

**Survey on Students' Complaints Handling and Response
Practices of Private University Colleges in Addis Ababa**

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School of Graduate Studies**



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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables	viii
List of Acronyms	ix
List of Acronyms	ix
<i>Abstract</i>	x
CHAPTER ONE	11
<i>Introduction</i>	11
1.1 Background of the Study	11
1.2. Company Profiles.....	13
1.2.1. Saint Mary's University College	13
1.2.2. Admas University College.....	14
1.2.3. Alpha University College	15
1.3. Statement of the Problem.....	16
1.4. Objectives of the Study.....	17
1.5. Significance of the Study	18
1.6. Scope and Limitations of the Study	18
CHAPTER TWO	19
<i>Literature Review</i>	19
2.1. Complaints and Complaints handling.....	19
2.2. Kinds of Complaints and Grounds.....	21
2.3. Considering Student as Customer.....	22
2.4. Customer Co-creation of Value and Higher Education Practices.....	24
2.5. Voice of Customers.....	25
2.6. Service Quality Measures	25
2.7. Complaint Handling Procedures: The Experience of Michigan State University	26
2.7.1. Reporting of Complaints.....	28
2.7.2. Investigation of Complaints.....	28

2.7.3. Investigation of Outcomes/Resolution Proposals	29
2.7.4. Implementation of Recommendations and Appeals	29
2.8. Satisfying Customer Complaints	29
2.9. Turn Complaints in to Opportunities	30
2.9.1. Making a Complaint	30
2.9.2. Investigation of Complaints.....	31
2.10. Customer Complaints Behavior.....	32
2.11. Principles of Effective Service Recovery	32
2.11.1. The Informal Approach of Complaints Resolution Mechanisms	35
2.11.2. The Formal Approach of Complaints Resolution Mechanisms.....	35
CHAPTER THREE	37
Research Methodology	37
3.1. Research Design.....	37
3.2. Sample and Sampling Techniques	37
3.3. Data Collection Instruments	39
3.4. Pilot Testing.....	39
3.5. Data Analysis	40
3.6. Ethical Consideration.....	40
CHAPTER FOUR.....	41
Data Analysis and Findings	41
4.1. Characteristics of the Respondents	41
4.2. Factor and Reliability Analysis.....	43
4.3. Descriptive Statistics.....	46
4.4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).....	50
4.4.1. ANOVA Among and Between responses of students	50
4.4.2. ANOVA Among and Between Management Responses.....	54
4.4.3. Analysis using t-test.....	56
4.5. Discussion and Interpretation	58

CHAPTER FIVE	62
<i>Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations</i>	62
5.1. Summary	62
4.2. Conclusion	66
4.3. Recommendations	67
Bibliography	70
<i>Appendices</i>	75

List of Tables

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents.....	42
Table 2: Factor Loadings, Communalities and Scale Reliabilities.....	44
Table 3: Descriptive Statistics	47
Table 4: Analysis of Variance	51
Table 5: Group Statistics.....	57

List of Acronyms

EPRDF: Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front

HEI: Higher Educational Institutions

IGNOU: Indira Gandhi National Open University

IT : Information Technology

PLC : Private Limited Company

QA : Quality Assurance

SMUC : Saint Mary's University College

SPSS : Statistical Package for Social Science

SSOM: Secretarial Science and Office Management

TQM : Total Quality Management

UK : United Kingdom

Abstract

Student complaint handling procedures and practices play an important role in the management of higher education, both in public and private domains. Students, especially, those in private higher educational institutions, are believed to be the customers, as they are responsible for paying their tuition fees. Handling the complaints coming from students and responding accordingly can help university colleges to convert associated threats into opportunities to perform better than their competitors and draw competitive advantage.

Keeping this in mind, the study is designed to assess the problems related to handling students' complaints and the procedures used by the private University Colleges in responding to such complaints. Additionally, an attempt was made to identify the major problems students complain about and their root causes, and the challenges faced by the management in handling student complaints. Descriptive survey method of study was applied to investigate the major problems and their causes. A self-administered questionnaire with the basic issues (as identified through extensive literature review and preliminary investigation with a group of students) related to the nature and types of complaints was prepared, and administered by the researcher with two groups (students and management) of respondents. All the responses obtained from respondents were analyzed using SPSS software package. In line with the study objectives, Percentages, Means, Factor, ANOVA, and t-test scores were computed.

Factor analysis was carried out to group various variables of the study to represent unidimensionality. In this way, nine dimensions representing various issues related to the nature of complaints and handling procedure were identified and named appropriately. These dimensions were used as the base for comparing and contrasting the performance of the three University Colleges over the stated issues. The findings of the research reveal that the major focus of many private higher educational institutions is on attracting new enrolments than treating effectively the existing students to make them loyal. Moreover, problems have been reported related to the institutional facilities and the staff behavior while handling and responding to student's complaints by the management. However, most of the complaints were reported to be associated with non-transparent grading system. Finally, the study offers some directions and implications to higher education sector, and provides insight to the management of private higher educational institutions in handling students' complaints.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The chapter provides an introduction and background of the study while describing the area in which the research is conducted. Also, specific objectives, significance, and scope of the study are addressed. Finally, the research problem is stated and organization of the paper is presented.

1.1 .Background of the Study

Education is the primary agent of transformation towards civilization and sustainable development, while increasing people capacities to transform their visions for society into reality. Education for sustainable development teaches individuals how to make decisions that consider the long-term future of the economy, ecology and equity of all communities.

The history of higher education in Ethiopia goes back to 1950s when Imperial Majesty, Haile Sellassie-I University College was founded. Starting from its establishment to the next 12 years, the University College expanded its dimensions and included School of Social Work, Geographical Observatory, an Extension Division, and Department of Education in addition to the existing programs of the Faculties of Arts and Science. The former Emperor of the Country Haile Selassie-I had played an important role in the development of higher education in the country. The Majesty donated his Palace Guenete Leul (the now Sidist Kilo University-Main Campus) to be the head office and main Campus of the university in 1961. Addis Ababa University has got its name in 1975 after the emperor was deposed from his political power by the Dergue regime (Haile Sellassie I University, 1971). Until then, no private Higher Educational Institution (HEI) was operating in the country. This was mainly caused by the discouraging rules developed by those ruling the country.

Many researchers indicated that the coverage of education in Ethiopia was poor. The rate of dropouts, the number of repeaters, student-teacher ratio etc indicates quantitative and qualitative weaknesses of the education system. In order to tackle this chronic problem, active participation of stakeholders in the education sector is quite imperative. In order to

foster the role of private sector for development of national human capital, the Federal Government of Ethiopia designed a policy that allows the involvement of private sector in the establishment and expansion of educational institutions at various levels. Furthermore, the education policy and strategy of Ethiopia encouraged the participation of the private sector in establishing educational institutions that aim at providing, technical and vocational training for middle and higher level qualifications in different fields (MicroLink IT College, 2007).

Many developing countries have mixed economic system, featuring both private ownership and government use of resources. The division between the two and their relative importance are mostly a function of historic and political circumstances (Todaro and Smith, 2006). However, after the political power has been taken by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), many encouraging regulations were taken place in the education sector. The government deregulated the education sector and many investors participated in the establishment of HEIs in the country. Hence, many private HEIs were organized as operating in the sector. Although the mushrooming of private higher educational institutions solved part of the problems of the country in the development of literate human being, they are suspected for educational quality.

According to Doherty (2008), the quality debate still rages on in academia. It requires the attention of all the stakeholders in the education sector. The quality assurance methods currently used in education demonstrably derive from industrial applications. To many academics, this is an anathema. Additionally, Zairi (2000) states that most organizations face big challenges in customer complaints handling:

- Suffer from a lack of systematic approach to complaints handling.
- Do not recognize the importance of customer complaints at a strategic level.
- Are ill-equipped in terms of systems and processes for logging in complaints, processing them, etc.
- Are not proficient with measurement and in particular in non-financial areas such as customer satisfaction and complaints.
- Have adverse cultures and too much of "blame and reprimand" practices.
- Have not embraced the concept of quality management and its related concept.

1.2. Company Profiles

Private higher educational institutions came in to being to alleviate the chronic problems of the overall development endeavors of the people and the country. Solving problems that affect the overall activities of the country cannot be solved by the government only. The government of Ethiopia designed a policy to allow private investors to participate in the higher education sector. Following the measures taken by the government many higher educational institutions were organized and gave training in different fields. Among these Admas University College, Alpha University College, Saint Mary's University College and others were organized and became pioneers in the field.

1.2.1. Saint Mary's University College

St. Mary's University College (SMUC) is an outgrowth of St. Mary's Language School which was established in 1991 in Addis Ababa. The Language school was upgraded to a language center in 1995 and has solely been devoted to the improvement of the English language proficiency of students, establishing itself as a leading language center in the capital. It was in this language center that the University College was born. St. Mary's College was established in 1998 under St. Mary's General Educational Development PLC with its head office in Awassa and a branch in Addis Ababa.

It commenced its operations in the same year with 33 students in Awassa and 37 in Addis Ababa, studying in three departments (Departments of Accounting, Marketing, and Law at diploma level). Later the same year, 49 students joined the Dilla Branch, 90 kilometers from Awassa, which is found in the southern part of Ethiopia. In the last quarter of 1998, it admitted more than 300 students in Addis Ababa (Lideta Campus located opposite the Federal High Court) and 25 students in Dilla. Envisaging the trend of development of the conventional mode of learning, the College moved its head office to Addis Ababa, Lideta Campus, in 1999 and opened the Department of Secretarial Science and Office Management (SSOM). With a view to broaden its programs, the Department of Computer Science (initially offering diploma programs) was put in place in September 2000 and the degree program in Law was initiated for the first time in the same year. By way of reorganizing itself, the College spent the last quarter of 2002 restructuring previous

offices as well as establishing new ones that provide the needed support and services both to the students and the staff.

In 2003, the College expanded its services and started offering Degree programs in Marketing, Management, Accounting, and Teacher Education diploma programs (in the fields of English, Mathematics, and Geography). A year later, the Computer Science Department, after being beefed up with manpower, facilities, and equipment, started offering Degree programs. In the same year, the College also opened the Natural Science Stream (comprising the subjects Biology, Chemistry, and Physics), which offers diploma level training under the Teacher Education Faculty. By August 2005, St. Mary's had more than 15,000 students in the distance mode of learning and 5,000 in the regular and extension programs. After a lot of hard work and dedication, the College was raised to the level of University College in February 2006. In the same year, SMUC, in collaboration with IGNOU – a leading distance education institution in India, started offering Masters Programs within St. Mary's newly acquired campus. The program is underway at a time when the wide gap between the demand for tertiary-level quality education and the supply side of the services called for such programs (Saint Mary's University College, 2008).

1.2.2. Admas University College

Admas is another pioneer institution in the area of higher education in the country. It was organized with the vision of achieving educational excellence by delivering quality training services at certificate, diploma, and degree levels in various fields of studies. The college also aspires to be a leading center for different socioeconomic researches and consultancy services aimed at adding to overall development of the country at large. Admas University College was established in October 1998 in Ethiopia and on September 2006 in Somaliland. Since then the university college has produced more than 10,000 students in various business fields. Currently the Ethiopian Ministry of education has accredited the University College's Certificate, Diploma and Degree programs (Admas University College, 2006-2007).

1.2.3. Alpha University College

The present Alpha University College grew out of the distance education institution established by an Ethiopian in 1981. The objective of the institution was to give vocational and technical training to Ethiopians unable to attend regular classes. The Ministry of Education recognized the institution originally as an institution of national vocational and Technical distance education. It was under this name that the institution started to play an active role of expanding education in the country. At that time, it included the programs such as Auto Mechanics, general Mechanics, Wood work, Electricity, Home economics, Agriculture, Personnel management, Purchasing and production management.

Using the institution as a foundation, Alpha Education and Training Share Company was established in 1994. The founders of the Company are Ethiopian businessmen and other experienced people with a wide range of professional training in different fields. After its foundation the motto of the company has been to provide relevant, accessible, affordable and quality education to citizens who would later on hopefully exert their efforts and contribute to the capacity building of Ethiopia. Since its establishment, it has been engaged in accredited distance education programs leading to certificate, diploma and degrees. Tens of thousands of distance education students have graduated and tens of thousands of students are attending their diploma and degree programs in the areas of Economics, Accounting, Business management, Information technology, Banking and Insurance, Public Administration and Development Management (Alpha University College, 2006). After evaluating its performance over years, it has decided to realize its plan of expanding its service both qualitatively and quantitatively. Various kinds of programs for both regular and extension students are being launched in its newly constructed six storey building that has been adequately furnished with the new expansion in focus. The Company is operating with a vision of providing quality, relevant, affordable, cost effective and flexible and training in both the campus based and distance learning program (Alpha University College, 2009)

1.3. Statement of the Problem

The coverage of Higher Education system of the country was poor in the past. Investors and stakeholders were not allowed to establish and operate in the higher education sector. However, this situation is changed by the prevailing government rules and regulations where the private sector is allowed to participate in the formation and operation of tertiary level education. Despite the fact that some of the impressive quantitative advances in school enrolments and literacy level, least developed countries remain strikingly low compared with those of developed (Todaro and Smith, 2006). This idea is also true for Ethiopian situation. When the private sector involved in the establishment and operations of HEIs, there were many colleges organized following the deregulation of the education sector. However, in the present time some of the colleges started to disappear from the industry. This is mainly caused by improper handling of their customers (students), the fierce competitions among the sector, lack of qualified individuals from the service provider side, the flourishing of government universities and customer dissatisfaction. Higher education institutions are increasingly recognizing that higher education is a service industry, and are placing greater emphasis on meeting the expectations and needs of their participating customers, that is, the students (DeShields et al., 2005).

