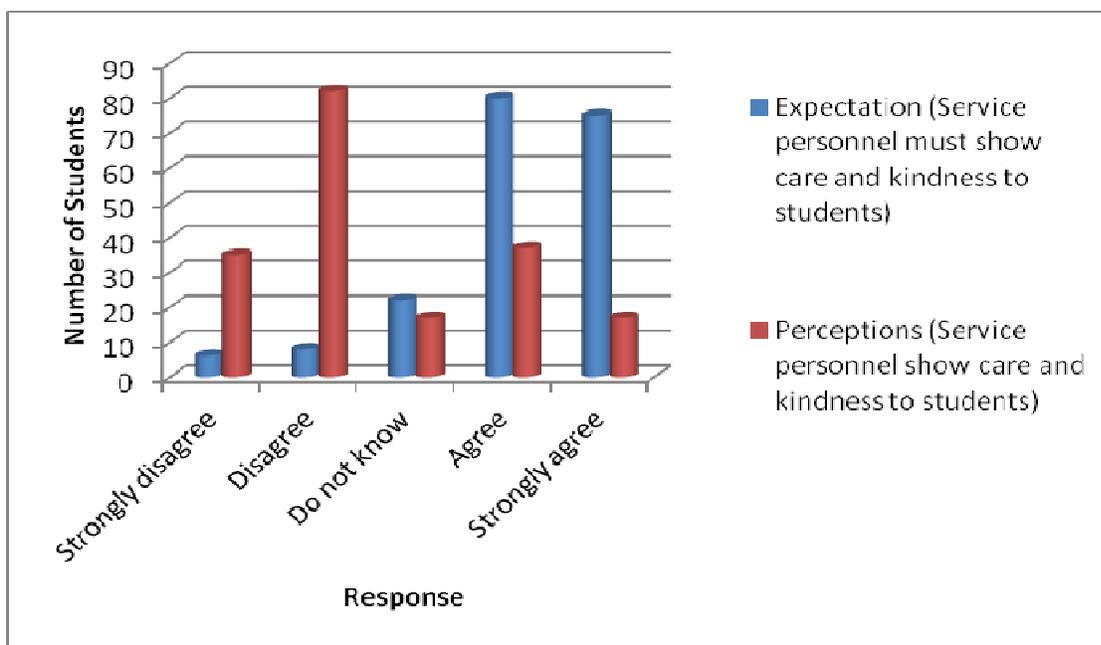
4.3.5   Empathy

This attribute of service quality means good relations and understanding between the service provider and the client. It implicitly refers to the care and personalized attention an institution (UNZA) gives to its students. In assessing this dimension of service quality, the attribute of politeness from the personnel under the office of Dean of Students Affairs (DOSA) towards students was utilized. A total of 192 respondents were asked if the personnel in charge of accommodation were polite or empathetic towards students. Only 28% (54) perceived a lack of empathy while 60% (117) felt that the personnel was kind and polite to them (Figure 7 above).

4.4   Students' Perceptions on the Quality of Library Services provided at UNZA

This section presents the findings based on the second research question which aimed at investigating the perceptions of students on the quality of Library Services provided at UNZA. The format of result presentation follows the same format described under section 4.3; findings will be presented in the light of five dimensions of service quality and these are tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

4.4.1   Tangibles

Tangibility was assessed by the use of the attribute 'sanitation in the Main Library'. It is noteworthy that a number of attributes such as ventilation, tidiness of bookshelves, cleanness of toilets and floors in the library could have been assessed separately. However, these were combined into a compound attribute referred to herein as 'sanitation'.

4.4.1.1 Sanitation in the Main Library

A total of 189 students were interviewed as regards to their perceptions of sanitation in the Main Library at UNZA. Of the total interviewed, 86% (163) expected to find good sanitation against 8% (15) who expected poor sanitation while 5% (11) were not sure whether or not there would be good sanitation. After using the library, the findings show a drastic change in their

perceptions. That is, 82% (155) perceived poor sanitation in the main library while only 15% (29) felt the library had good sanitation. Figure 8 below shows these findings:

Figure 8: Students' Perceptions of Sanitation in the UNZA Main Library
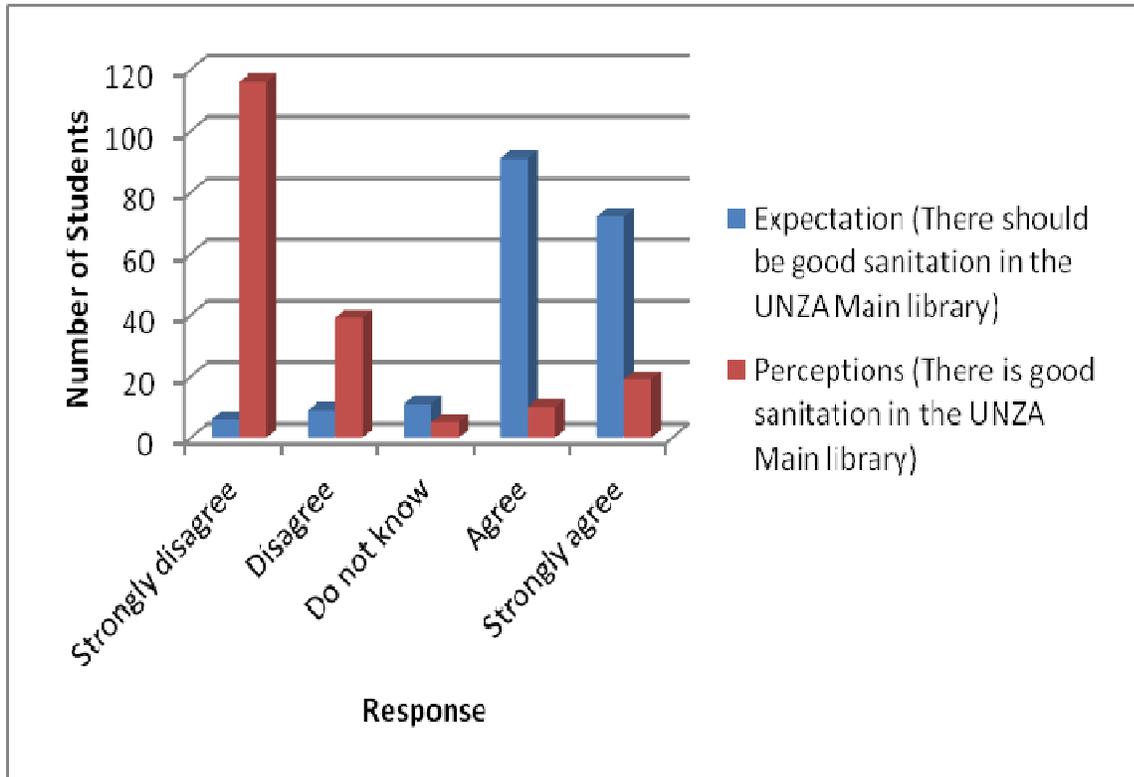
4.4.2 Reliability

This dimension of service quality was assessed using the attribute of 'availability of up-to-date study materials' in the Main Library at UNZA.

