



**DETERMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION LEVELS IN
TERMS OF SERVICE QUALITY AT CAPE POINT NATIONAL PARK**

By

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DECLARATION

I, Marjorie Dawn Siebritz, declare that the contents of this dissertation/thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Marjorie Dawn Siebritz

Date

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ABSTRACT

Tourism has become an important economic activity in the Western Cape as it creates employment for local citizens and generates income for the province. In order for tourism to be a constant income generator, services that are offered at various accommodation establishments, attractions, restaurants and visitor information bureaus should be outstanding, as service excellence and effective word-of-mouth advertising will generate repeat business.

This study investigated the current level of service quality, which is being offered at Cape Point National Park (CPNP). This investigation, focused on international customer satisfaction levels in order to improve service delivery where necessary and to generate satisfied and loyal customers.

The objectives of the study were to apply the principals of the GAPS model by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985:47) firstly to determine whether customers' expectations and management perceptions of such expectations match and, if not, what corrective actions should be established in order to close the customer expectation-management-perception gap. The second objective was to determine management's perceptions of service quality and to eliminate the management perception-service quality specification gap, if such a gap exists. A third objective was to identify the current level of service quality that is provided by Cape Point National Park and to eliminate any service quality specifications-service delivery gap, if it exists. The fourth objective was to establish whether CPNP's promotional activity "walks the talk". In other words whether what has been advertised by CPNP is what is indeed facilitated by the attraction, and if this is not the case, then what should be done by CPNP to close the service delivery external communications gap. Lastly, the to determine perceptions of service quality of international visitors, and to make recommendations (if necessary) to improve service levels on an ongoing basis so that CPNP can enjoy the long-term custom of local and international visitors.

Given the immense need for service excellence, particularly at CPNP, the research study investigated the views, opinions and attitudes of tourists who visited CPNP regarding service levels at the attraction. To gather the above data, it was done by

means of a survey completed by international visitors at the CPNP, and whilst they were travelling from the attraction via luxury coach. The focus of the questionnaire was directed at obtaining the views, opinions and perceptions of international visitors regarding services provided by the attraction so that corrective steps may be instituted to close any service gaps if there was a service level shortfall. The research that was undertaken was, therefore, aimed to create awareness of the needs of CPNP, its employees and, most importantly, the requirements and aspirations of international tourists.

The study concludes with a number of recommendations that requires consideration in order for CPNP to continue to effectively compete against other tourist attractions in the Western Cape. The interventions that can assist with improving the service levels at the attraction or close any existing gaps are education, training and long-term development of tourism staff. Secondly, a strategy should be formulated, implemented and controlled to attract more tourists to the attraction and to motivate them to spend their money at CPNP. Therefore, CPNP should promote its unique sales proposition and should position itself as a preferred attraction of choice so that the needs of all stakeholders that are associated with the park may be appeased to the maximum.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
LIST OF TERMS	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF ADDENDAE	xiii
CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH STUDY	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.1.1 Background and rationale for the research	1
1.2 Research problem statement	3
1.3 Key research questions	4
1.4 Research objectives	4
1.5 Delimitation of the research	5
1.6 Research methodology and design	5
1.6.1 Literature search	5
1.6.1.1 Relevant and particular normative criteria from the literature pertaining to stated research problem	6
1.6.2 Empirical survey	6
1.6.2.1 Description of the research population	6
1.6.3 Statistical analysis	8
1.6.4 Expression and interpretation of findings	8
1.7 Clarification of concepts	8
1.8 Chapter layout	9
1.9 Summary	10

CHAPTER TWO: MEASURING SERVICE QUALITY IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

2.1	Introduction	11
2.2	What is tourism?	12
2.2.1	Sustainable tourism	12
2.2.2	Advantages and disadvantages of tourism	13
2.3	Tourist attractions	14
2.3.1	Tourist attractions in the Western Cape	15
2.4	What is service?	18
2.5	Service quality	20
2.5.1	Tourist arrivals at Cape Point National Park	22
2.5.2	Determinants of service quality	23
2.5.2.1	Good and bad word of mouth	25
2.6	Customer satisfaction	26
2.6.1	Different priorities for different consumers (segmenting the market)	29
2.7	Customer service relationships at Cape Point National Park	31
2.8	Who is responsible for quality service?	32
2.8.1	Hands-on management	35
2.8.2	Motivate and train employees	37
2.8.2.1	Ways to recognise excellent work	40
2.8.2.2	Development of a service quality programme	41
2.9	Measuring customer service	41
2.9.1	Instruments used to measure service quality	44
2.9.1.1	SERVQUAL as an instrument	44
2.10	Summary	47

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	50
3.2	Objectives of the study	50
3.3	Research methodology	51
3.3.1	Literature search	51
3.3.2	Research approach: quantitative data solicitation	52
3.3.3	Research approach: qualitative data solicitation	53

3.4	Research Design	53
3.4.1	Description of the research population	54
3.5	Data collection method (questionnaire structure and design)	56
3.5.1	Survey objectives	58
3.5.2	Survey project	59
3.6	Articulation of findings	59
3.7	Summary	59

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1	Introduction	60
4.2	Response	60
4.2.1	Geographic description of respondents	61
4.2.2	Demographic profile of respondents	62
4.2.3	Employment status of respondents	62
4.2.4	Frequency of travel	63
4.2.5	Length of stay in the Western Cape	64
4.2.6	Major attractions visited by respondents	64
4.2.7	Rating service at CPNP	65
4.2.8	Service levels at CPNP as opposed to international standard levels	66
4.2.9	Quality of services received	67
4.2.10	Service received described as caring	68
4.2.11	Service received described as individualized	69
4.2.12	Service received described as dependable	70
4.2.13	Service received described as accurate	71
4.2.14	Service received described as consistent	72
4.2.15	Service received described as prompt	73
4.2.16	Service personnel described as knowledgeable	74
4.2.17	Service personnel described as courteous	75
4.2.18	Service providers at CPNP take all needs into consideration	76
4.2.19	Trained staff at CPNP	77
4.2.20	Service received is what CPNP promotes	77
4.2.21	Service received was exactly what was desired from CPNP	78
4.2.22	Physical environment described as appealing	79

4.2.23 Quality of service differs at various attractions within the Western Cape	80
4.2.24 Returning to CPNP because of good service	81
4.2.25 Word-of-mouth marketing	81
4.3 Summary	82

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction	84
5.2 Conclusions drawn after the Research	84
5.2.1 Conclusions: research objective 1	85
5.2.2 Conclusions: research objective 2	85
5.2.3 Conclusions: research objective 3	86
5.2.4 Conclusions: research objective 4	86
5.2.5 Conclusions: research objective 5	87
5.3 Recommendations	87
5.4 Limitations to the study	88
5.5 Conclusion	89

REFERENCES	91
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ADDENDUM 1: SAMPLE SIZE TABLE	97
ADDENDUM 2: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE	98
ADDENDUM 3: COVERING LETTER FOR SURVEY	101
ADDENDUM 4: GRAMMARIAN CERTIFICATE	102

LIST OF TERMS

ACSA	Airports Company South Africa
CPNP	Cape Point National Park
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
DEDT	Department of Economic Development and Tourism
LED	Local Economic Development
NDT	National Department of Tourism
SA	South Africa
SANParks	South African National Parks
SERVQUAL	An instrument to measure service
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
TGCSA	Tourism Grading Council of South Africa
US	University of Stellenbosch
UWC	University of the Western Cape
VFR	Visiting Friends and Relatives
WCPG	Western Cape Provincial Government
WOM	Word-of-mouth

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1.1** Research population
- Figure 2.1** Quarter 1, 2008-2009 Tourist arrivals at attractions
- Figure 2.2** Determinants of perceived service quality
- Figure 2.3** Potential relationships among service quality dimensions, satisfaction and word-of-mouth
- Figure 2.4** Service qualities model
- Figure 3.1** ACSA Cape Town International Airport Arrivals
- Figure 4.1** Geographic profile of international tourists (respondents)
- Figure 4.2** Gender of respondents
- Figure 4.3** Employment status of respondents
- Figure 4.4** Frequency of travel
- Figure 4.5** Length of holiday
- Figure 4.6** Other major attractions visited in the Western Cape
- Figure 4.7** Service levels at Cape Point National Park
- Figure 4.8** Service levels at Cape Point National Park as opposed to international standard levels
- Figure 4.9** Quality of service received exceeded expectations of respondents
- Figure 4.10** Service received can be described as caring
- Figure 4.11** Service received described as individualized
- Figure 4.12** Service that I experienced was dependable
- Figure 4.13** Service that I experienced was accurate
- Figure 4.14** Consistent service experienced throughout Cape Point National Park experience
- Figure 4.15** Service that I received was responsive, since it was prompt
- Figure 4.16** Service personnel described as knowledgeable
- Figure 4.17** Service personnel described as courteous
- Figure 4.18** Service providers at Cape Point National Park took all needs into consideration in terms of service delivery
- Figure 4.19** Cape Point National Park employees have been adequately trained to deliver a world class service
- Figure 4.20** Service that was received is in line with Cape Point National Park's promotion and advertising material

Figure 4.21 Service that was received at Cape Point National Park is exactly what was desired from Cape Point National Park

Figure 4.22 Physical environment (including staff) was appealing

Figure 4.23 Service staff at selected attractions within the Western Cape differ by the quality of the service that they offer

Figure 4.24 Visiting the attraction again because the quality of the service is an option/consideration

Figure 4.25 Respondents will inform friends and family about the service quality received at Cape Point National Park

LIST OF ADDENDAE

Addendum 1	Sample size table
Addendum 2	Research questionnaire
Addendum3	Covering letter for survey
Addendum 4	Grammarian certificate

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research topic and provides a background to the research study, its purpose and objectives, as well as the research methodology that was used to obtain the required research data. The chapter acts as a foundation on which the research was built, as it outlines various chapters that follow Chapter One.

1.1.1 Background and rationale for the research

In the opinion of the researcher the natural beauty of the Western Cape, which is complemented by its famous hospitality, cultural diversity, excellent wine and cuisine, make the province one of the world's greatest tourist attractions. Hence, the Western Cape is visited by tourists from all over the world, who hope to enjoy its famous beaches, its renowned wine farms and, importantly, tourism locations such as the Victoria & Alfred (V&A) Waterfront, Table Mountain, Robben Island and the Cape Point National Park (CPNP), which have made South Africa famous as a premium tourist destination, in general, and the Western Cape, in particular.

Tourists have many different needs that are expected to be appeased by organisations that offer tourism services, and the satisfaction of these needs is the prime objective of a tourist destination that is in business to sustain profitability over a long term. Satisfying customers, according to Carr (1990:4), is worthwhile in its own right, while emphasising service in order to please tourists is a priority for most tourism destinations throughout the world.

Pleasing customers is as important today as it was in the past. According to Carr (1990:26), when a company sells a product or service, they are actually selling satisfaction and customer satisfaction depends on a product's (or service's) perceived performance in delivering value relative to a buyer's expectations (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2006:16). Hill, Self and Roche, (2002:5) agree that customer satisfaction is based on meeting or exceeding customers' requirements. Therefore, managing tourist attractions in the Western Cape should be based on what is

important to customers and themselves, and how they will deliver their services so that customer needs and the needs of the organisation may be satisfied.

The researcher has a keen interest in tourism management in the Western Cape and believes (because of personal experience) that services that are provided by various tourism attractions can be improved. Whereas service levels have improved in the private sector (wine farms, restaurants and the like), some of the attractions that are operated by local government have not fared that well. International customer satisfaction levels should be met by all the facilities that wish to create a sustainable competitive advantage so that they may have an edge over their competitors in the marketplace.

CPNP, one of the popular tourism attractions in the Western Cape, was selected as the research topic as mixed reviews of service quality were unearthed by a survey that was completed the National Department of Tourism in 2008. While some tourists that were interviewed during 2010 were impressed with service levels at CPNP, others indicated that the service was of a substandard quality. Hence the decision to investigate whether CPNP as a tourist attraction, is satisfying the needs of its customers was taken by the researcher so that she may see what could be done to improve the quality of service so that customer needs and expectations may be realised and, if possible, exceeded. Competition is increasing and there is slight or no product differentiation (Asher, 1996:11), therefore, focusing on service delivery will help organisations to have a competitive advantage. As CPNP competes against other tourist attractions such as the V&A Waterfront, Table Mountain, Kirstenbosch Gardens and the Winelands, the attraction should therefore offer an attractive and unique alternative experience in order to attract visitors. In a report titled *Leadership in Customer Service*, which was published on the Accenture website (2007:15), it was stated that South Africa's service delivery standards were ranked of the lowest in the world. A lack of customer service ethos, which leads to poor service levels, has been identified as a challenge towards tourism growth (National Department of Tourism, 2008:1).

Accompanying the report by Accenture titled *Leadership in Customer Service* in 2007, a survey, which was conducted by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), University of the Western Cape (UWC), University of Stellenbosch (US) and the firm African Equations and commissioned by Cape Town Routes Unlimited (CTRU), found that during the period of December 2008 to January 2009:

1. Of 700 respondents, seventy-seven percent asserted that the service that they experienced (IOL Travel, 2009) was reported to be good to excellent;
2. Fifty-four percent had nothing negative to say about service levels in the Western Cape; and
3. Two-hundred-and-twenty-five (fourteen percent) experienced bad levels of service.

According to the above-mentioned survey, although a majority of visitors were impressed by the service that they experienced in the Western Cape, 225 felt that the services were substandard. Hence, it is this 225 who will provide a negative opinion of tourism in the Western Cape when they speak to friends, colleagues and family members when they return to their place of residence in countries throughout the world.

According to Hill, Self, and Roche (2002:4), there is growing evidence of a linkage between customer satisfaction and loyalty. As loyal customers are not price sensitive (Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff & Terblanche, 2004:382), use of word-of-mouth (WOM) to promote an offering and tend to use the offering on more than one occasion, satisfying customers so that they move up the brand loyalty ladder is an important consideration for a tourist attraction such as CPNP. One of the key objectives of this research was to uncover poor service delivery (if such inefficiencies exist) so that recommendations on how to close such service gaps for the benefit of all stakeholders of CPNP could be made. The problem statement is presented below, which is followed by the key research questions that are associated with the problem after which the research objectives are outlined.

1.2 Research problem statement

According to research that was conducted in 2007 by CPUT, UWC, US and African Equations, which was commissioned by CTRU, the level of service that was offered at the time by CPNP did not meet international standards. As the Western Cape is

competing against other countries for international visitors the researcher decided to investigate the current level of service at CPNP, which as stated previously is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Cape.

The research problem is that CPNP relies heavily on international tourists to sustain itself and the research which was conducted by CPUT, UWC, US and African Equations in 2007 has indicated that the level of service was not up to international standards. As visits by international guests to the Western Cape has a marked impact on the local economy, the researcher decided to undertake a research study to investigate such service levels at CPNP to see whether service has been improved subsequent to the research that was conducted in 2007, and how the current service compares to the expectations of the international tourists.

1.3 Key research questions

In order to measure service levels at CPNP, whether the service that is being offered by CPNP meets international tourist expectations should be determined. Key research questions pertaining to determining service quality are outlined below:

1. What are the determinants (criteria) of service quality?
2. What is the most appropriate method to measure customer service quality?
3. What is the current level of quality in terms of services offered by CPNP?
4. What interventions can be implemented to improve service?
5. What obstacles prevent the implementation of measures to continuously improve customer service?
6. Is there a need for improved service at the selected tourism attraction?
7. What are the views and opinions of tourists regarding customer services at the attraction?

After determining the level service quality and how it was measured at CPNP in terms of its standards, corrective action should be established where gaps exist. This leads to the research objectives that are presented next.

1.4 Research objectives

The research objectives were derived from the key questions above and prepared the foundation for questions that are found in the research questionnaire. The research objectives based on the Parasuraman GAPS model are as follows:

1. To determine whether the service level as experienced by international visitors to CPNP is meeting customer needs and expectations;

2. To determine whether service gaps exist from an international visitor perspective so that action may be taken to close such gaps;
3. To establish whether there is a gap between what management at CPNP perceive service quality should be in relation to what is being experienced there;
4. To identify the current level of service quality at CPNP and to eliminate the service quality specifications versus service delivery gap if any exists;
5. To establish whether CPNP promotional activity 'walks the talk'. In other words, whether what has been advertised by CPNP is what is being facilitated by the attraction, and if this is not the case, what should be done by CPNP to close the service delivery versus external communications gap? and
6. Lastly, to determine the perceptions of service quality of international visitors and make recommendations (if necessary) to improve service levels on an on-going basis so that CPNP can enjoy the long-term custom of both local and international visitors.

1.5 Delimitation of the research

The Western Cape has six regions, namely: Cape Overberg; Cape Town, Cape West Coast; Cape Winelands; the Karoo and the Klein Karoo and Garden Route, which offer a range of diverse attractions and welcoming communities (Cape Town Routes Unlimited, n.d). Amongst these six regions there are six major attractions, which include the V&A Waterfront, Table Mountain, the Cable Way, Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, Robben Island, various wine routes and CPNP. Although information pertaining to other visitor attractions is provided in Chapter Two of this study, the primary focus is on the CPNP tourism attraction.

1.6 Research methodology and design

The research methodology briefly discusses the literature review that explains the sources which were used to complete the study, the research design, the data collection methodology and how the data were collected, collated and analysed.

1.6.1 Literature search

A literature search was completed in order to have a better understanding of the subjects of service and service quality. This formed the foundation on which the study was built. The source of secondary data included textbooks, journals, academic papers, government policies, newspapers articles, conference presentations and the Internet. The primary data were collected by means of questionnaires which were completed by international visitors who visited CPNP.

1.6.1.1 Relevant and particular normative criteria from the literature pertaining to stated research problem

The literature includes an explanation of service, a description of the various tourist attractions in the Western Cape and the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985:47), which is a tool to establish service quality and gaps in such service quality.

1.6.2 Empirical survey

Research is a process that involves obtaining scientific knowledge by means of various objective methods and procedures (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:2). Furthermore, research is an activity that involves an investigation into a phenomenon with a view to improve understanding of the problem (or opportunity) through a process of collecting and analysing data that was obtained by following a universally accepted procedure (Allen-Ile, 2008:1). However, in order to acquire knowledge and to solve problems, a scientific methodology should be used and by utilising a logical and systematic approach, a researcher can obtain a deeper understanding of what is studied. A scientific methodology approach helps a researcher to maintain control of the research that is undertaken, and to define clearly what concepts mean to avoid confusion (Allen-Ile, 2008:1).

In order to obtain the requisite data, a questionnaire was compiled, which was first piloted and then distributed to visitors at CPNP whilst they were travelling from the attraction. In-depth interviews were also used to discuss the subject with international visitors, and to solicit the required research data. The interviews helped to obtain additional input that was not covered in the questionnaire.

1.6.2.1 Description of the research population

The research population is categorised into three components, which can be seen in Figure 1.1 below. The components are:

1. Description of the total possible research population;
2. Identification of the target research population, which, in collaboration with the supervisors and the statistician, can be any pre-determined percentage of a scientifically acceptable representative sample of the total research population mentioned in 1 above; and
3. A statement to the effect that a final response population figure will be decided on in collaboration with the supervisors and the statistician, which, at the time,

represents a given percentage of the target population whose responses will be the subject of the statistical analysis (see illustration below).



Figure 1.1 Research population

Source: Allen-Ile, 2008

Population refers to every element that exists at CPNP that is likely to be affected by the findings of this investigation. As the population of international travellers was too large, and as the data collection project was conducted within a confined timeframe, a sample from the population had to be drawn. A sample is a sub-set of the population from which data is collected for the research and upon which analysis is undertaken and findings made and applied to the population. The population and sample size are further discussed in Chapter Three of the study. Data analysis is discussed next.

1.6.3 Statistical analysis

Both quantitative as well as qualitative data were collected in order to obtain the requisite data needed to meet the research objectives. Quantitative methods included the questionnaire that the population sample had to complete regarding their perceptions of service levels at CPNP whilst the qualitative method include the face-to-face interviews that were conducted where views, opinions and attitudes were solicited. As the questionnaire contained questions that were mainly qualitative in nature and as some questions required respondents to rank statements in terms of importance, a hybrid approach was used (combination of both a qualitative and a quantitative strategy). Analysis of the closed-ended and ranked questions in the survey is presented in the form of tables, bar charts and pie charts to facilitate user-friendliness and ease of reading.

1.6.4 Expression and interpretation of findings

Once statistical analysis of the empirical data had been finalised, the results were interpreted and the findings were presented and analysed with the aid of tables, charts and figures and by textual explanation of each. Interpretation of the data is found in Chapter Four of the study.

1.7 Clarification of concepts

The term 'visitor' is used interchangeably with the terms 'customer' and 'tourist' during the course of the thesis. Tourists can be classified by purpose of visit. Conventionally, the following three categories are used:

1. Leisure and recreation – including holiday, sports and cultural tourism and visiting friends and relatives;
2. Other tourism purposes – including study and health tourism; and
3. Business and professional – including meetings, conferences, missions, and incentive and business tourism (Cooper, Gilbert, Fletcher & Wanhill, 2005:18).

The SERVQUAL (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985:47), instrument is used to measure service quality based on the differences between perceptions and expectations of customers regarding various dimensions of service quality.

1.8 Chapter layout

A short description of the content of each chapter follows.

1.8.1 Chapter One

Chapter One provides an introduction to the research and discussed the problem under investigation. It also presents the objectives of the study, as well as the research methodology that was used to collect data. The delimitation of the research is also covered in the chapter.

1.8.2 Chapter Two

Chapter Two reflects the results of the literature search of the study, which includes an overview of the Western Cape, tourism, tourist attractions, service quality, as well as the issue of customer satisfaction. Chapter Two also discusses the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985:47), which is the instrument that was used to uncover gaps in service quality at CPNP. The model also shows how these gaps can be closed, should any service gaps exist.

1.8.3 Chapter Three

Chapter Three discusses the population applicable to the study and how the research sample was drawn from the population. The chapter includes the process that was used to collect the requisite research data and how it was analysed. This chapter also includes information regarding the instrument that was used to collect data.

1.8.4 Chapter Four

Chapter Four presents the findings of the research and an analysis of the research findings. The information garnered from the analysis of the research data was used to draw conclusions and to suggest recommendations to solve the problems that were unearthed during the study.

1.8.5 Chapter Five

Chapter Five contains the conclusions that were drawn from the research findings of the study and the recommendations that were proposed to assist CPNP to improve levels of service that the attraction currently offers its visitors.

1.9 Summary

This chapter introduced the topic of the study and the importance of maintaining service quality in the tourism industry. It also discussed the background of the study and the rationale for selecting the research topic. Thereafter, the research problem was outlined, as were the key research questions, the research objectives, the delimitation and the research methodology. Finally, the chapter is concluded with a brief layout of each of the various chapters, which comprises the research study. The following chapter, Chapter Two, presents and discusses the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

MEASURING SERVICE QUALITY IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

2.1 Introduction

The Western Cape is one of South Africa's premier tourism destinations. The Western Cape Province is renowned for its world-famous landmarks such as Table Mountain, its vast Cape Winelands, its most exquisite coastline and the CPNP (SA venues.com). The Western Cape is one of the principal tourist areas in South Africa and is a region which has majestic mountains, valleys, wide sandy beaches and attractive scenery (Van Dyk, 2004:8). Ms Brown (2005) notes that the Western Cape prides itself on being able to offer visitors an "...exceptional Cape-flavoured combination of natural splendour, cultural tradition, entertainment and world-class meetings and convention opportunities". This variety was recognised last year by Conference and Travel Publications, a respected United Kingdom (UK) magazine, which named Cape Town as the number one long-haul destination for the second year in succession. This 'trends and spends' survey was based on research that was gathered from planners of meetings and incentive travel throughout the UK. The Western Cape has many attractions (scenery, people, history and culture), which serve as a primary reasons for people to visit the province.

Tourism potential is one of Cape Town's greatest assets as it generates income and creates jobs, business and other opportunities (Cape Town, 2008). International arrivals to South Africa looked positive, with 2,655,199 tourists visiting the country during the fourth quarter of 2009. This shows a growth of 1.8% when compared to the same period of 2008 (Cape Town Routes Unlimited, 2010).

In order to have a continuous influx of tourists, focus on service delivery is important as this will help attractions to have competitive advantages. As CPNP competes with other tourist attractions, the attraction should offer an attractive alternative in order to attract the custom of visitors to the Western Cape. Pizam and Ellis suggest that customer satisfaction is essential to all businesses because "it increases repeat purchases and word-of-mouth recommendations"(1999:326). The subject tourism is discussed next.

2.2 What is tourism?

Tourism can be defined as travelling for various reasons, including recreational or leisure purposes, but for not more than one consecutive year. A tourist can be a domestic tourist, a regional tourist or an overseas tourist. "A tourist travels for different purposes including business, leisure, conference and incentive" (DEAT 1996:vi). Zehrer (2009:332) defined tourism as "a service-intensive industry that is dependent on the quality of customers' service experiences and their consequent assessments of satisfactions or dissatisfaction". Tourism potential is one of the Western Cape's greatest assets; it is a large, successful and viable industry and contributes towards the prosperity of the province in terms of its economy, culture and environment.

Attractions form a key component, which offers visitors an opportunity to explore the sights, facilities and wonders of a destination. An attraction provides the single most important reason for leisure tourism to a destination and is a focus for recreation (Cooper, Fletcher, Wanhill, Gilbert & Shepherd, 1998:290). Baum (1993:3) states that it is obvious that tourism is concerned with people and that the tourism product is about people and is dependant, in terms of delivery, on the human factor. Tourism can only be successful if it provides a satisfactory experience for visitors. It should however, endeavour to improve the quality of life of the local population, as well as protect the local environment and its resources. The topic of sustainable tourism is presented below.

