

**SERVICE QUALITY IN SPORT TOURISM: THE CASE OF
THE BERG RIVER CANOE MARATHON**

Mini dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

The

MTECH Degree: Tourism and Hospitality Management

in the

FACULTY OF BUSINESS

at the

CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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November 2006

DECLARATION

I, Lisebo Tseane, declare that the contents of this study represent my own unaided work and that the study 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.

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ABSTRACT

The concept of service quality within sport tourism is important and plays a major role in differentiating each sport tourism product from its competitors. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the level of service quality within South African sport tourism and in the tourism industry in general, by focusing on a specific case study, the Berg River Canoe Marathon. The study discussed the importance of service quality within sport tourism, while the methods and instruments applicable to assess the level of service quality within sport tourism, were also addressed.

The survey was conducted across selected viewpoints, which included the starting and the finishing points of the marathon. A total of 100 survey questionnaires were distributed to spectators and participants at the event using purposive sampling, while stratified random sampling was used to determine the viewpoints. The SERVQUAL dimensions were incorporated in the questionnaires as the basis to determine the level of service delivery at the event.

The key findings for the study include a lack of service delivery consistency across the selected areas, the acceptance of service delivery by some respondents owing to the nature of the event and less interaction between event organisers and spectators. In addition, the starting and the finishing points were the areas, which were found to deliver high quality services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank:

- My supervisor, Dr Kamilla Swart, for her inspiration, encouragement and motivation. I would like to thank her for all the support she gave me during the completion of this study.
- My co-supervisor, Prof S. Bayat, for motivating and encouraging me throughout the completion of this study.
- My parents for all their support and love.
- My friends who always supported me.
- The Centre for Tourism Research in Africa (CETRA) for making research facilities available to me at all times.
- The 2005-2006 CETRA research team for their honesty, cooperation, hard work and team work.
- The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation for sponsoring this study.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSA: Canoeing South Africa

CTRU: Cape Town Route Unlimited

DMO: Destination Marketing Organisation

FIFA: Federation of international Football Association

MOT: Moment of Truth

SABC: South African Broadcasting Corporation

SERVQUAL: Service Quality Model

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

WHO: World Health Organisation

WPCU: Western Province Canoe Union

WTB: Wales Tourist Board

WTO: World Tourism Organisation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CHAPTER 1

Background of the research problem

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Research problem	10
1.3	The aim of the study	11
1.3.1	The aim of the study	11
1.3.2	The objectives of the study	12
1.4	Research questions	12
1.5	Research approach and methods	13
1.5.1	Research design	13
1.5.2	The survey population and sample size	13
1.5.3	Sample selection	13
1.6	Methods and tools of data collection	13
1.6.1	Secondary sources of information	13
1.6.2	Primary sources of information	15
1.6.3	Direct observation	15
1.7	Data analysis	15
1.8	Motivation for investigation	15
1.9	Operational definitions	16
1.10	Outline of the study	18

CHAPTER 2

Sport tourism and the concept of service quality

2.1	Introduction	20
2.2	Sport tourism defined	22
2.3	The relationship between sport and tourism	24
2.4	Characteristics of sport tourism products	29
2.4.1	Intangibility	29
2.4.2	Inseparability	30
2.4.3	Heterogeneity	31
2.4.4	Perishability	32

2.5	Canoeing in South Africa	33
2.5.1	The Berg River Canoe Marathon	34
2.6	Service quality at events	35
2.6.1	Introduction	35
2.7	Servicescape	38
2.7.1	Introduction	38
2.7.2	The effects of the servicescape on customer's behavioural responses	41
2.7.3	Interior and exterior layout	42
2.7.3.1	Layout accessibility	42
2.7.3.2	Attractions of the interior and exterior design	44
2.7.3.3	Seating comfort	45
2.7.3.4	Electronic equipment and displays	45
2.7.3.5	Cleanliness	46
2.8	Perceived quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions	47
2.9	Understanding service quality at events	48
2.9.1	Introduction	48
2.9.2	What is quality?	50
2.9.3	Ideal as the quality standard	52
2.9.4	Excellence as the quality standard: SERVQUAL revisited	54
2.9.5	Service quality	56
2.10	Measuring service quality	58
2.10.1	Introduction	58
2.10.2	The five-gap model of service quality	59
2.10.3	Categories for service quality determinants	64
2.11	The SERVQUAL instrument	66
2.12	Summary of the chapter	67

CHAPTER 3

Research methodology

3.1	Introduction	69
3.2	Research design	69
3.3	The survey population	70
3.4	Methods and tools of data collection	71
3.5	Sample	73
3.6	Data analysis	78
3.7	Summary of the chapter	78

CHAPTER 4

Results and Discussion

4.1	Introduction	79
4.2	Demographic profile	81
4.2.1	Age	81
4.2.2	Employment status and occupations	82
4.2.3	Monthly income	83

4.2.4	Highest education level completed	84
4.2.5	Gender	84
4.2.6	Historical race category	85
4.3	Knowledge of service	86
4.3.1	Comparison between aware and used services	88
4.4	Perception and attitudes	93
4.4.1	Reliability	94
4.4.2	Responsiveness	95
4.4.3	Tangibility	96
4.4.4	Assurance	97
4.4.5	Empathy	99
4.5	Length of stay	100
4.4.1	The intended length of stay	101
4.4.2	The actual length of stay	101
4.6	Comparison of service quality at different viewpoints along the Berg River	105
4.6.1	Knowledge of service	106
4.6.2	Perception and attitude	112
4.7	Direct observation	122
4.8	Summary of the chapter	124