A total of 189 respondents were asked to state if the main library at UNZA was reliable enough in their provision of relevant up-to-date study and research materials. The responses show that 96 (51%) students expected availability of such materials. However, after their repeated use of the UNZA library services, 122 (65%) did not feel the library provided relevant up-to-date study materials while 44 (23%) felt that UNZA Main Library provided the materials they needed for their study (Figure 9).

4.4.3   Responsiveness

With regard to the dimension of responsiveness of the library services provided at UNZA Main Campus, respondents were asked to state their perceptions of the library service personnel's ability to attend to students' queries promptly (attribute) (Figure 10).

Figure 9: Students' Perceptions and Expectations of Study and Research Materials in UNZA Main Library
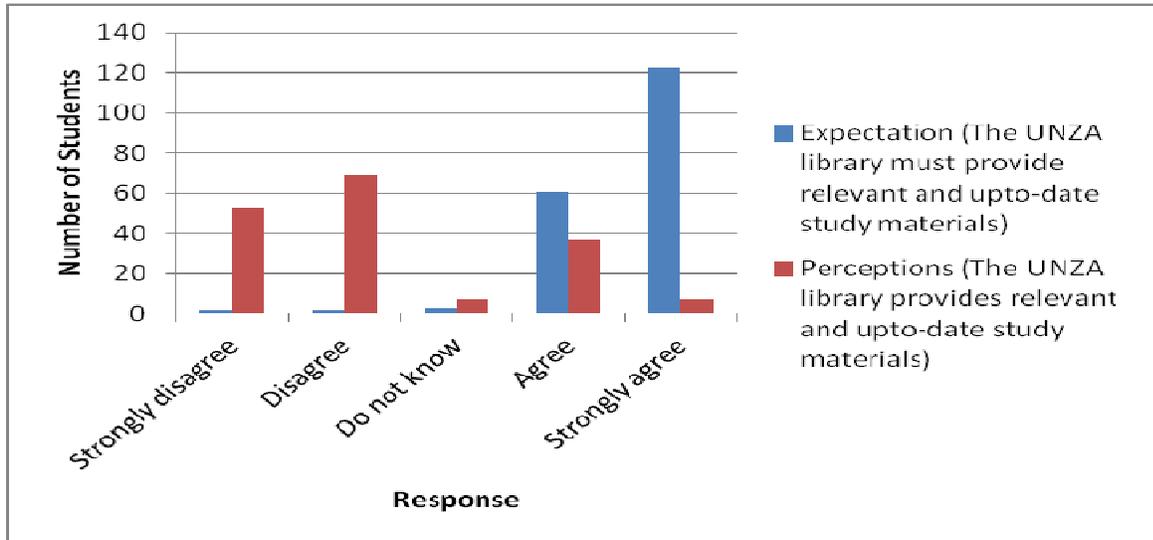
Figure 10: Students' Perceptions and Expectations of the Promptness of UNZA Library Personnel in Handling Students' Queries
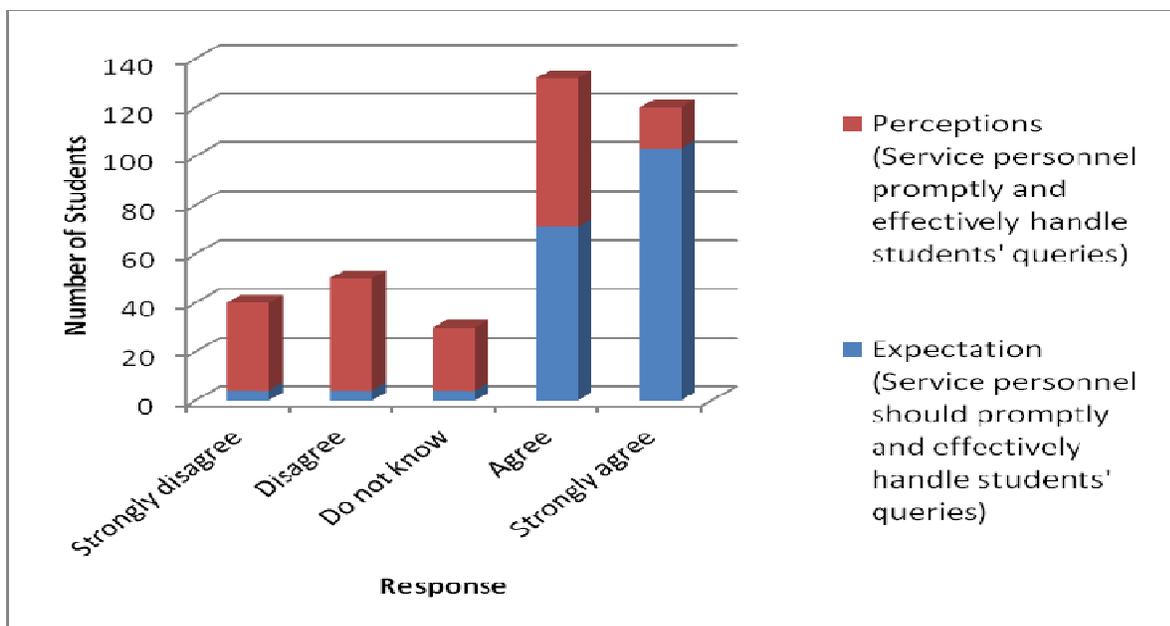
Of the total number of respondents sampled, 92% (174) expected quick and efficient service before their first use of the library. However, after their encounter with the library service personnel, 43% (82) felt the personnel were not prompt as compared to 41% (78) who felt the personnel were prompt and efficient in handling students' queries. Only 14% (26) did not know.