2.2.1 Sustainable tourism

Tourism can either be seen as a short-term endeavour to improve the livelihoods of people, or a long-term journey to satisfy all stakeholder needs. The latter refers to sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism is tourism development that avoids damage to the environment, the economy and various cultures of locations where it takes place. The aim of sustainable tourism is to ensure that development is a positive experience for local people, tourism companies, and tourists themselves (Fathom, n.d.). The United Nations' World Tourism Organization (NUWTO) defines sustainable tourism as tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions, while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. The Western Cape should commit itself to strive for sustainable tourism as it will ensure that income from

international visitors will be sustained over a long period of time. They should also increase the awareness of tourism in the country and promote tourism so that the benefits thereof may be enjoyed for generations to come. Teaching the community the importance of tourism should have a positive effect on the tourism industry because the more aware the community is, the better they will treat the environment and tourists who visit the area. This will mean that not only will business people and businesses have a positive attitude towards tourism, but the community will also understand how it will benefit them. In other words, by offering sustainable tourism, a province such as the Western Cape will be able to elongate the lifecycle of its tourism offerings, and thereby sustain long-term income for the benefit of all in the province. The benefits and shortcomings of tourism are discussed below.

2.2.2 Advantages and disadvantages of tourism

Tourism can have a positive, as well as a negative impact on tourist destinations and their surrounding areas.

2.2.2.1 Advantages of tourism

There are a number of benefits of tourism for both tourists as well as for the host destination. Tourism comprises five sectors, namely: accommodation, attractions, food and beverage services, transport and travel services. This means that the tourism industry encapsulates several careers. Tourism creates employment for local citizens and generates income for the region and country, which results in an increase in the standard of living of citizens, whilst conversely unemployment decreases (Sciaga, 2009). Swarbrooke (2002:25) agrees by asserting that attractions directly and indirectly provide jobs, which in turn creates income for those who are employed in the industry. The government also benefits from tourism as it taxes the employers and employees at the various attractions (income tax), while it also benefits from sales taxes that are paid on items that are bought at the attractions.

2.2.2.2 Disadvantages of tourism

Swarbrooke (2002:29) asserts that when considering tourism, "...one may only see the benefits that are generated by tourism, however, tourism can also have disadvantages as visitors could have a negative impact on the environment..." if the environment is not afforded protection. Sometimes a destination is spoiled by litter,

graffiti, vandalism and noise because tourists do not always respect areas where they do not reside. The same often applies to traditional cultures at a tourism destination. Tourists can cause environmental damage through forest fires, destruction of sand dunes and pollution. Consequently, this impacts negatively on tourism as increased pollution affects local residents and discourages tourism as visitors do not want to visit areas that have experienced environmental damage caused by tourists. Negative impacts naturally have a resultant adverse snowball effect on the local economy (Sciaga, 2009).

Lower level positions in the leisure industry such as maids, cooks and waiters are usually occupied by local residents. Swarbrooke (2002:26) posits that “people are poorly paid in such positions”, and are often considered to be exploited because of business owners favouring tourists at the expense of local workers. It is, therefore, important that everyone in the tourism value chain should benefit fairly from tourism. As attractions is one of the most important reasons for travel, a discussion on tourism attractions and particularly the most popular attractions in the Western Cape follows.

2.3 Tourist attractions

Often the primary reason for a visitation is to see the attractions at a destination. Bennett (2000:9) agrees by stating that tourist attractions form the basis of tourism and without the attractions, people would have little motivation to visit a tourist destination. Attractions can be defined as something unusual or interesting to see or do. There are three types of attractions, namely natural, man-made and socio-cultural attractions (Bennett, 2000:43). Attractions are arguably the most important component in the tourism system. According to Swarbrooke (2002:3), attractions are the main motivators for tourist trips and comprise the core of the tourism product. Therefore, without attractions there would be no need for other tourism services.

Attractions can have three types of impact namely: economic, environmental and socio-cultural (Swarbrooke, 2002:25). However, when purchasing the tourism product, the client also buys the skills, services and commitment of a range of human contributors to the experience that they are about to embark upon (Baum, 1993:4). Hence the tourism product consists of the attraction itself and the services that are

provided at such a facility, which is the sum of all the activities that are generated by humans. Various tourist attractions in the Western Cape are discussed next.

2.3.1 Tourist attractions in the Western Cape

The Western Cape has so much to offer visitors to the area and the following represents some of the most popular tourist attractions that may be found and experienced in the area.

2.3.1.1 Cape Point National Park

The Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve covers 7,750 unspoiled hectares of the southernmost part of the Cape Peninsula and stretches from Schuster's Bay in the west to Smitswinkel Bay on the False Bay coast in the east (Van Dyk, 2004:118). The Cape Peninsula Scenic Route is along the Indian Ocean to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve. CPNP is a world of unlimited fascination where "fynbos endures relentless elements to perpetuate the species and cloak the ground in colourful splendour after the winter rains (to the botanist), but to the tourist it is a tranquil place of unsurpassed loneliness, with a soothing silence, which suggests that this is nature's realm, where man is welcome to take only memories, and leave only footprints" (Sunsetbeach, n.d.). There are various facilities available at CPNP, including a restaurant and a curio shop (Van Dyk, 2004:119).

2.3.1.2 V&A Waterfront

North of Cape Town City lies the Victoria and Alfred (V&A) Waterfront shopping complex and the Cape Town Harbour (Van Dyk, 2004:50). Situated between Robben Island and Table Mountain in the heart of Cape Town's working harbour, the V&A Waterfront has become South Africa's most visited attraction. Set against a backdrop of magnificent sea and mountain views, shopping and entertainment venues are intermingled with office locations, world-class hotels and luxury apartments in the residential marina (Cape Town, 2009). Highlights of the V&A Waterfront include an undercover craft market, a huge food court, a brewery, the Victoria Wharf shopping centre, a theatre, a marine aquarium, two floating museums, guided walks, boat trips, live entertainment, luxury hotels and several fine restaurants and pubs (Van Dyk, 2004:79).

2.3.1.3 Table Mountain Cable Way

The original aerial cableway was built in 1929, but the new Rotair Aerial Cableway has been operating since 1997. The round 65-passenger cable car runs from the Lower Cable Station in Tafelberg Road to the Upper Cable Station and is located at 1067 meters, at the western tip of Table Mountain (Van Dyk, 2004:72). The top of Table Mountain offers spectacular views in all directions and gives a bird's eye view of the city. The upper cable car station is situated at 1067 metres and the revolving cable car makes sure that the trip up and down provides a good look in all directions. Once at the top, there are follow paths to various look-outs, with telescopes and a light meal or sundowners can be enjoyed at the restaurant. During summer, early evening is a good time as the sunsets are beautiful (About Cape Town, 2007).

2.3.1.4 Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens

The Western Cape is one of great scenic beauty. The Cape's floral kingdom is famous throughout the world for its beauty and it houses many endemic animals, birds and flowers, which contribute to its natural attraction (Van Dyk, 2004:30). Kirstenbosch is a botanical garden, which is enriched with South Africa's floral heritage and amongst it are famous proteas and the Cape's unique fynbos vegetation (Joyce, 2004:73). Kirstenbosch forms part of Table Mountain and is a real African marvel. In addition to the spectacular gardens on the mountain slopes, Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens also offers visitors an excellent restaurant and tearoom (McIntosh, 2004:18, 176).

2.3.1.5 Robben Island

People lived on Robben Island thousands of years ago, when the sea channel between the Island and the Cape mainland was not covered with water (Robben-Island, 2009). Since the Dutch settled at the Cape in the mid-1600s, Robben Island was used as a hospital for people who suffered with leprosy, and the mentally incapacitated and chronically ill (1846-1931). It was also used as a training and defence station during World War II (1939-1945). Thereafter Robben Island was used primarily as a prison (Robben-Island, 2009). Robben Island was used as a convict island (Van Dyk, 2004:80). It was here that the former South African President and Nobel Laureate, Nelson Mandela, and former South African President, Kgalema Motlanthe, alongside many other political prisoners spent decades being imprisoned

during the apartheid era. Although the purpose and use of the island changed a number of times over the last century or so, it more recently gained international notoriety as a prison for contemporary political figures. Since 1997 it has been used as a museum and declared a world heritage site.

2.3.1.6 The Cape Wine Routes

Dining really does go together with its often-used rhyme, wining (Cape Town Travel, n.d.). The Cape Wine Industry is one of the best-known industries of the Western Cape and has become a major tourist attraction over the last decade (Van Dyk, 2004:18). Along the Cape Wine Route are some of the best wines, which have won numerous gold awards. The Route includes Paarl, Wellington, Stellenbosch and Franschoek. However, there are also other winelands such as Constantia, Steenberg, Durbanville, Darling and the Walker Bay winelands.

2.3.1.7 The Cape Overberg region

Between the months of June and November and often as late as January, whale watching can be experienced from the shores or whilst on a boat ride. Hermanus has the status of being the best land-based whale watching attraction in the world (Hermanus, n.d.). Gansbaai offers a hiking trail along its cliffs with fantastic views of the protected coves in which the whales wallow and approach close to the shore. Hermanus not only offers scenic beauty, but also a modern infrastructure, craft markets, up market shops and adventure facilities (Hermanus, n.d.).

2.3.1.8 The Garden Route region

The Garden Route tourist region lies along the coastal region of the Breede River mouth up to the Tsitsikamma National Park and the Storms River mouth in the west. It is a garden-like area with evergreen forests, several island lakes and sandy beaches. Towards the interior, the region is enveloped by towering mountains, which are breached by breathtaking passes and gorges (Van Dyk, 2004:242).

In order to enjoy such attractions, the tourism service providers should provide visitors with world class service, hence the subject of service is discussed below.

2.4 What is service?

Service is an important part of many companies' value propositions (Buttle, 2004:241). The tourism industry throughout the world prides itself on its customer focus and commitment to service excellence (Mahesh, 1993:24). Grönroos (2001:150) asserts that services are processes and Freemantle (1993:127) declares that customer service is a practice and not a theory. The characteristics of services differ from that of products, however, all products have some form of service involved when the transaction takes place (Wright, 1999:133). According to Edvardsson (1998), when service takes place the customer is present and, therefore, affects the results in terms of added value and quality.

Zehrer (2009:334) describes service as a complicated phenomenon. Services are known to be inseparable, intangible, perishable and variable (Wright, 1999:134). Bennett (2000:231, 232) agrees by stating that service has several characteristics, which include in separability, intangibility, perishability, heterogeneity and that ownership cannot be transferred. This means that the service cannot be evaluated before purchase, as it is intangible (Mahesh, 1993:25). Buttle (2004:232) agrees that service cannot be seen, tasted, or sensed in other ways before consumption.

A service cannot be inseparable from the provider; thus the service provider forms part of the package. A sample of a service cannot be sent for customer approval in advance of purchase (Mahesh, 1993:25). A service is a process that leads to an outcome during a partly simultaneous production and consumption process (Grönroos, 2001:150). Mahesh (1993:25) states that sales, production, and consumption of service take place almost simultaneously. Grönroos (2001:150) agrees by stating that consumption and production are partially simultaneous activities and that customers participate in the service production process. Buttle (2004:232) also agrees by stating that unlike goods that can be manufactured in one time and location and consumed at a later time in another location, services are produced at the same time and place that they are consumed and, therefore, the service and the service provider are inseparable. Swarbrooke (2002:42) states that the service product is perishable and cannot be stored and this is supported by Buttle (2004:233) which states that Services also cannot be held in inventory for sale at a later time. Kang and James (2004:267) state that the interactive nature of service

refers to the two-way flow that occurs between the customer and the service provider.

Service, especially those with a high labour content, is heterogeneous: their performance often varies from producer to producer, from customer to customer, and from day to day (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985:42). As stated above, when a customer purchases a service, they do not gain possession of anything, thus ownership cannot be transferred (Bennett, 2000: 231, 232). Mahesh (1993:25) asserts that service cannot be centrally produced, inspected, stock-piled or warehoused. It is usually delivered to the consumer by people who are beyond the immediate influence of management.

Presently international markets have increasingly become a priority within even the smallest of companies. These international markets are larger, and hence offer greater revenue opportunities (Chaston, 1993:181, 182). Mahesh (1993:25) adds that quality control over a service requires monitoring of processes and attitudes of staff. Quality of service arises from the service encounter itself (Peters, 1999:6). However, Edvardsson (1998) argues that the service provider should be able to make the service tangible by presentation of the physical environment in the service organisation; property, equipment, employees and dress code are what the customer can observe. Buttle (2004:232) agrees that customers look for tangible cues to help them to make sensible choices. Customers might look at the appearance of the equipment and personnel, and view staff testimonials. Service marketers, therefore, should manage tangible evidence by “tangibilising the intangible” (Buttle, 2004:232). Employees that produce and deliver the product are part of the product; hence their attitudes, behaviour and appearance are crucial (Swarbrooke, 2002:41).

Unlike a bad product, bad service cannot be replaced. At best, sensitivity can be expressed to customer dissatisfaction and recover the situation with remarkably good service (Mahesh, 1993:25). Customers buy on the basis of quality, and this has awakened some organisations to the need to improve quality; however, improving the quality of the product alone does not guarantee success (Naumann & Shannon, 1992:44). Innovative approaches to satisfy and exceed the needs of the customer should occur in all areas of an organisation in order for the organisation to be

successful (Naumann & Shannon 1992:44). Tourists visit CPNP for an experience and the services offered at CPNP forms part of the experience. Service quality and related determinants are covered in the following section.

2.5 Service quality

As the nature of tourism and business services has been established, it can clearly be perceived that tourism is dynamic and that the main focus should be the customer. Customer service should be a fundamental and integral aspect of any business and should be given equal weight in strategic considerations about the company's future (Freemantle, 1993: xv).

Tack (1992:113) posits that organisations care for customers by satisfying their needs. Edvardsson (1998) also asserts that the concept of service should be approached from a customer's perspective, as this will form the perception of quality and determines whether the customer is satisfied or not. The author also adds that "successful service companies are characterised by their focus on the customers" (Edvardsson, 1998). Brink and Berndt (2008:26) state that successful companies never lose sight of their customers' demands and are careful to keep track of their customers' needs as they evolve and change. The definition of excellent service is based on past experience (Cook, 2008:16). Peoples' wants and needs change all the time hence, it is the responsibility of the tourism industry to continually know their customers' needs and to ensure enduring customer satisfaction.

The focus of competitive advantage has moved from internal processes and structure to markets and customers (Pizam & Ellis, 1999:326). Burnett (2001:57) agrees by stating that competitive advantage can be developed by customer-based thinking. Zehrer (2009:332) adds that competitive success of any service provider ultimately depends on customer satisfaction, which in turn, is ultimately determined by customers' experiences with service operations. Hurst, Niehm and Littrell (2009:512) suggest that tourism will increase when qualities such as personalised attention and genuine interaction with the customer is owned. Brown and Gulycz (2002:81) state that quality service leads to satisfied customers, loyal customers and ultimately increased revenue.

Freemantle (1993:123) states that customer service is a moving horizon, while the high standards of today can be the low standards in a few years time, therefore, constant improvement is a necessity. Quality means maintaining a certain standard of service and the provision of quality facilities. Customer care should be directed towards continuously improving the total quality of the organisation (Tack, 1992: 113). Cook (2008:2) agrees by stating that many companies have developed a strategy of providing superior customer care to differentiate their products and services. Quality means exceeding customer expectations (Taylor 1995:12). Peters (1999:8) agrees that creating quality is meeting and sometimes exceeding expectations. Swarbrooke (2002:315) states that offering a product of the right grade for the chosen market at an appropriate price, however, the customer-focused way to look at quality is to look through customers' eyes where quality is perceived in terms of the extent to which the product or service satisfies the needs and wants of the customer.

Cook (2008:2) affirms that having a customer-centred organisation, the business will benefit in the sense of enhancing its reputation, ensuring that service will be delivered correctly the first time. Peters (1999:6) states that a business should figure out what customers like, and deliver it in the same way every time so that customers will return, tell others about the business, and hence the business will become more successful. Zehrer (2009:333) agrees that the design of services has become an increasingly important issue in services management with emphasis on having a "service orientation". Therefore, quality and professionalism at CPNP should be a priority and should be promoted.

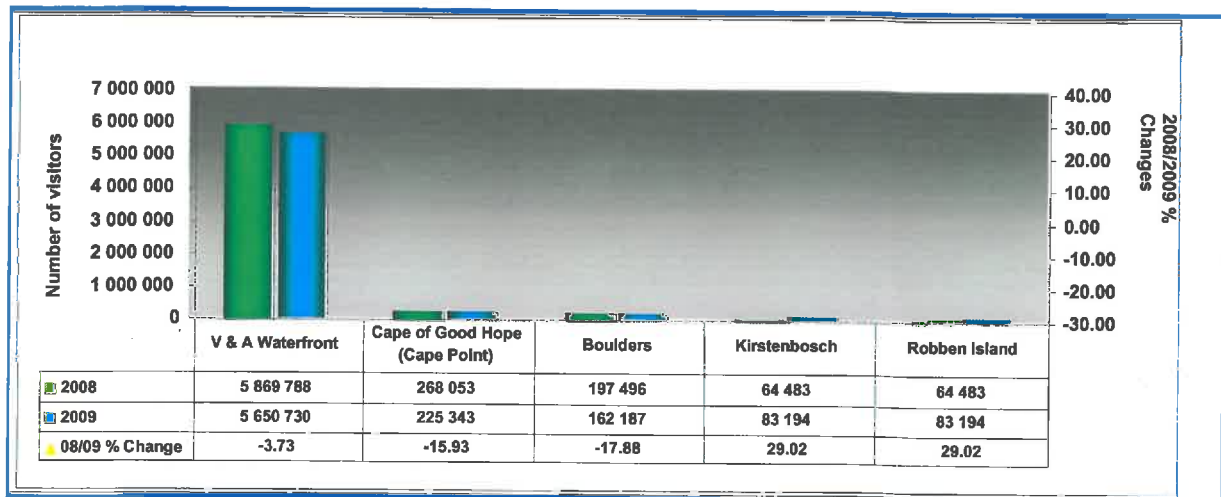
A customer-centred organisation can be described as a journey without an end point, whose purpose is to keep meeting and exceeding customer expectations (Cook, 2004:8). Hurst, Niehm and Littrell (2009:518) assert that commitment and involvement can only be conveyed to customers through service interactions and the relationship development efforts of retailers. Also, the concept of service augmentation stresses adding value above and beyond what is expected by the customer. Many companies presently regard quality as an essential part of their marketing strategy as they seek to achieve competitive advantage in the marketplace

by obtaining the reputation of being a quality organisation, which offers a quality product/service (Swarbrooke, 2002:315).

According to Edvardsson (1998), expectations which are created by marketing affect customers' perceptions. In addition to the marketing of an organisation, Szwarc (2005:5) states that every day customers encounter situations that can affect their views of a particular service. Emotional factors shape customers' judgment. Commenting on the research results that were released in 2007, that ranked South Africa's service delivery standards as the lowest in the world, the former Deputy President of South Africa, Baleka Mbete, via a recorded video message, told delegates that the customer service report has highlighted the need for the country to deal with the issue (Skills portal, n.d). Mbete further said that "...service quality is paramount to the success of the economy, but the country is simply not rising to the occasion. The essential skills needed for good customer care and service should be introduced as part of every tourism qualification" (Skills portal, n.d). According to Cook (2008:17), perceptions of services which customers receive depend on their expectations, hence if the treatment which the customer receives is better than his or her expectations, it would be excellent service, therefore, an organisation should strive to exceed customer expectations.

2.5.1 Tourist arrivals at CPNP

A comparison of the number of tourists that visited during the first quarter of 2008 and 2009 can be seen in Figure 2.1 below.



(Source: Cape Town Routes Unlimited-CTRU, 2009)

Figure 2.1 Quarter 1, 2008-2009 Tourist arrivals at attractions

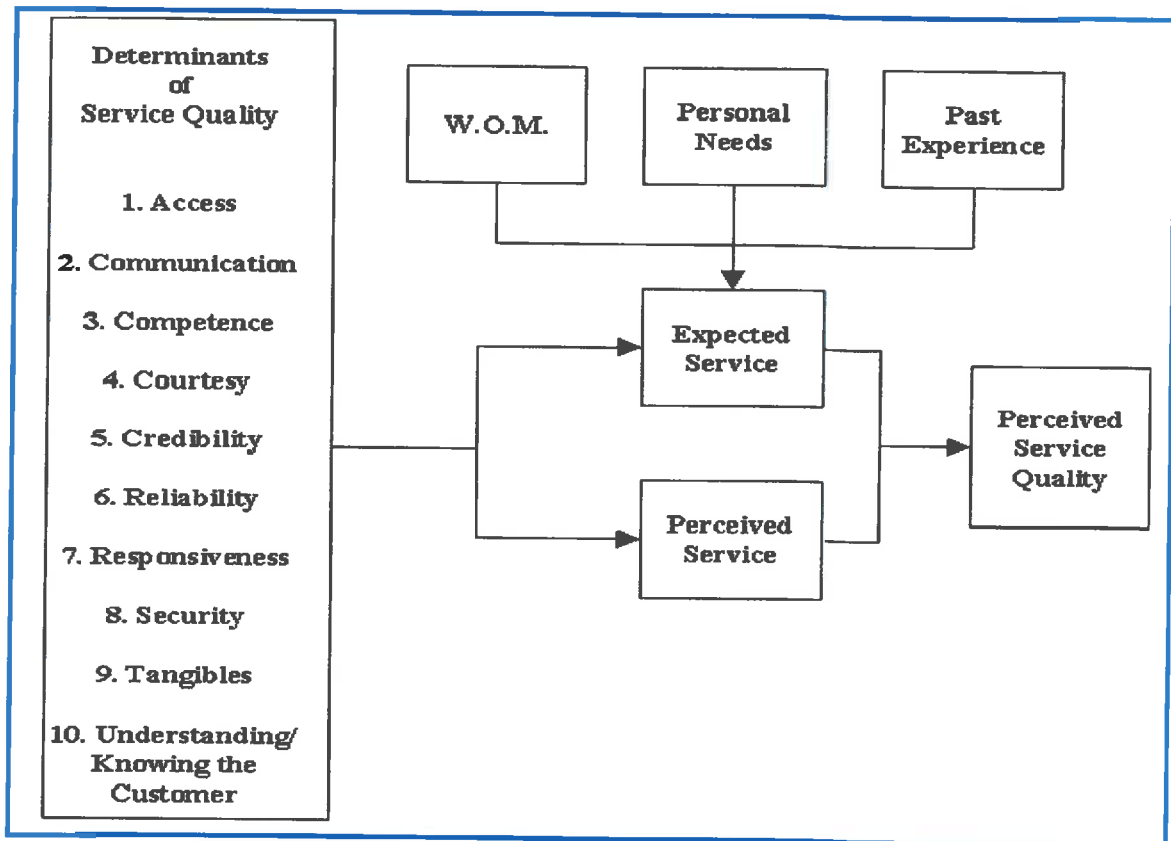
The above statistics reveal tourist figures for various attractions, which are mentioned before in Figure 2.1. It may be noted from the above figure that besides Kirstenbosch and Robben Island, CPNP, the V&A Waterfront and Boulders had a decrease in visitors during the period 2008 and 2009.

2.5.2 Determinants of service quality

Most researchers agree that customers' expectations are rarely concerned with a single aspect of the service package but rather with many aspects (Johnston, 1995:54). Parasuraman *et al.* (1985:47) propose a list of ten determinants of service quality as a result of their focus group studies with service providers and customers. These determinants include access, communication, competence, courtesy, credibility, reliability, responsiveness, security, tangibles and understanding (empathy). Access involves friendliness and simplicity of contact. Communication indicates keeping customers informed and listening to them. Customers become more comfortable and secure when they realise that employees are competent to handle critical incidents and customer complaints (Edvardsson, 1998). Parasuraman *et al.* (1985:47) agrees that "... competence means possession of the required skills and knowledge to perform the service". Courtesy entails politeness, respect, consideration, and friendliness of contact staff. Credibility entails trustworthiness, believability and honesty. It involves having the customer's best interest at heart. "Dependability and trust (reliability) are central components of the quality concept from the perspective of the customer. The customer wants to be assured that the

service will be delivered as agreed, that what they get, conforms to what has been promised and meets with their expectations” (Edvardsson, 1998). Parasuraman *et al.* (1985:47) argue that “...reliability involves consistency of performance and dependability”. Responsiveness refers to how willing and ready employees are to provide a service (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985:47). Tack (1992:207) states that if companies simply monitor customer complaints it will provide evidence of their success. Tack (1992:207) also adds that when any activity or operation is measured carefully, the results provide information that identifies problems and enables action to be taken rapidly to rectify them. Security is freedom from danger, risk, or doubt. Tangibles are the physical evidence of the service. Empathy refers to showing genuine interest in the customer. “It entails personal attentiveness, an ability ‘to enter’ into and identify with another person’s situation” (Edvardsson, 1998). The extra mile should be taken to understand and know customers’ needs (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985:47). Personal attention has proven to be a central quality factor (Edvardsson, 1998). Of course customers can be difficult; but this is their prerogative. It is not the prerogative of a service provider to provide bad service when confronted by an ill-mannered person (Tack, 1992:1). CPNP should consider these determinants when offering quality service to their customers.

Figure 2.2 below indicates that perceived service quality is the result of the consumer’s comparison of expected service with perceived service. It is quite possible that the relative importance of the 10 determinants in moulding consumer expectations (prior to service delivery) may differ from their relative importance *vis-à-vis* consumer perceptions of the delivered service (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985:47).



(Source: Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985:47)

Figure 2.2 Determinants of perceived service quality

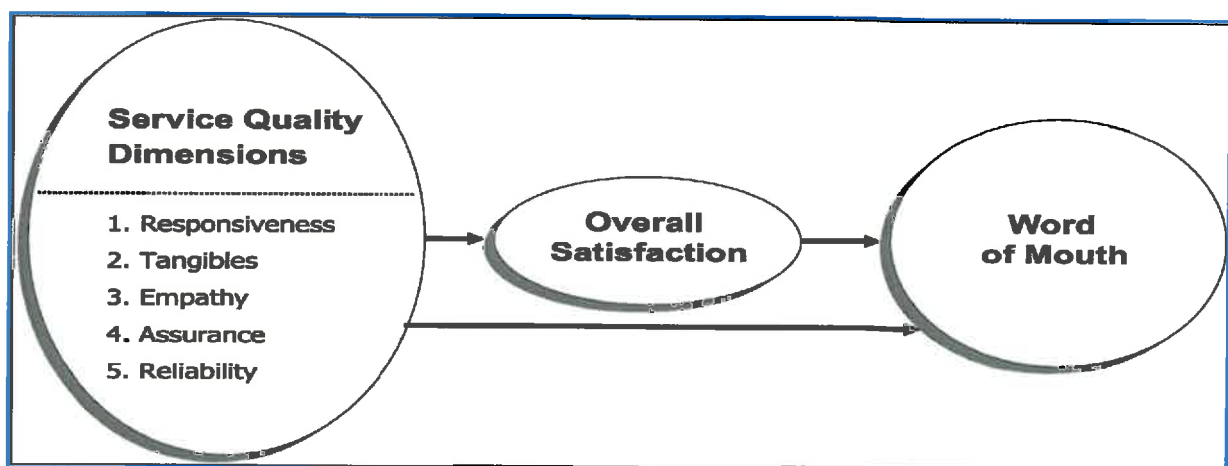
Two of the determinants, namely tangibles and credibility can be known in advance of purchase. Access, courtesy, reliability, responsiveness, understanding/knowing the customer and communication can only be known as the customer is purchasing the service. Competence and security cannot be evaluated even after purchase and consumption, and customers are probably never certain of these attributes (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985:48).