On the other hand, in today's world of fierce competition, handling students safely and responding to their questions timely helps institutions to exist in the market. However, failing to handle complaints coming to the University Colleges is equivalent to permitting a student to leave that college and looking for other. The rapid expansion of colleges and universities and significant increases in college education costs combined with demographic shifts in the population may force colleges to think differently about the role of student satisfaction for their survival. Even though the successful completion and enhancement of students' education are the reasons for the existence of higher educational institutions, college administrators tend to focus disproportionately more time on programs for attracting, admitting and handling students rather than enrollment management. Similar to the importance of satisfying customers to retain them by profit-making institutions, satisfying the admitted students by handling their complaints and

responding them immediately is also important for retention of students by Educational Institutions. It might be argued that dissatisfied students may cut back on the number of courses or drop out of college completely. Hence, the satisfaction-intention-retention link for students in higher education should be studied and carefully managed (DeShields et al., 2005).

The improper treatment of student's complaints may finally destroy the image of the institution and brings dark future. Moreover, the private University Colleges operating in Addis Ababa do not have set formal approaches of accepting complaints from their customers (students). In preliminary diagnosis, it has been seen that most of the institutions exerted more effort in attracting students, not on treating well the existing ones. In order to investigate and assess this problem, the following research questions were designed:

1. What are the major problems that force students to complain?
2. Is there a formal structure in Admas University College, Alpha University College and Saint Mary's University College, for handling students' complaints?
3. What are the specific problems facing University Colleges in handle students' complaints and while responding to them?
4. Do University Colleges use the complaints coming from students to design strategies to respond effectively?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The basic objective of the study is to assess the procedures and methods used by the private University Colleges in handling student's complaints, and the response strategy adapted by the institutions in Addis Ababa. The specific objectives include:

- To analyze the current problems that force students to complain
- To assess the student complain handling procedure/strategy followed by the University Colleges
- To help develop the University College a transparent customer complaint handling and response strategy.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Considering the insufficient researches done in the area of complaint handling procedure and response strategy, the study may draw the following benefits to the University Colleges and future researchers:

1. The study may bring the problems encountered in the teaching learning process and force students to complain and help authorities for appropriate actions.
2. As many evidences indicated that there were no researches in this area and it is hoped that the study will enrich the existing literature in the field of student complain handling and response strategy.
3. It may also serve as a springboard and good point of start for those who wish to conduct more comprehensive and intensive studies on the problem.

1.6. Scope and Limitations of the Study

It would have been better if the study includes all private higher educational institutions in the country. However, this research work is limited to Admas University College, Alpha University College and Saint Mary's University College operating in Addis Ababa. This is done to make the research more manageable and suitable for the intended purpose.

There were no further researches done in the past in this area. This research might be the first to study student complaints handling and the strategies designed by the aforementioned University Colleges operating in the capital city. Therefore, research papers in the area were not that much reviewed from Ethiopian perspective. Time and budget constraints also limit the scope of the study.

1.7. Organization of the Study

This thesis consisted of five chapters. The first chapter dealt with background, statement of the problem, objectives, significance, and scope and limitation of the study. The second chapter maintains a thorough literature review. The third chapter consists of research methodology by describing the research design, sample size and sampling technique, data collection instruments and analysis, and ethical considerations. The fourth chapter provides with the analysis and interpretation of the results. The final chapter presents a summary, conclusions drawn and recommendations forwarded by the study.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

This chapter provides an understanding of complaint behavior, nature and types of complaints, and complaint handling procedures. Additionally, an attempt is made to look into organizational profiles of the University Colleges and understanding the benefits of effective service recovery to them. A theoretical review of literature is provided with an aim to gain insight into the related area while assessing relevant theories.

2.1. Complaints and Complaints handling

Complaint is defined in different ways from different perspectives. From academic point of view, it is the expression of a specific concern about the provision of a course/module, or a programme of study, or a related academic service. It defines an appeal as a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on student progression, assessment and awards (The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2007). Others define it as it arises where a student is dissatisfied with the provision of goods, services or facilities by the institution or the terms and conditions on which they are offered or the level of performance by the staff undertaking the provision. Complaints may include a concern about the level of academic supervision provided by staff, the conduct of staff in connection with academic work such as workshop, lectures, seminars and tutorials.

Similarly, there may be complaints concerning non-academic provision such as the access to the Library, potentially criminal behavior by staff or students, or racial or sexual harassment, breach of the relevant disciplinary code by a member of staff or fellow student, direct or indirect discrimination on any unlawful ground, including race, gender and disability (Code of Guidance, 2004). According to the University of Western Sydney (2007) complaint means the expression of dissatisfaction drawn to the attention of a member of the College staff that requires review, investigation or action. A complaint may be lodged in writing by letter or email, or verbally by telephone or in person. The concept of student complain is defined by the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar (2008) as a student or prospective student's expression of dissatisfaction with

any aspect of the services and activities of the university/College including both academic and non-academic matters such as the enrolment, induction/orientation or application process; the quality of training or assessment provided; the way someone has been treated; and access to personal records including information obtained. This definition considers those students enrolled in the University or college and also those prospective coming to the service provider. The University of Western Sydney expanded the above definition and includes complainant, respondent and grievances. Complainant refers to the person/persons who have lodged a complaint. Respondent refers to the person/persons to whom the complaint is directed. Grievance has the same meaning as complaint. Victimization means any form of detriment directed at person/persons for their participation in making, supporting or resolving a complaint, whether that participation is actual, intended or presumed, or any form of detriment applied selectively and without justification.

A key factor in the effective handling of complaints or appeals is the institution's ability to respond in a timely way and bring matters to a conclusion as speedily as possible. It is therefore helpful if procedures and correspondence include indicative timescales for responses. It is also important that the timescales set are both fair and realistic, and have sufficient flexibility that they are able to take account of individual circumstances where necessary. Equally, it is important that the institution sets out clearly the responsibilities of the person or persons complaining to respect the procedures and to respond to letters and requests for meetings and information in a timely manner. The complaints coming to the University College can be academic or non academic. In any way both are treated as important ones and it is the right of every student to complain about unfavorable situations in the University College.

Additionally, the information obtained from students can be used by the University College as an informant where the aforementioned problem is found. Student customers become aggravated if they cannot voice their complaints and get their problems resolved. A majority of student customers are dissatisfied with the way their complaints are resolved. Ignored or mishandled complaints can have direct consequences with respect to lost business and/or negative word of mouth communication. Therefore, effective

handling of complaints can increase or restore a customer's confidence in the firm irrespective of whether it operates in physical space or cyber space. With that in mind, a producer of products or services typically provides customers with a toll free telephone numbers and an e-mail address for its customer service department. The management of customers' complaints is an evaluation tool that can be used by both non business and profit seeking organization.

According to Etzel et al (2004), complaint management process involves keeping track of:

- A. Customer complaints
- B. How complaints are resolved and
- C. Whether the complaint handling was satisfactory or not.

Customer complaints are never easy for businesses operating in the Educational fields. Universities and Colleges have a variety of procedures for dealing with student-related issues, including grade appeals, academic integrity violations, student discipline, and disclosure of student records, student elections, sexual harassment complaints, disability accommodations, and discrimination.

However, one area not generally covered by other procedures concerns student complaints about faculty conduct in the classroom or other formal academic settings. The University/college respects the academic freedom of the faculty and will not interfere with it as it relates to the content or style of teaching activities. Indeed, academic freedom is and should be of paramount importance. At the same time the University/College recognizes its responsibility to provide students with a procedure for addressing complaints about faculty treatment of students that are not protected by academic freedom and are not covered by other procedures. Examples might include incompetent or inefficient service, neglect of duty, physical or mental incapacity and conduct unbecoming a member of the staff (Student Handbook: 2008).

2.2. Kinds of Complaints and Grounds

Many students, being customers of private HEIs, complain when something goes wrong with them or the service provider. This may require an attention of the individual Institutions to hear and solve the problem as fast as possible. Otherwise, the inability to

solve problems may shift the attentions of their students towards other educational Institutions working in the same field. According to the current situations in the country, there is a fierce competition among private higher educational Institutions. The competition will not stop by sharing the number of new students coming to private higher educational institutions. It also tries to attract the students of other educational Institutions after being admitted.

Therefore, inability to handle complaints coming to each University College provides a source of students to other Institutions. The grounds for putting complaints might be inadequate supervision, non-availability of essential equipment or resources necessary to complete the work, plagiarism of the student's research, unauthorized disclosure of confidential information to a third party, assault or serious or threatening behaviour, sexual harassment, racist activity or behaviour, abusive or unreasonable behaviour, any action likely to cause injury or impair and unacceptable social behaviour.

However, these factors may differ from country to country and Institutions to Institution. Complaints according to Heriot-Watt University (2004), arise where a student is dissatisfied with the provision of goods, services or facilities by the institution or the terms and conditions on which they are offered or the level of performance by the staff undertaking the provision. Complaints may include a concern about the level of academic supervision provided by staff, the conduct of staff in connection with academic work such as studio work, workshop, lectures, seminars and tutorials. Similarly, there may be complaints concerning non-academic provision including the student accommodation, service of University, access to the library or the provision of appropriate language support.

2.3. Considering Student as Customer

The concept of the student as customers is not new. Crawford (1991) as stated in (Davies et al., 2007) first used the phrase 16 years ago when students were expected to pay tuition fees in UK. Other researchers have continued to use the phrase (Hill, 1995) in the same article. However, it is argued that this supplier/customer relationship is not as clear cut as that of some other service relationships, given that students are also "partners" in the

learning process. According to Clayson and Haley (2005) as stated in Eagle and Brennan (2007), in the United States, where many students have paid substantial tuition fees for many years, the debate about students as customers is further advanced.

Therefore, treating students as customers will help to managers and high responsibility persons in the higher educational institutions for informed decision making purpose. One prominent interpretation of the “student as customer” concept is that it has developed within the wider context of changes to the ways in which higher education institutions are funded and managed. According to Cruickshank (2003) as stated in Eagle and Brennan (2007) the application of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles to higher education was seen as a way of making the sector more relevant and responsive to the needs of employers and other sectors of society including funding agencies. By the same authors the basic principles of TQM as applied to higher education are as follows:

Delight the customer: Delight means being best at what matters most to customers, and this changes over time. Being in touch with these changes and delighting the customer now and in the future is an integral part of TQM.

People-based management: Knowing what to do, how to do it and getting feedback on performance is one way of encouraging people to take responsibility for the quality of their work. Involvement and commitment to customer satisfaction are ways to generate this.

Continuous improvement: Continuous improvement or incremental change, not major breakthroughs, is the aim of all who wish to move towards total quality.

Management by fact: Knowing the current performance levels of the products or services in the customers’ hands and of all employees is the first stage of being able to improve.

Moreover, the idea of students as customers has caused a misinterpretation of the relationship between universities and students. Driscoll and Wicks (1998: 60) as stated in Svensson and Wood (2007) suggest that limits be placed on the application of the marketing concept in universities, and urge relevant stakeholders to consider the dangers of taking the customer-seller analogy too far. Marketing metaphors are inappropriate to describe the student-university relationship. The student-university relationship has no

analogy to traditional marketing relationships such as customer-supplier or buyer-seller (Shupe, 1999). The expectations inherent in the customer-supplier relationship are inappropriate in the student-university relationship, because the relationship is not just predicated on the purchase and use of a product, but upon a level of interaction between the product, the consumer and the supplier that is not the norm in the general marketing relationship.

2.4. Customer Co-creation of Value and Higher Education Practices

One of the characteristics of service product is producing the service and consuming it simultaneously. Customer co-creation of value has been a central tenet of services marketing theory from the foundation of the discipline. Services products are usually produced and consumed simultaneously, thus requiring various levels of consumer involvement in the creation of the overall services product. Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) as stated in Dann (2008) identified preconditions for services co-creation as being the situations where the service product requires joint problem definition and solving plus the creation of personalized experiences within an environment that is conducive to dialogue, co-construction of the service and joint engagement in creating mutually beneficial outcomes.

Kotze and DuPlessis (2003) presented a link between the existing customer co-creation literature and the role of the student in higher education as an active participant in the creation of their learning experience. From the student-customer perspective, co-creation requires the contribution of mental, physical or emotional input into the services transaction. Students at the higher education level are most likely to be required to engaged in mental input into the learning process – through active learning (Kotze and DuPlessis, 2003), methods of enquiry and creation of academic identity (Kamler and Thomson, 2004), or various levels of self training in academic methods (Johnson et al., 2000). Co-creation comes with a level of assumed risk for the consumer in that they assume a level of responsibility for the satisfactory nature of the outcome (Walker, 1995) and associated risks from the activity undertaken. The co-creation of the supervision

process requires students to assume a level of responsibility for the mental input into the process, and acceptance of the risk of the final outcome.