CHAPTER 5

Summary, limitations, recommendations and conclusion

5.1	Introduction	125
5.2	Summary of key findings	125
5.3	Limitations of the study	127
5.4	Recommendations	128
5.5	Conclusion	130

FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Eight types of sport tourism	23
Figure 2.2	Basic model of sport tourism	25
Figure 2.3	Aspects of tourism	27
Figure 2.4	Interaction in event service management	38
Figure 2.5	Framework for understanding environment – user relationship in in service organisation	41
Figure 2.6	Hypothesized model	43
Figure 2.7	Managing the perceived service quality	58
Figure 2.8	The five-gap model of service quality	60
Figure 2.9	Service quality determinants	63
Figure 3.1	Berg River Canoe Marathon map	71
Figure 4.1	Age of respondents	81
Figure 4.2	Monthly income	83
Figure 4.3	Highest education level completed	84
Figure 4.4	Gender of respondents	85
Figure 4.5	Historical race category	86
Figure 4.6	Comparison between aware and used services	89
Figure 4.7	Comparison between the intended length of stay and the actual length of stay	101
Figure 4.8	Problems experienced during the event	103

TABLES

Table 2.1	Single – stimulus definition of quality	51
Table 3.1	Sample distribution for the Berg River Canoe Marathon (2005)	74
Table 3.2	The 2005 Berg River Marathon sample procedure	75
Table 4.1	Sample distribution by the location	80
Table 4.2	Employment status	82
Table 4.3	Awareness, knowledge and used services	87
Table 4.4	Ratings: Services environment	90
Table 4.5	Ratings: Servicescape or physical facilities	92
Table 4.6	Perception and attitude (Reliability)	94
Table 4.7	Perception and attitude (Responsiveness)	95
Table 4.8	Perception and attitude (Tangibility)	97
Table 4.9	Perception and attitude (Assurance)	98
Table 4.10	Perception and attitude (Empathy)	99
Table 4.11	The reason for differences between the length of stay and the actual length of stay	102
Table 4.12	The nature of the problem experienced during the event	103
Table 4.13	Suggestions to improve the service quality of the event	105
Table 4.14	Knowledge of service: comparison of different viewpoints	106

Table 4.15	A comparison of servicescape or physical facilities at different viewpoints	111
Table 4.16	Comparison of service quality dimension (Reliability) at different viewpoints	112
Table 4.17	A comparison of service quality dimension (Responsiveness) at different viewpoints	114
Table 4.18	A comparison of service quality dimension (Tangibility) at different viewpoints	115
Table 4.19	A comparison of service quality dimension (Assurance) at different viewpoints	117
Table 4.20	A comparison of service quality dimension (Empathy) at different viewpoints	120

LIST OF REFERENCES	131
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Annexure A	138
Annexure B	141

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Thwaites (1999: 1), a prominent feature of the last decade has been the general growth in discretionary income that has provided consumers with additional choices of leisure and recreational activities. The improved income and availability of free time has led to the hosting of various sporting events in South Africa throughout the year and, particularly since 1994, sport has made a substantial contribution to nation-building and reconciliation in South Africa (South Africa Yearbook, 2004/05: 519). Some of the major sporting events which take place in South Africa include: J&B Met, Argus Pick 'n Pay Cycle Tour, Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon, Red Bull Big Wave Africa and the Berg River Canoe Marathon, which the study focuses on.

The Berg River Canoe Marathon is classified under extreme sport. According to Saayman (2001: 143), extreme sport is growing at an accelerated pace and, in many cases, is replacing traditional sport. Extreme tourism is a type of niche tourism involving travel to dangerous places (mountains, jungles, deserts, caves, etc.) or participation in dangerous events. The author mentions that South Africa is a haven for these exciting and challenging tourism activities. South Africa is one of the richest countries in terms of natural resources (South African Hotels Search, 2006: 1), such as rivers, mountains and wild life. As Thwaites (1999: 1) states, an additional choice of leisure and activities contributes to a more competitive environment. Sport tourism organisers and stakeholders are forced to have a distinctive competitive edge to overcome this competition. Service quality is the key to being competitive. Competition within the tourism industry is fuelled by a preoccupation with service quality to add and enhance the complete tourism experience. Competitive advantages such as location, price and quality of service have

enabled many companies to survive within this competitive environment. Saayman (2001: 198) states that there are a number of other factors, which should be considered to offer a competitive edge. These factors are used as a checklist for success by tourist destinations and they include sport and training facilities, accommodation, transportation, climate, location (primary factors), price, accessibility, image, educational facilities, entertainment facilities, shopping facilities, infrastructure, culture and social characteristics, natural beauty, attitude, security or safety, service management, political situation and the media (secondary factors).

Shilbury and Westerbeek (1996: 149) also mention that all sport confront intense competition from, not only other sport, but also from a range of recreation and leisure options. In response to this new environment, sport and leisure organisations have acknowledged the importance of the customer and placed a greater emphasis on marketing activities and the delivery of service quality. Tourists are mindful of how facilities are managed, as well as how their arrangements are handled (Saayman, 2001: 200). The author also highlights that service is crucial for tourists and, therefore, the level of service in the destination should be taken into consideration. However, Costa and Glinia (2003: 284) argue that there are few studies which dealt with service quality that is provided by sport tourism organisations. Amongst them, Vassilliou (2001) and Glinia, Tsitskari, Kalaizidis and Costa (2002) have examined aspects of the organisational behaviour of those extremely 'close-contact' customer-service employees.