2.5.2.1 Good and bad word-of-mouth

Word-of-mouth (WOM) can be a determining factor of perceived service quality. Word-of-mouth refers to verbal communication between the actual or potential consumer and other people such as the product or service provider, independent experts, family and friends (Helm & Schlei, cited in Chaniotakis & Lymperopoulos, 2009:229). Edvardsson (1998) states that satisfied customers spread good news quickly. This is an inexpensive and effective marketing strategy, so according to Chaston (1993:21), companies that offer high levels of customer satisfaction will have greater success to continue to expand the total customer base and a high probability

that most new business comes via word-of-mouth referrals, which reduces the need for heavy promotional spending. Chaniotakis and Lympelopoulos (2009:230) agree that positive WOM could be considered by many marketers as perhaps one of the oldest forms of marketing communication and its values arise as a consequence of its impact on actual and potential buyers. Chaniotakis and Lympelopoulos (2009:229) state that service customers take heed of opinions and experiences of other individuals before making service purchase decisions, and they suggest that WOM reduces the risk that is associated with buying decisions. Szwarc (2005:6) suggests that the opinions and experiences of others that are viewed by customers as advocates shape opinions and so too do their sensory experiences and the services that they receive from other organisations.

In Figure 2.3 below 'satisfaction' and 'WOM' are included in the model of Chaniotakis and Lympelopoulos, as measurement variables.



(Source: Chaniotakis&Lympelopoulos, 2009:232)

Figure 2.3 Potential relationships among service quality dimensions, satisfaction and word-of-mouth

2.6 Customer satisfaction

Freemantle (1993:xiii) states that customer service is the final test. A company can get everything else right in terms of product, price, and marketing, but unless they complete the process with incredibly good service, the company runs the risk of losing business or even going out of business. According to the UNWTO (1985), customer satisfaction is a psychological concept that involves the feeling of well-being and pleasure that results from obtaining what a customer hopes for and expects from an appealing product and/or service. Vavra (1997:4) states that “the

definition of customer satisfaction characterises satisfaction as the end-state resulting from the experience of consumption". Hurst *et al.* (2009:519) posit that in order to accomplish the objective of customer satisfaction, organisations should study and know their target market and understand how they choose and evaluate service.

If customers' expectations are exceeded, then their experiences are positively confirmed. Therefore, satisfaction comes from the expectations of customers. The customers perceive in their minds what they want and once the service has been delivered, the customer will compare what has been perceived and what has been received. Customers perceive what they receive as the outcome of the service delivery process, but they also, and often more importantly perceive how the service delivery process functions (Kang & James, 2004:267). Parasuraman *et al.* (1985:42) state that service quality perceptions result from a comparison of consumer expectations with actual service performance. Edvardsson (1998) adds that "service should correspond to customers' expectations and satisfy their needs and requirements".

According to Johnson, Olsen and Andreassen (2009:4), customer satisfaction for each customer is a complex combination and emotional response. Perceptions of service can be formed from needs and wants, past experiences or word-of-mouth. In order to maintain good word-of-mouth marketing, companies should not only focus on the good aspects of the company, but also on the negative aspects in order to correct and improve them. A vast majority of dissatisfied customers do not complain whilst those who do, give the company valuable insights and opportunities to rescue the situation (Cook, 2008:18). Complaints and compliments highlight the dimensions of a product or service that customers really care about (Bennett, 2000: 252). Cook (2004:8) agrees by stating that this will help the company to improve on the current service delivery, as well as improve its short-comings. Customer feedback can be used to set service quality goals; both for internal, as well as external customers. It can also be used to drive the establishment of service standards. Without feedback from a company's customers, service can never be improved (Freemantle, 1993:94). Customer perceptions and feedback can generate the benefits of loyal customers and customer satisfaction (Hurst *et al.*, 2009:533).

Naumann (1995) and Peters (1999:7) state that nine out of ten dissatisfied customers will not complain, while several studies have found that it costs about five times as much in time, money and resources to attract new customers as it does to retain an existing customer. Bennett (2000:256) agrees that service providers should constantly be made aware of customer needs and expectations and whether these have been met. For every bad experience of service, research shows that customers tell ten other people (Cook, 2008:91) Therefore, it is necessary for service levels to be kept high and in the case of CPNP for tourists needs to be monitored continuously. Regular and timely feedback helps to promote improvement in service procedures by identifying areas of breakdown. Although quality assurance is essentially about doing the same thing over and over again as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible, effective quality assurance continually questions what people want. Monitoring service levels regularly will result in understanding the customer better and improve customer satisfaction. Service standards and procedures should be designed around the needs of customers. Although they should be specific, they should also be flexible enough to adjust to the special needs of customers (Bennett, 2000: 255).

It is sensible for CPNP to monitor what other attractions offer in terms of service. According to Swarbrooke (2002:139), successful attractions tend to be those which identify their competitors and set out to achieve a competitive advantage over them. If a company wants to compete in today's world, high quality services have to be offered, as studies have shown that firms that have a reputation for quality have much higher than average profit margins (Carr 1990:37-38). Lok Lee, & Hing (1995:293) agrees that a competitive advantage through high quality service is an increasingly important weapon in terms of business survival. To have a competitive advantage, the manner in which service is offered will determine the success. Pelletier (2005:165) states that customer service requires obsessive consumer attention to everything that a company can do to make customer service an extraordinary experience, all the time. It is also important to be obsessive in every way imaginable. Solicit feedback at every turn, covering both the good and the bad. Be obsessive about interacting with customers and become aware of their needs, wants, likes and dislikes.

Edvardsson (1998) explains that “quality improvement drives productivity and profitability”. Quality can be a ‘magic bullet’, which provides lower costs, higher customer service, better products and services and higher margins (Peters, 1999:7). According to Chaston (1993:20), companies that deliver the highest possible level of customer satisfaction are able to enjoy the benefits of greater customer loyalty, which result in higher repeat purchase rates, which lower marketing costs by reducing the number of customers that are lost to competition. Successful organisations should constantly be on the alert that high standards of customer care are practiced at all levels (Tack, 1992:207-208). Therefore the organisation should be customer focused or as Pelletier (2005:165) explains, it should be obsessed with the customer.

2.6.1 Different priorities for different customers (segmenting the market)

Organisations should know what their customers’ needs and wants are because tourists have unique needs and desires, and each tourist is potentially a separate market (Bennett, 2000: 200). Beatty, Mayer, Coleman, Reynolds and Lee, cited in Hurst *et al.* (2009:514), found that salespeople provided extra value for their customers by learning about their particular needs and catering to those needs. To segment a market is to be able to provide differentiated care on the basis of value.

Swarbrooke (2002:75) suggests one way of trying to deal with the complexity of the visitor attractions market and to look at the market in a way, which is helpful for marketing purposes, hence the practice of market segmentation. Brink and Berndt (2008:10) add that the prospect of cost effectively communicating, one-to-one, with all of an organisation’s customers is an impossible task. Instead, customers should be categorised or segmented based on what is known about them.

Buttle (2004:101) asserts that market segmentation is a process of dividing a market into more-or-less homogeneous subsets where it is possible to create a different value proposition. At the end of the process the company can decide which segment(s) it wants to serve. When it chooses a segment or segments, each segment can be served with a different value proposition. Furthermore, according to Nykamp (2001:7), the objective of customer segmentation is to identify logical, unique groups of customers that have similar characteristics and demonstrate similar behaviours that are relative to the purchase and use of an organisation’s

service/product. Nykamp (2001:80) further states that customer segmentation is a means of identifying unique customer groups that have different needs, expectations, and purchase behaviours.

Brown and Gulycz (2002:121) posit that by profiling customers and dividing them into segments, a company can target those groups more specifically to their needs. Davidson and Rogers (2006:77) agree by stating that segmentation analysis has been growing in importance over the past few decades, as its contribution to improving the effectiveness of an attraction and venue marketing has increasingly been recognised. Hurst *et al.* (2009:512) add that to be sustainable over time, tourism retailers should be able to balance service efforts to meet the needs and expectations of diverse customer segmentation. There are four (4) ways in which markets are segmented (Swarbrooke (2002:75) namely:

1. Geographically;
2. Demographically;
3. Psychographically; and
4. Behaviouristically.

According to Swarbrooke (2002:75), geographic segmentation refers to categorising people on the basis of where people in the market live and demographics refer to dividing the population into groups on the basis of their demographic characteristics such as age, gender and race. "Psychographics refer to differentiation of people on the basis of their attitudes and opinions and, lastly, behaviouristic refers to categorising people into groups in terms of their relationship with particular types of products, for example, whether or not they are first time users, or the benefits they seek from using a particular product" (Swarbrooke, 2002:75). However, there is a list of requirements when segmenting a market. A segment should be measurable (whether the targeted segment is growing or declining) and accessible (the segment should be reachable by the attractions' communication channels) (Davidson & Rogers, 2006:78).

McDonald and Dunbar (2004:55) outline the following advantages of segmentation:

1. Recognising customers' differences is key to successful marketing, as it can lead to a closer matching of customers' needs with the company's products or services;

2. Segmentation can lead to niche marketing, where appropriate, where the company can meet the needs of customers in that niche segment resulting in segment domination;
3. Segmentation can lead to the concentration of resources in markets where competitive advantage is greatest and returns are high;
4. Segmentation can be used to gain competitive advantage by enabling consideration to the market in different ways from competitors; and
5. By means of segmentation a company can market their company as a specialist in their chosen segments.

Therefore, management of service quality is important to the tourism industry; indeed, it is becoming increasingly important as a result of changing consumption patterns amongst tourists (Zehrer, 2009:3). CPNP can use segmentation to gain competitive advantage and ensure return visits as well as possibly exceeding customers' needs and expectations.

2.7 Customer service relationships at CPNP

“As customers begin to experience a better service, their expectations rises. The customer makes conscious and unconscious comparisons between different services experiences irrespective of the industry sector” (Cook, 2008:7).

Burnett (2001:344) and Pelletier (2005:123) assert that only 15% of communication is done via words, the other 85% consists of non-verbal communication, which includes gestures, facial expressions, and other means of communication. Therefore, factors that should be practiced when dealing with customers should include the body language of all employees as it has the potential to communicate more than two-thirds of what people try to convey to others. The tone of the voice of the service provider is also an important aspect of effective two-way communication. Other important issues include tact (this is essential, particularly when dealing with difficult, young, aged or foreign visitors.); customer identification (addressing customers by name where possible); attentiveness (service providers should be familiar with the needs of their customers and treat them as people) and guidance, as customers are often unfamiliar with the new environment (Bennett, 2000: 256-257).

There are various tourist attractions in the Western Cape and these tourist attractions have a responsibility to train service staff to deliver a level of personal attention to all customers. Service relationships and the perceived quality of interactions may play

an important role in the sustainability of tourism at the CPNP. Gwinner, Gremler, and Bitner (cited in Hurst *et al.*, 2009:515), posit that fostering a close salesperson-customer relationship may help tourist attractions to position themselves to build satisfaction and loyalty around relationship benefits. All staff members employed at CPNP should be educated and trained to offer their best service at all times. The personal touch in the customer's service experience is most memorable (Cook, 2008:18). Hurst *et al.* (2009:514) assert that quality improvement is everybody's responsibility.

2.8 Who is responsible for quality service?

Customer care is not a once-off project. It is the commitment of everyone, all the time, to provide a high standard of customer service (Tack, 1992:39). Mahesh (1993:27) states that customer care involves everyone within the organisation. It is not only about front-line staff. Burnett (2001:59) agrees that everyone in the organisation should be customer-driven; even those people who never come into contact with the actual customer should orient their thinking to understand this, irrespective of the function they are involved in. "Each co-worker should have the knowledge, resources and authority to provide the right quality. Each person should check the quality in their own jobs" (Edvardsson, 1998). When a company is renowned for caring for its customers, every member of the staff happily plays his/her part (Tack, 1992:8).

Chaniotakis and Lympelopoulos (2009:238) suggest that managers should pay great attention to the recruitment stage of contact personnel on the basis of their competence to manage interpersonal communication effectively. Cook (2008:199) states that studies of organisations which excel at customer service revealed that they invested heavily in their recruitment and selection processes.

Customer care starts with selecting the right staff, which are 'quality' people who can be turned into 'high quality' people through good training. Therefore, there should be enough trained staff, while organisations should recruit the right candidates for the job and then train them adequately. Cook (2008:201) asserts that it is vital to ensure that training in customer service is given to new recruits and that it is a key part of

induction training. Freemantle (1993:108) argues that when recruiting for incredible customer service, the company should look for people who can provide it.

Tack (1992:49) suggests that a lack of customer care can stem not from being unwilling to consider customers' needs, but from lack of skills or the required knowledge for satisfactory completion of a task. The author (Tack, 1992:190) further suggests that "product knowledge is high on the list of customer likes and dislikes. It is closely associated with customer care". Cook (2008:18) agrees by stating that "customers want to deal with people that they can trust, people that are knowledgeable and technically able and at the same time friendly and polite to the customer". Edvardsson (1998) states those employees' experiences, knowledge, competence, commitment and willingness to serve, affect customer perceptions of quality.

While knowledge of the product is important, Burnett (2001:105) states that enthusiasm and skills are necessary for the successful development of a business. Pelletier (2005:67) agrees by stating that a company should hire for attitude, as well as skills. Cook (2008:18) suggests that in providing training to staff to improve customer service, organisations often focus on the 'hard skills', product knowledge, technical skills and administration, without bringing about a change in attitude in the way that the staff deals with the customer at a personal level. Employee's attitude is automatically communicated to others and since service providers are the organisation in the eyes of the customer, they should maintain a positive attitude at all times. A positive attitude attracts while a negative attitude tends to alienate people (Bennett, 2000:256). Burnett (2001:59) posits that "attitudes make for positive relationships and the personal dynamics of your organisation can make or break the frail web of trust and co-operation".

Zehrer (2009:336) suggests delivering a consistent and satisfying customer experience is to be aware of the service-delivery process. There should be a service delivery process in place in order to guide new employees, while detailed recording of the process will allow variation to be traced and rectified (Peters, 1999:7). Bennett (2000:254) posits that a fully balanced service should be provided to create a flow of service, which will ensure that there is an orderly flow of delivery. A useful practice to

visualise the service-delivery process is the 'blueprint technique'. A service blueprint is essentially a flow chart that depicts every activity and step in the service-delivery process. It can be used to identify the 'fail points' in the service-delivery process, which precipitate such critical incidents in the customer experience (Zehrer, 2009:337). Chaniotakis and Lympelopoulou (2009:238) agree by stating that managers should focus on important areas of service quality by designing analytical blueprints related to processes.

According to Beeton and Graetz (2001:105), the nature of the tourism and hospitality industry provides unusual challenges to training and education providers, from issues of access, deliverability, time and need. "Programmes of education within school curricula and public awareness within communities are needed regarding the potential positive aspects of tourism. This will help citizens of the host community to treat tourists better and offer quality service (South Africa, 2002:7). Beeton and Graetz (2001:112) argue that it is important that institutions should understand that more graduates enter the industry and move into management and ownership positions. According to the National Responsible Tourism Development Guidelines (South Africa, 2002:7), "post-employment education and training programmes within the framework of the Skills Development Act and South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) are required to educate employees regarding the potential pros and cons of tourism, and comparative costs and benefits of alternative enterprises in order to aid decision making".

Although it is important for all staff members of an organisation to be customer-driven, it is more vital for the contact staff to be customer-driven. Customers' perceptions of an organisation are often based on the front-line staff's behaviour. These members of staff represent the organisation in the eyes of the customer, and any complaints that customers make are usually directed at this level (Cook, 2008:91). Front-line and supporting staff members should know procedures; have product knowledge and regular updates. They should also be knowledgeable about service standards (Cook, 2008:193). A service relationship occurs when a customer has repeated contact with a particular provider. Customers and providers get to know each other, both as individuals and as role players. The customer perceives and experiences a special connection with front line service providers (Johnson *et al.*,

2009:10). It is important to shape both customers and front-line employees' attitudes about the process and outcome of service delivery (Lok Lee & Hing, 1995:295). Edvardsson (1998) posits that willingness and readiness means carrying out the service punctually, quickly and being available when the customer needs assistance.

Customer service is a concept that is applicable to all industries and organisations and all their employees (Freemantle, 1993:xv). Clear and concise communication between customers and service providers, among service providers and between service providers and their superiors, is essential to success (Bennett, 2000:256). The subject of hands-on management is discussed next.

2.8.1 Hands-on management

The clearest link between skills needs and training methods is found with business and management skills. Both are considered as fairly important within the industry, and there is some recognition that these skills are best acquired with outside assistance, for example, through short courses, certificate and degree courses, and other training programmes at business colleges and universities (Beeton & Graetz, 2001:13).

In recent years technology has come to play an increasingly prominent role in service design to ensure memorable service experiences (Zehrer, 2009:339). However, service not only depends on modern technology, but also on the attitude of employees and the capability of managers (Freemantle, 1993:xv).

Management's role is to provide an environment that encourages a customer-caring, quality-orientated attitude (Tack, 1992:118). Chaston (1993:21) states that in most organisations the prevailing culture is that which reflects the beliefs and values of senior management. The success of a customer-care programme depends on the enthusiasm and dedication of the managing director (Tack, 1992:2). Mahesh (1993:26) posits that effective customer care is about more than training staff in smiling, pleasant manners and complaint handling. Good customer relations come from a total management culture within a company. Mahesh (1993: 27) adds that customer care 'starts at the top', which means that commitment to the principle of customer care should emanate from senior management levels within an

organisation. Successful management is not only about the right management style, but is also about attitude, ethos or culture of the organisation which overrides the management techniques that are used so that in the absence of other instructions values will dictate how an employee behaves.

Pelletier (2005:138) states that if an organisation of any sort has been really systematic about building those values and beliefs within themselves, they are probably cemented in a pretty firm foundation of the company's mind-set and activities. Swarbrooke (2002:195) suggests that "the role of managers and the management style that they adopt are important in that they affect the operation, the staff and the customers". Burnett (2001:59) argues that an organisation can only deliver levels of customer satisfaction that company morale permits. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that customer service is inculcated in all employees, including management. However, Edvardsson (1998) posits that service quality has become a field for strategic development, an important ingredient in the business idea, as well as a central management task at all levels of the organisation. The nature and extent of attitudes towards training by owners and managers of tourism and hospitality operations include their perceptions of the relevance of various forms of training (Beeton & Graetz, 2001:112).

According to Swarbrooke (2002:139) and Freemantle (1993:61), successful attractions tend to be those, which are effectively managed and it is important that attractions have experienced and professional managers across all aspects of the operation. Attractions without such management are often weak in one or more areas, including marketing, financial control, the management of people and strategic planning. Achieving incredibly good customer service is a direct result of having good managers.

Effective managers of tourist attractions should respond faster and more effectively to changes in the business environment than competitors. According to Swarbrooke (2002:139), these changes could be as diverse as technological developments, the state of the economy, new laws or changing consumer taste, but they all have one thing in common: they are all potential opportunities or threats for an attraction. The

responses of managers of tourist attractions will determine whether it will ultimately be an opportunity or a threat.

It is also essential to identify customer expectations and perceptions of service quality for a particular establishment, as this will allow management to better tailor its marketing efforts to ensure that customer expectations are met (Lok Lee & Hing, 1995:293). Tack (1992:41) asserts that implementing and making a policy successful can only be achieved if managers are enthusiastic about it, and show their enthusiasm. If they try to inspire others to try harder, so that everyone enjoys playing their part and all talk with pride to their friends and associates about how their company really does care for its customers, then success is assured. This enthusiasm can only develop if it begins with top management (Tack, 1992:41).

Beeton and Graetz (2001:107) argue that it is generally easier to encourage businesses that have a greater number of staff to undertake training, as they can cover the absence of staff, have a critical mass to provide on-site training and, generally, they are more likely to have a formal development programme. According to Freemantle (1993:98), it always takes more than one person to provide a superb service to a customer. The power rests with each individual member who is committed to "do the right thing" given any particular circumstance (Peters, 1999:9). The relationship between all staff, including management, should be based on trust. Pelletier (2005:3) states that to have great performance and as a result provide championship customer service, there are two overriding realities: any employee should be able to trust the leader and should also be able to trust team mates.

2.8.2 Motivate and train employees

According to Tack (1992:47-48), looking after customers does not come naturally; people should be motivated all the time to give of their best. Top management should remind themselves continually that the difference between loss and profit can be the attention given to customer care. Tack (1992:39) states that there are many ways in which employees can be motivated to give of their best all the time. Providing customised service that leads to on-going relationships with tourists is not an easy task (Hurst *et al.*, 2009:512), therefore, continuous motivation and training is of

utmost importance. Tack (1992:6) asserts that a manager can only motivate and train those who can readily accept such training and motivation.

There are a number of ways in which to motivate staff, which includes managing employees in a sensitive way so that they feel that they are being understood. Employees should be praised when they perform well and constructively criticised when they make mistakes as long as the manager helps such employees to learn from their mistakes (Swarbrooke, 2002:258). According to Tack (1992:2) people should be motivated to provide good service, and managers should be motivated to make sure that “everyone who deals directly and indirectly with customers gives 100 percent good service”. Swarbrooke (2002:257-258) agrees by stating that most people are enthusiastic when they start a new job and the challenge for managers is to maintain this enthusiasm by motivating staff. One of the main roles of managers is the motivation of their staff through their own personal actions and attitudes. Mahesh (1993:23-24) asserts that if the expectations of management for particular front-line staff are positive, the likelihood of this expectation being met will be increased. If the anticipation is of poor performance, then this too is more likely to be delivered. “To be successful, a customer satisfaction measurement (CSM) programme must be incorporated into the firm’s corporate culture” (Naumann, 1995:12). Tack (1992:118) agrees by stating that measurement is important, because it plots progress towards targets and provides personal incentives that are required by individuals who contribute to better quality.

When service staff members feel important, they will be motivated to strive harder, knowing that their work is worthwhile (Tack, 1992:43). Cook (2008:232) agrees that motivation encourages extra effort and people want to feel appreciated by others and be recognised for their efforts, hence recognition is a powerful force, which has the capability to unleash energy. Cook (2008:233-235) continues by asserting that good performance over time will only come from well-motivated staff. It is not possible for a company to inaugurate a customer-care policy unless care for its own people is given priority (Tack, 1992: 39). According to Peters (1999:9), employees should think of the next department as a customer and strive to give them great service. Mahesh (1993:27) states “care for your staff and they will care for your customers”. Cook(2004: 6, 8) agrees by stating that measuring internal customer satisfaction is as

important as measuring external customer satisfaction “as measurement is essential in enabling the organisation to establish a starting point for the journey to service excellence, as well as giving it a road map of how the journey is progressing”. Too often organisations look first to the customer, whereas the emphasis should also be placed on the staff. Improving staff experiences encourages a better service and a better experience for customers. More customers are obtained, which will improve the climate in which management and staff work. Investment and greater professionalism follow success and the cycle of achievement is reinforced (Mahesh, 1993:27).

Peters (1999:9) suggests that people in organisations tend to behave in unpredictable ways in spite of the creation of systematic structures. Therefore, the only way to achieve a ‘total quality’ orientation is by unifying the organisation’s employees’ belief systems around some unifying values. This will result in people using their intelligence and efforts to gravitate towards a best outcome within these self-managed boundaries. According to South Africa, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (2002:3), “all establishments should be encouraged to upgrade their standards of service, particularly small, medium and macro-enterprises and emerging entrepreneurs”. A need for training or education to help people perform better in their job and to develop their potential, in general, is essential (Swarbrooke, 2002:259).

However, according to Mahesh (1993:22), in many countries, the growth of tourism as an industry is severely limited by the lack of adequately trained personnel. Where the industry has developed in spite of this constraint, “the visitor has frequently been the casualty”. According to Cook (2008:184), training and development are essential to promote a customer service philosophy. Everyone in the organisation should be involved in training and development in order to enhance knowledge, skills and attitude towards customer service. Brink and Berndt (2008:21) suggest that excellent customer service can only be achieved by providing employees with continuous training. Chaniotakis and Lymperopoulos (2009:238) agree by stating that continuous training of staff helps them to behave the way that they should during the service delivery process. Beeton and Graetz (2001:106) emphasise that recognition is given to the fact that external training in an industry, which is supported by on-the-job

traineeships and apprenticeships, is important. Training can often be used to motivate people, particularly if it takes place away from the attraction in an attractive surrounding. This means that the attraction is spending money on service employees, which could make them feel valued by the organisation (Swarbrooke, 2002:258). According to Cook (2008:207), training and personnel departments will find it beneficial to develop their own standards and to regularly measure their own performances against such standards. Freemantle (1993:111-113) adds that training for improvement should be on-going and applicable to all, as learning how to improve customer service is a lifelong pursuit. Training should be revised and renewed on a continuous basis. Training and education can take a number of forms for staff at a tourism attraction, which include mentoring; on-the-job training; reading manuals or textbooks; group problem-solving; short on-site courses and off-site courses (Swarbrooke, 2002:259,260).

2.8.2.1 Ways to recognise excellent work

Success in achieving excellent customer service should be celebrated and rewarded (Freemantle, 1993:116). "Recognising excellent service is also an important motivator" (Cook, 2008: 242). Pelletier (2005:67) states that employers should "show appreciation to employees and encourage pride". He also adds that employers should always be aware of staffing needs and try to forecast what may be needed in the future (Pelletier, 2005:177). The reward is a reflection of the value placed on customer service and peoples' contributions to it (Freemantle, 1993:118).