2.5. Voice of Customers

Keeping customers is a competitive strategy for many organizations that further contribute to the long term success of the organization. Customer satisfaction is the customer's after purchase judgment or evaluation of a specific product or service. Keeping customers happy or satisfied involves day-to-day interactions as well as the consideration of a more global and longitudinal evaluation of performance. Strategic initiatives ideally should incorporate customer satisfaction goals and methods for reaching these goals. A common way to measure the level of customer satisfaction is to determine the difference between expected or desired quality levels and the actual quality level achieved. Many firms have placed emphasis on listening the complaints of their customers to keep them satisfied and find the problematic areas of the firm.

Stank et al. (1997) hypothesized that listening to the voice of the customer would be related to greater customer satisfaction. Information provided by customers should offer sellers guidance for improving their overall service. The authors added that listening to customers should be a priority for organizations wishing to improve their competitive position by leveraging service capabilities. Hepner-Brodie (2006) mentions about hearing of customer voices as follows: Whether you are designing a complex system, identifying and eliminating points of failure due to user error, or optimizing the supply chain for your part of the operations, collecting your customers' "voices" can help you develop optimal solutions by seeing issues from their vantage points. This means that the voice of customers has some implications on the performance of the firm and can give a second chance to the firm to correct problems.

2.6. Service Quality Measures

In service providing organizations, buyer-seller interaction is very common. These organizations want to measure the quality of their service using different criteria. According to Rao (2006) the total perceived quality of customers can be calculated by comparing expected quality with experienced quality. If the two are the same, the

customers feel satisfied with the service. If the expected quality is more than the experienced quality, the customer is dissatisfied. If the experienced quality is more than the expected quality, the consumer is highly satisfied. Customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction becomes an issue in the customer handling process because most complaints rise because of dissatisfaction in one or more performance of the organization. Parasuraman et al. (1986, 1990) in Davis et al. (2003) identified 10 dimensions that contribute to the level of service quality a firm provides to its customers. These are tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, competence, courtesy, credibility, security, access, communication and understanding the customers.

These dimensions were reduced to the following five in order to avoid repetitiveness and provide universal applicability:

- **Tangibles:** shows the physical evidence of the service, appearance of the personnel, the tools or equipments used to provide the service, physical representation of the service and other customers in the service facility.
- **Reliability:** is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. It focuses on performance of initial service, accuracy in billing, keeping records correctly and performing the service punctually.
- **Assurance:** is the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence.
- **Empathy:** is the provision of caring and individualized attention to customers.
- **Responsiveness:** concerns the willingness of employees to provide service. These include timeliness of the service, mailing transactions services immediately, efficient customer support and giving prompt service.

2.7. Complaint Handling Procedures: The Experience of Michigan State University

Students are customers of the University or the college that they are attending their study. Receiving their complaints and providing immediate response is expected from the University or the college. Receiving and solving the problems and dissatisfaction of the present students has implication for the future. It also maintains good name of the

educational Institution plus helps to retain the existing students. Peppers and Rogers (1996) in Straus et al (2006:386) stated that the cost of acquiring a new customer is five times higher than the cost of retaining a current one.

Therefore, Educational Institutions as they are working in the intensively competitive environment are expected to treat their customers as carefully as possible. Handling complaints and factors leading to dissatisfactions easily and treating customers may disseminate the good name of the organization and it will have a good image among the society and prospective. Also, Straus et al (2006) put this idea as “ in an environment of customer control with attention of a scarce commodity, a firm’s ability to build and maintain relationships with customers, suppliers and partners may be more important than a firm’s land, property and financial assets.” In this explanation, it is clear that maintaining good relationship with customer (students) in the case of Educational Institutions will benefit the service provider. Many of the staffs of private higher educational Institutions, in addition to serving as researchers, educators, advisors, mentors and managers, they also serve as complaint handlers to students, staff, and others within the community.

Some complaints, because of the seriousness of their nature, should be referred immediately to the Principal e.g. complaints about behavior which places others at risk of serious harm. Parents are ill advised to approach the children of other families with a school related complaint. This is often a sensitive area and in order to protect all the parties it is advisable to work through the relevant teacher or member of the college leadership. If a problem or concern that arises within a college cannot be resolved with the person involved with the issue, then it would normally be raised with an appropriate staff member with a view to discussing the issue and seeking resolution of such problems or concerns. Customers are the reasons for the existence of organizations. Nykiel (1992: 59) puts this idea as “retaining existing customers is usually the most efficient manner in which to have sales.” However, today, one should not perform to keep customers but also need to give existing customers a reason to turn.

2.7.1. Reporting of Complaints

Students, who believe they have been a victim of or witness to discrimination or harassment in violation of any University policy, or who desire information about University Policies/procedures, may contact the dean, department head or any administrative worker of the unit with which they are affiliated. Anyone who receives a complaint of a possible policy violation might contact one of the parties mentioned above in the university college that they are learning (The University of Michigan, 2006).

For instance, the University of Johannesburg (2008) the policy on handling students' complaints forms part of the policies and practice of the University and is a key element in maintaining mutual and healthy relationships among students, the University, its partners and/or clients. The University response to allegations of policy violations will be determined by the nature of the alleged misconduct and the totality of all available information. If it is determined that action by the University College is necessary, no one will be identified as a complainant without her/his consent.

In general, complaints may be filed by or against any member of the University community by using the policy prohibiting the alleged misconduct. Depending on the status of the complainant and/or respondent in the University and the specifics of the situation, complaints may also be filed and addressed to anyone without any formal procedure.

2.7.2. Investigation of Complaints

The allegations in all complaints are investigated thoroughly to assure a resolution that is consistent with the facts. Investigations involve obtaining and evaluating as much information as possible from the complainant, from the respondent (accused), from witnesses or others who may have useful information, and from relevant documents. The complainant will be treated with the necessary respect, empathy and professionalism. Corrective action is taken and sanctions imposed as appropriate based on the results of the investigation. Disciplinary action may be pursued against a complainant if the evidence indicates that a deliberately false allegation was made. Complainants or

respondents who are not satisfied with a resolution may move progressively through the options provided by University policy as appropriate (The University of Michigan, 2006).

2.7.3. Investigation of Outcomes/Resolution Proposals

What constitutes an appropriate resolution of any complaint will depend upon the specific circumstances. A variety of options may be available to the supervisor. In all instances where the evidence provides support for the complaint, the proposed remedies and sanctions will be structured so as to be consistent with the resolutions in any similar cases that may have occurred within the entire university college system. The respective institutional officer or human resources will consult with relevant offices regarding the typical resolutions in similar circumstances within the University College and will provide this information to the supervisor for consideration in determining the nature of the recommended sanctions or other resolution proposals. All of this must be completed prior to the complainant/ respondent being informed of any findings, the imposition of any discipline, or the implementation of a remedy for the respondent (The University of Michigan, 2006).

2.7.4. Implementation of Recommendations and Appeals

Any disciplinary action that is deemed appropriate will be imposed and any remedy will be implemented by the appropriate administrator in accordance with University policy and guidance from the respective Office of the University College. The involved parties will have available to them the appeal options that are specified in the policy under which the complaint was handled. Any complainant/respondent who remains dissatisfied with the University College response after an appeal may be able to present whatever concerns they have to an external state or federal agency (The University of Michigan, 2006).

2.8. Satisfying Customer Complaints

Many customers would complain when they are not satisfied with the product they purchased or the service they received. However, most of them feel that complaining is not worth the effort or that they don't know how to or to whom to complain. The need to resolve a customer problem in a satisfactory manner is critical. This is because that a satisfied customer tells three people on average about a good product experienced, but the average dissatisfied customer gripes to eleven people (Kotler, 2000). If each unsatisfied

customer tells still other people, the number of people exposed to bad word of mouth may grow exponentially. Customers whose complaints are resolved satisfactorily become more company loyal than customers who were dissatisfied.

2.9. Turn Complaints in to Opportunities

Many organizations see customers' complaints as negative attitude towards their organizations. However, some works on the reverse direction and use customer complaints as an opportunity. These kinds of organizations base their strategies on the information that they get from customers in the forms of complaints. As Roberts-Phelps (2001:172) puts, customer complaints are opportunities in work places and consider problems as wake up calls for creativity and commitment. Therefore, it is necessary to take any complaint coming to the organization positively and provide responses on timely basis.

2.9.1. Making a Complaint

The Catholic Education office (2004) states the way how to make a complaint. Obtaining resolution is not producing a satisfactory outcome; because the complaint can affect the interests of many parties. Members of the specific Institution such as employees/students/parents/community members can have complaints addressed. For example, if one feels that he/she is being harassed or discriminated against, complaint handling procedure is available. So the concerns can be dealt with in an appropriate manner. Who may use this procedure?

- All employees
- Students within the school
- Parents of students at the school
- Members of the wider community

Other Universities and colleges handle complaints in a different way. For instance the university of Michigan Students, faculty, or staff who believe they have been a victim of or witness to discrimination or harassment in violation of any University policy, or who desire information about University policies/procedures, may contact either the dean, director, or department head of the unit with which they are affiliated or the Institutional Equity Officer. Inquiries or complaints may also be directed to the Student Ombudsman or the Faculty Ombudsman or, if related to the Sexual Harassment Policy, to any of the

Dearborn Sexual Harassment Complaint Liaisons. Anyone who receives a complaint of a possible policy violation must contact the Institutional Equity Officer immediately.

Furthermore, the University response to allegations of policy violations will be determined by the nature of the alleged misconduct and the totality of all available information. Requests to “just get it on the record” or “have no action taken at present” will be honored when possible; however, some circumstances may preclude agreement to such requests. If it is determined that action by the University is necessary, no one will be identified as a complainant without her/his consent. In general, complaints may be filed by or against any member of the University community using the University policy prohibiting the alleged misconduct. Depending on the status of the complainant and/or respondent in the University and the specifics of the situation, complaints may also be filed and addressed under the Staff Grievance Procedure, or the Faculty Grievance Procedure, or the Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct, as appropriate.

2.9.2. Investigation of Complaints

After accepting Complaints, the next step is to investigate whether the complaint is true and existing or not. The allegations in all complaints are investigated thoroughly to assure a resolution that is consistent with the facts. Investigations involve obtaining and evaluating as much information as possible from the complainant, from the respondent (accused), from witnesses or others who may have useful information, and from relevant documents. Corrective action is taken and sanctions imposed as appropriate based on the results of the investigation (The University of Michigan, 2006). Disciplinary action may be pursued against a complainant if the evidence indicates that a deliberately false allegation was made.

However, complainants or respondents who are not satisfied with a resolution may move progressively through the options provided by University policy as appropriate. Resolution procedures are distinguished in terms of who gathers and evaluates information and proposes the resolution. Most policies procedures provide for an attempt at informal resolution prior to the implementation of the formal resolution procedures.

2.10. Customer Complaints Behavior

Customers may feel dissatisfaction in the service that they received from certain organization. The way how customer respond to their dissatisfaction may differ. Some complain informally to an employee working in the organization; ask to speak to the manager or the high post person represented by the organization and some file a complaint. As many researches indicated, most people or customers do not complain if they think that the services provided by that organization is poor (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004). Organizations should have understanding of the natures of complaints coming to the organization.

Moreover, especial care and support must be given to those customers who are not satisfied but do not want to complain about the poor service or their dissatisfaction. It might be easy for the institution to handle the complaints coming to the institution but it is difficult to handle the complaint of a silent dissatisfied customer. Therefore, organizations try to maintain open kind of communication whereby customers can put their complaints about their dissatisfaction. Etsegenet (2007) puts suggestion box as one of the most important items that organization/institutions can receive complaints coming from customers. So suggestion boxes must be installed by responsible individuals to get feed backs from customers about the service provided by the firm.

2.11. Principles of Effective Service Recovery

The problems of many organizations across the world are not to discover customer complaints but to provide responses at the right time to the right person. More important than the mistakes that one makes are the actions that one takes and the speed with which one takes to solve the problem. Most organizations focus their recovery efforts on getting the product or service error corrected, but in the process they fail to correct the inconvenience they have caused to their customers or consider the potential negative word of mouth that the experience will generate. Service recovery is defined as actions that service providers take in response to service defections or failures in service delivery to return aggrieved customers to a state of satisfaction by addressing customers' problems (Gronroos, 1988).

Recognizing that customers are a valuable asset base, managers need to develop effective procedures for service recovery following unsatisfactory experiences. Dube and Maute, 1996; Hoffman and Kelley, 2000; Jonhston and Hewa, 1997; Keaveney, 1995 as stated in Ok et al (2007), service failure and inappropriate service recovery efforts that do not meet customers' recovery expectation directly link to negative word-of mouth behavior and switching behavior that result in losing revenues. The importance of satisfactory service recovery can be found not only in mitigating negative impact, but also in retaining relationships with customers. Studies have provided empirical supports for the proposition that complaint handling and service recovery are closely tied with both trust and commitment. Ennew and Schoefer (2003) stated that a poor service or a service failure will result in dissatisfaction and this in turn will prompt a variety of responses which may include complaining, negative word-of-mouth and decisions not to repurchase. If it is impossible to avoid service failures and dissatisfaction, then it becomes increasingly important for organizations to understand how to manage such occurrences and minimize their adverse effects. The first and major effort of the organization is to receive and try to solve the problem in a simple and lower cost as much as possible at the right time. However, if the organization is not successful in solving the problematic areas in the right way, it tries to reduce the risks caused by the mistake or problem.