Sport tourism has emerged as a niche market in recent years and has become an important economic activity (Ritchie, 2005: 161-162). The sector has become fundamental to various people such as politicians, tourism stakeholders and athletes as it tightens ties between countries and continents and, moreover, it showcases many tourist destinations. Certain outdoor activities such hiking, hunting, kayaking, skiing, yachting and canoeing depend almost exclusively on natural environments and natural resources such as mountains, forests, rivers and seas (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 236). The ability of these attractions to stage sport events, contributes towards an increasing awareness of tourist destinations, as well as improving their images. Recent research was conducted

on the Super 12 Rugby union competition in Australia, which suggested that the potential of this competition attracted domestic and international visitors, resulting in expenditure as well as their ability to contribute towards the destination's image (Ritchie, 2005: 161-162). A lack of service quality in sport tourism can lead to a negative impact on the environment through excessive litter, which can result in unsustainable tourism practice. In order to undertake sport tourism in a sustainable manner, it would be crucial to consider the protection and preservation of the environment where the event takes place and, most importantly, to improve the quality of service, which would increase service effectiveness. Therefore, development and improvement of service quality in sport tourism is crucial for the success and growth of South African tourism.

Several studies on service quality have been conducted which use different models such as the service quality model for professional sports events by Tsan and Maguire (1998), the generic service quality instrument, SERVQUAL, developed by Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry (1985), which has been found to be a popular research tool and has been applied directly or in a modified form to a variety of leisure – based sectors such as tourism, hotels and racquet and health clubs (Thwaites: 1999: 2). However, Turco, Swart, Bob and Moodley (2002: 148) state that although tourist satisfaction is critical to the success of any sporting event, relatively little South African research has been published on this topic within the field's leading journals.

The service quality models have been applied in various ways, depending on the researchers' study of interest. For example, Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) focused on sport 'servicescape', which can be easily controlled by managers – aesthetics, layout, seating, electronic equipment and cleanliness. They argue that services research, to date, has been mainly focused on service encounters of a relatively short duration such as those in travel agencies, banking, insurance, fast food restaurants and public utilities, while the service encounter in sport tourism requires customers to stay for longer periods.

Service at travel agencies and banks, for example, cater mainly for customers who tend to spend only a brief period of time when they engage via the windows of the service

facility. In this case, the quality of service is perceived by customers primarily on the basis of intangibility factors such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy and less on tangible aspects such as the physical facilities. The customer at the travel agency would be more concerned on how courteous the personnel are (assurance) than on the availability of facilities such as computers (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 45).

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) further state that leisure services such as concert halls, theatres, recreation and sporting clubs on the other hand, generally, require customers to spend extended periods of time in the physical surroundings (tangible element) of the service provider and in these cases, the perceived quality of the servicescape may play an important role in determining whether or not customers are satisfied, which in turn influences how long they desire to stay in the facility. Ribeiro (2003) argues that tourism enterprises concerned with quality should be able to combine the tangible and intangible products thus supporting Costa and Glinia's (2003: 287) study, which emphasises the importance of intangible aspects within sport tourism.

Their study on empathy and sport tourism focuses on the role of interaction between employees, service providers and customers. The study highlights the fact that it is on the cognitive side of empathy that listening plays such a crucial role especially for the purpose of retaining customers. In a service setting, empathy refers to the caring attitude demonstrated towards individuals, as well as the individualised attention to customers. Empathy is one of the basic elements of a new type of intelligence called 'emotional intelligence' (EQ), which was reported, in the 1980s, to be more important in the workplace. Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry (1994) in their effort to assess service quality developed SERVQUAL, an instrument to be completed by clients, which include, empathy as one of the five main components that describe the construct of service quality. On the other hand, Jones and Haven (2005: 6) assert that there is a temptation within the tourism industry to assume that because the service encounter is rooted in personal experience, any assessment of quality will be intangible. They advised that this temptation should be resisted and that every effort should be made to establish standards and performance measures for tourism services.

All of the above studies have emphasised the importance of service in sport tourism. However, one study focuses on tangible aspects while the other deals with the intangible aspects of service. George (2004: 308) state that due to the fact that sport tourism products are not often separated from employees it is clear that the quality of service is highly dependent on service providers and employees, as employees are considered part of the product, therefore, the intangible aspects of service should be measured. It is this author's contention that some sport tourism products, such as an e-ticket, is self service, however, it should be noted that the information provided for an e-ticket was done by employees, which means that the type of information, layout and design is the reflection of the employees, which emphasises the fact that sport tourism employees are part of the sport tourism products. Employees play an important role in service delivery; they form part of the service and product (Kotler *et al.*, 19996: 319), while their attitudes, appearances and knowledge contribute to the ability to offer personal touches to customers. However, the current human resource base of the South African tourism industry has already begun to show strain, as outlined next.

According to McManus (1997: 44), the managing director of Qualitour (Pty) Ltd, the existing training and development programmes in South African tourism companies do not meet the demand and expectations of employees (nor those of the tourists). Many employers fail to train their staff because of their unrealistic expectations of loyalty, which translates into a perception that training budgets are wasted by a high staff turnover (McManus, 1997: 44). A lack of training leads to poor service delivery, loss of customers and a negative reputation, however, if companies implement an internal marketing programme, staff turnover can be reduced. Pope and Turco (2001: 91) emphasise that internal marketing should be implemented in order to deliver service quality, thus, employees who are motivated and cared for, are likely to deliver good service and stay longer at the firm.