Tack (1992:44-45) posits that "the rule in business for all to remember is that appreciation must be deserved and praise should only be given when deserved. All employees should strive to improve when knowing that their achievements have been recognised, and are told that they have done well". Once employees have achieved service excellence they should be rewarded by means of payment for the achievement of customer service objectives, as this can have a powerful impact on obtaining target tasks that have been achieved (Cook, 2008:239). A caring attitude can be achieved under nearly all circumstances, provided that an employee is adequately rewarded, and all managers are trained to understand the concepts of human relations and motivation (Tack, 1992:2).

Financial incentives are a form of recognising and awarding staff for their excellent work, which can take the form of gifts, trips or money. Another good incentive can be an “employee of the month” award (Swarbrooke, 2002:258). Involving staff in the design of reward incentives ensures greater ownership. By doing this, employers should ask employees what motivates them (Cook, 2008:235). Tack (1992:47) states that incentives can include prizes, vouchers and free holidays. Employees appreciate that managers know what they are doing, so performance monitoring does not only improve effectiveness of the organisation, but can also help to increase job satisfaction (Swarbrooke, 2002:259).

Most people are motivated to try harder if they are aware of a development programme that will assist them to aspire to greater levels within a company. It need only be a small step as long as the step is incremental over time. Developing a career development programme, according to Tack (1992:47), is a motivation tool that can assist to inspire employees to work harder.

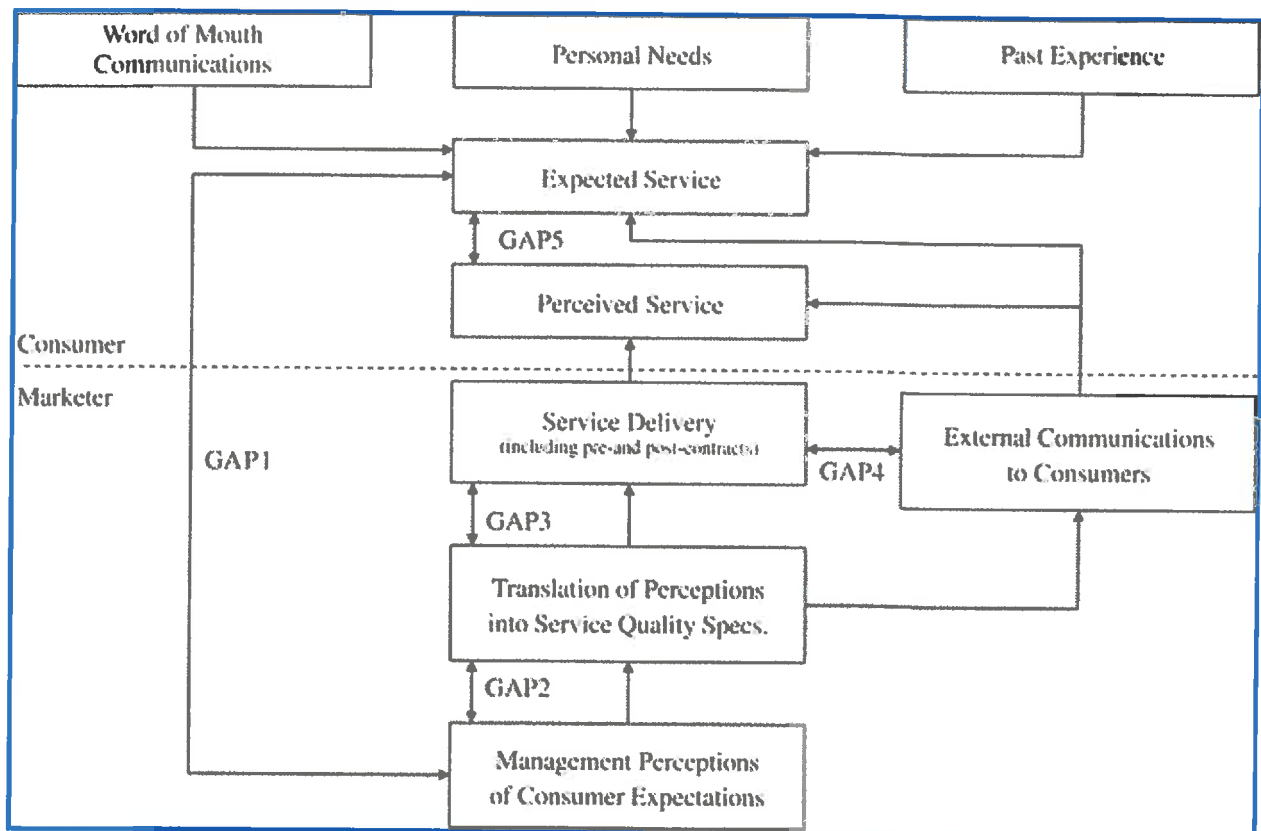
2.8.2.2 Development of a service quality programme

The recognition of external-based training through developing programmes with practical components that are based on a theoretical base should be increased (Beeton & Graetz, 2001:113). A performance appraisal scheme can also be an advantage. Tack (1992:100) states that the objective of any performance appraisal scheme should be to improve the performance of the entire organisation. As caring for the customer is a crucial ingredient for effective performance, the scheme should recognise this. Appraisal is about performance improvement and better customer care.

2.9 Measuring customer service

Since customer satisfaction is the objective of most successful companies, service quality should be measured by how well the organisation satisfies its customers (Brink & Berndt, 2008:70). Quality evaluations are not made solely on the outcome of a service: it also involve evaluations of the process of service delivery (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985:42).

There are several ways to measure customer satisfaction and this will include the 'after sales surveys' and 'mystery shopping' to mention a few (Brink & Berndt, 2008: 71, 72). Measuring service quality indicates whether a gap exists between the customer's expectations and perceptions (Brink & Berndt, 2008:73), as illustrated in Figure 2.4.



(Source: Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985)

Figure 2.4 Service quality model

In Figure 2.4 above, there are essentially 5 performance gaps as postulated by Parasuraman *et al.*, (1985) which are discussed below:

Gap 1: The customers' expectations-management perceptions gap

"This gap represents divergence in the perceptions that customers and management have with respect to what constitutes quality in service. While there is considerable confluence in perceptions, discrepancies were identified in the research which suggests that the respective priorities are not always identical" (Mahesh, 1993:28). Bennett (2000:234) adds that the most critical step in delivering service quality is probably determining exactly what customers need.

Gap 2: Management's perceptions-service quality specifications gap

Parasuraman *et al.*, rightly note that management's correct perceptions of customers' expectations are necessary, but not sufficient to achieve superior quality service. This gap represents a further concern that emerges from their research, which is the difficulty that management experiences in translating its understanding of customers' perceptions into service quality specifications (Mahesh, 1993:28).

Gap 3: Service quality specifications-service delivery gap

This gap represents difficulties in translating well-developed service specifications within companies into actual front-line performance by employees. Mahesh (1993:28) acknowledges that service performance gaps can reflect a variety of factors in addition to the establishment of service quality standards; these include poorly qualified employees, inadequate internal systems to support contact personnel and insufficient capacity to serve. When employees are unable and/or unwilling to perform the service, they frequently fall short of the standards formulated with regard to a specific service (Bennett, 2000:238).

Gap 4: Service delivery-external communications gap

A key determinant of customers' expectations is the external communications employed by service companies through advertising, sales and marketing initiatives. If the promised service does not match reality, customer perceptions are inevitably undermined. "In short, external communications can affect not only customers' expectations of a service, but also customers' perceptions of the delivered service" (Mahesh, 1993:28). Organisations are sometimes unable to resist the temptation to promise customers more than it can deliver. Consequently, organisations are merely raising the expectations of customers, while it is in no position to meet these expectations (Bennett, 2000:243).

Gap 5: Customers' expectations-perceptions of quality service gap

This gap derives from the cumulative consequences of the afore-mentioned four gaps. At the same time, this gap itself is one of the key factors within the creation of each of the other four gaps. It is thus presented as, perhaps, the linchpin gap within the Zeithaml model and the one that requires the most immediate remedial action within most service companies (Mahesh, 1993:28).

2.9.1 Instruments used to measure service quality

Monitoring return customers (observation, mystery shopping and by means of customer surveys) can also be used as a tool to measure customer satisfaction. This might be difficult when measuring customer satisfaction at an attraction because it is not often that people return to the same attraction. An understanding of the characteristics of service is necessary in the selection of an appropriate instrument to measure service quality. An Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) model, observation, customer surveys and even 'mystery shoppers' can be used to measure service quality. However a more simple and inexpensive instrument available to measure service quality from the customer's perspective is the SERVQUAL instrument, which was developed by Parasuraman *et al.*, in 1985 and later refined by Lok Lee and Hing (1995:296).

Much of the research to date has focused on measuring service quality by using the SERVQUAL instrument (Kang & James, 2004:266). The SERVQUAL instrument has been found to provide a relatively simple and inexpensive means of measuring service quality in labour intensive establishments (Lok Lee & Hing, 1995:301). Despite criticisms that have been levelled against SERVQUAL, it remains an instrument that is used in all areas of business and industry (Brink & Berndt, 2008:73).

2.9.1.1 SERVQUAL as an instrument

The SERVQUAL instrument is used to measure service quality based on the differences between perception and expectations of customers regarding the various dimensions of service quality, namely tangibles, responsiveness, reliability, empathy and assurance (Brink & Berndt, 2008:73). SERVQUAL is a generic instrument and was designed to have broad applicability. The instrument is adaptable and can be adjusted to the requirements, characteristics and research needs of a wide range of organisations (Van Niekerk, 1996:66).

The instrument is used to measure service quality, including a means of capturing customers' perceptions of the tangible influences on service quality such as physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel (Lok Lee & Hing, 1995:295). The SERVQUAL scale is the most prominent instrument that is used to measure

customers' opinions of service quality expectations and perceptions regarding actual services received (Jonsson, Kvist & Klefsjö, 2006). "SERVQUAL is a research methodology designed to identify the gaps between what customers expect from an excellent product or service provider and what they perceive the service to be from the current supplier of that product or service" (Szwarc, 2005:31). To measure service quality, even in labour intensive establishments, the SERVQUAL instrument has been found to provide a relatively simple and inexpensive means of doing this, which implies that interested parties can regularly conduct service assessments (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988).

The original SERVQUAL scale was later revised to ensure that there was no overlap of dimensions, and resulted in the five dimensions (Hurst *et al.*, 2009:516). Assessment of the quality of a service is done during the delivery of the service- the encounter between the customer and a service contact person. Parasuraman *et al.* (1985) identified the five generic dimensions of service quality (SERVQUAL), which should be present in service delivery for it to result in customer satisfaction:

1. Reliability;
2. Responsiveness;
3. Assurance;
4. Empathy; and
5. Tangibles.

Lok Lee and Hing (1995:295) describe reliability as "the organisation's ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately". Reliability refers to "the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately" (Bennett, 2000:248). Szwarc (2005:31) explains reliability as "the people or companies doing what they say they will, on time and to specification". Hurst *et al.* (2009:516) describe reliability as the organisation's ability to actually perform what is promised, as well as the organisation's dependability.

Perceived service quality may be enhanced if staff responds appropriately to a customer's request for prompt service (Lok Lee & Hing, 1995:295). Responsiveness refers to "the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service" (Bennett, 2000:248). Szwarc (2005:31) portrays responsiveness as a willingness to "help and meet individual requirements". Hurst *et al.* (2009:516) explain responsiveness as a willingness to help customers in an efficient manner.

Lok Lee and Hing (1995:295) describe assurance as the “knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence”. Assurance is “the knowledge and courtesy of employees as well as their ability to convey trust and confidence” (Bennett, 2000:248). Szwarc (2005:31) describes assurance as “displaying trust and confidence and having the necessary skills to get the job done”. Hurst *et al.* (2009:516) characterise assurance as: “confidence, knowledge, courtesy and trust conveyed by employees”.

Customer care means keeping all promises, large and small, which are made to those who keep companies in business (Tack, 1992:186). This may involve employees providing personalised attention to patrons’ needs (Lok Lee & Hing, 1995:295). Empathy refers to “understanding these customer needs and providing individualised service” (Szwarc, 2005:31).

Lok Lee and Hing (1995:295) describe tangibles as the establishment’s physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel. “Tangibles refer to the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials” (Bennett, 2000:248). Tangibles refer to the physical environment, organisation image and appearance of employees (Hurst *et al.*, 2009:516). CPNP should include these five dimensions in their service delivery to ensure customer satisfaction. Since customers receive but a large component of service, they undoubtedly depend on other cues in the absence of tangible evidence by which to assess service quality.

Szwarc (2005:32) lists the following as strengths of the SERVQUAL approach:

1. It can be used across many different industries, and so is of help not only to measure how a company performs against others in the same field, but also how the industry fares against others;
2. More data is generated allowing for a greater depth of analysis;
3. It can enable users to segment their customers according to expectations and perceptions, and these segments can then be analysed with other data such as demographics;
4. The internal consistency of the SERVQUAL scale has been shown to be high in various studies done on it over the years; and
5. Managers use it because it provides them with data that they can understand, and because it has been used by many organisations around the world.

Although the SERVQUAL model has many devotees and supporters, some authors, notably Francis Buttle (1996:8 – 31) and Lages and Fernandes (2005.1562 – 1572) argue that its findings are not 100% accurate. Francis Buttle critiques SERVQUAL in the article "SERVQUAL: review, critique, research agenda" on a number of

theoretical and operational bases. He particularly notes that SERVQUAL's 5 dimensions are not universals, and that the model fails to draw on established economic, statistical and psychological theory. Although SERVQUAL's face and construct validity are in doubt, it is widely used in published and modified forms to measure customer expectations and perceptions of service quality.

Luis Lages and Joana Fernandes in the article "The SERPVAL scale: A multi-item instrument for measuring service personal values" suggest that consumer final decisions are taken at a higher-level of abstraction. Similarly to the SERVQUAL scale, the Service Personal Values (SERPVAL) scale is also multi-dimensional. It presents three dimensions of service value to 1) peaceful life, 2) social recognition, and 3) social integration. All three SERPVAL dimensions are associated with consumer satisfaction. While service value to social integration is related only with loyalty, service value to a peaceful life is associated with both loyalty and repurchases intent.

Even though SERVQUAL has the aforementioned limitations it is still used universally as a tool to establish gaps in service and a methodology to close such gaps should they exist.

2.10 Summary

This chapter explained the term tourism, and how tourism would not exist without attractions. The advantages and disadvantages of tourism were also discussed. Tourism managers realise that they should improve their levels of service in order to remain competitive. Therefore, to have repeat visits from tourists to the Western Cape, attractions should differentiate themselves by endeavouring to improve on and maintain high service levels. In today's business world, there is no substitute for effective customer care. It has been mentioned that the tourism industry prides itself on its customer focus.

Services as processes were discussed as well as the characteristics of services and how they differ from the attributes of products. All products have some form of service involved when a transaction takes place. The components that make up

services are inseparability, intangibility, perishability and variability. Businesses should move away from a product orientation to rather focus on becoming customer-centric. Following any set of principles does not guarantee success for an attraction. Many successful attractions are managed professionally and are customer-driven.

Emphasis was given to customers' needs/wants, as well as how these needs/wants can be met or exceeded. It would be sensible to focus on the needs and demands of customers, as well as changes in these needs and demands. Success is determined by customer satisfaction and, therefore, all tourists that visit CPNP should be treated as though they were the only customer. Marketers create expectations of CPNP, as well as services offered and it is the staff's responsibility to meet the expectations that have been created. To offer excellent quality service, the management and staff at the CPNP should exceed customer expectations.

The chapter also discussed segmentation of the market and how this will benefit targeting different segments that make up the market. It should be remembered that segmentation takes place on the basis of psychographic, demographic, geographic and behaviour aspects. Markets should be segmented effectively so that CPNP can divert its efforts and resources at the most viable market segments so that all stakeholders' needs can be appeased.

Attractions should recognise the need for further and continuous education and training. This includes the management of such facilities. CPNP should strive to perform at its best at all times and service staff should inculcate a culture of service excellence. An attraction whose workforce is 100% committed to customer care and whose management continually motivates managers and their subordinates, is the attraction that will prosper. Hence, in order for standards of services at CPNP to be improved to match international standards, service levels should be maintained and improved upon.

With this in mind, how service can be measured by using the SERVQUAL model was also examined. The SERVQUAL model also helps to identify different gaps within service delivery. Once gaps have been identified, they should be closed so that organisations' and customers' needs may be mutually satisfied. To remain one of the

most visited attractions in the Western Cape, CPNP's service delivery should be up to international standards. To achieve this, employees should be educated and trained continuously, and also be kept satisfied because satisfied employees generate satisfied tourists.

The following chapter discusses the methodology that was used to solicit the required research data.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of how the requisite research data was collected during the study. The chapter commences with revisiting the research objectives, then discusses the research methodology, the research approach and, importantly, its design. The chapter also includes the research population and how a sample was drawn from the population so that accurate inferences could be made about the topic that was researched. It concludes by providing a summary of the chapter, key features and then goes on to introduce the following chapter.

3.2 Objectives of the study

As stated in Chapter One, the objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To determine whether the service level as experienced by international visitors to CPNP is meeting customer needs and expectations;
2. To determine whether service gaps exist from an international visitor perspective so that action may be taken to close such gaps;
3. To establish whether there is a gap between what management at CPNP perceive service quality should be in relation to what is being experienced there;
4. To identify the current level of service quality at CPNP and to eliminate the service quality specifications versus service delivery gap if any exists;
5. To establish whether CPNP promotional activity 'walks the talk'. In other words, whether what has been advertised by CPNP is what is being facilitated by the attraction, and if this is not the case, what should be done by CPNP to close the service delivery versus external communications gap? and
6. Lastly, to determine the perceptions of service quality of international visitors and make recommendations (if necessary) to improve service levels on an on-going basis so that CPNP can enjoy the long-term custom of both local and international visitors.

The objectives above, is based on the SERVQUAL model and the identification of service gaps. The research methodology is discussed next.

3.3 Research methodology

It is the nature and process of research, which enables readers to conduct their own research in order to find answers to their specific research problem. The research methodology is a guideline to assist a researcher to complete an investigation (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:ix). The research methodology is, therefore, mainly concerned with the collection of data to solve research problems so that action may be taken to solve such problems. By the selection of the most appropriate methodology, it was attempted to assess levels of customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction at the CPNP. A researcher has an obligation to use the appropriate methodology to conduct a study (Kumar, 2005:215) so that the research objectives may be realised (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006:17).

3.3.1 Literature search

In order to conceive the research topic in a way that permits a clear formulation of the problem, some background information is necessary (Bless *et al.*, 2006:24). In academic research, in order to identify a research problem, a literature search should be conducted. It is advisable to check journals to see what research has been done so that repetition does not occur, as it would be futile to research a topic unless the researcher intends to have a perspective on the particular topic. The determination of international customer satisfaction levels in terms of service quality at CPNP has not previously been researched as far as could be detected, hence a review of related literature provided important facts and background information about the subject under study.

Another important factor why a literature search is important is to gain insight regarding problems that are associated with previous studies. A literature review can, besides the above, act as a motivational tool when conducting primary data collection, as the information garnered by the literature search can further the interest in the topic that is investigated (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:40). Therefore, as many journals, books and other sources of information as time allowed was consulted, so that a solid ground was established on which to build the study and hence ensure that no repetition of the subject occurs.

When a study is undertaken, existing literature should be examined in order to become acquainted with the available body of knowledge in the area of interest. There are three types of sources for literature searches, namely: primary literature sources, secondary literature sources and tertiary literature sources (Welman *et al.*, 2005:41). Bless *et al.* (2006:169) concur with the afore-mentioned by stating that relevant articles are cited and commented on, which if read, increases the researcher's knowledge on the matter that is studied. A literature search or information review places a research project in a solid framework by indicating how it fits into a particular field. Most researchable problems are identified through reading and examining previously published historical, theoretical and empirical work (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006:19).

3.3.2 Research approach: quantitative data solicitation

The positivist approach to research is also identified as the quantitative approach (Welman *et al.*, 2005:7). Quantitative research relies on measurement to compare and analyse different variables (Bless *et al.*, 2006:43). Quantitative research emphasises measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables within a value-free context (Welman *et al.*, 2005:8).

As the views, feelings and opinions needed to be established of different international tourists who visit the CPNP regarding levels of service they experienced at the CPNP, a quantitative approach seemed to be appropriate in this instance. Quantitative research evaluates objective data, is easier to aggregate, compare and summarise and opens up possibilities for statistical analysis (Babbie, 2007:23). As mainly closed-ended questions were used to obtain the required research data and also ranking scales to gauge various answers to some of the questions that were posed in the research questionnaire, a quantitative strategy was utilised. Quantitative research involves numerical information in the form of numbers or figures. A tool of quantitative research can include questionnaires. It evaluates objective data and uses complex structured methods. Data was collected for the research via questionnaires of which 500 were distributed and 360 were completed, it is then presented in the form of graphs for ease of use.

3.3.3 Research approach: qualitative data solicitation

The word qualitative implies an emphasis on processes and meanings that are not rigorously examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Therefore, the aims of qualitative research methods should establish the socially constructed nature of reality, stress the relationship between the researcher and object of study, as well as emphasise the value-laden nature of the object of study (Welman *et al.*, 2005:8). When conducting qualitative research, it is suggested that notes be taken down as communicating is done with a research respondent. These notes are normally detailed notes, which are made by hand, tape recordings and observations, and are compiled during qualitative interviewing (Welman *et al.*, 2005:211). Qualitative research focuses on behavioural regularities of everyday situations (Welman *et al.*, 2005:193). Qualitative research does not make an attempt to either quantify or determine the extent of diversity (Kumar, 2005:165). It uses qualifying words or descriptions to record aspects of the world (Bless *et al.*, 2006:43). Qualitative research, therefore, involves narrative information in the form of words or other visual representation. It evaluates subjective data and is flexible and explorative. As interviews with international visitors were conducted to obtain additional data (other than what was asked for in the research questionnaire), as well as a questionnaire completed, to capture mainly quantitative-oriented data, a qualitative and a quantitative approach was used. Therefore, a hybrid strategy was utilised, which is an amalgam of both a quantitative and a qualitative approach.

3.4 Research design

Empirical research is a method of obtaining knowledge by means of experience or observation. Empirical evidence (what is recorded as a result of a researcher's experience and observation) can be analysed either quantitatively or qualitatively. By quantifying the evidence or understanding it in qualitative form, a researcher can answer empirical questions, which should be clearly defined and answerable with the data that has been collected. Research design varies by questions that are investigated and the field of the study. Many researchers combine qualitative and quantitative forms of analysis to better answer questions, which cannot be studied in laboratory settings. Facts that are observed in nature are the foundation of knowledge (Bless *et al.*, 2006: 3). Empirical data is, as mentioned above, derived from or guided by experience or experiment. Another definition of the term empirical

is 'depending upon experience or observation alone, without using scientific method or theory'. An empirical approach was used during the research as the tourists were observed at the CPNP, as they experienced the attraction, and then requested them to complete the research questionnaire before they departed from the nature reserve.

According to Mouton (2005:137), are usually for formulated to address real-life problems and that there is a framework that identifies and distinguishes between three worlds, namely:

1. World one which is the world of everyday life and lay knowledge;
2. World two which refers to the world of science and scientific research; and
3. World three which is the world of meta science.

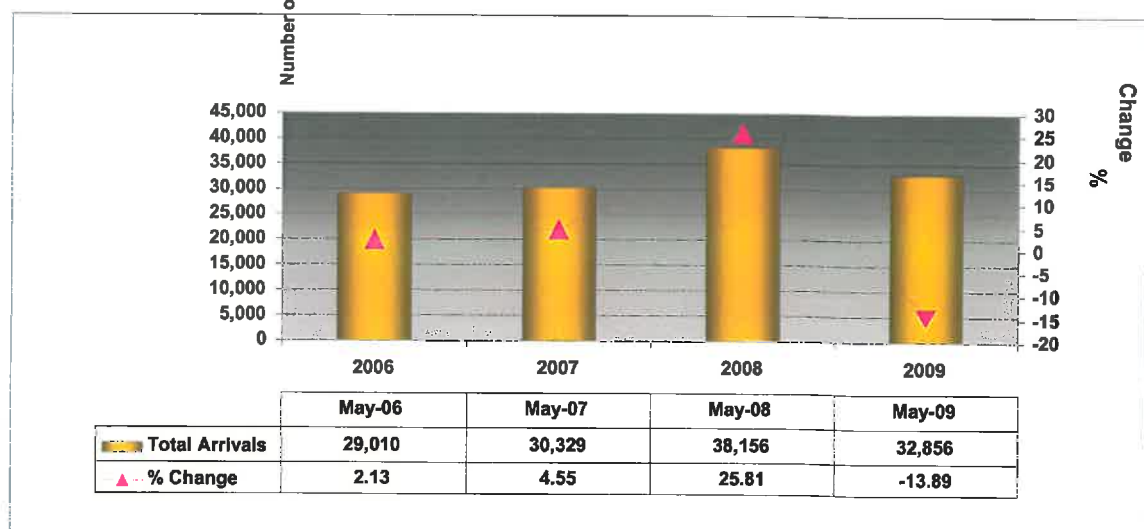
This study is involved in the world of scientific research because it takes phenomena from world one and then translates them into objects of enquiry (Mouton, 2005:138). As mainly primary data were required from respondents to make accurate assertions a survey research design was used (although empirical data were obtained by means of observation). Surveys are "...studies that are usually quantitative in nature and aim to provide a broad view of a representative sample of a large population" (Mouton, 2005:152). Key questions are usually exploratory in context, predominantly descriptive and causal (Mouton, 2005:152). Such design is used amongst other applications in attitudinal surveys which is what this study is all about...obtaining views, opinions and attitudes about service levels at CPNP. The research design that was used in this study was therefore a survey and as a result thereof the required data were collected along with researcher observations and depth interviews which were primarily used to obtain answers to questions that were not reflected in the survey. Some tourists were also accompanied whilst they were travelling from the attraction on their luxury coaches. As the experience was fresh in the minds of research respondents, the data that was obtained from the research participants are viewed as true reflections of what they experienced at the CPNP.