According to Lovelock and Wirtz (2004:387), three guiding principles for how to do this are:

- Make it easy for customers to give feedback
- Enable effective Service recovery and
- Establish appropriate compensation levels.

Service recovery is concerned with the process of addressing service failures; more specifically, service recovery can be thought of as being concerned with the productive handling of complaints and includes all actions taken by a service provider in order to try to resolve the problem a customer has with their organization (Gronroos, 1990). It is generally recognized that complaints are necessary to institute a recovery effort. Without complaints, a firm may be unaware that problems exist and unable to appease unhappy customers.

Indeed, arguably the greatest barrier to effective service recovery and organizational learning is the fact that only 5 to 10 percent of dissatisfied customers choose to complain following a service failure (Tax and Brown, 1998:77) as stated in Ennew and Schoefer (2003). What constitutes an effective service recovery has been the subject of some debate.

Additionally, Bell and Zemke (1987) proposed five ingredients for recovery:

- **Apology:** A first person apology rather than a corporate apology, and one which also acknowledges that a failure has occurred.
- **Urgent reinstatement:** Speed of action coupled with a 'gallant attempt' to put things right even if it is not possible to correct the situation.
- **Empathy:** A sincere expression of feeling for the customer's plight.
- **Symbolic atonement:** A form of compensation that might include not charging for the service or offering future services free or discounted.
- **Follow-up:** An after-recovery call to ascertain that the consumer is satisfied with the recovery process.

Some authors (Folkes, 1984; Hirschman, 1970; Landon, 1980) as stated in Ennew and Schoefer (2003) directed their studies on consumer complaining behavior studies on understanding customers' responses to product/service failures. Voice occurs when customers verbally complain and express their dissatisfaction to the company (Andreassen, 2000). The purpose of the voice option is "to retrieve restitution, to protect other consumers, or to assist the firm in correcting a problem".

The main purpose of complaints handling is to resolve the problem without hurting the operational activities of organizations in the field. It is also used to establish a clear set of regulations, guidelines and procedures for addressing student complaints and grievances, crafted to achieve mutually acceptable resolutions. Many Universities use two kinds of approach to solve such kinds of problems coming to them for resolution. There are the formal informal and the approach. Service recovery is an umbrella term for systematic efforts by a firm to correct a problem following a service failure and retain customers' goodwill. Service recovery efforts play a crucial role in achieving or restoring customer

satisfaction. It requires thoughtful procedures for resolving problems and handling disgruntled customers (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004:385).

2.11.1. The Informal Approach of Complaints Resolution Mechanisms

This is the situation where students should always raise any problem with the person immediately involved, e.g. Lecturer, Faculty Administrative Officer, Academic Administration Assistant, Librarian, Student Counselor, Financial Administrative Assistant, Bursary Financial Officer, Programme Coordinator, Sports Coach etc (The University of Johannesburg, 2008). Recipients of student concerns or informal complaints are responsible for addressing them promptly and fairly. This stage is normally an oral process and a written record will not be made other than in the minutes of meetings, where applicable. The employee involved is encouraged to share the experience where the effectiveness of an academic department or administrative service could benefit.

Moreover, most of the complaints can be resolved informally and where practicable a complaint should be dealt with as close as possible to the point at which it arises. University of Manchester (2006) believes that the complaint should be made initially to the appropriate member of staff who seems best placed to deal with the matter (e.g. Personal Tutor, Programme Director, Head of School, Advisor or Tutor in the Hall of Residence, local service provider, or Head of the office concerned in the central administration). A student should normally expect to receive a written or verbal acknowledgement within five working days and a full response within fifteen working days of receipt of the complaint.

2.11.2. The Formal Approach of Complaints Resolution Mechanisms

The need for institutions to have transparent, fair and just procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals is a key to this precept, as is the need for institutions to ensure fairness to all those who are party to or named in, a complaint or an appeal. Institutions are expected to have effective arrangements to monitor, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of handling their complaints and appeals procedures and to reflect on their outcomes for enhancement purposes. If Institutions are unable to resolve complaints

informally by discussion and explanation, one can lodge a formal written complaint via the respective complaint handling office.

According to the University of Western Sydney (2007) complaints may be handled and resolved through any of the following avenues:

- The Direct Avenue (where the complainant takes their complaint up directly with the respondent);
- The Formal Avenue (where the complaint is lodged with and investigated by the College); and
- The External Avenue (where the complaint is lodged with and investigated by an external organization).

A complaint may be lodged through the Formal Avenue if:

- The respondent has withheld permission to follow the Direct Avenue, or
- The respondent has agreed to follow the Direct Avenue but the complainant and respondent have been unable to agree on the proposed meeting, discussion and other arrangements that the complainant wishes to follow, or
- The Direct Avenue has been followed but the complainant believes that the complaint remains unresolved, or
- The complainant does not wish to follow the Direct Avenue.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

Based on the theoretical framework, the study developed with the methodology applied for preparing instruments of data collection, sampling, and data analysis. This chapter deals with the specific steps followed to collect primary data, sampling procedure, and ethical grounds maintained in accomplishing research objectives.

3.1. Research Design

The research design constitutes the blue print for collection, measurement and analysis of data. It aids the researcher in the allocation of his/her limited resources by posing crucial choices: Is the blue print to include experiments, interview, observations and the analysis of records, simulations or some combinations of these...? It is the plan structure of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions (Cooper and Emory, 1995).

In this study, descriptive survey method of research was used. This method is chosen for its suitability to reveal the current problems in handling student complaints and providing the necessary response on timely basis. Since the objective of a descriptive survey study is to learn the who, what, when, where and how of the topic, it is believed that it is suitable for the research topic under study. Some preliminary research indicated that many higher educational Institutions do not have formal complaints handling procedures and this research method revealed the problems in the area. This method helped the researcher to assess the situation of students' complaints handling and response practices in the private University Colleges operating in Addis Ababa. Out of seven University Colleges operating in Addis Ababa, three University Colleges were selected for this study.

3.2. Sample and Sampling Techniques

A total of seven private University Colleges are in operation in Addis Ababa. Out of these University colleges three were selected for the study using convenience sampling method based on the number of students being served. This is done to make the research

more manageable. These University Colleges are Alpha University College, Admas University College and Saint Mary's University College. The recent data obtained from the registrar of each University college indicated that the total number of students in both the regular and the extension programs is greater than 15,000. Two groups of respondents were selected, namely students and management group. Thus total sample of 240 students and 30 respondents (10 from each) management group in each University College were selected for the study. The first duty was to identify the population of students selected for the study.

Therefore, the study first considered second and third year students both in the regular and extension programs. This was done because of the time and experience of these groups of students stayed in the University Colleges and taking their experience over the past one and two years. A care has been taken not to select a department selected in one University College for the study. Taking this in mind, Marketing Management department from Saint Mary's University College, Management department from Admas University College and Accounting and Finance department from Alpha University College were selected using purposive sampling.

The first sample of respondents (students) were selected from each University College using simple random sampling using lottery method from both regular and extension programs according to the proportion number of students in each department. It is believed that this method of sampling provides equal chance for all students to be included in the sample. Based on the data obtained from each University College, Admas University College serves about 5,600 students in both the regular and extension programs including TVET and degree, Alpha University College over 3,160 and Saint Mary's University College 6,570. Therefore the samples were selected based on the above mentioned numbers of students available in each University college as follows:

Admas University College	▶	$5,600 / 15,330 * 240 = 88$
Alpha University College	▶	$3,160 / 15,330 * 240 = 49$
Saint Mary's University college	▶	$6,570 / 15,330 * 240 = 103$
Total Sample of Students		<u>240</u>

However, the second group of respondents represents deans, programmers, registrars, department heads, librarians, and campus coordinators from the management group. 30 questionnaires were prepared and distributed to these groups and all the questionnaires were successfully collected. These groups of respondents were selected using availability sampling in all the three private University Colleges. Care has been taken to consider the departments which are common in the three private university colleges. This was done to make the research result comparable among the University Colleges selected for the study. All the common departments were included in the study by taking in to consideration the manageability of their number.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

The study has dealt with two groups of respondents from three private University Colleges operating in Addis Ababa. The questionnaire consists of 5 point Likert-type scale fixed with item statements to collect the needed data both from students and the management group. In addition to this documents related to the procedures of complaints handling and response practices and personal observation was used for the study. The values attached to each scale ranges from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree.

Self administered questionnaires were prepared and distributed to the two groups of respondents. The first groups of respondents (students) were selected from each University College using simple random sampling by lottery method. The second groups of respondents were the management group consisted of deans, department heads, registrars, librarians, coordinators and programmers in each University Colleges selected for the study using availability sampling.

3.4. Pilot Testing

In order to test the questionnaires before it is fully distributed to sample respondents, around 30 questionnaires were prepared and distributed to regular and extension students of two private university colleges operating in Addis Ababa. These University Colleges were Alpha and Saint Mary's. In order to avoid any pre-information about the research work, such groups of respondents were excluded from the full fledged research. The

department of Accounting and Finance from Saint Mary's and the department of Management from Alpha University College were excluded from the participation in the final research work. This was done to get feedback for correcting the language, removing ambiguous ideas, and maintaining idea clarity.

3.5. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed by using both Statistical tools such as SPSS (statistical Package for Social Science) and manual system whenever possible with the convenience of the researcher. Furthermore, percentages, frequencies, means, ANOVA and t-test were used to analyze the data obtained from student respondents and the management group. To compare and contrast among and between the responses obtained from students of the three private University Colleges, ANOVA was used.

In addition, ANOVA was used for the responses obtained from the management group of the three private University Colleges. Finally, two groups of respondents were created from the study: namely; students and management. Their responses were compared using the nine dimensions for the study by using t-test. After analyzing the data, the results obtained from the three private University Colleges were compared and contrasted to find any difference and similarities between the responses of respondents from the three Private University Colleges. The responses obtained from the three University Colleges respondents were compared between and among themselves to see any significance difference among them. With the convenience of the researcher, manual data analysis system especially in computing some figures were also used.

3.6. Ethical Consideration

The student researcher has got access to different kinds of documents and personal information. The researcher obeys the ethical values and situations not to disclose any data or information to others. Further more; the researcher used the data and information only for the purpose of the research. The researcher kept the norms and ethics of the University Colleges and personal information received during the collection of data. It is only the student researcher and his advisor who had access to the information collected through these questionnaires and document analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis and Findings

Data collected, by following the methodology presented in the previous chapter, were exposed to various statistical analyses inline with research objectives to accomplish. This chapter explores the techniques used in identifying dimensions associated with complaining behavior and complaint handling, scale reliabilities, and analyzing data associated with demographic profile of the respondents.

With an objective to find out problems in the areas of students' complaint handling and response practices of the private University Colleges, the study considered three aforementioned institutions. A total of 270 questionnaires were prepared and distributed of which 248 completely filled and returned used in the study. A total of 240 student respondents (distributed among three University colleges as mentioned in the previous chapter) were selected to participate in the study, and contacted personally to obtain the data on complaint behavior and response strategy. However, a total of 218 (90.8% response rate) were collected back as completely filled and retained for further analysis.

The second group of respondents (deans, programmers, campus coordinators, librarians, registrars, and department heads) was distributed with 30 questionnaires (10 for each university college) and collected back to be considered for comparison with students' response. Thus, based on the responses obtained from the sample respondents, the analysis of data was carried out by using SPSS 12.0 package. Furthermore, interpretation was seen for all the findings obtained. Factor analysis was carried out to identify the unidimensionality of the constructs used in the study, and scale reliability was checked by computing Cronbach's Alpha (0.842) for all questionnaire scale items.

4.1. Characteristics of the Respondents

Respondents were taken from three private University colleges comprising of three departments. The University Colleges are Admas, Alpha and Saint Mary's University Colleges and students were selected from Management, Accounting and Finance and

Marketing Management respectively. Therefore, the characteristics of respondents based on sex, age, and college is summarized as follows:

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents

S. N.	Items	Students						Management Group				
		Sex				Total	%	Sex				
		M	%	F	%			M	%	F	%	
1	Colleges	Admas UC	51	23.39	29	13.3	80	36.69	10	33.3	-	-
		Alpha UC	18	8.25	27	12.38	45	20.64	7	23.3	3	10
		Saint Mary's UC	43	19.72	50	22.93	93	42.66	9	30	1	3.3
		Total	112	51.38	106	48.62	218	100	26	86.7	4	100
2	Age	Below 20 Years	5	2.29	8	3.66	13	5.96	-	-	-	-
		21-30 Years	68	31.19	80	36.69	148	67.88	12	40	1	3.3
		31-40 Years	37	16.97	15	6.88	52	23.85	11	36.7	3	10
		41-50 Years	2	.91	3	1.37	5	2.29	3	10	-	-
		Above 50 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		112	51.38	106	48.62	218	100%	26	86.7	4	100	
3	Program	Regular	47	21.55	56	25.68	103	47.25	--	--	--	--
		Extension	65	29.81	50	22.93	115	52.75	--	--	--	--
		Total	112	51.38	106	48.62	218	100%	--	--	--	--

Source: Data extracted from SPSS

As it can be seen from Table 1, the maximum numbers of respondents were taken from Saint Mary's University College. Less than half (42.66%) of the student respondents were from this University College. This is because of the number of students admitted in this university college is greater than the number of students admitted in the other university Colleges. Regarding the demographic information of respondents, majority (67.88%) of them lie in the age group of 20-30 years. In addition to the age of the respondents, the difference between male and female number of respondents based on sex is small and the numbers of males and females who participated in the research were

51.38% and 48.62% respectively. It is clear that somewhat equivalent number of students based on sex were taken for the study from the three private University Colleges.