Employment in the tourism business is characterised by low pay, long working hours and a lack of training and high labour turnover. Many operators are recruited from overseas with concomitant implications for delivering what the Wales Tourist Board (WTB) terms

as a 'sense of place' (Jones & Haven-Tang, 2005: 9). The researchers mention that recent research found widespread skill gaps among existing employees, particularly in relation to customer service skills. Moreover, as Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) state, the emphasis on physical attributes is also of importance in order to evaluate the quality of service in sport tourism, since customers are required to spend extended periods of time in the physical surroundings of the service provider.

According to Asher (1996: 1), there have been rapid changes over the past decade within the tourism industry, in both government-owned businesses, private and community-based tourism; particularly since it has been fuelled by major changes in software performance (e-commerce) and the increasing globalisation of markets. Creating a world market in many areas has coerced the tourism industry and entrepreneurs to subject their activities to radical thinking and to put more emphasis on activities in quality service offered to their customers. This pace of change will only increase, as the world effectively becomes a smaller place. There have been several key threats that have underlined these changes as outlined by Asher (1996: 1) below:

1. **Customers:** have realised their power and have taken charge. In the private sector markets, customers have demanded mass-market products that are at the same time customised for them, and have demanded to be treated as individuals. In the public sector, changes, for example, the National Health Service in the UK has provided choices and traditional customers cannot easily take their business elsewhere. In addition, Jones and Haven (2005: 6) state that in community-based tourism, tourists are given the opportunity to interact with the host community and to feel at home through traditional welcoming. Private tourism companies have widely accepted that quality is one of the most important factors of their competitiveness in the global tourism market
2. **Competition has intensified:** Competitors have taken advantage of changes in technology to attract niche markets and improve their quality of service.
3. **Technology:** Changes in information technology (IT), in particular, have made the interchange of data easier and faster. This has led to slower, more traditional paper based organisations - particularly in the service sector - undertaking a radical rethink of their business.

4. Change has become the only constant: The nature of change has itself changed. The lifecycle of tourism products and service have been reduced dramatically, and organisations need to move faster to keep up, requiring, retooling, reinventing and innovation.

As mentioned earlier, sport tourism is an ideal example of services where customers spend lengthy periods of time in the physical surroundings of the service provider, which is known as the servicescape. Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 59) state that servicescape is important to event managers since an amenable environment means that people spend more time and that this environment is easily controllable. The researchers conducted the study on servicescape within English football leagues. Following the disaster at Hillsborough in Sheffield, a government enquiry (under Lord Taylor) set out new standards for the design and layout of football stadia. These standards included a move toward all-seater grounds and the improvement of cleanliness and ground facilities. These changes have made football grounds more attractive places, which encourage people to return, thus impacting positively on spectators.

Saayman (2001: 136) also emphasises the importance of cleanliness at the event venue, arguing that spectators may be discouraged to use rest rooms that are covered with trash, refuse and dampness and may become dissatisfied with the event, while a close monitoring of facilities and maintaining cleanliness may encourage spectators to stay longer and enjoy the facilities. In addition to Wakefield and Blodgett's (1996) study on ground facilities, Saayman (2001: 137) also emphasises the importance of the psychological effect of making spectators feel crowded, the arrangements of aisles, seats and service areas for spectators, may directly or indirectly decrease perceptions and feelings towards the sport events' environment. The crowding effect has been found to have a negative effect on the physical surroundings and a negative influence on the pleasure of spectators. Spectators, who feel uncomfortable because other spectators are too close, may not wish to stay in the place or to return.

According to Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 60), the servicescape also affects perceptions of service quality. In particular, interior décor, cleanliness and accessibility

would affect this perception. However, Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 53) found that attractiveness and cleanliness of the physical environment at sport venues, was less important, while they note the potential for using SERVQUAL in this context. Visitors to sport venues perhaps expect less in terms of décor and cleanliness than punters in a casino. In contrast, such elements such as seating comfort could be more important, therefore, sport organisers should consider the improvement of seating even at the cost of ground capacity if this means more regular attendance (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 60).

The event organisers should also consider the importance of physical evidence such as electronic scoreboards and displays at the sport grounds in order to provide a useful illustration (George, 2004: 375). Sport, in particular soccer and rugby, involve breaks in the game, therefore, in order to keep the ground active during these breaks, other images and impressions are used, which include the use of entertainment such as cheerleaders, dancers, bands and mascots (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 49).

Another factor, which was not included in Wakefield and Blodgett's (1996) study, is ambience, however the authors advice on examination of ambience factors stating that these factors could also be useful to managers within service business. They also note other elements such as temperature, music, aroma and the weather. According to Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 55), all these factors are, to a greater or lesser extent, controllable, except the weather and customers.

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 55) assert that an attention to the physical environment in which a service is consumed – whether or not it is a hedonistic experience – is an area to which service marketers should pay greater attention. Many event organisers regard the physical environment of the event as part of what they sell rather than see them as an important part of the business's marketing effort (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 61). Saayman (2001: 136) identifies five stadium factors that influence spectator attendance: stadium parking, cleanliness, crowding, food service and fan control. Wakefield and Blogett (1996: 48) further state that the availability, proximity and excitability of stadium parking may increase or decrease the spectator's enjoyment. Parking before arriving at

the event may affect or influence the spectator's overall perception of the event negatively. Parking may cause difficulties when leaving the stadium or spectators may want to leave early and therefore, not see the end of the event and leave less satisfied. Food services are also an important source of revenue during sport events (Saayman, 2004: 137). The quality of food is determined by the taste and variety offered. Food should be tasted and reasonably priced otherwise spectators will be forced to eat outside the sport venue or eat before they arrive at the venue.