4.4.4   Assurance

In order to assess the capacity of UNZA Main Library's ability to inspire trust, the dimension of assurance as a service quality was used. The respondents were asked to state whether the service personnel were attentive and caring when serving students as indicated in Figure 11:

Figure 11: Students' Perceptions and Expectations of UNZA Library Personnel's Attitudes
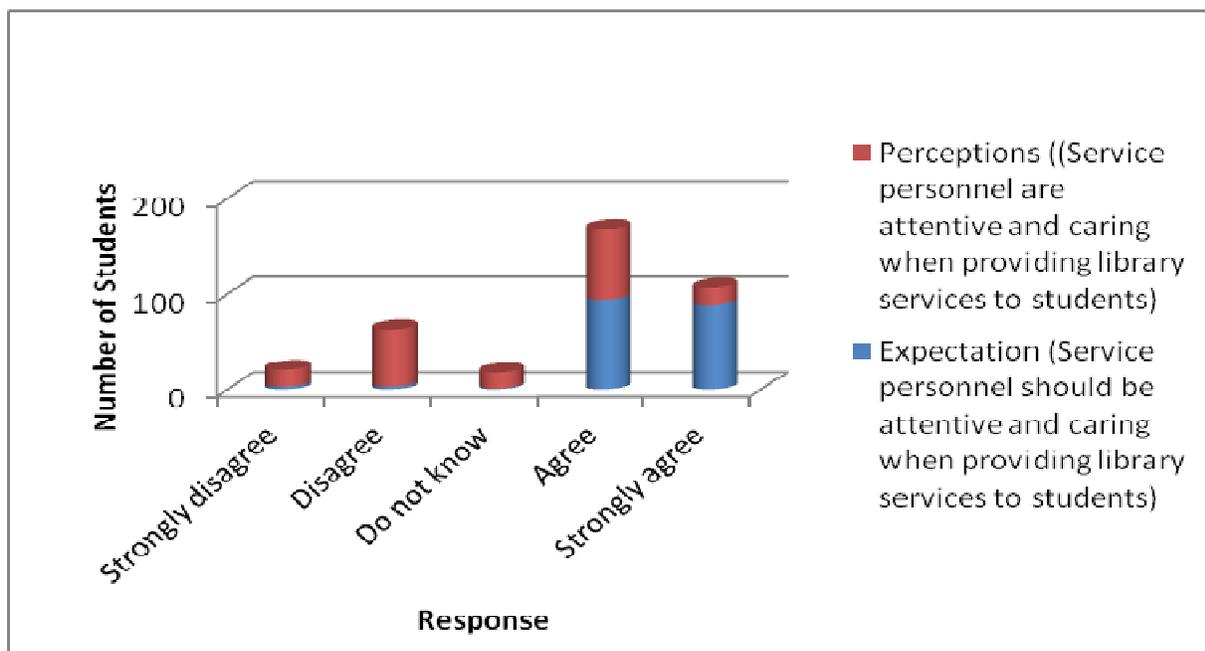
The results on assurance show that out of the 189 respondents interviewed, 96 (51%) were confident that attentiveness and care would be shown to them by UNZA library personnel while utilizing the library services at UNZA. However, after their encounter with the library service personnel, 49 (26%) felt that the personnel inspired trust while only 42 (22%) felt that the personnel were neither attentive nor caring when serving them.

4.4.5 Empathy

In order to find out the views of students towards the quality of library services, it was necessary to investigate the care and personalized attention UNZA Main Library gave to students through its personnel. This represented the service quality dimension of empathy.

Therefore, respondents were asked to state if the library personnel exhibited personal care and kindness towards students. The responses show that 32% (60) felt the personnel was kind and polite to them, 57% (108) perceived lack of empathy among the service personnel while 11% (20) were not sure whether or not good relations between the library personnel and students at UNZA existed as shown below:

Figure 12: Students' Perceptions and Expectations of Empathy among UNZA Library Personnel
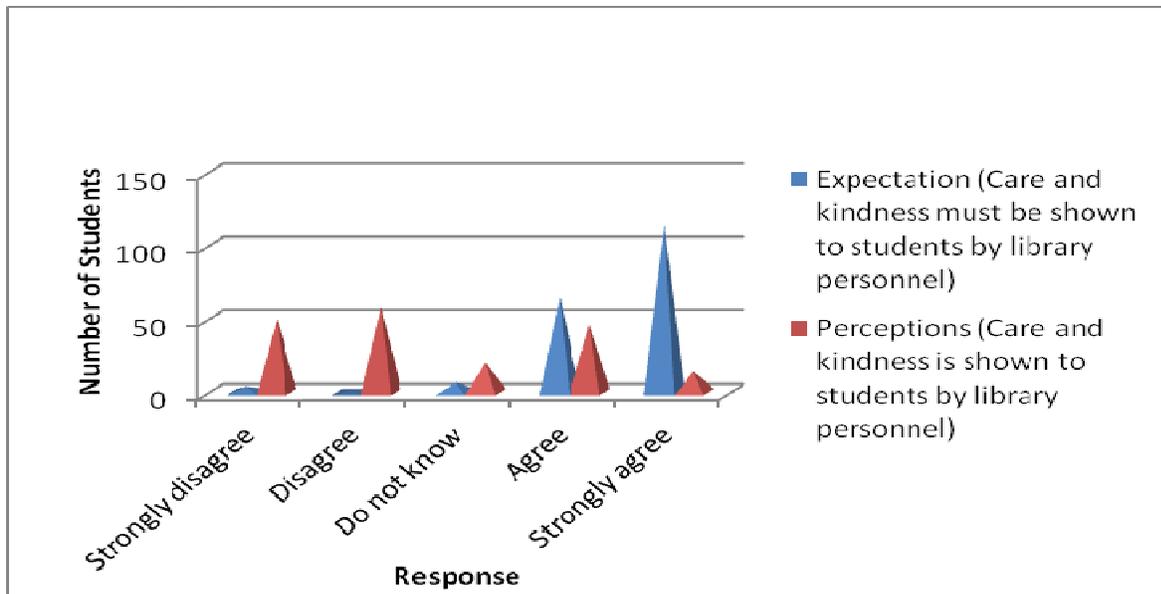
4.5 Challenges Encountered By UNZA in the Provision of Quality Student Welfare Services

This section presents findings based on the fourth research question. It aimed at identifying the challenges faced by UNZA in the provision of quality student welfare services at UNZA.