Besides it can be hypothesized that the participation of females in higher education especially in the private sector is increasing from time to time and the gap between male and female students in higher education is reduced.

4.2. Factor and Reliability Analysis

The data collected from questionnaire (248 completely filled) were exposed to factor analysis by using varimax rotation and principal component approach. All the items obtaining a value (factor loading) of 0.5 and higher were retained for further analysis. Five variables those did not show a significant contribution in the study, were removed. In this way, after removing the unloaded items with the stated value, the factor analysis was re-run and finally, all the items were loaded themselves into 9 dimensions with 70.94% of variance explained. The major dimensions extracted from the SPSS data reduction program are summarized in Table 2. The ALPHA result in this study provides an effective tool for measuring Cronbach's alpha, which is a numerical coefficient of reliability. Computation of alpha is based on the reliability of a test relative to other tests with same number of items, and measuring the same construct. After factor analysis, it is a common practice to attach a descriptive name to each common factor once it is extracted and identified. The assigned name is indicative of the predominant concern that each factor addresses. The nine dimensions extracted from the SPSS and the related variables are presented in the following table (table 2).

Table 2: Factor Loadings, Communalities and Scale Reliabilities

Key Dimensions & Items	Loadings	Communality	Reliability
F1: Responsiveness			0.866
1. Employees at the University College show courtesy to the students when responding to the complaints	.629	.712	
2. The University College is quick in solving unethical behavior of staff members	.824	.732	
3. The University College is quick in solving sexual harassment related problems	.691	.689	
4. The University College is quick to solve registrar office complaints	.833	.774	
5. The University College is quick to solve academic complaints	.662	.707	
6. Staffs who accept complaints are accessible at any time in the University College	.678	.724	
7. The employees (staffs) seem very understanding about the problems students experienced in the past	.527	.689	
F2: Types of complaints			0.729
1. The evaluation practice of the University College draws many complaints	.763	.710	
2. The University College receives complaints about lectures	.539	.589	
3. There exist complaints on grading in the University College	.738	.758	
4. Students complain on the part of threatening behavior of staffs at the University College.	.540	.538	
5. Students complain about the complexity of reporting mechanisms in the University College.	.537	.641	
6. Students complain about unfair grading system in the University College	.691	.616	
7. There exist complaints about unfair payments made for obtaining educational materials/booklets.	.785	.692	
8. The students complain about University College staff members as they don't treat them (students) well.	.575	.693	
9. There exists a complaint handling procedure in the university college.	.697	.633	
F3: College Facility			0.691
1. The University College maintains a neat and clean washroom/toilet facility for all the students.	.823	.802	

2. The University College maintains sufficient space/rooms/corridors for students to pass their free time.	.787	.729	
F4: Complaint Filing through Suggestion Box			0.767
1. There exists suggestion box in the university college.	.850	.815	
2. The common way to place complaints is to put them in the suggestion box located in the University College.	.874	.830	
F5: Procedure of Complaints handling			0.720
1. A hand book, showing the rules and regulation of the university college, is given to students to guide on complaints handling.	.631	.726	
2. The procedure helps students in addressing their complaints with ease to the appropriate authority in the University College.	.792	.771	
3. The procedure indicates a clear time scale on how to obtain response on the complaints being placed	.798	.745	
4. The timing to handle a complaint by the University College is fair and realistic	.502	.643	
F6: Service Recovery and Complaint measures			0.661
1. The University College takes quick measures when complaints come with inadequate evaluations.	.612	.749	
2. Quick measures are taken on non-availability of essential equipment or resources necessary to complete the work by the University College.	.564	.753	
3. Employees of the university College treat students courteously when receiving complaints from them.	.539	.705	
4. The University College ensures a quick recovery on the part of academic problems than others.	.653	.650	
5. The employees (staffs) show little kindness or understanding to the complainants of students.	.719	.671	
F7:Feedback actions			.830
1. The University College checks the suggestion box every time and responded accordingly.	.818	.811	
2.The complaints, received through the suggestion box by the University College receive quick/prompt action.	.871	.807	

F8: Empathy			0.668
1. Students complain about the unsatisfactory resolution of their complaints at the University College.	.837	.804	
2.The students complain about management on their non-responsiveness in openly discussing problems with students.	.726	.706	
3.The students complain about University College staff members as they don't treat them (students) well	.575	.693	
F9: Response on suggestion Box			0.436
1.No body addresses to the complaints placed in the suggestion box.	.767	.711	
2.Many complaints placed in the suggestion box, did not get any response from the University College.	.552	.635	

Source: Extracted from SPSS factor analysis

The liberalization of higher education opened the door for the private sector to participate in the field. The sector contributes to the social, economic, cultural and political development of any country. The liberalization policy of the government in the sector leaves the private sector in the field to operate by itself. However, the sector requires an immediate attention of the concerned individuals who are responsible for the management of the higher educational institutions. As the numbers of private higher educational institutions are numerously established here and there, students may flow from one University College to the other. The option left for each university college might be in the management of its current students and being responsive and proactive to handle their problems. The ability to handle complaints coming to the university college may maintain good name and image of the university college.

4.3. Descriptive Statistics

Based on the nine factors obtained from the SPSS factor analysis, the mean value for each factor for the responses obtained from students computed is summarized as follows:

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Dimensions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
1 Responsiveness	218	3.3336	.90955	.827
2 Complaint types	218	3.4042	.67229	.452
3 College facility	218	3.1078	1.27943	1.637
4 Complaint filing through suggestion box	218	2.8050	1.26994	1.613
5 Procedure of complaint handling	216	3.4178	.88193	.778
6 Service recovery and complaint measures	218	3.3387	.70754	.501
7 Feed back actions	218	2.6399	1.12672	1.270
8 Empathy	218	3.2508	.96180	.925
9 Response on suggestion box	218	2.7225	1.03390	1.069

Source: Extracted from SPSS mean computation

As shown in the above table, responsiveness of the university college for the questions related to this issue is above average. However, the result is not that much satisfactory making the university college to be responsive. It is very important for businesses operating especially in the education sector to be more responsive. Their total operation is closely related with the shaping process of the human mind. As the human behavior is the most difficult and complicated, university colleges should be quick in handling problems affecting these people. In dimension 2 of the above table, the kinds of complaints forwarded to the university colleges are above the mean. This means that there are complaints coming from students every time in its operation and the way that the university college assumes to handle might be in a different way. In dimension 3, the complaints in this issue are around the mean. Almost half of the respondents agreed that there are complaints in the facilities maintained by the university college. It seems that the university colleges are operating by neglecting this important issue. The Facilities which include the tangible items like availability of free space to pass their time, corridors, neat and clean toilets, and wash rooms, are equally important like the teaching learning process in the sector.

The other issue that has been included in the variables was the existence of suggestion box in the University Colleges and the practice of the university college to handle complaints through it. In dimension 4 above, it is confirmed that the score is below the mean and it is 2.8. This is a clear indication that university colleges do not use suggestion

boxes for handling complaints. The way that the management thinks to handle complaints and the way students think does not coincide. Suggestion boxes are the common ways by which organizations in general and educational institutions in particular receive feed back from their customers about their operation system. But the above figure indicates that there are no habits of using the suggestion box for receiving customer responses by the university colleges. In educational institutions, if carefully managed and handled, suggestion boxes are one of the mechanisms that students get relief about the issue that they have been affected for many times.

Dimension 5 shows the mean responses obtained from the analysis and it is 3.4178. It seems that most respondents agree with the procedure of complaints handling in the university college. The hand book of university colleges shows the dos and don'ts expected from students. It doesn't show the steps and hierarchies to be taken how a complaint is addressed to a concerned body in the university college. In dimension 6, though it is above the mean, it is not satisfactory for the measures taken by the university college. Customer satisfaction is crucial for the survival of any business organization including university colleges operating the field.

However, service failures are often unavoidable due to human and nonhuman errors. This will result in the dissatisfaction of customers which forces them to complain, disseminate bad words of mouth communication and finally contract termination. Many university colleges care for the existence of necessary materials and resources when they ask accreditation from the concerned body. After getting the accreditation, it seems that they don't care about it and depicted in the existence of complaints. In dimension 7, issues related on feed back and action of the university college is described. The mean result is 2.6399 which is less than the average result. This indicates that university colleges are weak and slow to provide response for the questions coming from their customers (students). Since university colleges operate in the dynamic and turbulent environment, it is necessary to adjust them selves to the feed back obtained from its customers in particular and the external environment in general. One could raise a question like why university colleges are slow to provide prompt response. The answer to this question

might be that the university colleges do not open their door to an outside information like complaints and do not provide its ears.

With regard to giving individual attention to customers, empathy, as shown in dimension 8, the mean value is 3.2508. As long as the university college is a private one, the mean result of this dimension is expected to be high. One of the major variables that separate private higher educational institutions from public colleges and universities is their treatment of customers (students) politely and try to catch the customer's interest at heart. This requires the university college to maintain convenient time to accept any complain if they have. Many of the respondents answered the last question included in the questionnaire as they do not get persons concerned in the university colleges to appeal about the issues that need responses from the university colleges. Since the competition is fierce and the technological environment is dynamic and complex, it is better to retain the exiting students than looking for new one. In addition to retaining the exiting students who are really the reasons for the existence of the university colleges, it is costly to find new students. Moreover, bad words of mouth disseminated by the existing students about the inability of university colleges to handle appeals and complaints will affect the future performance of the sector.

Therefore, one of the methods of reducing the existing keen competition among university colleges is to handle the exiting students. The performance of university colleges will be better if some one is assigned to handle students' complaints over the academic year and easy to evaluate the performance of the university college through the academic year over this issue. If one raises a questions like how many complaints are served in this University College over a certain period of time. No one can answer this question as they do not maintain records and assign one person or a department to collect information about complaints in particular and feed back in general. In general, the axiom "customer is a king" can be applied in this area and will enhance the performance of the university colleges in the future.

In the last dimension extracted using data reduction, response of the university colleges and the measures taken about the information obtained from the university colleges is a neglected element (dimension). One of the mechanisms of collecting information is using suggestion box. Collecting information through suggestion box is not enough for any organization. What matters best are the measures and remedial actions taken by the university colleges to alleviate the problems. The mean result obtained for this dimension is 2.7225 which is less than the average value. This clearly indicates the inability of the university college to install and collect information about its performance and the problems that their students are facing through suggestion box.

As Murphy and Peck (1980:4) put it, information is the life blood of any organization. Therefore, it is clearly seen that there is a communication barrier between students and the university colleges. The way that University College people think and what actually going on in the university colleges in terms of collecting information and responding to that does not coincide.

4.4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Analysis of variance is used to analyze the data collected from more than two groups. In this research, respondents were selected from three private University Colleges both from students and the management group. The data collected from students was analyzed using one way ANOVA among students of the three University Colleges. Further more, the same tool has been used to analyze the data collected from the management group.

4.4.1. ANOVA Among and Between responses of students

Analysis of variance is used to determine if there is a significant difference among and between the two or more groups. The study was done in three private university colleges with two groups, students and management group which include deans, coordinators, programmers, librarians, registrars and department heads. In this section, the comparison among and between university colleges for the result obtained from students is compared. To do this one way ANOVA is used and the results obtained from the software are summarized as follows. For the detail computation of the ANOVA, refer to Annex 2 in

the appendix. Since the study involves three groups, ANOVA is the appropriate analysis technique. Because of the treatment in the dependent variable, the mean values of two or three different independent variables cannot be the same. Using ANOVA it is possible to see whether the difference among the mean values of the three University Colleges is a true difference or chance difference due to sampling error. To analyze the mean of the three University Colleges, three different analyses are made. The first one is between the mean values of Admas UC and Alpha UC; the second one is between Admas UC and Saint Mary's UC and the third one is between Alpha UC and Saint Mary's UC. Moreover, the overall analysis is made among the three University Colleges as the best performers or least performers using the relative mean value differences. The analysis is made on nine dimensions using the data extracted from the SPSS software package as shown in the table found in annex 2 in the appendix. The difference that exists among the mean values of the three university colleges using nine dimensions is computed as follows:

Table 4: Analysis of Variance

Ser. No.	Dimensions	Admas UC(1)	Alpha UC(2)	S.M. UC(3)	Difference		
					1-2	1-3	2-3
1	Responsiveness	3.2771	3.2825	3.4111	-0.0054	-0.134	-0.1286
2	Complaints type	3.5301	3.3383	3.321	0.1918	0.2091	0.0173
3	College facility	2.8313	3.4556	3.1889	-0.6243	-0.3576	0.2667
4	Complaints filing through suggestion box	2.6566	2.1667	3.2611	0.4899	-0.6045	-1.0944
5	Procedure of Complaints handling	3.5813	3.0291	3.4528	0.5522	0.1285	-0.4237
6	Service Recovery and Complaint measures	3.2751	3.3778	3.3778	-0.1027	-0.1027	0
7	Feed back action	2.506	2.1889	2.9889	0.3171	-0.4829	-0.8
8	Empathy	3.4217	2.963	3.237	0.4587	0.1847	-0.274
9	Response on suggestion box	2.5843	3.1111	2.6556	-0.5268	-0.0713	0.4555

Source: Extracted from SPSS application of ANOVA

When ANOVA is used to find the significant difference among the mean values of the three university colleges, MS Excel application has been used and the result is summarized in the above table. Using the first dimension, responsiveness, the difference

among the mean values of the three University Colleges (between Admas and Alpha, Admas and Saint Mary's and Alpha and Saint Mary's) are -0.0054, -0.134 and -0.1286 respectively. This means that Admas University College is less responsive than the remaining two University Colleges. The difference that exists between the mean values of Alpha and Saint Mary's indicates that the former is less responsive than the later.