The quality of service can also be affected by customers. When customers are present during the service delivery, they can contribute to, or detract from, the quality of the service delivery and others' satisfaction (George, 2004: 276). Saayman (2001: 137) also supports this statement by asserting that the nature of sport events can cause offensive events, the intensity of the relationship between teams and their fans, alcohol abuse or the behaviour of the players may influence some spectators to become offensive or abuse other spectators. For example, when 90 people were crushed to death at a stadium in Johannesburg and many hundreds were injured, when excited fans tried to get into a capacity stadium (Van Der Wagen, 2001: 1).

South Africa still lacks the ability to provide an environment that is clean and secured throughout the sporting event (Turco *et al.*, 2003: 234). The study, which was carried out in the Durban Unicity by (Turco *et al.*, 2003), outlines the lack of attention to ambience factors. This study highlights the following as the major problems regarding service quality in sport tourism in the Durban Unicity (Turco *et al.*, 2003: 234 – 235):

- Low visible security and poor policing;
- Lack of parking space;
- Lack of activities and entertainment areas for children;
- Littering and a dirty environment;
- Inadequate facilities (toilets, water, etc.); and
- Insufficient parking.

In response to the above problems, the researchers emphasise an improvement of sport facilities, the tourism environment such as lighting, revamping the accommodation industry, ensuring high standards in terms of service provision and public facilities, which clearly indicates that there is a need for South African sport governing bodies such as Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA) and the South African Sports Commission (SASC), to ensure an improvement in the current level of service quality within sport tourism. SRSA and SASC are responsible for policy, provision and the facilitation of sport and recreation delivery in the country and one of their objectives is to co-ordinate and monitor the creation and upgrading of sport and recreational infrastructure throughout the country and to improve the quality of international events hosted by South Africa.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (1996: 10) states that there is generally poor service within the tourism industry and related sectors. There is little excitement to deliver service or to go the extra mile to satisfy the customer. According to the White Paper, the problem is that it seems to be an accepted norm by the bulk of domestic tourists. Many establishments perform well as a result of the unexpected new demand and many owners and managers believe that the products that they offer, is acceptable (Tourism White Paper, 1996: 13). In addition, Jackson and Schmader (1990) mention that poor service quality within events, is the result of too much emphasis on quantity rather than quality, products rather than market orientation, poor physical conditions and a lack of information and poorly selected or inadequately trained personnel.

Studies on quality of service have focused their attention on tangible products rather than on intangible products such as sport tourism yet presently consumers seek products, which are of a high quality and are service oriented (Bennett, 2000). Emphasis on poor quality service in sport tourism is highlighted by Costa and Glinia (2003), who mention

that despite the growing demand for outdoor recreation and leisure service and the significance of customer satisfaction in international tourism, the majority of studies have focused on existing facilities, equipment and employees' profile and that few studies have dealt with service quality provided by sport tourism organisations, as mentioned previously. Moreover, no in-depth research exists on service quality at sport tourism events in South Africa as outlined earlier.

Currently, there is some support for the initiative to improve the quality of service within the tourism industry. Customers should not merely be seen as people who pay money for a product or service. Each customer should be treated with respect and service providers should strive to meet the customers' needs. There is a need to determine whether tourism bodies, the government, private companies and communities are meeting their customers' expectations and perceptions. Customers require products and service to progress from quality to excellence. Excellence can be defined as exceeding the expectations of customers (Jones & Haven-Tang, 2005: 7).

1.3 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to determine the level of service quality within South African sport tourism, by focusing on a specific case study, the Berg River Canoe Marathon.

1.3.1 The aim of the study

South Africa will host the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Thousands of spectators and participants from overseas, neighbouring countries and within the country are expected to attend this global event. The FIFA World Cup will be hosted for the first time on the Africa continent. According to the South Africa Yearbook (2004/05: 522), an economic impact study predicts that 2.72 million tickets will be sold during the FIFA World Cup, which will generate economic activity, which would amount to approximately R4.6 billion. Capital expenditure on the upgrades of stadiums and other infrastructure will

amount to R2.3 billion and the event will lead to direct expenditure of R12.7 billion while contributing R21.3 billion to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Furthermore, some new employment opportunities will be created and approximately R7.2 billion will be paid to the government in taxes. Finally, this event will create significant direct and indirect economic benefits for the country (South Africa Yearbook, 2004/05: 522). With this opportunity, South Africa should regard it as a marketing tool to host future mega-events and to increase repeat business in every tourism sector. This study, therefore, will serve as a platform for event organisers for the 2010 FIFA World Cup to measure the current level of service within South African sport tourism. The study will assist the 2010 FIFA World Cup organisers to evaluate the current quality of service and to make necessary improvements.

1.3.2 The objectives of the study are:

- To evaluate the level of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon.
- To identify the shortcomings of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon.
- To provide an understanding of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon in particular, and within South African sport tourism in general.
- To provide information that may improve the level of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon in particular, and within South African sport tourism in general.
- To highlight the role of quality services within South African sport tourism.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Emanating from the objectives, the following research questions were constructed:

- What is the level of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon?
- What are the shortcomings of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon?