3.4.1 Description of the research population

A population is the object and comprises of individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events or conditions that they are exposed to (Welman *et al.*, 2005: 52). Therefore, an entire set of objectives or people, which is the focus of the research, is known as the research population (Bless *et al.*, 2006:98). The population is the

larger pool of people from which a sample is drawn (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:133). The actual survey sample is, therefore, drawn from the defined population. The sample size and the proportion of the population that this constitutes will be influenced by a number of factors, which includes the level of accuracy required and the size of the population (Baum, 1993:72).

The population under investigation for this research project included all international tourists who visited CPNP. Preparing a valid population and subsequent sample drawing is not necessarily an easy task (Baum, 1993:71). For example, the number of people who arrived at Cape Town International Airport during 2006 to 2009 is illustrated in Figure 3.1. Typically, the population applicable to this study would be derived from international tourists who visited the Western Cape at the time that the study was conducted. Naturally only international tourists who visited CPNP were applicable in this regard.



(Western Cape Tourism Barometer, pg 9, Cape Town Routes Unlimited, 2009)

Figure 3.1 ACSA Cape Town International Airport Arrivals

Figure 3.1 depicts the number of international arrivals (visitors) who arrived at Cape Town International Airport during the months of May. It may be observed that during May 2006 and May 2007 there was an increase in visitors of 4.55%. During May 2007 and May 2008 there was an increase in visitors of 25.81%, however, thereafter the number of international visitors declined (from May 2008 to May 2009). Although all of these visitors did not visit CPNP, the number of 32, 856 visitors was used as

population in order to draw a sample size that would be large enough and, therefore, hopefully representative of the entire population. In reality (referring to the issue regarding the fact that determining the size of a population and sample is not an easy task), the research population should have been all the visitors that visited CPNP during the period of research, but as the number is unknown (there is no register of visitors to act as a sample frame) for the period the research was conducted, it was decided to use the aforementioned number of international visitors as the research population. As a result, the sample size was determined, according to Sekaran's sample size table (refer to Addendum 1) as 379 research participants.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about sample size, although statistical requirements do not influence the validity of information, which is drawn from small samples. Political considerations may also dictate use of a rather large sample than is statistically necessary. A larger sample will enhance the value of information relating to any sub-grouping within the sample. Small populations will require different treatment and 50% or even greater sampling may be required (Baum, 1993:72). The respondents that completed the questionnaires were all international tourists who visited CPNP. The survey was conducted during April to December 2010. Majority of the survey was conducted during the month of May; hence the population size was decided from the international arrivals (visitors) who arrived at Cape Town International Airport during the month of May.

3.5 Data collection method (questionnaire structure and design)

There are two main ways to conduct research, one of which is the positivist approach. The positivist approach underlies the natural-scientific method in human behavioural research and holds that research should be limited to what can be observed and measured objectively and, which exists independently of the feelings and opinions of individuals (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:6). Positivism maintains that knowledge is about description rather than questioning. Positivists recognise only positive facts and observable events; those things that can be seen, measured and counted as facts. Positivism equates closely with the traditional, scientific view of the world. Positivism takes little account of beliefs or feelings, although some of its more extreme protagonists seem to be drawn towards mysticism. Phenomenologists, however, are concerned with what things mean, rather than with identifying and

measuring phenomena. They are particularly interested in the idea that human experience is a valuable source of data, as opposed to the idea that true research or discovery lies in simply measuring the existence of physical phenomena.

As this research used both a quantitative and a qualitative strategy (factual and opinionated data), a hybrid approach was used. This resulted in the development of a questionnaire that reflected factual data, as well as the opinions, views and feelings of various respondents who participated in the survey. To achieve this, a structured questionnaire (refer to Addendum 2) was developed in order to acquire information, as determined by the research objectives as a stated in Chapter One. The questionnaire that was designed for this study contained a list of statements in order to obtain information which was appropriate for analysis. Open-ended questions are those where respondents are asked to provide their opinions, whereas closed-ended questions are those that respondents should answer from a list of options that are provided (Babbie, 2007:246). Closed-ended questions were mainly used for this research study, although some questions requested respondents to rank order their answers according to the quantitative strategy.

Kumar (2005:126) asserts that from a design point of view, a research questionnaire should be easy to read and understand. The decision to conduct a questionnaire survey, according to Welman *et al.* (2005:174), "...should be a culmination of a careful process of thought and discussion, which should involve consideration of all possible techniques. The concepts and variables that are involved and the relationships investigated (in the form of hypotheses, theories, models or evaluative frameworks) should be clear and should guide the questionnaire process. When designing a questionnaire, the researcher should seek as much as possible previous research on the topic or related topics".

The questionnaire for the purpose of this study was designed to generate a broad spectrum of data about the perceptions and opinions of international tourists regarding service levels at CPNP. The intention to provide the management of the CPNP with information so that the service levels at this attraction can be improved.

The advantages of a survey are as follows:

1. It can accommodate the diversity of tourism industry sectors and sub-sectors (Baum, 1993:69);
2. It reflects the 'here and now' situation in the tourism industry (Baum, 1993:69); and
3. It can target issues of special concern (Baum, 1993:69).

It should be noted, however, that a survey also has the following disadvantages:

1. It may result in an element of subjectivity from both the interviewee and the interviewer, and this may affect both the validity and reliability of the data collected (Baum, 1993:69);
2. Fieldwork can be time-consuming and frustrating (Baum, 1993:69); and
3. It is, generally, expensive to conduct (Baum, 1993:69).

As the advantages outweighed the disadvantages it was decided to use a survey design in accordance with the survey objectives, which are outlined below.

3.5.1 Survey objectives

The objectives of the survey are as follows:

1. To identify current levels of quality services offered at CPNP;
2. To measure perceptions of service quality by international tourists;
3. To evaluate the impact of quality service;
4. To determine whether the quality of services received at CPNP meets international tourists' needs;
5. To establish whether the service received at CPNP was unique;
6. To determine whether the service that tourists received was prompt;
7. To determine whether service staff showed willingness to assist tourists; and
8. To establish whether employees at CPNP are knowledgeable.

The survey took place at CPNP, where the requisite data was collected by means of the instrument discussed above. Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire on a voluntary basis and the reasons for and importance of the survey was explained as recommended by Henning (2004:73). A total of 360 completed questionnaires were received for analysis. The questionnaire enabled the collection of data concerning the quality of service currently provided at the CPNP and the gaps in service quality. The idea was to use the data to assist the attraction to improve its service so that it may become more competitive in the market as a tourist attraction.

3.5.2 Survey project

As stated previously, the survey took place at CPNP during April to December 2010, while the conducting the study. Three fieldworkers assisted with the survey after being trained. The fieldworkers distributed the questionnaires to tourists and some of the questionnaires were distributed and completed by respondents at a tour operating company, E.C Distinctive Tours.

3.6 Articulation of findings

After understanding the problem and the way that it was investigated, the data should be analysed. The data should be separated and arranged into groups, each of which corresponds to a particular part of the problem that is studied. A report should be written with the data in a sequential manner, while the problem is presented with sub problems. The data, as presented, should be accurate and methodical by using a particular technique to present a statistical analysis and provide reasons for using that particular technique (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:285).

3.7 Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology that was adopted to obtain the research data. This chapter also discussed approaches that were used (strategies) and the research population, the method used to draw a sample from the population. The chapter concluded by providing insight into how the data was collected, captured and reported.

The questionnaire was the main instrument that was used to complete data collection, and the advantages and disadvantages of the instrument were presented. The survey was conducted to provide better insight of customer satisfaction levels at CPNP. It also includes boundaries of the method in which the survey takes place. 500 questionnaires were distributed, while a total of 360 completed questionnaires were received. As stated previously, the data was collected by using a questionnaire. Once the information was collected and captured, the findings are then presented in the form of graphs, as well as pie charts for reader-friendly purposes. The following chapter, Chapter Four, presents the findings and analysis of the data that was collected by the instrument in order to attain the research objectives.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter detailed the research methodology that was used in this investigation. The descriptive research comprised a survey, which was conducted at CPNP and in Cape Town's CBD. The questionnaire was given to a population of 500 tourists who had had a CPNP experience, 360 were completed. This chapter presents the findings of the research along with analyses and discussions of the responses that were received. Tables and charts have been used to present the findings as clearly as possible.

4.2 Response

From the questionnaires that were distributed to the population of 500, total of 72% valid responses were received. Although this falls short of the targeted 379 respondents, recommended by Sekaran (refer to Addendum 1), a sample size of 360 is large enough to present the views and opinions of the population of visitors who visited CPNP during April to December 2010. It was attempted to increase the response rate by visiting the CPNP; however, no further responses were received after this date.

4.2.1 Geographic description of respondents

In this section the derivation (homeland) of the various visitors were investigated. Figure 4.1 below illustrates the responses that were received from the international tourists.

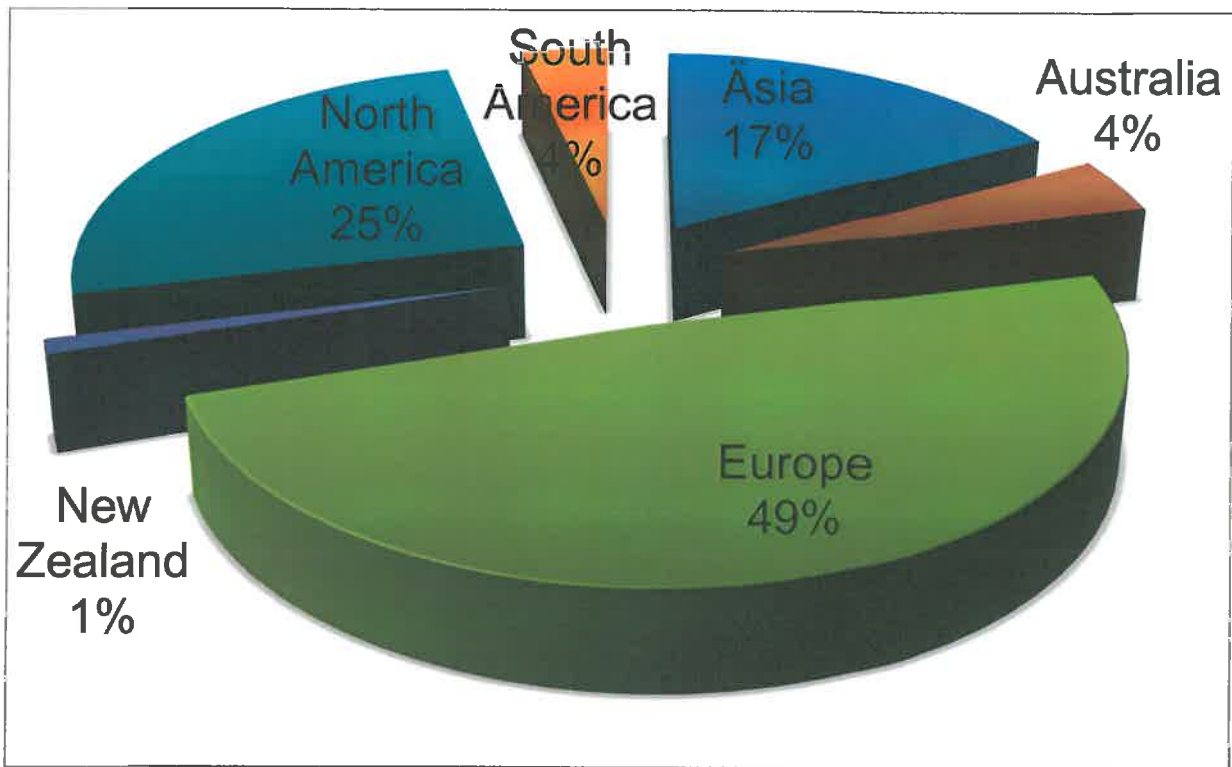


Figure 4.1 Geographic profile of international tourists (respondents)

It may be noted from Figure 4.1 above that a large number of visitors came from Europe (49%), followed by North America (25%), Asia (17%), South America (4%), Australia (4%), and New Zealand (1%). Europe in this instance included the following countries: Belgium, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, and the Ukraine.

4.2.2 Demographic profile of respondents

This section identified visitors' gender. Previous research studies regarding tourism have indicated that males tend to travel more than females. The findings are indicated in Figure 4.2.

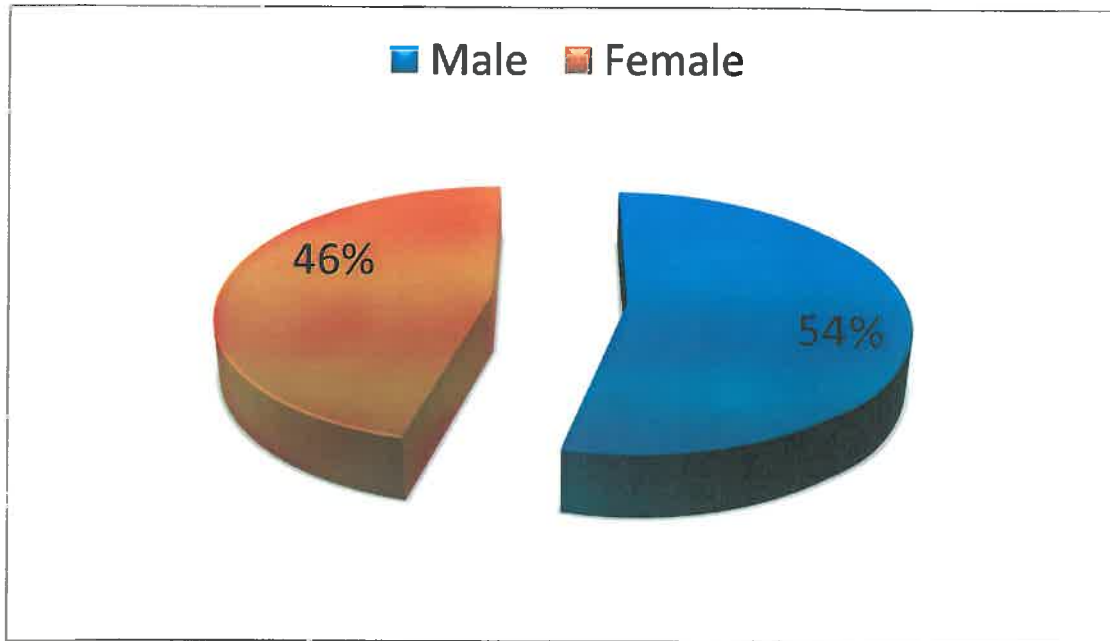


Figure 4.2. Gender of respondents

Figure 4.2 above indicates the gender of respondents, where a majority are male (54%) and the remainder are female (46%). This concurs with previous research on the subject.

4.2.3 Employment status of respondents

This question was designed to determine the employment status of the respondents. The majority of international tourists from the USA are retired; hence they have the time and money to travel internationally. The overall findings are in Figure 4.3 below.

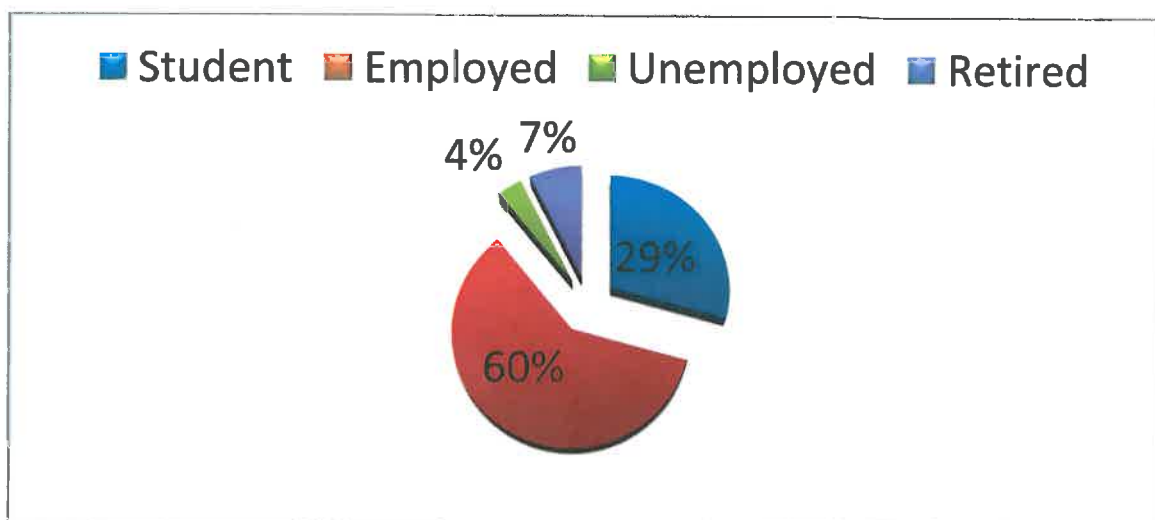


Figure 4.3 Employment status of respondents

It may be seen in Figure 4.3 above that a majority of respondents were employed (60%), followed by students (29%), and then retired respondents (7%). Four percent of the respondents were unemployed. From a tourism perspective this provides the Western Cape with a huge opportunity, since it can tap into the lucrative retiree market in both Europe and the USA.

4.2.4 Frequency of travel

Figure 4.4 below illustrates how often respondents travel. It is important for tourism attractions to determine the frequency of travel as the aim of any tourism attraction should be to establish a relationship with the market so that visitors will return to an attraction, and thereby spend more of their money at the attraction.

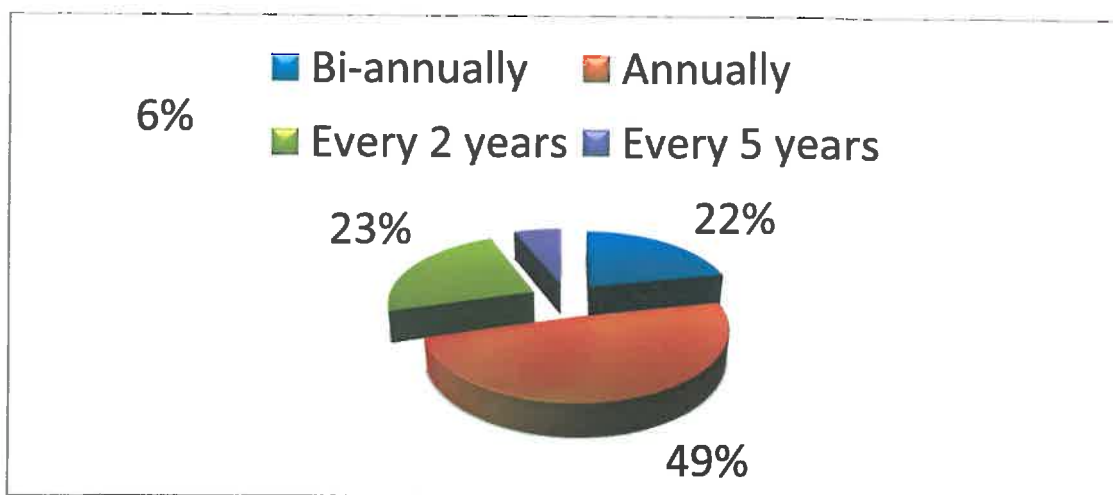


Figure 4.4 Frequency of travel

Figure 4.4 above reveals that most respondents travel annually (49%), some every second year (23%), others travel as often as twice a year (22%) and a minority (6%) travel every 5 years. From a repeat business point of view, it appears that a majority of travellers travel regularly, which creates opportunities for repeat business.

4.2.5 Length of stay in the Western Cape

Here the concern was about uncovering the average length of stay for tourists in the Western Cape. The findings are presented below.

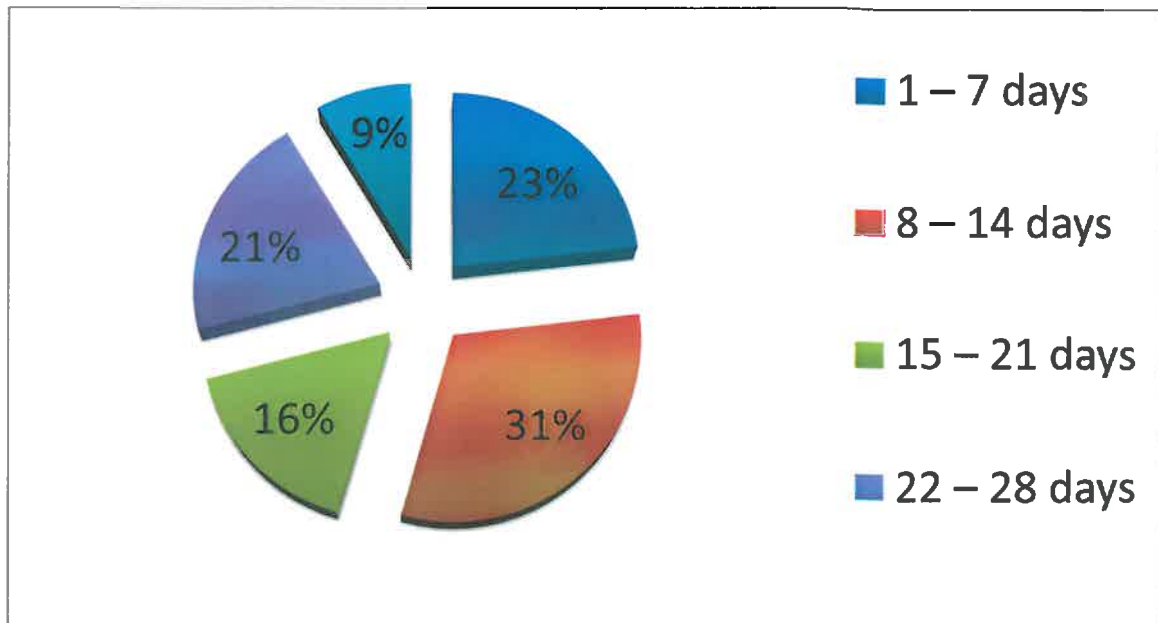


Figure 4.5 Length of holiday

Figure 4.5 above illustrates how long respondents stay in the Western Cape while on holiday. As can be noted above, a majority of respondents (31%) stayed between eight and fourteen days in the Western Cape, while 23% of respondents stayed between one and seven days. It is relevant to note that 46% of respondents stayed for longer than 15 days in the area.

4.2.6 Major attractions visited by respondents

Figure 4.6 below illustrates which other major attractions were visited by respondents. It is important for tourism attractions to determine which other tourism attractions are their competitors.

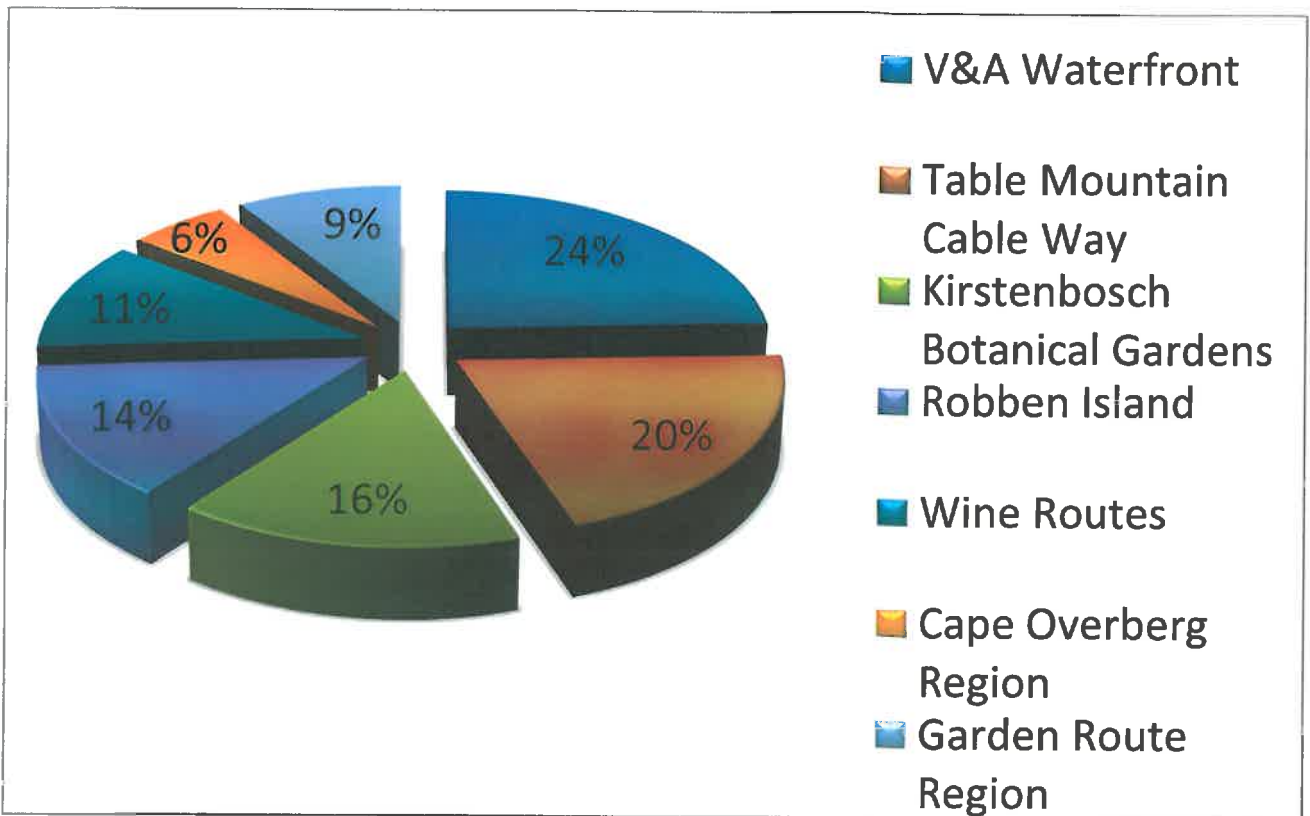


Figure 4.6 Other major attractions visited in the Western Cape

Figure 4.6 above shows how many of the other major attractions were visited by respondents. A total of 24% of the respondents visited the V&A Waterfront, 20% visited the Cable Way at Table Mountain, 16% visited Kirstenbosch Gardens, 14% visited Robben Island, 11% visited the various Wine Routes, 9% visited the Garden Route, and 6% visited the Cape Overberg.

4.2.7 Rating service at CPNP

In this section determines the quality of services that are offered at CPNP. Figure 4.7 below illustrates responses that were received from respondents.