Key informants from UNZA management, UNZA Main Library, Dean of Students Affairs and Ministry of Education, Science Vocational Training and Early Education were asked to state the

challenges they encountered in ensuring that quality accommodation and library services were provided at UNZA Great East Road Campus. The findings are shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Challenges Faced in the Provision of Quality Accommodation and Library Services at UNZA

Key Informants	Challenges
Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education	1. Inadequate funding to the education sector 2. Inadequate staff to conduct regular inspections 3. Lack of inter-institutional cooperation between Ministry of Education and UNZA Management
UNZA Management	4. Inadequate funding to the institution
UNZA Library	5. Inadequate funding to the department 6. Bureaucratic inefficiency 7. Insecurity in case of fire breakouts i.e. the library has no fire hydrants, inadequate fire extinguishers and no fire escape routes 8. Inadequate study space 9. Not enough computers 10. Lack of expansion space 11. Inadequate staff 12. Need for regular staff training
Dean of Students Affairs	13. Insufficient funding to units 14. Over-enrolments 15. Vandalism 16. Shortage of accommodation 17. Lack of personal responsibility by students towards UNZA environment and property such as littering, blockages due to throwing solid materials in drainages and toilets

4.6 Summary

This chapter has presented findings of the study on the perceptions of students towards the quality of accommodation and library services provided at the University of Zambia. The findings revealed that students did not perceive any errors in room allocation. However, the results show low perceptions of students on library research materials as well as the security systems on campus. Moreover, perceived poor sanitation in students' hostels and the Main Library was also noted. The study further revealed that UNZA faced several challenges in the provision of quality student welfare services, among them were insufficient funding to the institution and lack of personal responsibility to property. The next chapter presents the discussion of the findings.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study on students' perceptions on the quality of student welfare services provided by the University of Zambia. The study of students' perceptions of different welfare services offered by UNZA was in fact, a quality assessment of the levels of satisfaction of students towards not just their learning and environment but also their living environment while on campus. In essence, the study attempted to answer the following question; Are students satisfied with their living and learning environments at UNZA? In answering to this question, the study was guided by three objectives which were; to investigate the perceptions of students towards the quality of accommodation; investigate the perceptions of students on the quality of library services at UNZA; and identify the challenges in the provision of quality student welfare services by UNZA.

5.2 Perceptions of Students towards the Quality of Accommodation at UNZA

This section discusses the findings of students' perceptions towards the quality of accommodation provided at UNZA. A number of attributes in service quality were used to guide students' responses such as the physical appearance, reliability, responsiveness and empathy in the provision of accommodation to students.

5.2.1 The Physical Cleanliness of the Campus and its Hostels

The perceptions of UNZA students towards the quality of accommodation were done firstly, by investigating students' views of the physical environment at UNZA. When asked whether the students perceived UNZA surroundings as clean, about 50% (103) of the students interviewed felt the surroundings were dirty. In essence, the majority students were not satisfied with the general cleanness of the surroundings (see Figure 1 on page 34). However, the study also

highlighted a nearly 40% who were satisfied with the general cleanness of the campus. This being a perceptual study, this scenario is common and will be a regular feature even for other student welfare services. The different backgrounds of different students affect the way they perceive these student welfare services. For some who are tailored towards 'absolute' cleanness, existence of litter might be viewed as 'filthy' while for those from a different background, the situation might have to take increased levels of litter for them to clarify the environment as 'not clean'. However, UNZA being an institution whose business includes ensuring the satisfaction of its clients (the students); the high number of students who were not satisfied with the cleanness of the surroundings entails the need to improve on its service provision in this department.

Regarding sanitation in students' hostels, 72% (136) of the 189 interviewed were not satisfied with the sanitation in hostels, 4% (8) did not know and yet 23% (45) were satisfied with the sanitation in their hostels (see Figure 2 on page 45). The difference in views could yet again be explained in the difference in backgrounds among students or the levels of individual cleanness among students. Some rooms were observed to be cleaner than others and in many instances it was due to the individual efforts of students. Some students have painted their rooms and have spent time, effort and monitory resources to keep their rooms tidy while other students have not cared much about the cleanness of their room. Individual attitudes towards sanitation played a key role in whether or not the hostels were sanitary. Beside individual effort, a general lack of responsibility towards shared property was observed; a situation Hardin (1968) described as 'tragedy of the commons'. This theory states that individuals, acting independently and rationally according to each one's self-interest, behave contrary to the whole group's long-term best interests by depleting some common resource. This situation has been exemplified by observing students' use of common resources.

The safety and cleanness of the water used by the students was also another service of which most students were sceptical of. The question of 'Do you feel water at UNZA is clean and safe?' was met with a lot of 'No' (109 of the 192 interviewed). Some students complained that there were times a leakage in the sewer line led to the contents of the sewer pipes finding its way into the domestic water. Whether this was true or not it gives an impression of the strong views some students had towards the supplied water. As the adage goes 'biological cleanliness does not mean psychological cleanliness' implies that even though the water might be clean, the users should be convinced that the water is clean for them to enjoy their water use with a peace of mind. This being the case, UNZA management needs to not only provide safe and clean domestic water but should be seen to provide safe and clean domestic water in order to convince its clients that the water is not only biologically, chemically and physically safe but also psychologically safe.

5.2.2 Reliability of UNZA Hostel Allocation

If students are to have faith in the institution's capability of providing quality services, reliability in provision of student welfare services including room allocation is a must. Erroneous room allocation procedures should not even be mentioned. So how do students perceive UNZA reliability in terms of room allocation? The majority, 91 (47%) students did not perceive errors in room allocation while 57 (30%) doubted the reliability of the process. The UNZA policy of 'first come first serve' towards room allocation followed strictly is a mode of ensuring reliability in room allocation. Some of the students who doubted the reliability of the room allocation process cited incidences of where females were allocated male rooms (errors) or students from nearby places offered rooms at the expense of students coming from far-away places. If this is the case, there is need to intensify the screening process before students are offered accommodation.

5.2.3 Responsiveness of UNZA Accommodation Personnel

The question of whether or not accommodation personnel at UNZA exhibit effective and quick response to complaints and queries by students was met with mixed responses. Over half (91 or 52%) of those interviewed were not satisfied with the manner in which the queries were handled compared to 35% (57) who were satisfied. Hence the question, 'Is this good enough?' Going by the UNZA motto 'excellence in service' improvements should be made for the institution to be competitive.