This result confirms the feed back obtained from students in Admas University College. Respondents of this University College reported that the complaint handler and the coordinator is one person and the complaints that students have on this person cannot be forwarded to any other concerned body. The second dimension used in the study is complaint type that has been handled in the three University Colleges. The analysis indicates that the difference in the mean value of types of complaints between Admas and Alpha is 0.1918 which indicates that more complaints types are handled in Admas than in Saint Mary's University College. Moreover, the difference in the mean values obtained between Admas and Saint Mary's is 0.2091 which makes Saint Mary's University College to handle less complaint types than the former one. The difference in the mean values obtained between Alpha and Saint Mary's using the complaint types dimension is 0.0173 which makes Alpha UC to handle more complaint types than Saint Mary's UC. This is a positive figure and indicates the number of complaints served by Alpha University College is greater than Saint Mary's University College. Therefore, more complaints were in Admas University College in the overall comparison among the three university Colleges.

The third dimension used in the study was College facility which includes free space, rooms, and corridors, neat and accessible toilet and washes rooms. The mean value comparison shows that fewer facilities are available in Admas University College than the rest. The mean value of complaints about College facility comparison between Admas and Alpha is -0.6243 which indicates that more complaints exist in Admas University College than the later. The comparison of the mean value of complaints about the College facility between Admas and Saint Mary's depicts that more facilities are found in Admas than Saint Mary's.

The last comparison is between the facilities maintained by Admas and Saint Mary's. The difference in the mean values of complaints about the College facility between Admas and Saint Mary's University Colleges is 0.2667 which indicates that more facilities are available and accessible to students in Alpha than Saint Mary's. The fourth dimension used in this research to find the difference in the values among the three University Colleges is complaint filing through suggestion box. The mean values obtained for this dimension in Admas and Alpha University Colleges is below average. In addition, from the response obtained for the qualitative question asked in the research, respondents indicated that there are no suggestion boxes in these University Colleges. This result confirms the qualitative response obtained from respondents in the University Colleges. That is why the mean value is less than average. The difference in the mean value of complaint filing through suggestion box between Admas and Alpha UC is 0.4899 which depicts Alpha UC the lowest in installing and accepting and filing complaints. In general, Alpha UC is least of all in this regard and Saint Mary's UC is the better as compared to all. That means University Colleges should arrange any other possibility for accepting complaints coming from their customers.

The fifth dimension used in the research is the existence of complaints handling procedure among the three University Colleges. Many respondents reported that the flow of information from students to the management of the University College is guided by the procedure. Since the variables raised in this issue are positive, Admas UC becomes the best of all in providing the direction on how to place complaints of students. The least in this regard among the three University Colleges is Alpha. The mean value variance between Admas and Alpha, Admas and Saint Mary's, and Alpha and Saint Mary's UCs are 0.5522, 0.1285 and 0.0944 respectively. The other measuring dimension for the study is service recovery and complaint measures.

In this regard, the mean value variations among the three private University Colleges are -0.1027, -0.1027, and 0 for Admas and Alpha, Admas and Saint Mary's and Alpha and Saint Mary's respectively. The result makes Admas University College the least in

recovering the default services when complaints placed and the measures taken to alleviate the problems. While the two University Colleges have better service recovering mechanisms and taking measures over the problematic area. The next issue is the feedback actions of the University Colleges taken for the study. As shown in the above table, the mean value variations between Admas and Alpha, Admas and Saint Mary's and Alpha and Saint Mary's University Colleges are 0.3171, -0.4829 and -0.8 respectively. The result indicated that all the three University Colleges perform below the average and the least one is Alpha and the best one is Saint Mary's University College in the relative comparison.

Empathy is one of the dimensions used in the research. This measures the suitability and ability to create conducive and convenient environment for customers (students) in the University Colleges. This can be done by understanding the customers (students) need and minimizing the problematic areas where more complaints created. The mean value variations between Admas and Alpha, Admas and Saint Mary's and Alpha and Saint Mary's are 0.4587, 0.1847, and 0.4555 respectively. This variation depicts that Alpha University College is the least and Admas is the best.

The last dimension used in the study was response on suggestion box. The mean value variation among the three University Colleges, as shown in the above table, makes Admas the least and Alpha the best though no suggestion box is maintained by the three University Colleges. In general, the mean Value difference comparison among the three University Colleges describes some of them to be better and others to be least.

4.4.2. ANOVA Among and Between Management Responses

One of the data analysis tools used in the research is analysis of variance among and between responses obtained from the management group. The management group, in this study, includes the deans, department heads, programmers, librarians, registrars and campus coordinators. To simplify the data analysis mechanisms the responses obtained from these groups is considered as a single source of data. Using the nine dimensions used in the research, the responses among and between the management groups of the

three University Colleges is presented as follows. For detail information, refer to annex 3 in the appendix. Based on the data shown in annex 3 of the appendix, the mean difference among the management group responses of the three University Colleges, using responsiveness as the first dimension, makes Saint Mary's University College the most responsive and Admas University College the least responsive. In today's complex and dynamic world, one has to include the changes taking place both internally which come in the form of complaints and externally from the environment. This means that being responsive more important for managing own business especially in the education sector. Based on the responses obtained from the management group, Saint Mary's University Colleges becomes the best in maintaining college facility and Alpha the least for the same dimension.

Regarding complaints filing through suggestion box, the result obtained from the three University Colleges confirmed the existence of small variations among their means. It is also proved by physical observation that no suggestion box is maintained in the University Colleges used for the study. The management group might assume the way how they handle complaints and answer the questions accordingly from that point of view. Mean while this, the result indicates that Alpha is the least and Admas is the best among the three University Colleges using this dimension. The fourth dimension used in the study is procedures of Complaints handling. The mean result obtained from the management group showed that the Complaints handling procedures in Saint Mary's University College is below half. However, this creates confusion among the management groups whether there is complaint handling procedure or not.

Therefore, Admas University College is the best and Saint Mary's University College is the least in the availability of complaints handling procedure in the three University Colleges. Using service recovery and complaint measures as the fifth dimension, Alpha University College is better than the other two and Admas and Saint Mary's University Colleges maintain more or less similar status. The total mean response of the three University Colleges in this regard is around the mean. As long as the University Colleges are in operation, some errors which make students to complain might be created. What is more important is being proactive and solve problems by responding in as much quick as

possible. The types of complaints that force students to complain are many in Alpha University College as compared with the others. Students might be forced to complain when something goes wrong in the University College. For instance, library facilities, recreating space, corridors, and toilet and shower rooms are among the many used in the study. Therefore, many factors are available in Admas University College and few factors in Alpha University College for the dimension of complaint types. Another dimension used in the study was empathy. It was found that more consideration is given to students in Saint Mary's University College and less consideration in Admas University College to students when they forward their complaints to the concerned body in the University College.

The final dimension was response on suggestion box. It seems that Saint Mary's University College is the best on responding on the issues obtained through the suggestion box. Alpha University College becomes the least in providing response for the information obtained through the suggestion box. It seems that the management group might respond based on their experience of complaints handling in their respective departments. Nevertheless, it is clearly observed that University Colleges do not accept complaints through the suggestion box. To accept or reject complaints through suggestion box, the suggestion box itself should be available for the purpose. In general, the responses obtained from the management group using the questions attached in the appendix, confirmed that Alpha University College handles more types of complaints; Admas in complaints filing through suggestion box, better in availability of complaints handling procedures, service recovery and complaint measures, and empathy and Saint Mary's University College is more responsive, better college facility, best in providing feedback and better in providing response obtained through the suggestion box.

4.4.3. Analysis using t-test

To determine whether there is a significant mean score difference between the responses obtained from students and the response obtained from the management group (for two independent groups), t-test has been used. The statistical data extracted by using SPSS

software package is summarized as follows. For detail information, refer to Annex 4 in the appendix.

Table 5: Group Statistics

Dimensions	Respondents	Respondents		t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
		No	Mean		
Responsiveness	Students	218	.90955	0.758	0.449
	Management group	30	.52480		
Complaint types	Students	218	.75633	2.688	0.008
	Management group	30	.61740		
College Facility	Students	218	1.06629	-1.173	.242
	Management group	30	.85853		
Complaint filing through suggestion box	Students	218	1.26994	-1.771	0.078
	Management group	30	1.00630		
Procedure of Complaints handling	Students	216	.88193	2.132	0.034
	Management group	30	1.06488		
Service recovery and complaint measures	Students	218	.70754	0.250	0.803
	Management group	30	.43126		
Feedback action	Students	218	1.12672	-3.080	0.002
	Management group	30	1.14081		
Empathy	Students	218	.96180	3.175	0.002
	Management group	30	.60321		
Response on suggestion box	Students	218	1.03390	-3.930	0.000
	Management group	30	.87099		

Source: Extracted from SPSS t-test for independent groups

T-statistics has been used by the researcher as the data analysis tools. It has been applied to determine the existence of significant differences between the responses of the management and the student respondents. The responses obtained from students and the management group is compared using the first dimension responsiveness. Based on the above table, no significance difference ($t=0.758$, $p<0.450$) is found between the responses of students and the management group. Using the second dimension of complaint types, the t-value obtained is 2.688 ($p<0.009$) i.e. there exists significant differences between

two groups on the issue/dimension of types of complaint filed to and accepted by the university colleges. The third dimension was college facility. The result obtained from the application of t-test indicates a value of -1.173 ($p < 0.242$). Therefore, no significant difference was obtained between the two groups.

The independent t-test result for the fourth dimension, complaint filing through suggestion box, indicates a t-value of -1.771 ($p < 0.079$), smaller but non-significant result was found. Therefore, once again, the students and management responses were found to maintain insignificant difference on the part of complaint filing behavior/practice by using suggestion box. In the areas of procedures of complaints handling, the t-value obtained is 2.132 ($p < 0.035$), appeared to be significant at 95% confidence level, which confirms that there exist significant difference between the groups on the procedures of complaint handling. The dimension of service recovery and complaint measures brought a different result that smaller t-value was obtained from the application of the tool. The t-value result was 0.250 ($p < 0.804$). Therefore, no difference was reported to be significant statistically, between two groups.

Regarding feedback action, the t-value obtained was -3.080 ($p < 0.002$). This indicates that the difference between management and student responses is statistically significant. In empathy the result is reversed and the t-value was 3.175 ($p < 0.002$). Therefore, it can be seen that on the part of empathy, both the management and students are maintaining significant differences. The final dimension used in the study is response on suggestion box. The t-value obtained was -3.930 ($p < 0.0000$), which confirms that there exist significant differences on the responses scored from the management and students on complaint boxes and complaint handling in the institutions through it.

4.5. Discussion and Interpretation

Higher education educational institutions are the sources of the literate manpower of a nation and have great impact in the development of any nation across the world. The development and effective management of this sector enhances the economic development of the country. Recognizing this situation, the government of Ethiopia liberalizes the education sector and opens the door for private Investors. Now-a-days

many private higher educational institutions have been established and provide service to the people in the country. On one hand, the government allows the private investors to participate in the sector, on the other hand, some bottle neck government regulations are placed in to practice. This makes the competition in the sector more intensive and made the institutions focusing on the internal management of their current students. Managing the current students more carefully becomes the most important part of their operation. This can be done by strengthening the management of examinations and of examination bodies; reviewing assessment procedures; enhancing security of examinations; ensuring fairness and transparency in the selection process; ensuring that suitable textbooks and other materials are available in libraries. The other side should focus on improving management in the education system by improving human resource management by better remuneration packages, more promotion opportunities, and better supervision; finding a better or workable mechanism of inspecting and supervising harassment of female students; selection of students on merit; improving conduct and management of examinations.

Furthermore, University Colleges could do more than this to alleviate the current problems that exist with them. Many of them are concentrated in attracting new students than managing and satisfying the existing ones. It is found that many problems and complaints arose from dissatisfaction of the service provision of University Colleges. Students are the reasons for the existence of University Colleges and principal incomes of these University Colleges come from the tuition fee that students paid. In this regard, students do have the right to get the right service at the right time which is equivalent to the money paid in the form of tuition fee. It forces them to be treated like customers in other organization and exercise their rights when something goes wrong. One of the mechanisms of exercising their right is to complain and forward their complaints to the concerned University Colleges' official assigned to receive and serve them.