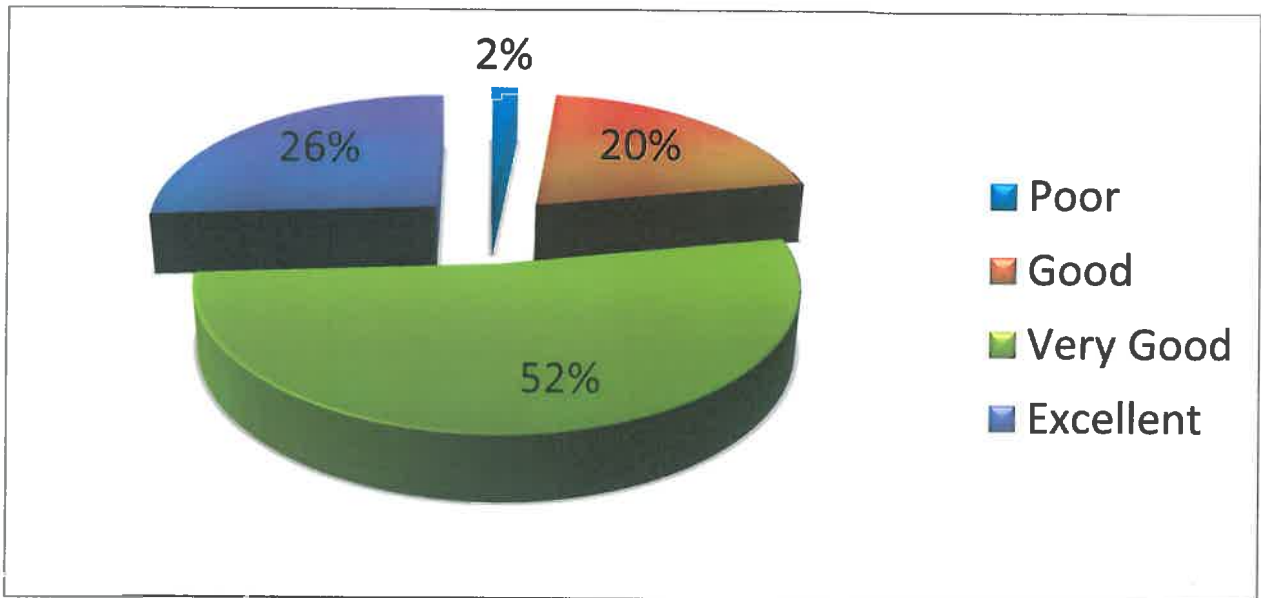


Figure 4.7 Service levels at CPNP

Figure 4.7 above illustrates the levels of service delivered at CPNP. Majority of the respondents rated good service delivery, but there were respondents who had a bad experience. A total of 52% of respondents rated the service as being 'very good', while 26% of the respondents thought that the service was excellent, 20% of the respondents rated the service as good, and a further 2% thought that it was poor. The criteria can be found in Addendum 2.

4.2.8 Service levels at CPNP as opposed to international standard levels

Figure 4.8 below illustrates service levels at CPNP as opposed to international standard levels. It is important for tourism attractions to determine the quality of service that they offer to international tourists in order to ensure positive word-of-mouth marketing.

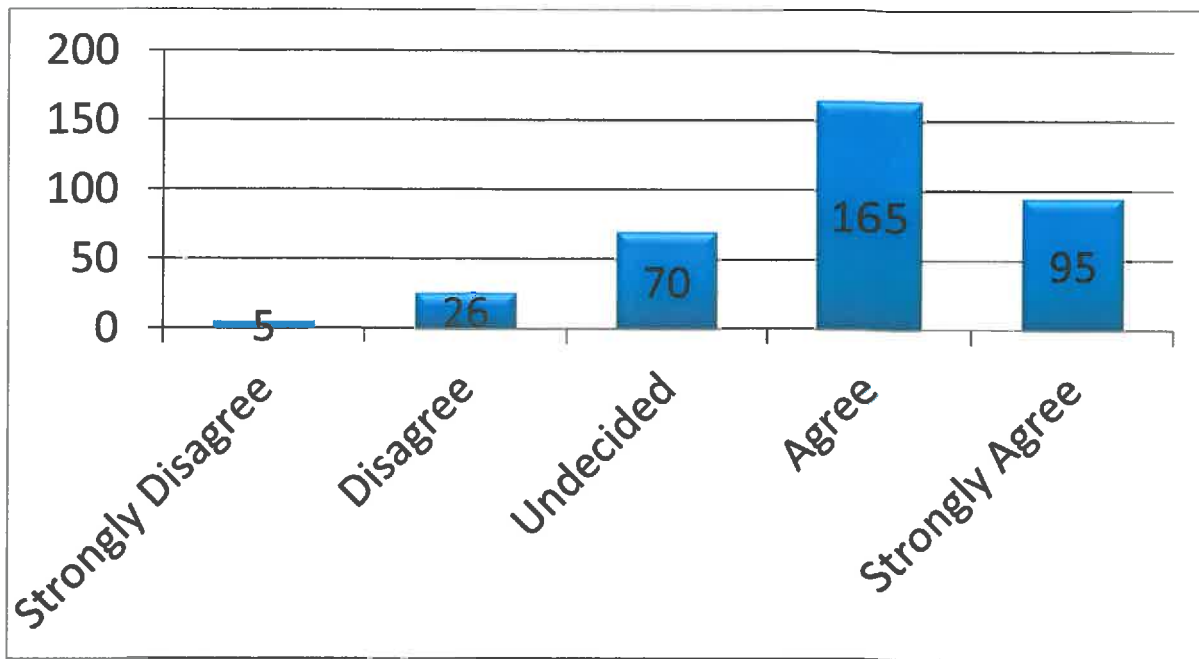


Figure 4.8 Service levels at CPNP as opposed to international standard levels

Figure 4.8 above illustrates whether services that are offered at CPNP is of an international standard or not, service they received at similar attractions abroad. It may be noted that ninety-five (26%) respondents strongly agreed and one-hundred-and-sixty-five (46%) respondents agreed that the services are of an international standard, whereas twenty-six disagreed and five respondents strongly disagreed that the service at CPNP were not of an international standard. A high number of respondents (70) were undecided as to whether the service at CPNP is of an international standard and therefore did not make a positive or negative indication in this regard. This seemed to act as a theme for the remaining statements (questions) about the service levels at CPNP. Although often when placed in a corner, many respondents tend to migrate to the middle (neutral), the researcher was still perturbed at the high level of neutrality. This point is further elaborated upon in Chapter Five under the heading *Limitations of the study*.

4.2.9 Quality of services received

This section gauged whether the quality of services that were received exceeded the expectations of the respondents; whether tourists who visited CPNP had a better experience than anticipated. The findings are shown in Figure 4.9 below.

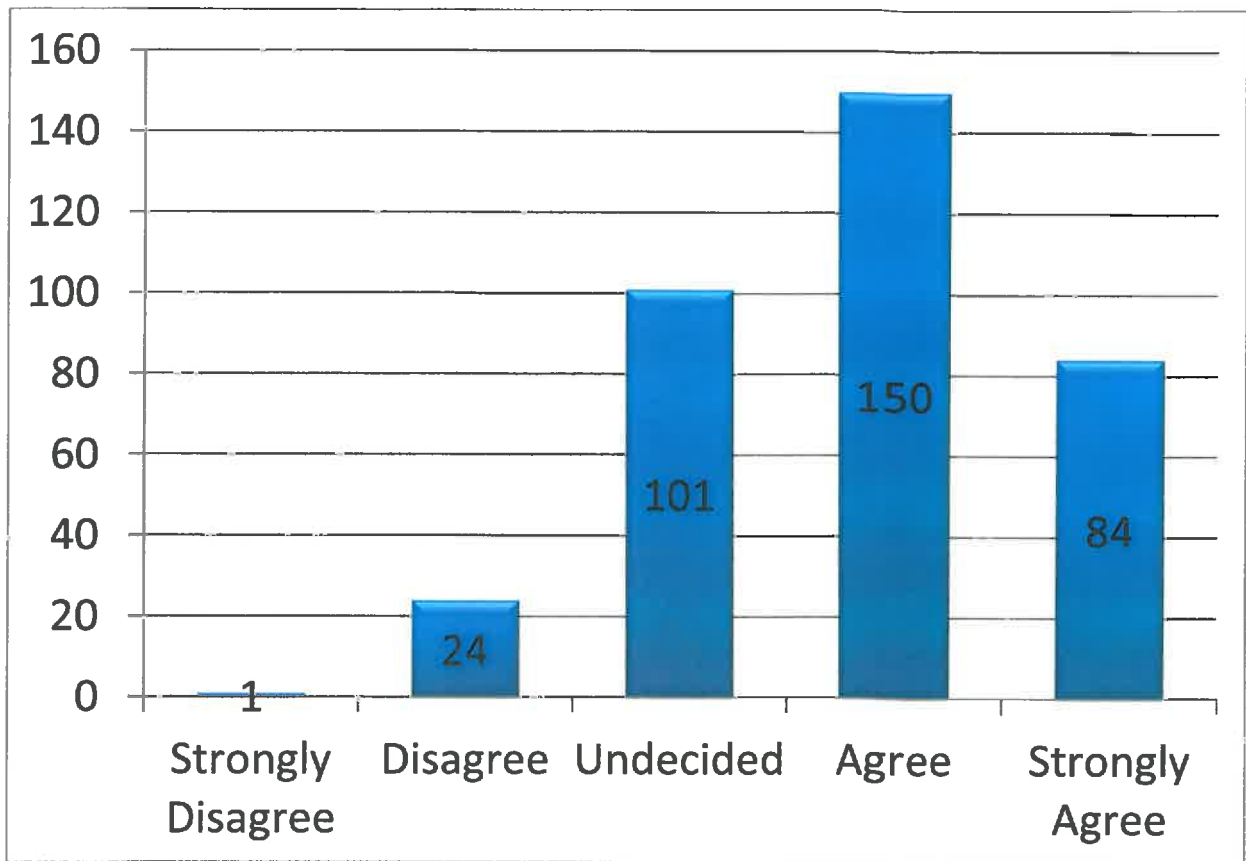


Figure 4.9Quality of service received exceeded expectations of respondents

Figure 4.9 illustrates whether service received at CPNP exceeded customers' expectations. A majority of the respondents, namely one-hundred-and-fifty (42%), agreed that their expectations were exceeded, while eighty-four respondents (23%) strongly agreed. A total of one-hundred-and-one (28%) respondents were doubtful and twenty-four respondents (7%) disagreed that the services exceeded their expectations. One person strongly disagreed that the services exceeded his/her expectations. One-hundred-and-sixteen respondents were either uncertain or disagreed that the services exceeded their needs.

4.2.10Service received described as caring

This question was designed to determine whether respondents thought that the service staff were caring. When dealing with difficult people this can sometimes be a challenge.

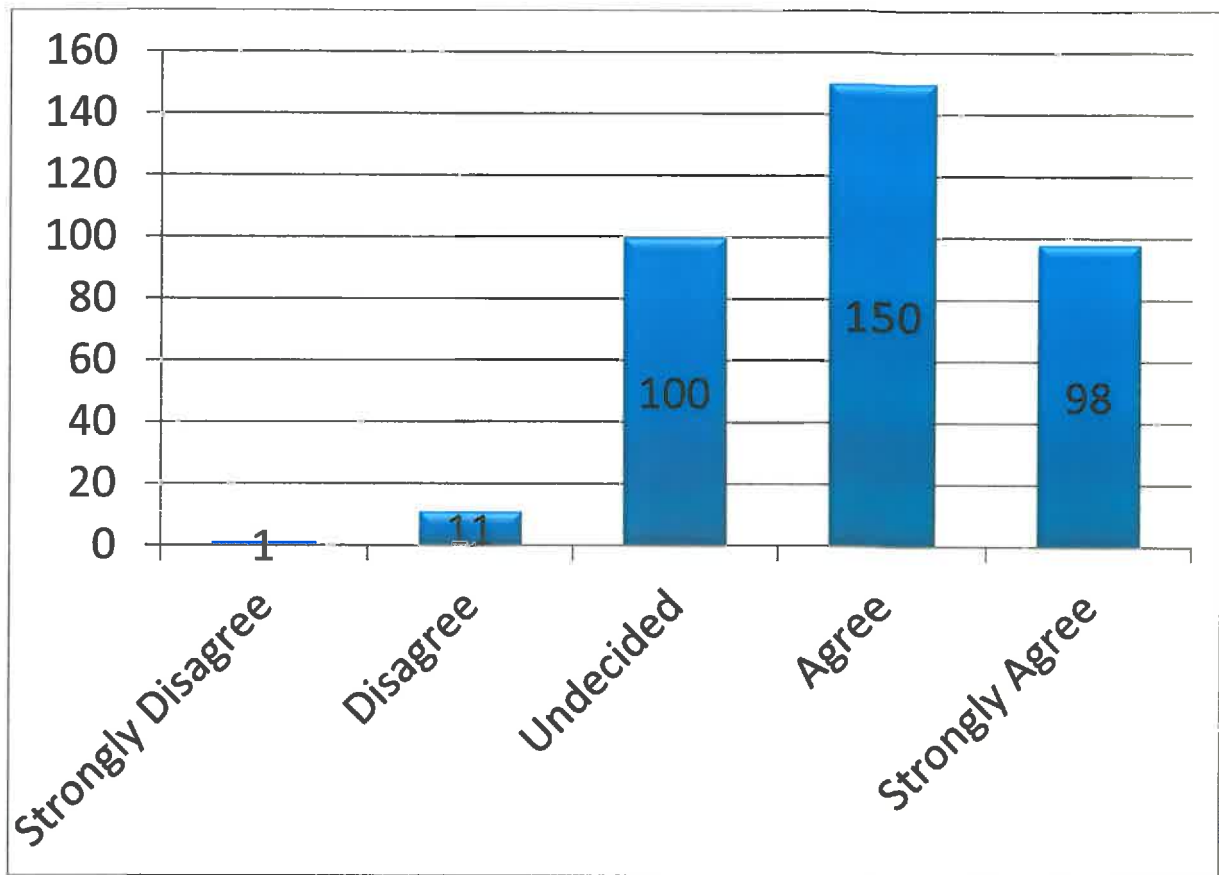


Figure 4.10 Service received can be described as caring

Figure 4.10 illustrates respondents describing the services received as caring. It was a fairly good overview, but there were candidates who thought that the staff were not caring. One-hundred-and-fifty (42%) respondents agreed that service delivery was caring while ninety-eight (27%) strongly agreed. One-hundred (28%) respondents could not decide and eleven (3%) disagreed, while one person strongly disagreed.

4.2.11 Service received described as individualised

Figure 4.11 below illustrates whether respondents thought that the service delivery was individualised. Satisfied customers result in repeat business.

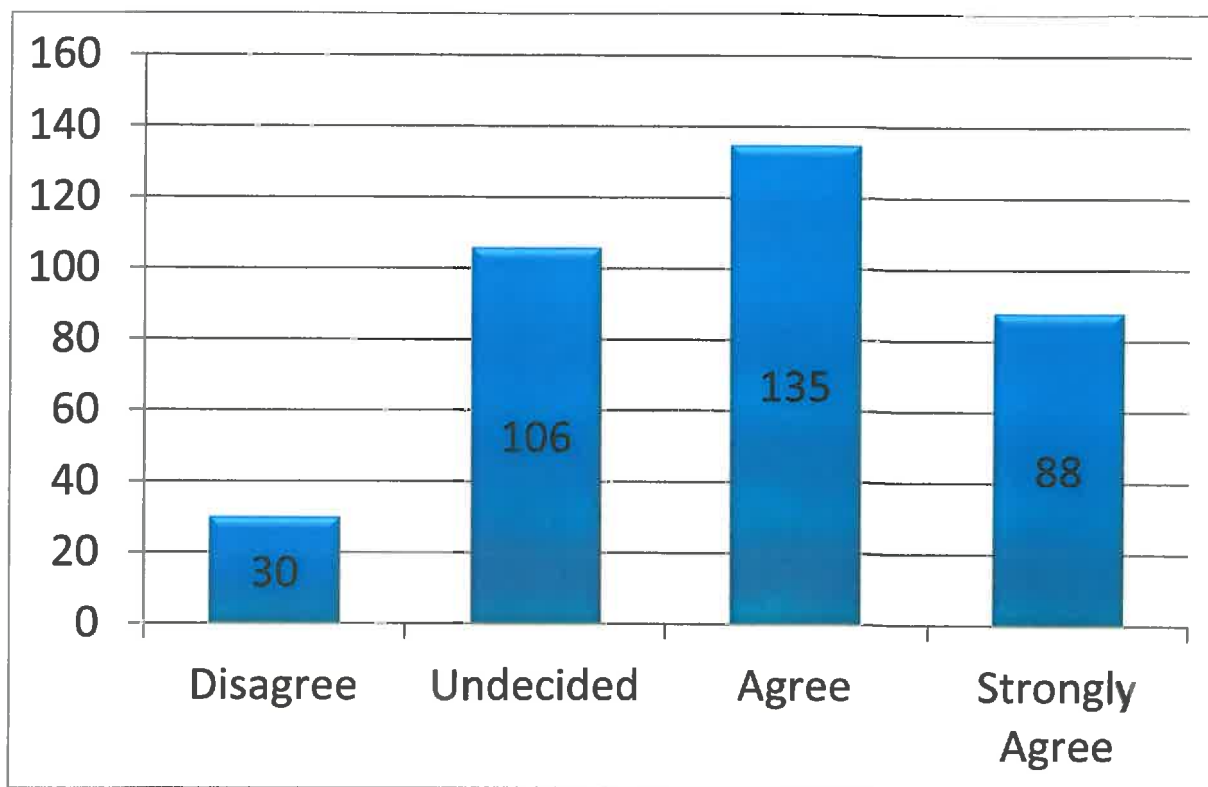


Figure 4.11 Service received described as individualised

Figure 4.11 illustrates whether the services received were individualised. One-hundred-and-thirty-five (38%) respondents agreed that they felt that they were the only customers there and eighty-eight (24%) strongly agreed. However, one-hundred-and-six (30%) respondents could not decide and thirty (8%) respondents disagreed. It may be noted from Figure 4.11 above that there are only four columns in the table. None of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. This phenomenon occurs in a number of other figures which are to follow.

4.2.12 Service received described as dependable

This question was designed to determine whether respondents thought that the services were dependable. The findings are shown in Figure 4.12 below.

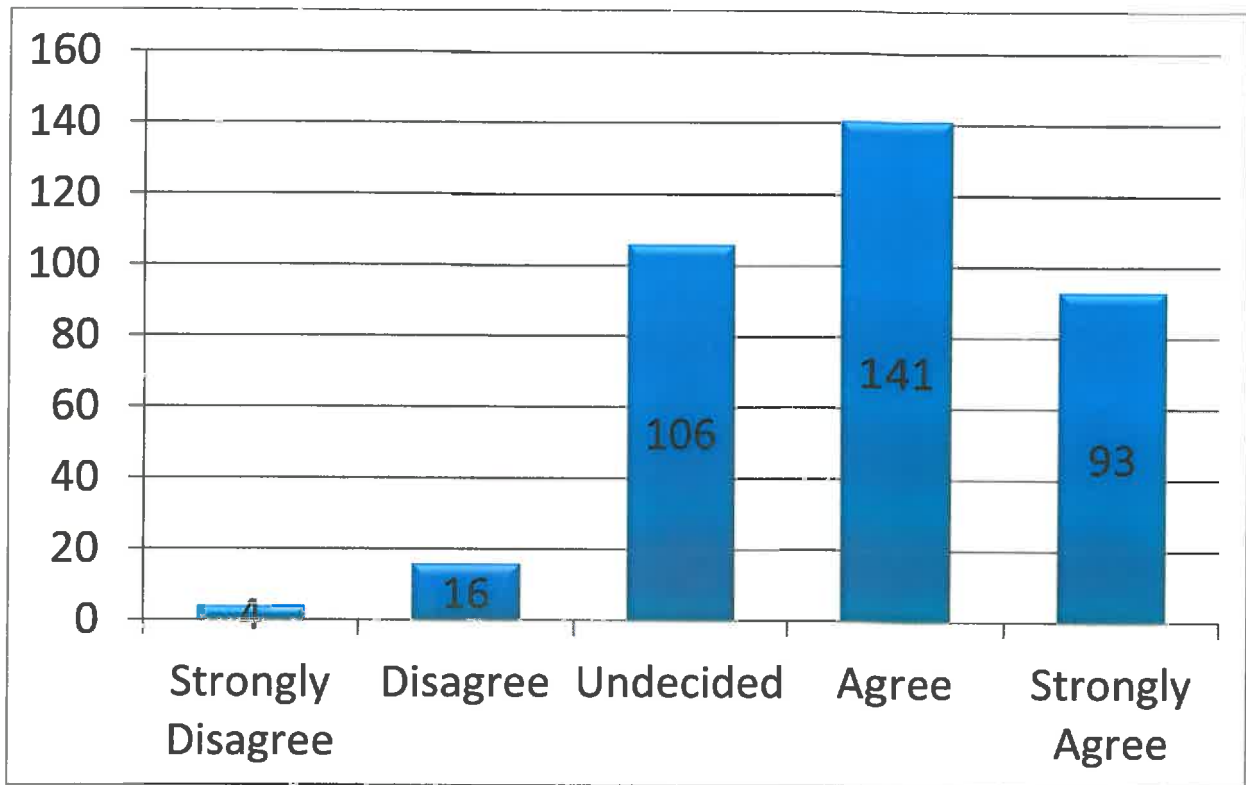


Figure 4.12 Service that I experienced was dependable

Figure 4.12 illustrates whether the services experienced were dependable. One-hundred-and-forty-one (39%) respondents agreed that the service that was experienced was dependable, while ninety-three (26%) respondents strongly agreed. One-hundred-and-six (29%) respondents were doubtful and sixteen (5%) disagreed, while four (1%) respondents strongly disagreed that the service was dependable.

4.2.13 Service received described as accurate

In figure 4.13 below the accuracy of the service was questioned; whether the tourists felt that the services that they received were as accurate as advertised. The findings are shown in Figure 4.13 below.

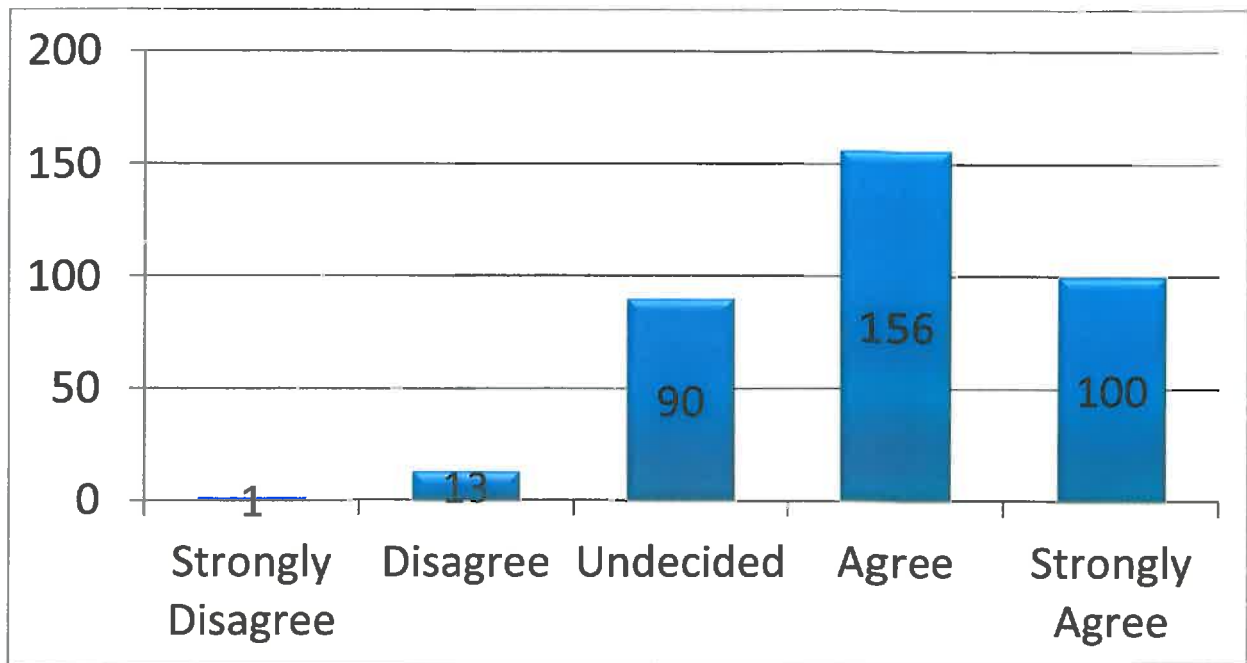


Figure 4.13 Service that I experienced was accurate

Figure 4.13 illustrates whether the service experienced was accurate. While one hundred-and-fifty-six (43%) of respondents agreed and one-hundred (28%) strongly agreed, ninety (25%) respondents were doubtful, thirteen (4%) disagreed and one person strongly disagreed.

4.2.14 Service received described as consistent

Here the focus was to determine whether the service was consistent throughout the park, from the time that one enters up to the little curio shops. The findings are presented in Figure 4.14 below.