5.2.4 Assurance and Empathy of UNZA Personnel towards Students

The issue of assurance was assessed in the light of security provided by the institution. Many students, 125 of 192 (65%) were not confident of the security provided by UNZA and they backed this up with experiences of theft incurred by them and their colleagues. On the other hand, 117 (60%) students felt accommodation personnel were empathetic to them as compared to only 54 (28%) who perceived a lack of empathy. At least for this quality dimension, the positive was more than the negative.

5.3 Students' Perceptions on the Quality of Library Services provided at UNZA

This section discusses the findings of students' perceptions towards the quality of library services provided at UNZA. A number of attributes in service quality were used to guide students' responses such as the physical appearance, reliability, responsiveness and empathy in the provision of library services.

5.3.1 Sanitation and Reliability of UNZA Main Library

The general sanitation of the main library was used as proxy to determine how students perceived the quality of library services and in this case 'sanitation' of the main library entails cleanness of toilets, dust on book shelves, ventilation as well as cleanness and tidiness of library floors. Majority students, 155 (82%) were not satisfied with the sanitation of the main library.

This is a worry since students spend a lot of time in the library doing their study and research. Poor sanitation in the library is not only a hazard to their academic prowess but also a health hazard. Even more worrying is the lack of fire exit points and assembly points as well as hydrants in the library. This means that in the case of a fire breakout, there is a reduced chance of library users surviving the inferno. This is a situation requiring immediate attention.

The question of UNZA main library's reliability is in essence a question of the capability of the library to provide relevant up to date study material. The majority students, 122 (65%) did not feel the library provided them with relevant up-to-date materials. Ground-truthing by the researcher revealed existence of a lot of 'old' literature and a few latest literatures in print form. Besides, despite the UNZA Main Library's e-resources being well stocked with lots of new literature, most of these e-resources were not available to students. Access to these e-resources is available to students in theory but restricted in practice. These e-resources have passwords which are given to lecturers but are not usually given to students. In fact, the students interviewed were not even aware of the existence of these e-resources let alone have access to the passwords. This is a worrying status quo since UNZA is an academic institution of which provision and availing study materials is one of its core-business. If the students are not satisfied in this case, then the institution needs to make major changes to arrest the situation. Beside availability, training of students in access and use of these e-resources should be done regularly.

5.3.2 Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy of UNZA Library Personnel

When asked whether or not they perceived UNZA library personnel to have handled their queries promptly; nearly half of the students felt the personnel were prompt and a similar number felt the opposite. Similar results were obtained from assessments of assurance and empathy. Yet again, for an institution engaged in competition with several other universities in quality service provision, these numbers do not inspire confidence.

5.4   Challenges of Quality Student Welfare Service Provision at UNZA

The established challenges of quality service provision by MESVTEE, UNZA Management, DOSA and UNZA Library were similar to many challenges faced by majority public institutions with the common one being inadequate funding. This is in tandem with Sawyerr (2004) who records that the challenge of funding for African universities is major and generates several implications. These include infrastructure deficiencies, overcrowding and inadequate access to international knowledge. UNZA's challenges of sanitation, vandalism and security, however, could indeed be addressed by individual efforts to help themselves and fellow human beings to experience social development by living and learning in a conducive environment (Chakanika, 1989).

Over all, UNZA's main challenges of bureaucratic inefficiencies, inadequate computers, inadequate staff, irregular staff training, inadequate study space, irregular inspection of campus premises, over-enrolments, shortage of accommodation and institutional corporation could be addressed with improved institutional management. However, it requires not only strategy (UNZA, 2013-2017) which UNZA has already set in place but also thriving towards being a High Performance Organization (HPO) (Pickering et al., 2013). Achieving the status of HPO would entail collective responsibility of both management and employees.

5.5   Students' Expectations and Perceptions

The findings of this study show students' perceptions towards the quality of SWS at UNZA. The difference between expectations and perceptions indicates the state in quality of accommodation and library services. These findings asserts with Parasuraman (1985), whose view is that service quality is a function of the differences between expectation and performance along the quality dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, security, understanding and tangibles. Indeed, students did not perceive quality in a one-dimensional way but rather judged the quality of accommodation and library services

based on multiple factors such as sanitation of the hostels, safety of water, security systems, responsiveness and empathy of service personnel.

An emerging trend from all the graphs in chapter four (Results) is that of students having high expectations for the quality of welfare services offered by UNZA and yet their perceptions drastically changed upon their encountering them. The following table (Table 7) illustrates the levels of student satisfaction to dimensions and attributes of service quality.

Table 7: Levels of Student Satisfaction towards the Quality of Student Welfare Services Provided By UNZA

Student Welfare Service	Dimension of Service Quality	Attribute of Service Quality	Expectation	Perception	Student Satisfaction
Accommodation Services	Tangibility	Cleanness of surroundings	High	Low	Low
		Sanitation in Students' hostels	High	Low	Low
		Clean and safe water for usage	High	Low	Low
	Reliability	Errors in room allocation process	Very Low	Medium	Moderate
	Responsiveness	Quick and effective response to queries	High	Medium	Moderate
	Assurance	Security of students and property	High	Low	Low
	Empathy	Kindness and politeness towards students	High	Moderately high	Satisfied
	Tangibility	Sanitation in the main library	High	Low	Low
	Reliability	Provision of relevant up to date study and research material	High	Low	Low

Library Services	Responsiveness	Library personnel's ability to attend to students' queries promptly	High	Moderate	Moderate
	Assurance	Service personnel's attentiveness and care provided to students	High	Moderate	Moderate
	Empathy	Personal care and kindness showed to students	High	Low	Low

The table above indicates that students' perceptions against expectations (p-e) were low in nearly all cases. This implies that students were not satisfied with most of the services provided by UNZA. The expectations were assessed for students before they came to UNZA and these were usually high while their perceptions after coming to the institution became low. For instance, perceived poor sanitation in students' hostels at UNZA by its clients is indicative of low quality accommodation provision which may potentially impact on their academic performance (Kotler, 1994).