However, most University colleges do not have an office and individual or officer to accept and entertain students' problems. University Colleges are following the traditional way of accepting complaints when students write a kind of application in a blank white paper and give it to anyone whom they think concerned. Moreover, University Colleges

do not have forms where students can apply and fixed time scale to provide response to students. Above all, it is found that some University Colleges are operating in the areas where there are noises which disturb the teaching learning activity.

This forces students to take some measures by leaving the present college and looking for another one. This makes University colleges to lose much of their revenue in way and brings a decrease in the total enrolment in the future. Most of them have shown a keen interest of collecting money in the form of tuition fee and silent when problems and complaints come from the students' side. Of course, some Colleges operating in Addis Ababa, nowadays, disappeared from the market. One of the factors that contribute to this situation is mismanagement of their students.

University Colleges should aim to handle complaints in a way that:

- encourages informal conciliation
- is fair and efficient
- treats complaints with appropriate seriousness, sympathy and confidentiality
- facilitates early resolution
- allows the University or a particular section to learn from

In addition, University Colleges do not have the habit of complaints filing and reporting and evaluating the total complaints reported during one semester or one academic year. Many University Colleges see complaints as a negative attitude towards their institution rather than looking it as an informant about the problems and weaknesses that they have. The other side of the problems reported is the feedback mechanisms maintained by University colleges. Hill (1995) stated that perceived higher education service quality could be the product of a number of service encounter evaluations by students. Such encounters would be with administrators, teaching staff and managers as well as other higher education employees.

Therefore, the teaching learning activity requires an integration of all factors and resources. It also includes activities out side of the class room. Academic life from the student perspective involves students experiencing a number of disparate service offerings ranging from the quality of teaching and learning activities to the quality of on-campus support facilities to pass their free time though the University Colleges are

Private. Apart from this, it is found that University Colleges do not have complaint handling procedure manuals which is accessible and open to all students. Students would like to be treated as important customers and should get the necessary respect and dignity from the University College side. Service marketing principles are rarely used in the service sector in our country especially in the education sector. University Colleges should also develop the habit of maintaining and applying service marketing for successful accomplishment of their operations. Maintaining free communication path and transparent management system which serves their customers in general and students in particular provide a good name for the University College.

One of the transparencies of the management of University Colleges is depicted in the establishment of freely discussing with students and hearing their problems. On the one hand, the management of University Colleges has got information about their status and on the other hand, the management makes students a feeling of concern about their problems. Students will feel that the management is sensitive about them and their complaints. Some factors which make students to complain were confirmed by the responses obtained from the management group.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summaries, Conclusions and Recommendations

This section presents a summary of the study together with conclusion drawn and forwards some recommendations based on the findings.

5.1. Summaries

The major objective of this study is to assess the practices used in the private University Colleges in handling customers (students) complaints and its root causes. In addition, the major problems encountered in handling student complaints and response practices in three private University Colleges operating in Addis Ababa and, ultimately forward possible suggestions on what needs to be done to solve the problem. Recruiting students has been always an important activity for the higher educational institutions. However, the rapid expansion of colleges and universities, significant increases in college education costs combined with demographic shifts in the population may force colleges to think differently about the role of student satisfaction for their survival.

Even though the successful completion and enhancement of students' education are the reasons for the existence of higher educational institutions, college administrators tend to focus disproportionately more time on programs for attracting and admitting students rather than enrollment management. Similar to the importance of satisfying customers to retain them for profit-making institutions, satisfying the admitted students is also important for retention in educational institutions. It might be argued that dissatisfied students may cut back on the number of courses or drop out of college completely (Kotler and Fox, 1995). This means that the major tool that can be used among the mushrooming higher educational institutions is to handle the existing students more seriously.

Most complaints arise from dissatisfaction of the service provided by the institutions and private University Colleges should keep their current students satisfied with their service. However, the increased turmoil in the higher education marketplace may force the university colleges to utilize a more customer-oriented philosophy in delivering their

services, and those who understand these principles will have a better chance of achieving their objectives more effectively. Although, many organizations target to provide flawless service, mistakes and failures are frequent occurrences. For this reason, service organizations especially educational institutions need to analyze these occurrences systematically and generate effective remedies to the service failures and students' complaints through successful service recovery acts. By providing equitable and quick responses to students' complaints, educational institutions (University Colleges) aim to achieve a pool of satisfied students and increase the level of retaining them. Wetzal et al. (1999) put this situation in the other way round as the probability of retaining a student at a particular college or university increases, the student stays longer at that institution, because of the higher student transaction cost to switch to a competing institution.

In this study a descriptive survey method was used with the assumption that it will help to gather a large variety of information related to the problem under study. Seyoum and Ayalew in Andualem (2008) described that, the descriptive survey method of research is more appropriate to gather several kinds of data of a broad size. In order to analyze the problem and forward recommendations as solutions to the problems identified in the study, the following research questions were raised.

1. What are the major problems that force students (customers) to complain?
2. Is there a formal structure in Admas University College, Alpha University College and Saint Mary's University College where they handle and treat students' complaints?
3. What are the specific problems facing University Colleges to handle students' complaints and provide response?
4. How do University Colleges solve students' Complaints and do they use the complaints coming from students to design a strategy to solve the problem in the future?

To answer these research questions three data collection instruments, namely questionnaires, document analysis and personal observations were used for the study. The questionnaires were self constructed and a five scale ones which focuses on five major areas, namely kinds of complaints, availability of suggestion box, availability of

complaint handling procedures, responsiveness of the University College and service failure recovery capability of University Colleges. These major areas identified in the questionnaires were divided into nine dimensions during factor analysis and those nine dimensions were used in the study to investigate the major problems of University Colleges in handling students' complaints and their response practices.

The nine dimensions used in the study were responsiveness, complaint types, college facility, complaint filing through suggestion box, procedures of complaints handling, service recovery and complaint measures, feedback actions, empathy and response on suggestion box. Moreover, statistical calculations, percentages, mean scores, factor analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-test were used to evaluate the data and answer the basic questions. Based on the analysis the following major findings are drawn from the study.

1. The main respondents selected in the study were students and the management group. It has been seen that the number of female (48.62%) and male (51.38%) students are represented equivalently in the research though the sampling method is simple random sampling.
2. University Colleges are formal institutions that try to achieve their objectives by employing human and nonhuman resources. It is found that University Colleges are weak in responding to the changes taking place internally. Those changes require responsiveness of the University Colleges and University Colleges are weak in providing quick response to questions placed by students.
3. As long as the business is in operation, the existence and occurrence of complaints are unavoidable. Though there are many complaints placed by students, it is found that no responsible person is assigned to handle such problems. In addition, no records are maintained by the University Colleges to evaluate its performance about the number of complaints reported and solved during a certain academic year.
4. Many University Colleges operate in rented buildings which have narrow corridors and difficult to change class. Many respondents reported that some 10 or 15 minutes expired in corridors waiting their long queue to pass. The question of facility is not limited to the free spaces maintained by the University College. It

also includes other facilities like toilet, wash rooms, study places, refreshment field. It is found that there is a problem of accessing toilets, study spaces, and refreshment fields and spaces for sport and other extra curricular activities.

5. As many of the respondents report, there is a great problem in the evaluation of practices of university colleges. The evaluation practices of University colleges are not transparent, fair and clear. Moreover, many respondents confirmed that there is great subjectivity in this part.
6. Most students report their complaints to the department that they are learning thinking that the department is the concerned one to accept their appeals. This means that there is no clear flow of information on how to place complaints to a concerned body assigned for this specific purpose by the University College.
7. The management part of University Colleges taken for the study considers their College to be one of the best and free from any flaws. Because of this misunderstanding, they are not willing to see their College in the eyes of external customers and students.
8. Although complaints are received in different ways, one of the common one is using suggestion box. No suggestion box is found installed in the University Colleges used for the study.
9. Most university Colleges have facility problems such as current and updated books, internet service, computers, free and accessible toilets, and other facilities to be used in the University colleges.
10. Now days the technological advancement is dynamic and complex across the world. Countries and institutions share this new and sophisticated innovation through internet. However, these University Colleges do not have internet service (cafes) for their students other than those who are joining the computer science department.
11. It is found that University Colleges do not have a formal structure for handling complaints of their students.

4.2. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the research, the following conclusions are drawn.

1. The number of respondents in terms of sex implies that gender disparity is reduced in the higher educational institutions. Private higher educational institutions become good examples of encouraging female students' participation in higher education on the way to reduce gender disparity in the sector.
2. University Colleges were not responsive to accommodate changes taking place within and outside. In addition, it is clear that they are operating in a dynamic environment and try to handle their students' problems as quick as possible using a predetermined time scale to solve a particular problem.
3. One of the most important elements of the teaching learning activity in higher educational institution is the availability of conducive work environment including the facilities maintained for this purpose. Some of the buildings that University Colleges rented are not built for education purpose. Their corridors are narrow, learning rooms crossed by poles; small number of toilets which is not accessible and cannot serve many students thought they are using it turn by turn.
4. Poor evaluation practices of University Colleges will destroy their image and does not provide them good name from the society side. This brings moral questions on their graduates in the future and even in the eyes of competitive higher educational institutions.
5. The management of University Colleges are not active and eager to collect information from with in and out side of its campus. Though information is considered as life blood of every organization, the University Colleges under study do not open their ears to their students. This will exactly have an adverse effect on their future performance. Unavailability of suggestion box means unwillingness to receive and entertain information coming from their students or customers.
6. Appeals and complaints are indications of the activities taking place within the University Colleges. It gives direction to University Colleges as to the nature of the problems. If they are not quick to solve problems of their students, it is equivalent as saying their students leave from here and look for another one.

Some other competitors can use it a mechanism of attracting students of other institutions as a competitive advantage.

7. One of the most important innovations that people can share information across the world is information flow through internet. Students of higher educational institutions are more exposed for this information sharing and it is the University College that can arrange for their students to access and use free internet services. Moreover, many University Colleges maintain virtual library by which their students access information in the form of books, journals, e-mails and others.
8. It is found that the employees of University Colleges do not treat students when accepting and responding for their questions and complaints. It seems that employees lack the most important marketing concept of customer service.

4.3. Recommendations

The major objective of the study is to find out the main problems faced by private University Colleges in handling students' complaints and response practices and, ultimately forward possible suggestions on what needs to be done to solve the problem. Based on the findings and the conclusion made for the research, the following recommendations are to be made.

1. Private University Colleges are established to support the human development program of the country and producing graduates who are competent, responsible, ethical and great contributors to the development of the country. To fulfill these important objective students should learn in the environment what they want to achieve and put it in to practice after graduation. Therefore, University Colleges should create and maintain responsive management, conducive teaching learning environment, transparency, and open discussion with their students.
2. When students feel that they are mistreated or dissatisfied by the service of the University College that they are learning, they may forward their complaints to the concerned body and office. There must be an open and responsible office organized for this purpose. It is clearly seen that University Colleges do not have formal structure that answers students' questions on timely basis. Therefore, University Colleges should maintain at least a formal structure where students can

forward their complaints and an officer assigned specifically for this purpose. In addition, University Colleges should maintain records of complaints coming from their students and use it to evaluate their performance over a certain period of time. This will help them to provide zero defect service to their customers and can use it as a competitive advantage to attract students in the future.

3. University Colleges lack responsiveness to the questions of their students, lack the knowledge of customer service, and do not have procedures of students complaints handling. These issues make the situation somewhat complex and become a threat to University Colleges' future performance. Therefore, it is better for University Colleges to be responsive and set a time scale to provide response to their students for their complaints.
4. It is found from the research that University Colleges do not have manuals of complaints handling. Unavailability of such type of important document will make their students confused to forward their problems to the concerned body directly. Therefore, it is better for University Colleges to prepare customer service manual and show their students how their complaints are handled by the University College.
5. Many complaints coming from students focus on the unethical grading practices of University Colleges. This is one of the critical problems facing higher educational institutions. If the University College is suspected for such kinds of problems, it will not have good name among the society at large and hiring organizations. It is better for University Colleges to develop a system of grading scale, communicating that to students and put it in to implementation.
6. One of the major problems of University Colleges is unavailability of important facilities to their students. It seems that they forgot this important item and focus only on the academic aspect. The importance of physical facilities such as free space, clean and neat toilet, current and updated books, and internet service are unquestionable. Therefore, University Colleges should try their best to fulfill the aforementioned items when they rent building or construct their own.
7. One of the mechanisms of forwarding complaints to the concerned body in the University College is to place it in the suggestion box. However, it is found that

University Colleges do not have suggestion boxes installed for accepting feedback and complaints from their students. This brings a variation in the way that the management of University Colleges thinks and the way that students want to place their complaints. Therefore, University Colleges should install suggestion box in accessible and clear areas by assigning some to handle it seriously.

8. Since University Colleges are business organization, it is necessary to have equipped their officers and employees with some training on customer service. Those front line employees who have more contact with students should have the ability to handle students courteously when accepting and responding to their complaints.

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Appendices

Annex 1. Questionnaire

Addis Ababa University (Post Graduate Program)

Survey on Students' Complaints Handling and Response practices in
Private University Colleges in Addis Ababa.

Dear Respondent,

The objective of this questionnaire is to collect information for the study of students' complaints handling and response practices in private university colleges for a Master of Arts degree in Marketing Management. Given below are the items to score your opinions on the practices of Students' Complaints Handling and Response Practices in your University College. This information will be used for academic purpose and the responses will be treated in strict confidentiality. In advance, I thank you very much for active cooperation and participation.(To be filled by students).