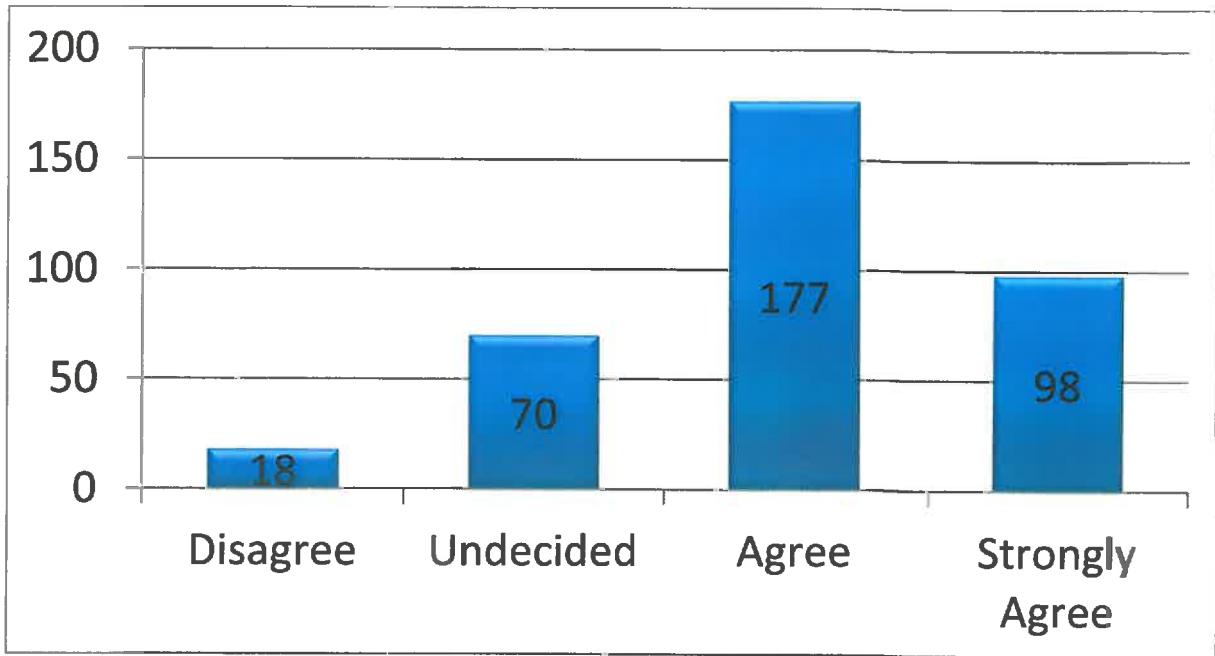


Figure 4.14 Consistent service experienced throughout CPNP experience

Figure 4.14 illustrates the service experienced as consistent throughout the CPNP experience. One-hundred-and-seventeen (49%) respondents agreed that the service was consistent, while ninety-eight (27%) respondents strongly agreed. Seventy (19%) respondents were undecided, while eighteen (5%) disagreed.

4.2.15 Service received described as prompt

This question was structured to investigate whether the service received was responsive by being prompt at the attraction. The findings are presented in Figure 4.15 below.

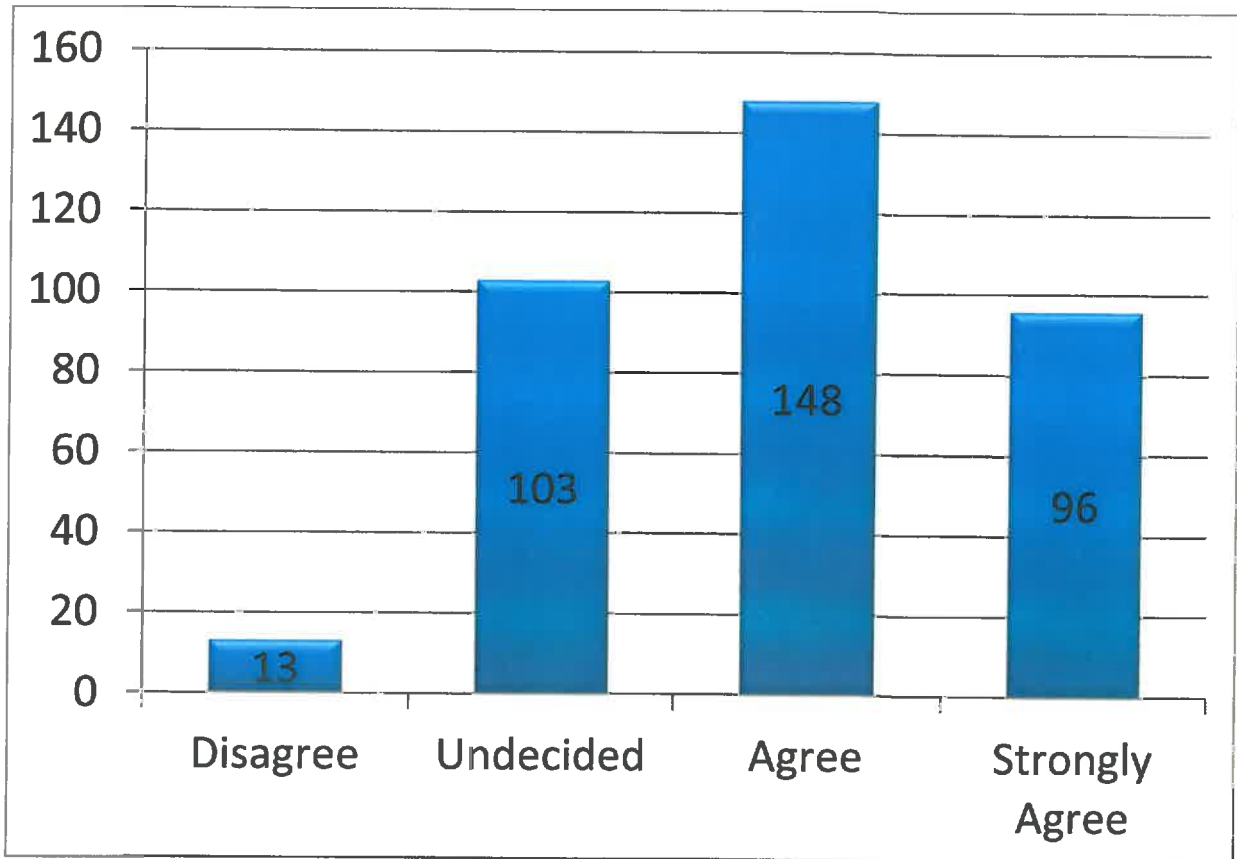


Figure 4.15 Service that I received was responsive, since it was prompt

Figure 4.15 illustrates that the service was prompt. One-hundred-and-forty-eight (41%) respondents agreed that the service was prompt, and ninety-six (27%) strongly agreed. However, one-hundred-and-three (28%) were undecided and thirteen (4%) respondents disagreed.

4.2.16 Service personnel described as knowledgeable

Figure 4.16 illustrates whether respondents thought that the service personnel were knowledgeable. In order to sell a product or service, the attraction should know what they are selling.

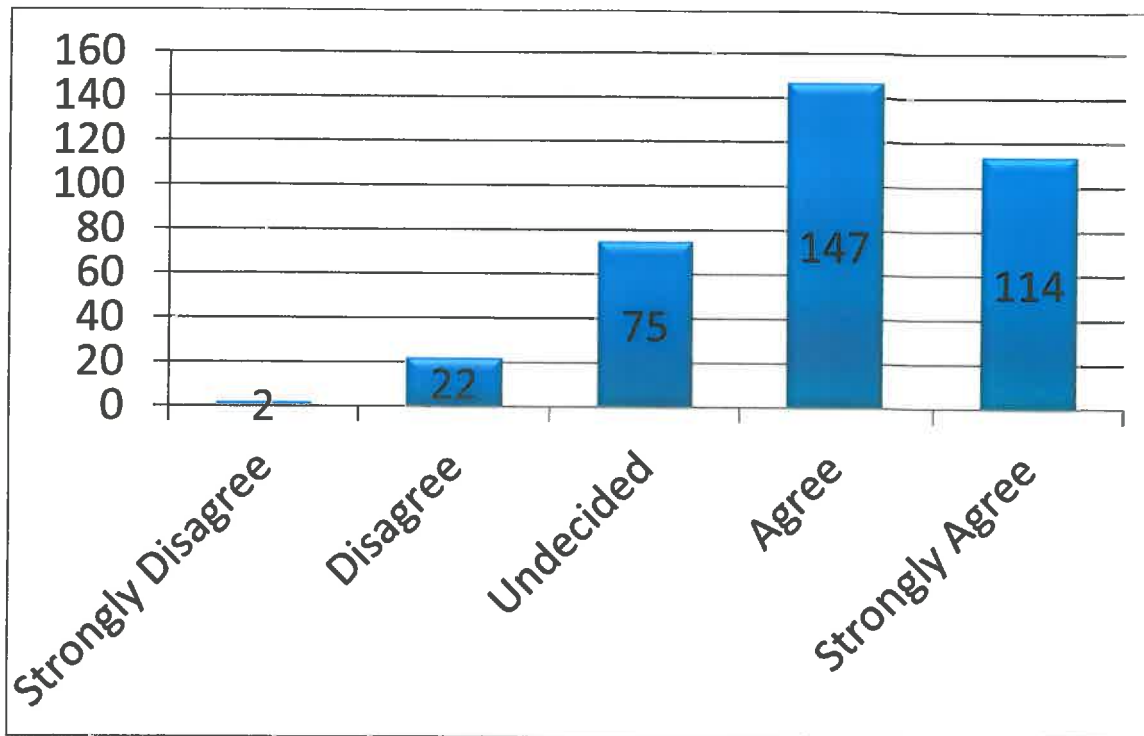


Figure 4.16 Service personnel described as knowledgeable

Figure 4.16 illustrates that one-hundred-and-forty-seven (41%) respondents agreed that the service personnel were knowledgeable, while one-hundred-and-fourteen (32%) strongly agreed. Seventy-five (21%) were undecided, while twenty-two (6%) disagreed and two people strongly disagreed.

4.2.17 Service personnel described as courteous

Figure 4.17 illustrates whether respondents thought that the service personnel were courteous.

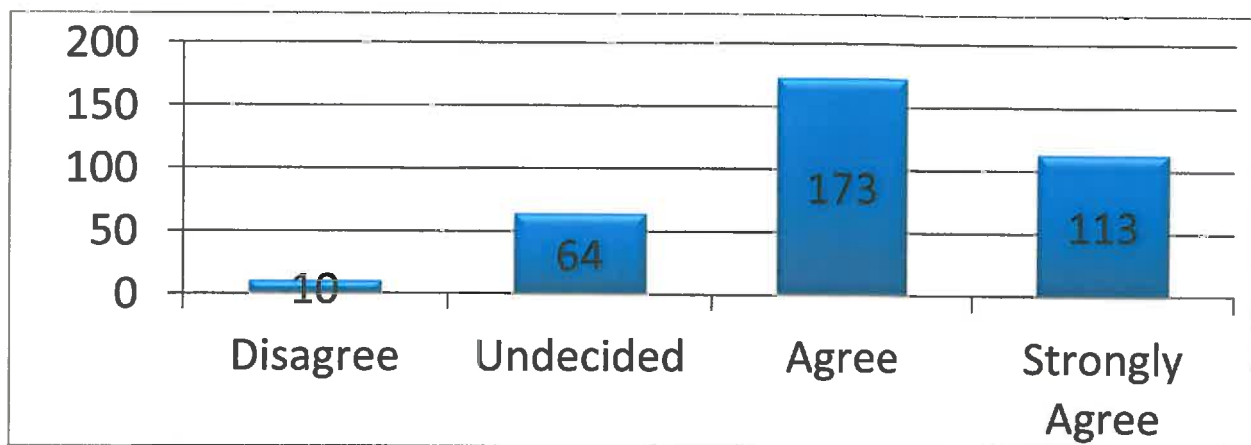


Figure 4.17 Service personnel described as courteous

Figure 4.17 illustrates that one-hundred-and-seventy-three (48%) respondents agreed that the service personnel were courteous, while one-hundred-and-thirteen (31%) strongly agreed. Sixty-four (18%) were undecided and ten (3%) respondents disagreed.

4.2.18 Service providers at CPNP take all needs into consideration

Figure 4.18 illustrates whether service providers at CPNP took all respondents' needs into consideration in terms of service delivery. The findings are presented in the figure below.

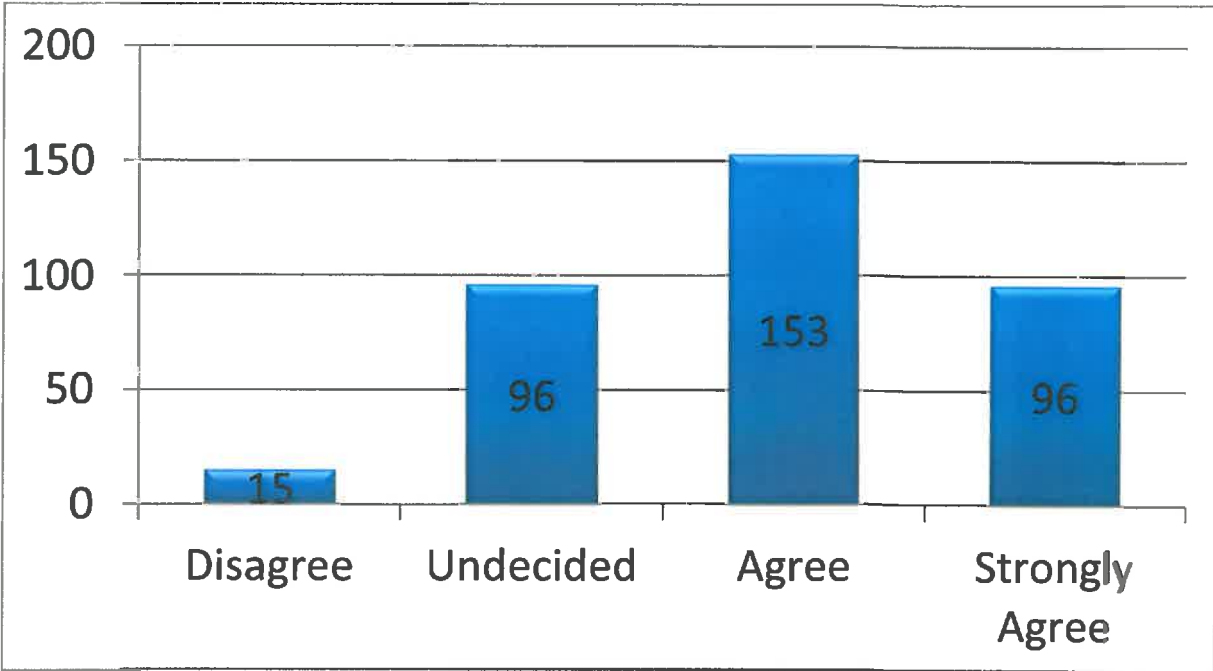


Figure 4.18 Service providers at CPNP took all needs into consideration in terms of service delivery

Figure 4.18 illustrates that one-hundred-and-fifty-three (42%) respondents agreed that service providers at CPNP took all their needs into consideration in terms of service delivery, while ninety-six (27%) strongly agreed. Ninety-six (27%) were undecided and fifteen (4%) respondents disagreed.

4.2.19 Trained staff at CPNP

Figure 4.19 illustrates whether CPNP employees have been adequately trained to deliver a world class service.

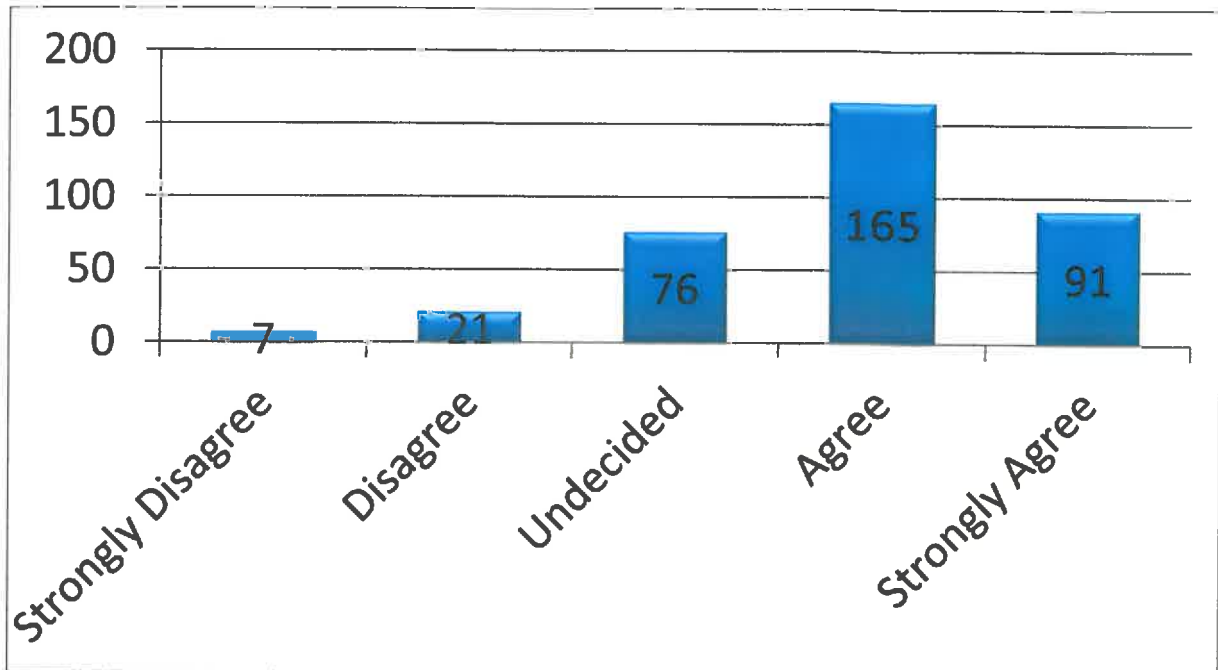


Figure 4.19 CPNP employees have been adequately trained to deliver a world class service

Figure 4.19 above illustrates that one-hundred-and-sixty-five (46%) respondents agreed that employees have been adequately trained, while ninety-one (25%) strongly agreed. Seventy-six (21%) were undecided and twenty-one (6%) respondents disagreed, while seven (2%) strongly disagreed.

4.2.20 Service received is what CPNP's promotes

Figure 4.20 below illustrates whether the service that was received is in line with CPNP's promotion and advertising material, namely whether CPNP 'walks the talk'. The findings are presented below in Figure 4.20.

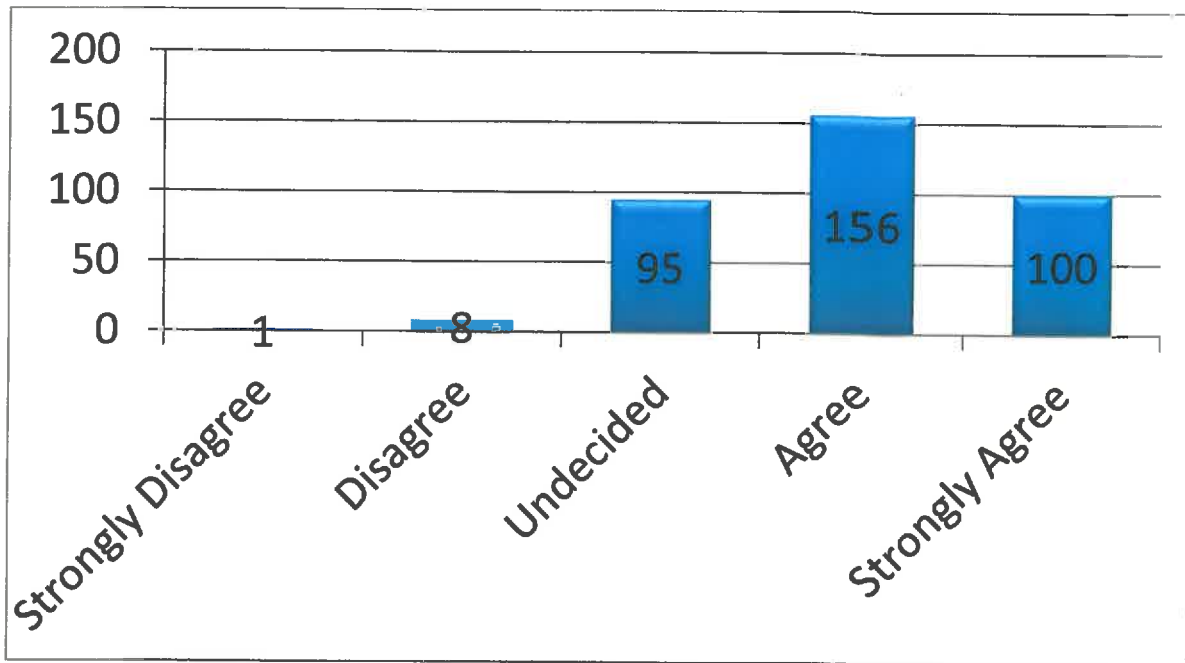


Figure 4.20 Service that was received is in line with CPNP’s promotion and advertising material

The above figure, Figure 4.20, shows that one-hundred-and-fifty-six (43%) respondents agreed that the service that they received was in line with CPNP’s promotion and advertising material, while one-hundred (28%) strongly agreed. Ninety-five (27%) were undecided, while eight (2%) respondents disagreed and one respondent strongly disagreed.

4.2.21 Service received was exactly what was desired from CPNP

Figure 4.21 below illustrates whether the service that was received at CPNP was exactly what was desired from CPNP.

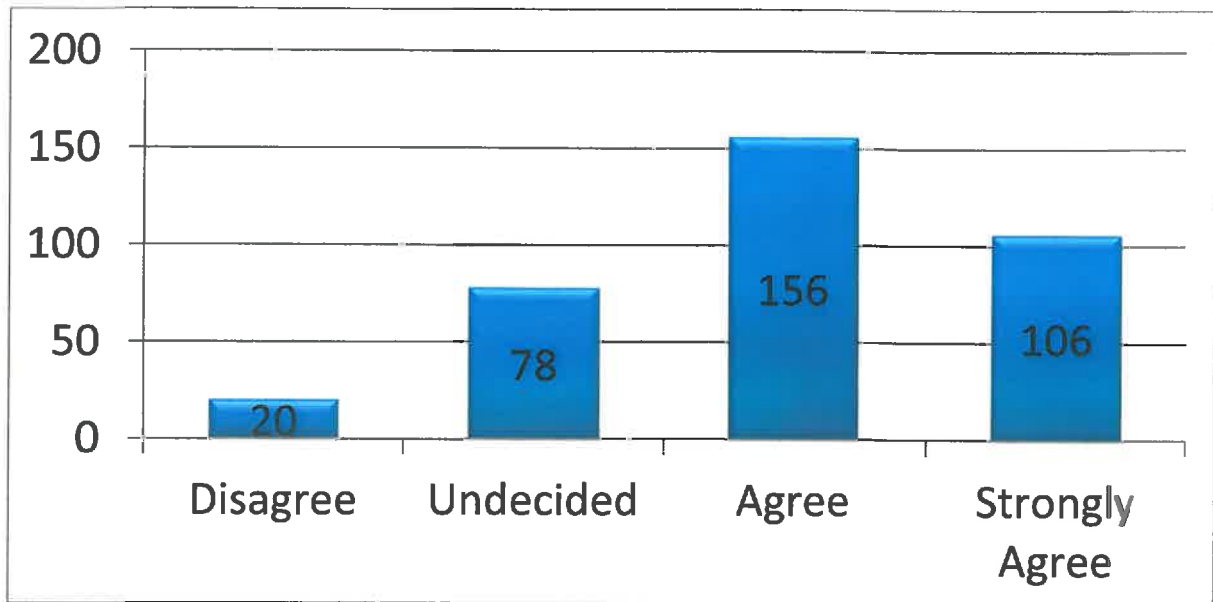


Figure 4.21 Service that was received at CPNP is exactly what was desired from CPNP

From the above figure it can observe that one-hundred-and-fifty-six (43%) respondents agreed that the service that was received at CPNP is exactly what was desired from CPNP, while one-hundred-and-six (29%) strongly agreed. Seventy-eight (22%) respondents were undecided, and twenty (6%) respondents disagreed.

4.2.22 Physical environment described as appealing

Figure 4.22 illustrates whether respondents thought that the physical environment was appealing. The physical environment can affect the type of service received.

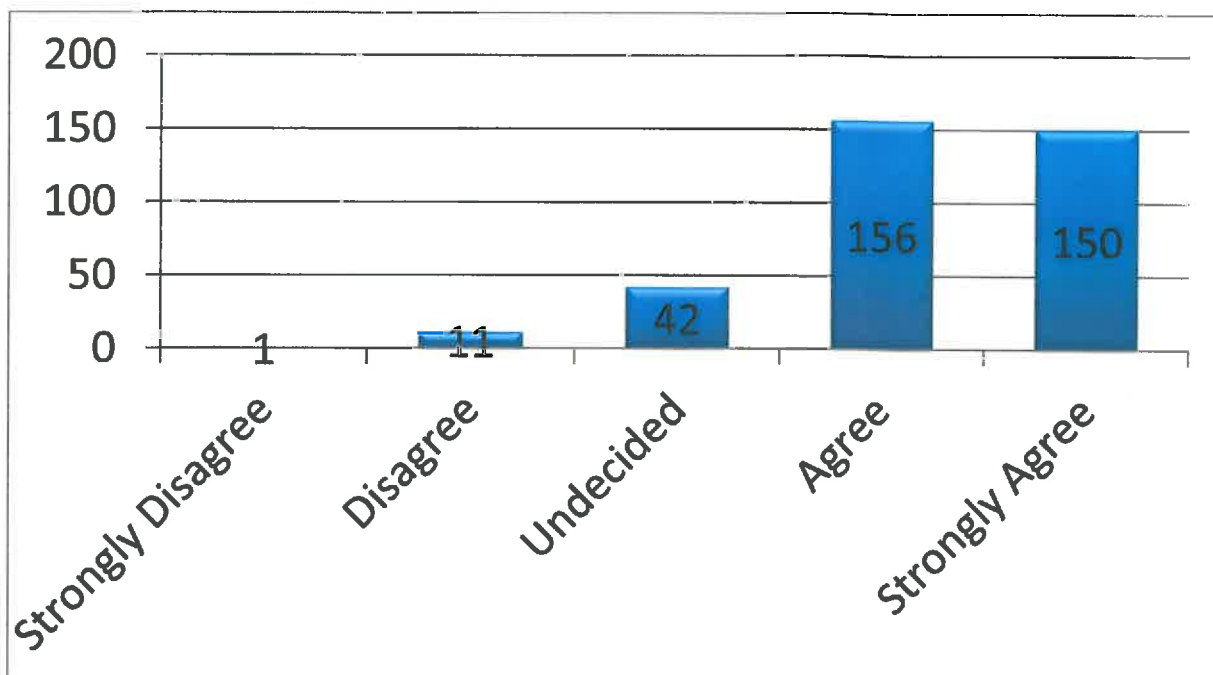


Figure 4.22 Physical environment (including staff) was appealing

The figure above shows that one-hundred-and-fifty-six (43%) respondents agreed that the physical environment was appealing, while one-hundred-and-fifty (42%) strongly agreed. Forty-two (12%) were undecided, while eleven (3%) respondents disagreed and one respondent strongly disagreed.

4.2.23 Quality of service differs at various attractions within the Western Cape

Figure 4.23 illustrates whether the service staff at selected attractions within the Western Cape differs by the quality of service that they offer. Levels of service should be of a high quality at all attractions. The findings are presented in the graph below.