Therefore, it can be stipulated that the status quo of Zambia's biggest and highest institution of learning (UNZA)'s accommodation and library services leaves much to be desired. Contrary to the notion of service quality, which refers to excellence in respect of a particular characteristic that is thought to be valuable (Hawes and Stephens: 1990), UNZA in essence was letting the students down *per se*. Arguably, the principles with which this institution was formed were not being followed to the satisfaction of its clients, as far as provision of quality accommodation and library services was concerned. These principles are clearly explained in Kelly (1991: 125):

> The new university must be responsive to the real
> needs of the country....Must be an institution which
> on merit will win respect and proper recognition

throughout the university world. Unless it satisfies these two criteria, it will fall short of meeting its national responsibility. It must combine practical service to the nation... with the fulfilment of its historic purpose of a university as a seat of learning, a treasure-house of knowledge, and a creative centre of research.

In light of this, UNZA ought to carry out satisfactorily these responsibilities if its objectives are to be met. Service quality to clients is cardinal in achieving this end. This is so because quality service provision is a major differentiating tool which forms the basis for attracting and retaining students.

However, it must be taken into consideration that meeting and exceeding UNZA's aim of 'Service and excellence' calls for pooling of effort and resources by stakeholders such as the government, UNZA management and its service staff, the students, any Zambian citizen as well as the donor community.

5.6   Summary

This chapter has discussed the findings of the study based on the perceptions of students towards the quality of student welfare services provided at UNZA. The study was based on three objectives.

It was discussed that the perceptions of students on the quality of accommodation and library services was generally poor. Majority students were not satisfied with the sanitation of the hostels and the main library toilets and book shelves. This is a worry since students spend a lot of time either in their rooms or in the library doing their study and research. This is in tandem with Kotler (1994) who postulates that poor sanitation at an academic institution is not only a hazard to students' academic prowess but also a health hazard.

In terms of challenges, the following were identified: bureaucratic inefficiencies, inadequate computers, inadequate staff, irregular staff training, and inadequate study space in the main library, irregular inspection of campus premises, vandalism, over-enrolments and shortage of accommodation. Among these challenges, inadequate funding to the institution was ranked as the major challenge which negatively affected the overall provision of quality student welfare services at UNZA. The next chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study based on the findings and discussions on students' perceptions towards the quality of student welfare services provided at the University of Zambia.

6.2   Summary

This study was based on three objectives and responded to three research questions. The first objective and research question set out to investigate the perceptions of students towards the quality of accommodation provided at UNZA.

Both this objective and the research question were answered. The findings of the study revealed that 103 (50%) students interviewed felt the surroundings were dirty. In essence, the majority students were not satisfied with the general cleanliness of the surroundings. However, UNZA being an institution whose business includes ensuring the satisfaction of its clients (the students) the high number of students who were not satisfied with the cleanliness of the surroundings entails the need to improve on its service provision in this department.

Regarding sanitation in students' hostels, 137 of the 192 (71%) interviewed were not satisfied with the sanitation in hostels. Yet, some rooms were observed to be cleaner than others and in many instances it was due to the individual efforts of students. Some students have painted their rooms and have spent time and monitory resources to keep their rooms tidy while other students have not cared much about the cleanness of their rooms. Thus, individual attitudes towards sanitation played a key role in whether or not the hostels were sanitary. This situation is likely to impact on students' academic performance if not attended to.

The safety and cleanliness of the water used by the students was also another service of which most students were sceptical of. Some students complained that there were times a leakage in the sewer line led to the contents of the sewer pipes finding its way into the domestic water. This being the case, UNZA management needs to be seen to provide safe and clean domestic water in order to convince its clients that the water is not only biologically, chemically and physically safe but also psychologically safe.

Further, the study revealed that majority, 91 (47%) students did not perceive errors in room allocation while 57 (30%) doubted the reliability of the process. Some of the students who doubted the reliability of the room allocation process cited incidences of where students from nearby places were offered rooms at the expense of students coming from far-away places. If this is the case, there is need to intensify the screening process before students are offered accommodation.

Assurance was assessed in the light of security provided by the institution. Many, 125 students (65%) were not confident of the security provided by UNZA and they backed this up with experiences of theft incurred by them and their colleagues.

The second objective and research question sought to investigate the perceptions of students on the quality of library services provided at UNZA. A number of dimensions in service quality were used to guide students' responses such as the physical appearance, reliability, responsiveness and empathy in the provision of library services.

Majority students, 155 out of 192 interviewed (82%) were not satisfied with the sanitation of the main library. Since students spend a lot of time in the library doing their study and research, poor sanitation in the library is not only a hazard to their academic prowess but also a health hazard which can lead to loss of life.

Besides, the research revealed that UNZA Main Library lacks fire exit points and assembly points as well as hydrants.

This means that in case of a fire breakout, there is a reduced chance of library users surviving the inferno. This is a situation requiring immediate attention.

Observation by the researcher revealed existence of a lot of 'old' literature and a few latest literatures in print form. However, the library's e-resources were well stocked with lots of new literature although access to these e-resources is available to students in theory but restricted in practice. In fact, most students who interviewed were not even aware of the existence of these e-resources let alone have access to the passwords. This is a worrying status quo since UNZA is an academic institution of which provision and availing of study and research materials is one of its core-business. If the students are not satisfied in this case, then the institution needs to make major changes to arrest the situation.

When asked whether or not they perceived that UNZA library personnel handled their queries promptly, nearly half, 78 (41%) students felt the personnel were prompt and almost a similar number felt the opposite. Similar results were gotten from assessments of assurance and empathy. Yet again, for an institution engaged in competition with several other universities in quality service provision, these numbers do not inspire confidence.

The third objective and research question were aimed at identifying the challenges faced by UNZA in the provision of quality student welfare services.

The study revealed that the main challenge faced by UNZA in the provision of quality student welfare services is inadequate financial resources. This is in tandem with Sawyerr (2004) who records that the challenge of funding for African universities is major and generates several

implications. These include infrastructure deficiencies, overcrowding and inadequate access to international knowledge.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education pointed out inadequate funding to the education sector which has affected the funding of higher institutions. The study also revealed that the department in charge of standards in higher education had inadequate staff to conduct regular inspections. UNZA, like many public universities lacks regular inspections meant to ensure prevalence of a conducive learning and living environment at the institution. This situation is not in line with the Ministry of Education policy which highlights that service be of high standard in order to win the respect of the university world. Hence, to ensure a high standard of quality at UNZA, there is need for 'adequacy of physical facilities, quality of library holdings' and regular physical inspections to the institution (GRZ, 1996:96-105).