Part I. General Information: Please put a tick mark (√) on the choice representing you.

1. Your College

- A. Admas University College _____
- B. Alpha University College _____
- C. Saint Mary's University College _____

2. Program : Regular
 Extension

3. Department: Accounting and Finance
 Management
 Business Administration
 Marketing Management
 Others _____

4. Sex Male
 Female

5. Age A. below 20 years
 B. 20-30 years
 C. 31-40 years
 D. 41-50 years
 E. above 50 years

Part II. Read each of the statements and indicate your level of agreement/disagreement by putting a tick mark (✓) in the respective box.

Items		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Kinds of Complaints						
1.	The evaluation practices of the University College draw many complaints.					
2.	The University College receives complaints about lectures.					
3	There exist complaints on grading in the University College.					
4	Students usually place complaints on unethical behavior of the University College staff.					
5	Students complain about the unsatisfactory resolution of their complaints at the University College.					
6	Students complain on the part of threatening behavior of staffs at the University College.					
7	There exist complaints about non academic issues like library service, materials, inefficient service etc in the University College.					
8	Students complain about the complexity of reporting mechanisms in the University College.					
9	Students complain about unfair grading system in the University College.					
10	There exist complaints about unfair payments made for obtaining educational materials/booklets.					
11	The University College maintains a neat and clean washroom/toilet facility for all the students.					
12	The University College maintains sufficient space/rooms/corridors for students to pass their free time.					
13	The students complain about management on their non-responsiveness in openly discussing problems with students.					
14	The students complain about University College staff members as they don't treat them (students) well.					

Availability of Procedures						
15	There exists a complaint handling procedure in the university college.					
16	The procedure of handling students' complaints is easy and simple.					
17	A hand book, showing the rules and regulation of the university college, is given to students to guide on complaints handling.					
18	Students know where to put their complaints in the University College.					
19	The procedure helps students in addressing their complaints with ease to the appropriate authority in the University College.					
20	The procedure indicates a clear time scale on how to obtain response on the complaints being placed.					
21	The timing to handle a complaint by the University College is fair and realistic.					
Availability of Suggestion Box						
22	There exists suggestion box in the university college.					
23	The common way to place complaints is to put them in the suggestion box located in the University College.					
24	No body addresses to the complaints placed in the suggestion box.					
25	Many complaints placed in the suggestion box, did not get any response from the University College.					
26	The University College checks the suggestion box every time and responded accordingly.					
27	The complaints, received through the suggestion box by the University College receive quick/prompt action.					
Responsiveness of the University College						
28	The university College is quick to provide response.					
29	The University College takes quick measures when complaints come with inadequate evaluations.					
30	Quick measures are taken on non-availability of essential equipment or resources necessary to complete the work by the University College.					

31	Employees of the university College treat students courteously when receiving complaints from them.					
32	Employees at the University College show courtesy to the students when responding to the complaints					
33	The University College is quick in solving unethical behavior of staff members.					
34	The university College is quick in solving sexual harassment related problems.					
35	The university College is quick to solve registrar office complaints.					
36	The university College is quick to solve academic complaints.					
Service Failure Recovery						
37	The University College ensures a quick recovery on the part of academic problems than others.					
38	The measures taken by the University College are satisfactory.					
39	Staffs who accept complaints are accessible at any time in the University College.					
40	The employees (staffs) show little kindness or understanding to the complainant students.					
41	The employees (staffs) seem very understanding about the problems students experienced in the past.					
42	The result of the complaint was not up to expectation in the University College.					

6. What should be done by the University College to solve the problems that force students to complain?

Annex 2. ANOVA Statistics (Students' Responses)

Dimensions		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% confidence level for mean Std. Deviation		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Responsiveness	Admas U. College	83	3.2771	.96384	.10580	3.0666	3.4876	1.00	5.00
	Alpha U. College	45	3.2825	.72363	.10787	3.0651	3.4999	1.86	4.71
	Saint Mary's U.College	90	3.4111	.94441	.09955	3.2133	3.6089	1.00	5.00
	Total	218	3.3336	.90955	.06160	3.2121	3.4550	1.00	5.00
Complaintstypes	Admas U. College	83	3.5301	.61310	.06730	3.3962	3.6640	2.00	4.56
	Alpha U. College	45	3.3383	.74834	.11156	3.1134	3.5631	1.56	4.56
	Saint Mary's U.College	90	3.3210	.67441	.07109	3.1797	3.4622	1.78	4.56
	Total	218	3.4042	.67229	.04553	3.3144	3.4939	1.56	4.56
College facility	Admas U. College	83	2.8313	1.27661	.14013	2.5526	3.1101	1.00	5.00
	Alpha U. College	45	3.4556	1.28285	.19124	3.0701	3.8410	1.00	5.00
	Saint Mary's U. College	90	3.1889	1.23974	.13068	2.9292	3.4485	1.00	5.00
	Total	218	3.1078	1.27943	.08665	2.9370	3.2786	1.00	5.00
Complaints filing through suggestion box	Admas U. College	83	2.6566	1.30647	.14340	2.3713	2.9419	1.00	5.00
	Alpha U. College	45	2.1667	1.08711	.16206	1.8401	2.4933	1.00	5.00
	Saint Mary's U.College	90	3.2611	1.15687	.12195	3.0188	3.5034	1.00	5.00
	Total	218	2.8050	1.26994	.08601	2.6355	2.9746	1.00	5.00

Procedure of Complaints handling	Admas U. College	83	3.5813	.87401	.09593	3.3905	3.7722	1.75	5.00
	Alpha U. College	43	3.0291	.82051	.12513	2.7766	3.2816	1.50	4.50
	Saint Mary's U. College	90	3.4528	.87079	.09179	3.2704	3.6352	1.50	5.00
	Total	216	3.4178	.88193	.06001	3.2995	3.5361	1.50	5.00
Service Recovery Complaint measures	Admas U. College	83	3.2751	.81418	.08937	3.0973	3.4529	1.00	4.50
	Alpha U. College	45	3.3778	.56228	.08382	3.2088	3.5467	2.00	4.50
	Saint Mary's U. College	90	3.3778	.66891	.07051	3.2377	3.5179	1.83	4.83
	Total	218	3.3387	.70754	.04792	3.2442	3.4331	1.00	4.83
Feed back action	Admas U. College	83	2.5060	1.10568	.12136	2.2646	2.7475	1.00	5.00
	Alpha U. College	45	2.1889	.94922	.14150	1.9037	2.4741	1.00	4.00
	Saint Mary's U. College	90	2.9889	1.13171	.11929	2.7519	3.2259	1.00	5.00
	Total	218	2.6399	1.12672	.07631	2.4895	2.7903	1.00	5.00
Empathy	Admas U. College	83	3.4217	.98234	.10783	3.2072	3.6362	1.67	5.00
	Alpha U. College	45	2.9630	1.13978	.16991	2.6205	3.3054	1.00	5.00
	Saint Mary's U. College	90	3.2370	.80919	.08530	3.0676	3.4065	1.00	4.67
	Total	218	3.2508	.96180	.06514	3.1224	3.3792	1.00	5.00
Response on suggestion box	Admas U. College	83	2.5843	1.03541	.11365	2.3582	2.8104	1.00	5.00
	Alpha U. College	45	3.1111	1.09175	.16275	2.7831	3.4391	1.00	5.00
	Saint Mary's U. College	90	2.6556	.96467	.10169	2.4535	2.8576	1.00	5.00
	Total	218	2.7225	1.03390	.07002	2.5845	2.8605	1.00	5.00

Annex 3. ANOVA Statistics (Managements' Group Responses)

Dimensions		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
						Responsiveness	Admas UC		
	Alpha UC	10	3.0000	.57538	.18195	2.5884	3.4116	2.29	4.00
	Saint Mary's UC	10	3.1286	.38362	.12131	2.8541	3.4030	2.43	3.57
	Total	30	3.0333	.53279	.09727	2.8344	3.2323	2.29	4.00
Complaint types	Admas UC	10	3.5333	.63462	.20068	3.0794	3.9873	3.00	4.44
	Alpha UC	10	3.5889	.69891	.22102	3.0889	4.0889	2.33	4.44
	Saint Mar's UC	10	3.3667	.21628	.06839	3.2120	3.5214	3.00	3.67
	Total	30	3.4963	.54802	.10005	3.2917	3.7009	2.33	4.44
College facility	Admas UC	10	3.2000	.82327	.26034	2.6111	3.7889	2.50	4.50
	Alpha UC	10	3.1500	.74722	.23629	2.6155	3.6845	2.00	4.50
	Saint Mary's UC	10	3.8000	.42164	.13333	3.4984	4.1016	3.00	4.50
	Total	30	3.3833	.72734	.13279	3.1117	3.6549	2.00	4.50
Complaints filing through suggestion box	Admas UC	10	3.3000	1.15950	.36667	2.4705	4.1295	2.00	5.00
	Alpha UC	10	3.4500	.95598	.30231	2.7661	4.1339	2.00	5.00
	Saint Mary's UC	10	4.4000	.51640	.16330	4.0306	4.7694	4.00	5.00
	Total	30	3.7167	1.01441	.18520	3.3379	4.0955	2.00	5.00

Procedure of complaints handling	Admas UC	10	3.6750	1.36448	.43149	2.6989	4.6511	1.00	4.75
	Alpha UC	10	3.2000	.96321	.30459	2.5110	3.8890	2.00	4.75
	Saint Mary's UC	10	2.9000	.90676	.28674	2.2513	3.5487	1.75	4.50
	Total	30	3.2583	1.10735	.20217	2.8448	3.6718	1.00	4.75
Service recovery and complaints Measures	Admas UC	10	3.1167	.43069	.13620	2.8086	3.4248	2.50	3.67
	Alpha UC	10	3.0500	.52734	.16676	2.6728	3.4272	2.50	3.83
	Saint Mary's UC	10	3.0333	.25820	.08165	2.8486	3.2180	2.67	3.33
	Total	30	3.0667	.40731	.07436	2.9146	3.2188	2.50	3.83
Feed back action	Admas UC	10	3.5000	.94281	.29814	2.8256	4.1744	2.00	4.50
	Alpha UC	10	3.6000	1.07497	.33993	2.8310	4.3690	2.00	5.00
	Saint Mary's UC	10	4.7000	.25820	.08165	4.5153	4.8847	4.50	5.00
	Total	30	3.9333	.98027	.17897	3.5673	4.2994	2.00	5.00
Empathy	Admas UC	10	3.5333	.75686	.23934	2.9919	4.0748	2.67	4.67
	Alpha UC	10	3.4000	.58373	.18459	2.9824	3.8176	2.33	4.33
	Saint Mary's UC	10	3.6000	.30631	.09686	3.3809	3.8191	3.00	4.00
	Total	30	3.5111	.56550	.10325	3.2999	3.7223	2.33	4.67
Response on suggestion box	Admas UC	10	3.3000	.58689	.18559	2.8802	3.7198	2.00	4.00
	Alpha UC	10	3.4000	.84327	.26667	2.7968	4.0032	2.00	5.00
	Saint Mary's UC	10	3.7500	.67700	.21409	3.2657	4.2343	3.00	4.50
	Total	30	3.4833	.71297	.13017	3.2171	3.7496	2.00	5.00

Annex 4. T-test Statistics

Dimensions		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Responsiveness	Equal variances assumed	10.941	.001	.758	246	.449	.12879	.17001	-.20608	.46366
	Equal variances not assumed			1.131	56.637	.263	.12879	.11391	-.09934	.35692
Complaints types	Equal variances assumed	2.751	.098	2.688	246	.008	.38804	.14436	.10370	.67237
	Equal variances not assumed			3.134	41.976	.003	.38804	.12381	.13816	.63791
College Facility	Equal variances assumed	3.172	.076	-1.173	246	.242	-.23853	.20329	-.63894	.16188
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.382	42.364	.174	-.23853	.17258	-.58673	.10966
Complaints filing through suggestion box	Equal variances assumed	3.197	.075	-1.771	246	.078	-.42829	.24181	-.90457	.04800
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.111	42.830	.041	-.42829	.20286	-.83744	-.01913
Procedure of Complaints handling	Equal variances assumed	2.415	.121	2.132	244	.034	.37616	.17645	.02860	.72372
	Equal variances not assumed			1.849	34.746	.073	.37616	.20347	-.03702	.78933

Service recovery and complaint measures	Equal variances assumed	4.577	.033	.250	246	.803	.03313	.13258	-.22800	.29426
	Equal variances not assumed			.359	53.483	.721	.03313	.09217	-.15171	.21797
Feed back action	Equal variances assumed	.359	.550	-3.080	246	.002	-.67676	.21973	-1.10956	-.24396
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.051	37.219	.004	-.67676	.22182	-1.12612	-.22740
Empathy	Equal variances assumed	8.020	.005	3.175	246	.002	.57299	.18047	.21752	.92845
	Equal variances not assumed			4.478	51.991	.000	.57299	.12795	.31623	.82974
Response on suggestion box	Equal variances assumed	1.790	.182	-3.930	246	.000	-.77752	.19786	-1.16723	-.38781
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.475	41.130	.000	-.77752	.17375	-1.12839	-.42665