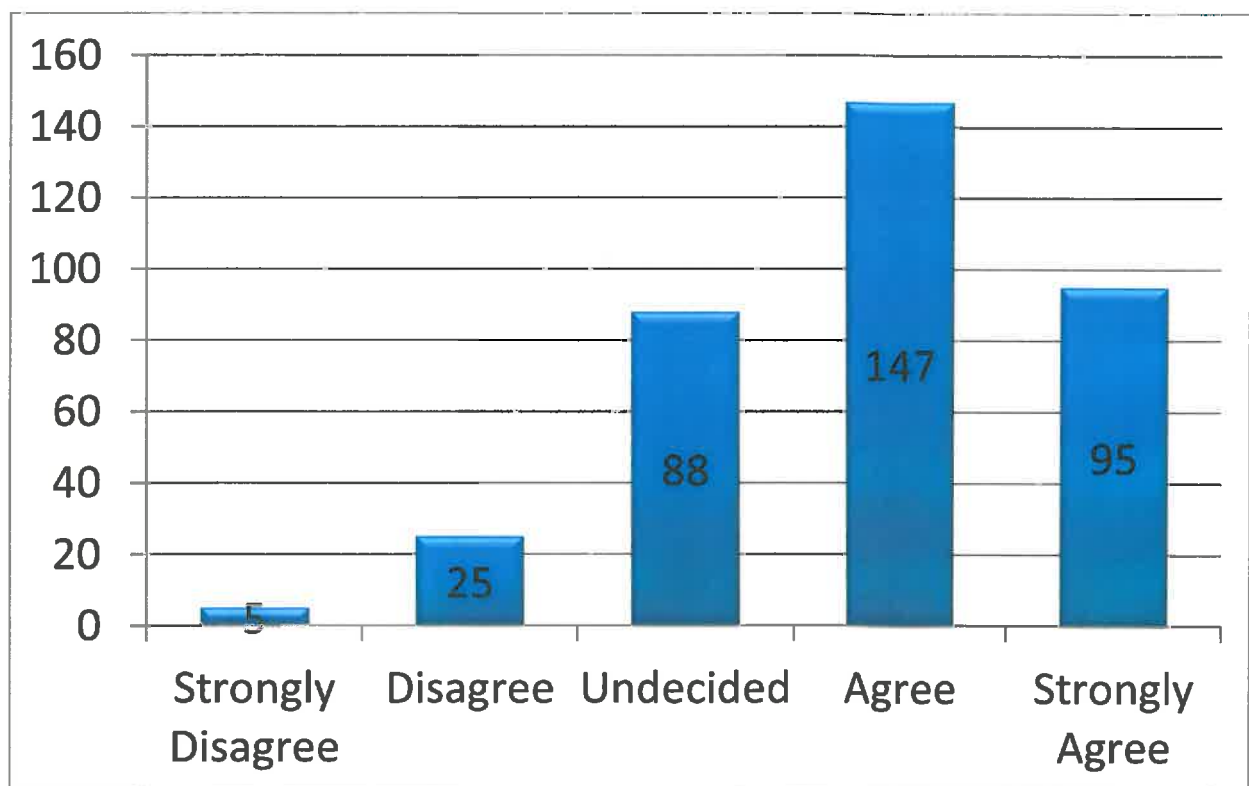


Figure 4.23 Service staff at selected attractions within the Western Cape differ by the quality of the service that they offer

The graph above illustrates that one-hundred-and-forty-seven (41%) respondents agreed that the service staff at selected attractions within the Western Cape differs by the quality of service that they offer, while ninety-five (26%) strongly agreed.

Eighty-eight (25%) were undecided, while twenty-five (7%) respondents disagreed and five (1%) respondents strongly disagreed.

4.2.24 Returning to CPNP because of good service

Figure 4.24 illustrates whether visiting the attraction again because the quality of the service is an option/consideration. When high quality service is guaranteed, repeat business is guaranteed.

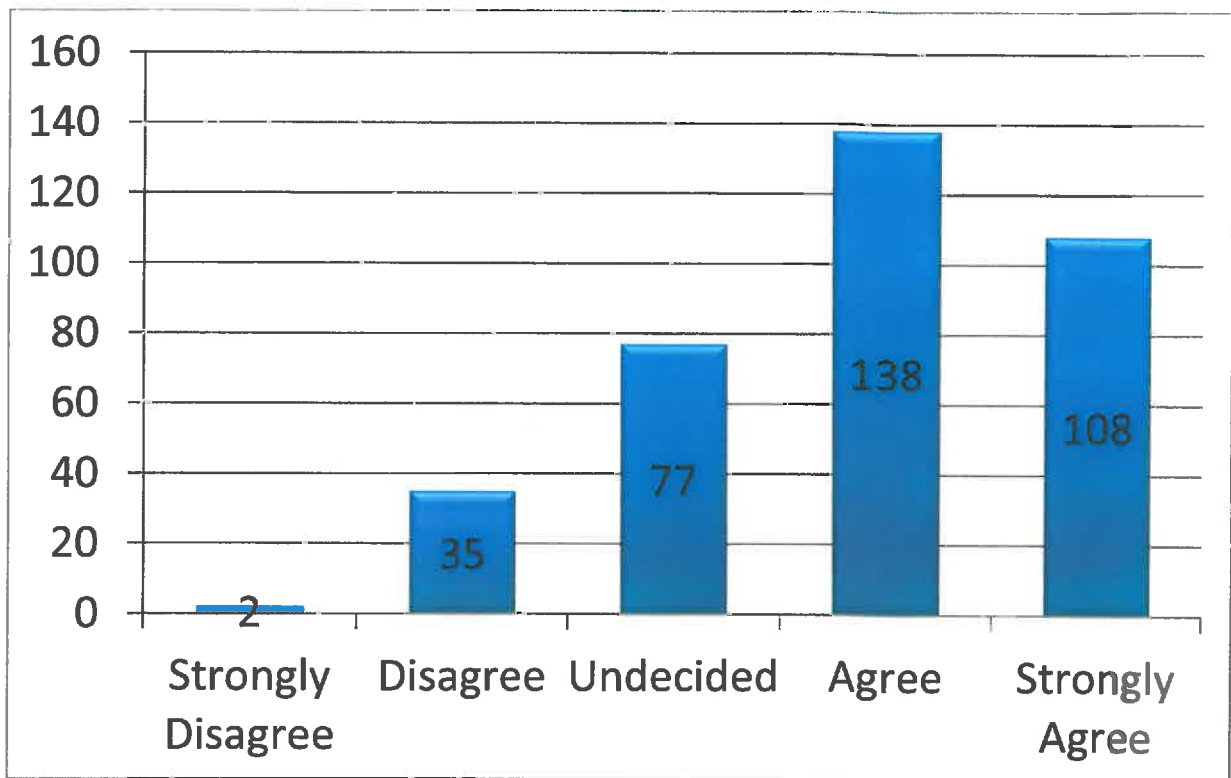


Figure 4.24 Visiting the attraction again because the quality of the service is an option/consideration

In the figure above, one-hundred-and-thirty-eight (38%) respondents agreed that they will visit the attraction again because of good service, while one-hundred-and-eight (30%) strongly agreed. Seventy-seven (21%) were undecided, while thirty-five (10%) respondents disagreed and two (1%) respondents strongly disagreed.

4.2.25 Word-of-mouth marketing

Figure 4.25 illustrates how many respondents would inform friends and family about the service quality that they received at the tourist attractions in terms of whether the

service was a good or bad experience. The cheapest way of advertising is word-of-mouth, as discussed in Chapter Two.

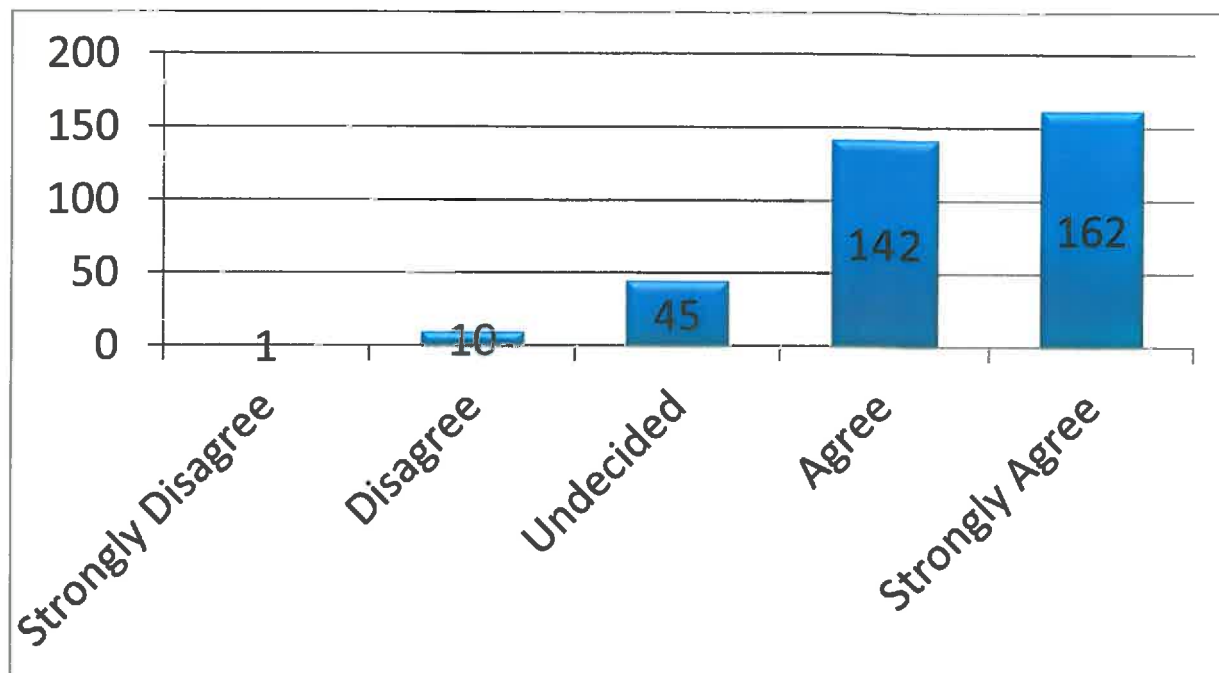


Figure 4.25 Respondents that will inform friends and family about the service quality received at CPNP

The above figure shows that one-hundred-and-sixty-two (45%) respondents strongly agreed that they would inform their friends and family about the service quality, while one-hundred-and-forty-two (39%) agreed. Forty-five (13%) were undecided, while ten (3%) respondents disagreed and one respondent strongly disagreed.

4.3 Summary

This chapter presented, analysed and discussed the findings from the primary investigation, and link them to the research objectives of the study. Of the 360 valid responses that were received, respondents were from Europe, North America, Asia, South America, Australia, and New Zealand. Fifty-four percent of the respondents are male and forty-six percent are female.

It may be noted from the above that a majority of respondents travel on an annual basis, some every second year, while others travel as often as twice a year and a minority travel every 5 years. This indicates that respondents have experienced service delivery at all levels because of their frequent travelling. The respondents

also experienced other attractions within the Western Cape, and could, therefore, make comparisons of the services received.

Although a majority of respondents rated the service at CPNP as good, there were others who provided negative feedback about service levels that they experienced at CPNP. A number of visitors also indicated that they did not want to participate in the survey. The unwillingness of these visitors could be a result of time restrictions and the fact that they were on holiday. There was a fairly good response concerning service delivery at CPNP but there is always room for improvement.

The above research findings and the literature in previous chapters show that attractions should be committed to improve on and maintain high service levels. The general feeling amongst respondents was that the service delivery was of a high quality, but some respondents asserted that CPNP employees should be educated and trained to deliver service of an international standard.

The following and final chapter discusses the conclusions which are drawn from the findings of the investigation under the headings of the research objectives, and provide conclusions that are drawn from the findings, as well as recommendations on how to solve any service shortfalls.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Four presented the findings of the research data and the core objective of this research was to determine whether the needs of international visitors to CPNP are being appeased and, if not, how CPNP can improve its offering so that it can satisfy these needs and also position itself as an attraction of choice. This chapter deals with the conclusions and provides recommendations, to assist the management of the CPNP to provide better service delivery to their most important assets, namely, their visitors.

5.2 Conclusions drawn after the research

The data of this study was analysed in terms of the following key research objectives:

1. Research objective 1: To determine customer expectations and management perceptions in terms of these expectations, while the secondary objective was to eliminate the customers' expectations-management perceptions gap;
2. Research objective 2: To determine management's perceptions of service quality, while the secondary objective was to eliminate the management's perceptions - service quality specifications gap, if it exists;
3. Research objective 3: To identify current levels of service quality at CPNP and to eliminate the service quality specifications - service delivery gap, if it exists;
4. Research objective 4: To determine whether what has been advertised by CPNP has been realised (whether CPNP has 'walked the talk' regarding promises made to the public). The secondary objective was to eliminate the service delivery-external communications gap, as well as eliminate customers' expectations - perceptions of quality service gap; and
5. Research objective 5: To measure perceptions of service quality and to make recommendations on the findings of the surveys regarding how customer service can continuously be improved, should any gaps exist.

The conclusions of the study are presented in terms of the objectives listed above, under relevant subsections.

5.2.1 Conclusions: research objective 1

This research objective was to determine whether customer expectations and management perceptions of these expectations have been met at CPNP and, if not, the secondary objective was to eliminate any gaps between the two (expectations versus perceptions of expectations). The data obtained from the primary research project established that in most instances the expectations of tourists were indeed realised. This indicates that management understands the needs and expectations of its international tourists and has aligned its service delivery accordingly. It should be noted that some tourists felt that their expectations were not met, while it is these tourists who, via word-of-mouth, may tarnish the reputation of the attraction. Management should, therefore, conduct regular surveys to determine the needs and expectations of its visitors and then take corrective action where required to improve service delivery. Although the old adage: 'you please some people some of the time and not all people all of the time' is true, the management of CPNP should do their best to try to appease the needs of all its customers, irrespective of which country they come from.

5.2.2 Conclusions: research objective 2

Here the research objective attempted to uncover whether management has accurately determined the standards that customers require and whether the standard of service that is delivered, satisfies the needs of customers, as well as the organisation. In other words, through research, management should determine the requirements of customers and then align services to meet these standards. Oftentimes managers do not believe that they can meet customer standards (requirements for service) and as a result, do nothing about it. A gap could also exist if management is only prepared to generate a standard of service X, even though a standard Y is sought by customers. This could be a result of inadequate funds, capacity restrictions, a culture within the organisation of only meeting the required standards, and not trying to exceed customer expectations, inadequate employee training, which has a negative impact on service delivery and/or finally, the fact that as the world is suffering from an economic recession, CPNP might be utilising a cost-effective leadership strategy to reduce costs and, by association, reduce the standard of service delivery.

The findings of the research, however, dispute the above as the bulk of visitors indicated that the standard of service delivery at CPNP meets the standards that they expected from the attraction. It should be pointed out, however, that there is scant evidence to support the fact that customer service standards have been accurately determined and, in order to do so, CPNP management should:

1. Use a flow chart of its operations to identify all points of contact between the facility and its customers;
2. Develop standards according to which the system should operate;
3. Write specifications on how staff should treat customers at each contact point; and
4. Essentially produce a guidebook for employees to follow with the goal of meeting or exceeding customer expectations.

5.2.3 Conclusions: research objective 3

The delivery of *Gap 3* occurs between the actual performance of a service and the standards that are set by management. The existence of the delivery gap depends on both the willingness and the ability of employees to provide service, according to specifications. The survey established that 52% of the respondents thought that the service they experienced was good, and 26% thought that the service was excellent. Although the majority of the feedback was positive (88%) there were still seventy-nine respondents who rated the service as mediocre and poor. This illustrates that there is still room for improvement. This may be a result of a lack of training, which is provided to employees, a poor selection process, or the classical example of employing low-paid service personnel who are not qualified to do face-to-face service work.

5.2.4 Conclusions: research objective 4

This research objective aimed to determine what has been advertised by the service provider and whether CPNP has executed the levels of service they advertised. The secondary objective was to eliminate the service delivery - external communications gap, as well as to eliminate the customers' expectations - perceptions of quality service gap. It was established that 71% of the respondents thought that the service that was received was in line with CPNP's promotion and advertising material. A total of one-hundred-and-four (29%) respondents were doubtful or disagreed. This could be a result of over-promising and under-delivering or poor horizontal communication where what had been advertised in the media had not been communicated to service staff.

5.2.5 Conclusions: research objective 5

This research objective aimed to measure perceptions of service quality and to make recommendations based on the findings of the survey regarding how customer service can continuously be improved. The fact that 28% of the respondents who participated stated that the services that were received were not up to international standards indicates that services at CPNP can be improved.

1.3 Recommendations

It is recommended that the management at CPNP should take the following into consideration when formulating a strategy to improve service quality at the attraction.

1. Clear defined and measurable goals should be set to achieve acceptable customer service (Freemantle, 1993:75). It is vital to create a customer service culture, while the value of excellent customer service should be deeply embedded within the culture of the organisation and within the personal beliefs of every serving member of the organisation (Freemantle, 1993:81). Chaston (1993:21) agrees by stating that the behaviour of an organisation is guided and influenced by the values and attitudes of employees. Culture is reflected in the commitment of employees towards a common purpose and determines skills or job roles effectively. CPNP's primary goal should be to satisfy customers and create loyal customers, whilst bearing in mind that dissatisfied, demanding, and finicky customers should be seen as opportunities. The service delivered should be caring, individualised, dependable, accurate, consistent and prompt. The service staff should be knowledgeable and courteous at all times.
2. An integrated and coordinated management strategy and policy should be developed for continual monitoring of performance standards at CPNP. It would be wise to put into practice Freemantle's (1993:64) advice to continually provide 'service to the point of obsession', and that all employees should develop an 'obsession' with qualitative customer service. The 'obsession' should start from the top with an overriding commitment to customer service.
3. According to Freemantle (1993:40), all employees should know the product, know the service, know the organisation, know how to get things done and know how to resolve problems. In order to be knowledgeable about the product,

service and organisation, continuous education and training of all staff are recommended.

4. Select a strategy that is appropriate to the lifecycle of CPNP. This should be an appropriate growth strategy (product development), which should be directed at CPNP reinventing itself by extending services to its customers, improving on existing ones and, importantly, developing a marketing strategy to attract more visitors and to position itself as an attraction of choice.

5.4 Limitations to the study

The first limitation of this study is the high number of respondents who provided neutral feedback to certain questions that were posed to them. This could be linked to the third limitation as indicated below concerning the issue of language. However the high level of neutrality could also have been the result of respondents being time-starved because the bulk of the questionnaires were completed in transit from the attraction to their accommodation. The third option is that respondents did not want to make any negative comments post the CPNP experience, which is a common aspect of consumer behaviour. For example, people often experience bad food and service at a restaurant but do not complain when asked about the quality of food and service. It is these customers who express negative word-of-mouth which results in negative publicity for that particular restaurant. However the latter does not apply as by far the majority of the people either agreed or strongly agreed that service at the attraction was of a satisfactory nature.

The second limitation that applies to this study is that CPNP is located at a far-off distance. Due to both time and financial constraints, it was not possible to visit the CPNP continuously and had to conduct most of the research during the months of April to December 2010.

The third limitation was the language barrier, as not all respondents were English-speaking and not all tourists enjoyed the luxury of a translator. It is, however, believed that the data received during the research project was not skewed or lost in translation.

The final limitation was that not all the visitors were willing to participate in the survey. This was mainly owing to the fact that the tourists were on holiday. However, the findings would not be different had the support of the full number of respondents that were targeted for the study successfully obtained. In other words, the findings are viewed as reflecting the total population of international visitors who visited CPNP during the course of the research.

5.5 Summary of study

This study has contributed to the limited knowledge that is available on service delivery at CPNP. The study also identified opportunities for the management of the CPNP to identify areas where shortcomings exist and where improvements can be made in service delivery.

Recommendations have been made to ensure that service delivery is up to international standards and to ensure that all staff members are continuously educated and trained. By using these recommendations, CPNP's management staff should be able to satisfy all staff and customer needs and thereby provide levels of service that are of international class. This will assist to differentiate CPNP from attractions that compete against it.

The introductory chapter of this study provided a background to the research problem, as well as a general overview of service delivery at CPNP. The chapter also focused on the aims and objectives of the study, the research questions and the research approach and methods that were used to collect both primary and secondary data. It also provided a motivation to conduct the study and operational definitions for terms that were used throughout the research.

The second chapter of the study reviewed a number of literature sources, which provided a conceptual framework and theoretical overview of tourism and of major tourist attractions within the Western Cape. A brief discussion of service delivery was given, as well as a discussion of service quality. This chapter also dealt with customer satisfaction and how this satisfaction is measured.

Chapter Three provided a discussion of the methodology that was used in the study. It also documented the questionnaire design, the instrument that was used to collect data, the sample size, and the survey population.

Chapter Four presented the findings of the research data and discussed the research findings.

The final chapter, Chapter Five, provided conclusions and recommendations that were made in relation to the findings and research objectives of the study. The chapter also considered the limitations of the study.

It is believed that there is scope to further investigate service levels at all other competing tourism attractions in the Western Cape. By doing so and by uncovering additional service gaps, these gaps may be closed, which will improve the Western Cape as a tourism destination. This should have a marked impact on the local economy of the province and, as it will benefit the area and the community at large, possibly research at a doctoral level will be appropriate.

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ADDENDUM 1: SAMPLE SIZE TABLE

N	S	N	S	N	S
30	28	280	162	1500	306
40	36	290	165	1600	310
50	44	300	169	1700	313
60	52	320	175	1800	317
70	59	340	181	1900	320
80	66	360	186	2000	322
90	73	400	196	2200	327
95	76	420	201	2400	331
100	80	440	205	2600	335
110	86	460	210	2800	338
120	92	480	214	3000	341
130	97	500	217	3500	346
140	103	550	226	4500	354
150	108	600	234	5000	357
160	113	650	242	6000	361
170	118	700	248	7000	364
180	123	750	254	8000	367
190	127	800	260	9000	368
200	132	850	265	10000	370
210	136	900	269	15000	375
220	140	950	274	20000	377
230	144	1000	278	30000	379
240	148	1100	285	40000	380
250	152	1200	291	50000	381
260	155	1300	297	75000	382
270	159	1400	302	100000	384

(Sekaran. 2003, Research Methods for Business, Table 11.3 pg 294)

ADDENDUM 2: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey among international tourists at CPNP on service quality as part of a formal study project named *DETERMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION LEVELS IN TERMS OF SERVICE QUALITY AT CPNP*

Section A: Question 1: Please provide some details about yourself by selecting one of the following fields applicable to your situation:

1.1 In which country do you reside?	
1.1.1	

1.2 Gender	
1.2.1	Male
1.2.2	Female

1.3 What is your occupation?	
1.3.1	Student
1.3.2	Employed
1.3.3	Unemployed
1.3.4	Retired

1.4 How frequently do you travel?	
1.4.1	Bi-annually
1.4.2	Annually
1.4.3	Every 2 years
1.4.4	Every 5 years

1.5 How long are you staying in the Western Cape?	
1.5.1	1 – 7 days
1.5.2	8 – 14 days
1.5.3	15 – 21 days
1.5.4	22 – 28 days
1.5.5	29 days and more

1.6 Other than CPNP, which of the following attractions have you visited?	
1.6.1	V&A Waterfront
1.6.2	Table Mountain Cable Way
1.6.3	Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens
1.6.4	Robben Island
1.6.5	Various Wine Routes
1.6.6	Cape Overberg Region
1.6.7	Garden Route Region

1.7 How would you rate the service at CPNP (1 being <i>poor</i> and 5 being <i>excellent</i>)	
1.7.1	CPNP

Section B Question 2:

Please read the following statements and indicate your preference according to the legend below.

LEGEND

1 STRONGLY DISAGREE	2 DISAGREE	3 UNDECIDED	4 AGREE	5 STRONGLY AGREE
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(PLEASE INDICATE WITH AN (X) IN THE APPROPRIATE COLUMN PER ITEM)

STATEMENTS (Where options are presented, more than one option can be selected)		Degree of preference				
		1	2	3	4	5
2.1	The service offered at CPNP is of International standard.					
2.2	The quality of services that I received exceeded my expectations.					
2.3	The service that I received can be described as caring.					
2.4	The service that I received can be described as individualised.					
2.5	The service that I experienced was dependable.					
2.6	The service that I experienced was accurate					
2.7	The service that I experienced was consistent throughout the CPNP experience.					
2.8	The service that I received was prompt.					
2.9	The service personnel were knowledgeable.					
2.10	The service personnel were courteous.					
2.11	The service providers at CPNP took all my needs into consideration in terms of service delivery.					
2.12	From the service that I received, it seems that CPNP employees have been adequately trained to deliver a world class service.					
2.13	The service that I received is in line with CPNP's promotion and advertising material.					
2.14	The service that I received at CPNP is exactly what I desired from CPNP					
2.15	The physical environment (including staff) was appealing?					
2.16	The service staff at the selected attractions within the Western Cape differs by the quality of service that they offer.					
2.17	Visiting the attraction again because of the quality of the service is an option/consideration.					

2.18	I will inform friends and family about the service quality received at the tourist attractions.					
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Thank you for your assistance
M.D Siebritz
Researcher

ADDENDUM 3: COVERING LETTER FOR SURVEY

P O Box 30609

Tokai

7966

June 2010 – March 2011

Dear Sir / Madam

QUESTIONNAIRE ON DETERMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION LEVELS IN TERMS OF SERVICE QUALITY OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AT CPNP

Thank you for taking the time to participate in completing this questionnaire as it is part of a research study to determine levels of international customer satisfaction in terms of the service quality at CPNP. Your willingness to complete the questionnaire will be much appreciated, as the information thus obtained will assist the researcher to complete the study of international customer satisfaction levels in terms of the service quality at CPNP.

The questionnaire has been prepared so that it will require minimum time to complete. Responses to the various questions / statements will be decisive for the eventual outcome of the research.

All information is confidential and you will not be able to be identified.

If you have any questions about the questionnaire, how the information is used or the results, please contact Miss M.D Siebritz on 072 838 9913 or via email marjoriesiebritz@yahoo.com.

Once again thank you for your co-operation.

Marjorie Siebritz

204101859

Researcher