Regarding provision of quality accommodation at UNZA, the following challenges were identified; over-enrolment of students which has resulted in shortage of accommodation and overcrowding in hostels. Thus, the student population could not be supported by systems of maintenance such as plumbing, electrical and carpentry which has resulted in constant break downs and damage to facilities.

Further, the research revealed that lack of personal responsibility by students towards UNZA property and environment had negative implications on the tidiness and sanitation of the institution such as vandalism, littering of the surroundings and constant blockages of toilets. Thus, regardless of students at UNZA being adults, there is need to constantly sensitize them on the benefits of good sanitation and the importance of taking personal responsibility of institutional property.

Regarding provision of quality library services, lack of expansion space resulting in lack of cohesion between student enrolment levels at UNZA and student functional structures was the main challenge identified. That is, by December 2013 there were 20,348 students against 1,650 library seating capacity (UNZA, 2013). As the result, inadequate study space, insufficient staff personnel and inadequate computers were a common scenario.

These challenges can be addressed with improved institutional management and increased funding to UNZA, specifically to the various departments and units which are directly responsible for providing student services. However, it requires not only strategy (UNZA Strategic Plan, 2013-2017) which UNZA has already set in place but also thriving towards being a High Performance Organization (Pickering et al., 2013).

6.3 Conclusion

The expectations of students towards student welfare services provided by UNZA were generally high compared to their perceptions after getting exposed to the available student welfare services. The study had investigated the quality of accommodation and library services provided by UNZA in the context of student perceptions. Quality of accommodation included the general hostel sanitation, cleanliness of water provided and hygienic conditions in student rooms. On the other hand, quality of library services meant proper sanitation in the library, proper ventilation, aeration and general safety from potential hazards such as fire. Both student welfare services were measured in the light of the five measures of service quality which are tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance and empathy.

The study revealed that besides empathy provided by the UNZA Main Library service personnel, students were not satisfied with the library services offered by the institution. Even though UNZA is an institution of higher learning and research, students felt the material in the library was mostly out-dated and required major refurbishment. Overall, the students were not satisfied

with the welfare services offered by the institution hence the need for UNZA management to ensure their clients got satisfied amidst competition provided by the other available institutions of higher learning.

It was recommended that the Ministry of Education and UNZA management arrange regular quality assessment exercises of the various welfare services they offer to determine areas requiring urgent attention and work on these before the problem exacerbates into a crisis. Furthermore, students need to be more responsible towards the institution property and avoid vandalising property intended for public good. Collective effort from both parties will surely lead to improved conditions of learning.

6.4 Recommendations

Arising from the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There is need to maintain the facilities and improve sanitation in the existing student hostels at UNZA Great East Road Main Campus by the office of the Dean of Students.

2. Through responsible units, UNZA management need to sensitize students on the need of personal responsibility to UNZA property in order to avoid vandalism and improve sanitation at the institution.

3. UNZA Management need to engage the government through the Ministry of Education on rehabilitation of UNZA Main Library whose walls are in a dilapidated state, has poor ventilation, poor security system, flooding in toilets and lacks fire exit points, assembly points as well as hydrants.

4. There is also immediate need for UNZA management to ensure construction of a library which would serve the students better and compliment on the existing UNZA Main Library which has a seating capacity of 1, 650 against 20, 348 student population (by December 2013).

5. Since providing quality student welfare services include sympathy, there was need to train the personnel in the office of the Dean of Students and Librarian at UNZA on customer relations. The client, the student, needs to be accorded the uttermost respect and attention so as to withstand other Public and Private Universities who are competing for the same clients.

6. Trained personnel in the office of the Librarian need to thoroughly educate students on how to use e-library and give students unlimited access to e-resources so as to compliment on lack of modern books on UNZA Main Library shelves.

7. In order to ensure prevalence of a conducive learning and living environment and win the respect of the university world, there is need for routine inspections of UNZA premises by Officers in–charge of standards in higher education from Ministry of Education.

8. UNZA management need to construct more student hostels in order to balance the ratio between student enrolments and functional structures at the institution. This move may reduce overcrowding in rooms, avoid communicable diseases, increase student retention rates and over-all improve the provision of quality student welfare services at UNZA.

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Appendix I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA GREAT EAST ROAD CAMPUS

Research Title: Students' Perceptions on the Quality of Student Welfare Services Provided at the University of Zambia

Dear Respondent,

The researcher of this study is a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia in the School of Education pursuing a Master degree of Education in Adult Education.

You have been randomly sampled and therefore kindly requested to participate in this research. Be assured that the information you will provide will be confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. Kindly, do not write your name.

(Tick where applicable)

Demographic Characteristics

	Female	
Gender	Male	
	15-25	
Age (Years)	26-35	
	36-45	
	46 and above	
	Undergraduate	
Level of Study	Postgraduate	

PART A

STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS OF THE QUALITY OF ACCOMMODATION

INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete Part A of the questionnaire indicating your expectations of the quality of accommodation provided at a university.

By ticking, please answer on a scale from

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Do not know, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS	1	2	3	4	5
TANGIBLES (Physical appearance)					
The university surroundings must appear clean.					
There should be good sanitation in student hostels.					
Water must be clean and safe for usage.					
1. RELIABILITY (Ability to inspire trust)					
Error occurrence during room allocation must not be there.					
There should be genuine interest in helping students who encounter problems during their university stay.					
2. RESPONSIVENESS					
Service personnel should provide prompt service to students by attending to their queries quickly.					
3. ASSURANCE					
Students must feel safe and their property secure while in university premises.					
There should be no favouritism in room allocation					

EMPATHY					
Care and kindness must be shown to students (use of polite words while serving students).					

PART B

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE QUALITY OF ACCOMMODATION

INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete Part B of the questionnaire indicating your views of the quality of accommodation provided at the University of Zambia.

By ticking, please answer on a scale from

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Do not know, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS	1	2	3	4	5
1. TANGIBLES (Physical appearance)					
The university surroundings appear clean.					
There is good sanitation in student hostels.					
Water is clean and safe for usage.					
2. RELIABILITY (Ability to inspire trust)					
Error occurrence during room allocation is not there.					
The staff personnel show genuine interest in helping students who encounter problems during their university stay.					
The e-resources are made available to students					

3. RESPONSIVENESS					
Service personnel provide prompt service to students by attending to their queries quickly.					
4. ASSURANCE					
Students feel safe and their property is secure while in university premises.					
There is no favouritism in room allocation					
5. EMPATHY					
Care and kindness is shown to students (use of polite words while serving students).					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA GREAT EAST ROAD CAMPUS

Research Title: Students' Perceptions on the Quality of Student Welfare Services Provided at the University of Zambia

Dear Respondent,

The researcher of this study is a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia in the School of Education pursuing a Masters' degree of Education in Adult Education.