- What is the level of customer understanding regarding the quality of service at the Berg River Canoe Marathon, in particular, and within South African sport tourism in general?
- How can the level of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon in particular, and within South African sport tourism, in general, be improved?

1.5 RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

1.5.1 Research design

The Berg River Canoe Marathon has been identified as a suitable sport event for the study as part of a broader study that provides a comparative analysis of a random sample of events drawn from Kwazulu-Natal and the Western Cape. The research design incorporated the survey population of event spectators and participants. The questionnaire survey and the direct observation data collection methods were used to gather information from the respondents.

1.5.2 The survey population and sample size

The survey population included participants and spectators. One hundred questionnaires were issued to participants and spectators.

1.5.3 Sample selection

Purposive sampling was applicable for the study; this method of sampling was used to distribute the questionnaires during the event. Stratified random sampling was used to determine the locations in which the questionnaires were distributed.

1.6 METHODS AND TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

1.6.1 Secondary sources of information

Secondary sources of information were used as the foundation of the study. The secondary sources assisted in gathering information and ideas on service quality within sport tourism. The following sources of information were used:

- Books

Various books on sport tourism, events, service quality and tourism were used to compile the literature review and to obtain relevant information such as the concept of sport tourism, the relationship of sport tourism and tourism, the importance of service quality in sport tourism and an understanding of sport tourists' needs and wants.

- Journals

Journal articles from journals such as the Journal of Sport Tourism, Journal of Customer Research, Journal of Travel Research and Sport Marketing Quarterly and the Journal of Retailing, were used to obtain relevant examples regarding service quality within sport tourism.

- Internet

Information regarding the background of the Berg River Canoe Marathon and the marathon route was obtained from Internet sites, such as

<http://victoriafalls.zimbabwe.za.net/event-berg-river-canoe-marathon.html>

- Dissertation and theses

Completed dissertation and thesis were used for technical writing guidance and to gather information related to service quality in the service sector. One of the dissertations consulted is SERVQUAL in an internal non-profit market: psychometric issue (Pitt, 1999).

- Newspapers

Newspapers were consulted to evaluate public issues and interests (especially that of spectators) around the service quality in the tourism industry, in general, and specifically in South Africa. "The Edge" newspaper was used for the study.

- Government published documents

Government publications were used to understand the role of the tourism industry's stakeholders in particular, the South African government publications were used regarding the level of service quality within South African tourism and also to obtain information in preparation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (1996) and the South Africa Yearbook (2004/05) were used in these areas.

1.6.2 Primary sources of information

Face-to-face survey questionnaires were used on-site to capture information such as biographical particulars, typical behaviour, opinions, beliefs and convictions and perception of service quality. In order to assess the respondent's attitudes, a likert scale was used. Unstructured interviews were used on-site and off-site to identify some variables such as past experiences, which were not captured in the questionnaires.

1.6.3 Direct observation

Direct observation was conducted. The four dimensions of service quality identified earlier were used to assess the level of service quality and especially the following:

- Cleanliness of the area where the event takes place;
- Physical appearance, design and the layout of facilities such as toilets, seats and refuse removals;
- Physical appearance of event organisers;
- Availability of facilities; and
- The behaviour, attitude and interaction of events organiser, in general, with both participants and spectators.

1.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis was used. The computer software Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS for Windows) was used to analyse the quantitative data, generate tables, bar charts and histograms. The qualitative data was analysed into conceptual categories by using the constant comparative method.

1.8 MOTIVATION FOR INVESTIGATION

The future of any service sector relies on the level and quality of its service. In order to ensure survival, effectiveness and competitiveness, the tourism industry should provide

service of an exceptionally high quality in order to gain a differentiation opportunity. However, this is not the case within the South African tourism industry. According to McManus (1997: 44), the increase in tourism and hotel development has added to the lack of consistency owing to the declining skills and experience of the existing management pool. This also shows that there are shortcomings with regard to quality service within the industry. Apart from that, there is limited literature in tourism studies in South Africa generally, and in sport tourism, in particular and specifically, sport event tourism. South Africa is preparing to host an international mega-event in 2010. It is, therefore, necessary to identify the current level of service quality within South Africa. These reasons led to an interest to investigate the level of service that tourists receive from the tourism industry, in general, and the sport tourism industry, in particular.

The growing demands from tourism worldwide means that tourism companies are competing globally; therefore, South African tourism companies should strive for prominence by improving their quality of service. A much-improved quality of service will eliminate shortcomings and improve the knowledge, accuracy and empathy of employees, as well as the physical appearance of facilities, which lead to customers' satisfaction resulting in repeat business.

1.9 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

CONSUMER: A person who purchases or uses tourism products (George, 2004: 124).

SERVICE: Any activity or benefit that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 1996: 96).

SERVICESCPE: The physical surroundings of the service provider, which includes the exterior and the interior of the event (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 45).

SERVICE QUALITY: A measure of how well the service level delivered matches customer expectations. It means conforming to customers' expectations on a consistent basis (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985: 42).

SERVQUAL: A 22-item scale developed to measure customer perceptions of service quality. It conceptualises service quality as the gap between customers' perceptions and expectations and identifies five dimensions of service quality, namely reliability, responsiveness, tangibles, assurance and empathy (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985: 41).

SPORT TOURISM: All forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organised way for non-commercial or business and commercial reasons that necessitate travel away from home and work locality (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 12).