You have been randomly sampled and therefore kindly requested to participate in this research. Be assured that the information you will provide will be confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. Kindly, do not write your name.

(Tick where applicable)

Demographic Characteristics

	Female
Gender	Male
	15-25
Age (Years)	26-35
	36-45
	46 and above
	Undergraduate
Level of Study	Postgraduate

PART A

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS OF THE QUALITY OF LIBRARY SERVICES

INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete Part A of the questionnaire indicating your expectations of the quality of library

services provided at a university.

By ticking, please answer on a scale from

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Do not know, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS	1	2	3	4	5
1. TANGIBLES (Physical appearance)					
There should be good sanitation in the library (the floors, walls and toilets must be clean)					
Books and book shelves must appear neat all the times					
There should be proper ventilation in the library					
2. RELIABILITY (Ability to inspire trust)					
The university library must provide relevant and up-to-date study and research materials.					
The e-resources should be made available to students					
3. RESPONSIVENESS					
Service personnel should effectively manage conflict situations and must be capable of					

handling students' complaints					
4. ASSURANCE					
Students must feel safe and their property secure while in the library.					
Service personnel should be attentive when providing library services to students.					
5. EMPATHY					
Care and kindness must be shown to students (use of polite words while serving students).					

PART B

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE QUALITY OF LIBRARY SERVICES

INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete Part B of the questionnaire indicating your views of the quality of library services provided at the University of Zambia.

By ticking, please answer on a scale from

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Do not know, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS	1	2	3	4	5
1. TANGIBLES (Physical appearance)					
There is good sanitation in the library (the floors, walls and toilets must be clean).					

Books and book shelves appear neat all the times.					
There is proper ventilation in the library.					
2. RELIABILITY (Ability to inspire trust)					
The university library provides relevant and up-to-date study and research materials.					
The e-resources are made available to students					
3. RESPONSIVENESS					
Service personnel effectively manage conflict situations and must be capable of handling students' complaints					
4. ASSURANCE					
Students feel safe and their property is secure while in the library.					
Service personnel are attentive when providing library services to students.					
EMPATHY					
Care and kindness is shown to students (use of polite words while serving students).					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

Appendix III

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENT WELFARE SERVICE PROVIDERS AT UNZA GREAT EAST ROAD CAMPUS

Research Title: Students' Perceptions on the Quality of Student Welfare Services Provided at the University of Zambia

Dear Participant,

The researcher of this study is a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia in the School of Education pursuing a Master degree of Education in Adult Education.

You have been purposefully sampled and therefore kindly requested to participate in this research. Be assured that the information you will provide will be confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.

1. What is the name of this department or unit?

2. What is your position in this department or unit?

3. How long have you served in this capacity?

4. What is your understanding of student welfare services?

5. What student welfare services are you responsible for?

6. How do you ensure that students appreciate the services you provide?

7. How would you rate the quality of the welfare services you provide for students at UNZA? (poor, average, good or excellent)

8. Please give reasons for your rating.

9. What are the main challenges you face in providing quality student welfare services in your department or unit?

10. What possible measures would you take to ensure that student welfare services are of good quality in your department, and over-all at UNZA?

END OF INTERVIEW

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Appendix IV

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PESONNEL IN CHARGE OF STANDARDS IN HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS AT MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EARLY EDUCATION

Research Title: Students' Perceptions on the Quality of Student Welfare Services Provided at the University of Zambia

Dear Participant,

The researcher of this study is a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia in the School of Education pursuing a Master degree of Education in Adult Education.

You have been purposefully sampled and therefore kindly requested to participate in this research. Be assured that the information you will provide will be confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.

1. What is the name of this department?

2. What is your position in this department?

3. How long have you served in this capacity?

4. What is your understanding of student welfare services?

5. Do you know of any student welfare services provided at UNZA? Please cite examples? How would you rate the quality of the following welfare services provided for students at UNZA? (Poor, average, good or excellent)

    a. Accommodation

    b. Library services

6. Please give reasons for your rating.

7. What role do you play to ensure that student welfare services at UNZA are of good quality?

8. What challenges do you face in ensuring that quality student welfare services are provided at UNZA?

9. What possible measures would you take to ensure that student welfare services are of good quality at UNZA?

END OF INTERVIEW

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Appendix V

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM THE ASSISTANT DEAN (POST GRADUATE) - SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Telephone: 291381	**PO Box 32379**
Telegram: UNZA, LUSAKA	**Lusaka, Zambia**
Telex: UNZALU ZA 44370	**Fax: +260-1-292702**

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Date:...08│11│13...

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: FIELD WORK FOR MASTERS / PhD STUDENTS

The bearer of this letter Mr./Ms...ANNIE MUSONDA......Computer number...512801372........is a duly registered student at the University of Zambia, School of Education.

He/She is taking a Masters/PhD programme in Education. The programme has a fieldwork component which he/she has to complete.

We shall greatly appreciate if the necessary assistance is rendered to him/her/

Yours faithfully

D. Ndhlovu (PhD)
ASSISTANT DEAN (PG)- SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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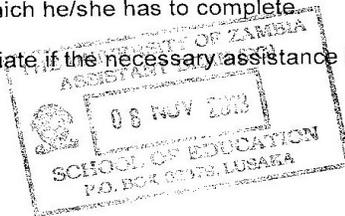
Appendix VI

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM THE DEAN OF STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AMONG STUDENTS AT UNZA

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

Telephone: 254955
Telegrams: UNZA LUSAKA
TELEX: UNZALU ZA 44370

P.O. BOX 32379
Lusaka Zambia

3rd December, 2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: ANNIE MUSONDA COMP. # 512801372

This serves to inform you that Annie Musonda is a duly registered student in the School of Education and has been granted permission to interview students as part of her Masters programme.

Please assist her in any way possible.

Yours faithfully

John Munkombwe
DEPUTY DEAN OF STUDENTS

cc: Dean of Students