SPORT TOURISTS: Individuals who travel because they are involved in the physical execution of the sporting activity or involved in sport as organisers, trainers and spectators (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 70).

SPECTATORS: Individuals who attend sport for the purpose of supporting and cheering the participants (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 13).

PARTICIPANTS: People who are involved in the physical execution of the sporting activity and who are most needed for the activity to occur. These people take part in sport for many reasons, such as enjoyment, improving their health and fitness, socialising or competing (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 132).

1.10 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter One provides an overview of quality service within the service industry more especially within sport tourism and the need for tourism companies to improve their service delivery. The background of the study has been identified, which include the importance of service quality within the tourism industry. It also provides a clear picture of the current situation of South African sport tourism in comparison to some international events. Furthermore, the aim and objectives of the study have been defined and the importance of the study has been explained.

Chapter Two, which is the literature review of the study, addresses the concept of sport tourism and includes the relationship between sport tourism and tourism. A brief overview of canoeing in South Africa, including the Berg River Canoe Marathon will be provided. This chapter further discusses the importance of service quality within the events industry. Various aspects of service quality will be examined at such as servicescape, quality and different service quality models, including the SERVQUAL model, which will be used to measure the quality of service in sport events.

Chapter Three discusses the methodology of the study. The research design will be provided, which identifies the survey population, methods and tools of data collection and the sample size will be discussed. The chapter outlines the sampling procedures of the study, including the criteria that will be used to collect data from various viewpoints.

Chapter Four will focus on data analysis, while the findings of the study will be discussed and the results will be interpreted by using graphs, pie charts and tables. The computer software Statistical Package for Social science (SPSS for Windows) will be used to analyse data.

Finally, Chapter Five will provide the conclusion, limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

SPORT TOURISM AND THE CONCEPT OF SERVICE QUALITY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to provide a clear understanding of sport tourism and the relationship between sport and tourism. The chapter will also discuss canoeing in South Africa and a brief description of canoeing is provided. Most importantly, the study provides an overview of the Berg River Canoe Marathon. Lastly, the chapter analyses the importance of service quality in the events industry. As most researchers such as Pope and Turco (2001), Turco *et al.* (2002) and many more highlight the importance of service quality, this study will deal, in-depth, with issues around service quality in events. The importance of service quality is discussed and some of the service quality aspects that will be examined include the servicescape, quality, service quality models and the service quality proper.

Sport tourism is an increasingly important facet of the tourism product of many destinations (Smith, 2004: 1). For example, in 1996 about 233 sport events were identified in New Zealand that met the requirements of being able to attract international or out-of-region visitors and again as Smith (2004: 1) indicates, the New Zealand Tourism Strategy for 2010 highlighted events as a key means to grow year-round and regional demand. Since sport attracts both international and domestic tourists, there is a need to cater for tourists at the destination where the event is intended to be held.

Saayman (2001: 31) mentions that in ancient times sport tourism was managed along the same principles as present and that the essence of sport tourism will grow if people are given what they need and want. This again supports George's statement that customers' needs should be met in order to have repeat business support (George's, 2004: 9).

People enjoy sport in two different ways namely as spectators and as participants. Spectator sports such as football, cricket and rugby attract large crowds throughout the year. Major sporting events such as the FA Cup and Wimbledon are watched by thousands of people live and by millions, globally, on television (Smith, 2004:1).

The debate whether sport should be regarded as a tourism component has been under discussion for some time. Sport enterprises regard the tourism component of travel as lesser even while tourism enterprises sell sport as a play activity rarely as an organised activity and that they rarely employ sport professionals to manage this component (World Tourism Organisation: Tourism Market Trends, 2000: 20). This chapter, therefore, provides clarity on the relationship of sport and tourism and how each complements one another.

Both sport and tourism have become integrated components of the global culture of our times. Tourism and sport are two ancient expressions of the human spirit. Since the earliest times people travelled - not only as nomads seeking new pastures for their animals, but also as explorers – driven by curiosity to discover new worlds (De Villiers, 2001: 65).

Many people may be confused if sport is part of tourism or if tourism is part of sport. It is important, therefore, to look at the relationship between the two. Moreover, the distinction of sport tourism is outlined.

Keyser (2002: 19) explains tourism as the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the place where they normally live and work, and their activities during their stay at these destinations, as well as the facilities created to cater for their needs. Tourism can be a day trip, a longer holiday or a business trip. Standeven and De Knop (1998: 6) mention that active sport that is associated with business tours, is increasingly widespread and that sport as part of business hospitality is big, profitable and growing with most of the clients spectating at events miles away from their places of work. Thus, sport tourism has emerged as a factor, which underpins tourism development, a means for local development and an economic motor (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 6). Sport tourism is one of the components that contribute to tourism

globally. In the 1990s, as a result of the reigning unwholesomeness and stress of day-to-day living, new demands have come into play based on discovery, adventure and the genuine experience of 'nature sports' destinations, hence the birth and growth of sport tourism (D' Estaing, 2001: 96).

2.2 SPORT TOURISM DEFINED

Gammon and Robinson (1997: 5) identify two definitions of sport tourism, namely the hard definition and the soft definition. The hard definition of sport tourism is based on the active or passive participation at a competitive sporting event; in other words, a sport tourist is someone who specifically travels (stay in places outside their usual environment) for either active or passive involvement in competitive sport, which means in this case, the prime motivational factor for travel, is sport.

However, the softer definition refers to tourists who travel and who are primarily involved in the active recreational participation of a sporting interest. Tourism sport, on the other hand, defines someone for whom the sporting elements act as a secondary enrichment to their holiday. Standeven and De Knop (1998: 13) define sport tourism as travel for non-commercial (holiday) or for commercial (non-holiday and business) reasons to participate in or to observe sporting activities. Based on the definition, eight types of sport tourism can be identified. These are illustrated in Figure 2.1.

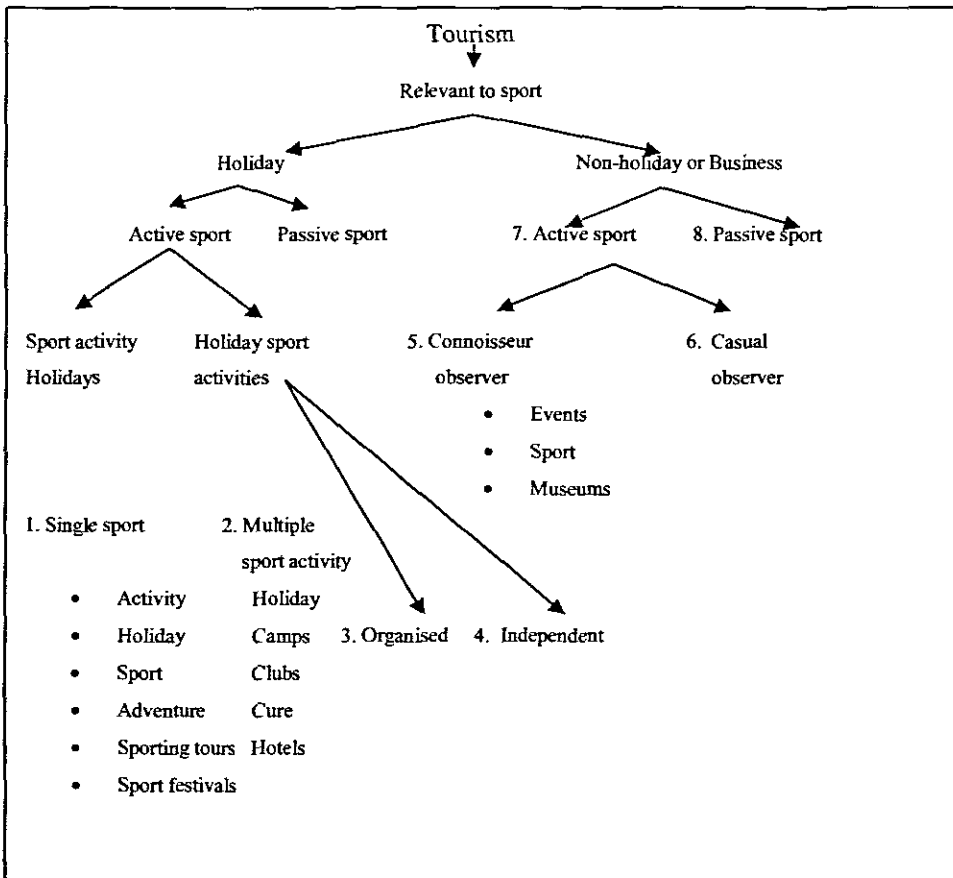


Figure 2.1: Eight types of sport tourism

Source: Standeven and De Knop (1998:13)

Sport tourists may be active or passive as indicated in Figure 2.1. Active sport tourists may engage actively during holidays, in which case sport is the main intention of the trip or in holiday sport activities where sport is incidental (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 12). There are two types of sport activity holidays, namely the single sport activity holiday and the multiple sport activity holiday. The single sport activity holiday occurs when the specific sport is the main reason for travelling and the multiple sport activity holidays is when the participation in several sport forms an important part of the holiday experience. Passive sport tourists are grouped into casual observers and connoisseurs. Casual observers are those who have extensive passive involvement in the sport activity since they watch as spectators or officials (Standeven & De Knop, 1998).

The World Tourism Organisation (WTO): *Tourism Market Trends* (2000: 18) examined sport tourism from two perspectives: one based on elitist sport practices such as skiing, climbing and cycling by relatively few people, generally, mountain sport in idyllic surroundings; these activities require unpretentious infrastructure and are geared to generate unique experiences. The other scenario is one of sport for the masses, such as football with a large volume of activity, a broad base of adherents and a large volume of enthusiasts. However, both should be organised efficiently in order to offer high quality service.

Sport derives from the word “disport” which means to divert oneself (Kurtzman, 2001). This implies that people divert their attention from the rigours and pressures of everyday life by participating in the mirth and whimsy of ‘frolicsome’ physical activity. According to WTO: *Tourism Market Trends* (2000: 18), sport tourism is based on the practice of sporting activity in a pleasant environment, but not necessarily in a competitive context; levels of physical fitness, results or classification are immaterial except for competitive athletes. Sport tourism combines the opportunity to participate in a sporting activity with a wide range of other values such as contact with nature, stunning scenery and landscape, exceptionally good food, interesting culture and people (WTO: *Tourism Market Trends*, 2000: 18).

People who travel for sport or tourism seek self-fulfilment, the chance to meet new people and to enjoy experiences. Therefore, sport becomes one of the major tourism components and, indeed, the marketing and continued survival of many tourism destinations and products, hinges on the practice of sport activities.

2.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPORT AND TOURISM

De Villiers (2001: 66) has identified the differences and similarities between sport and tourism. Sport is performance-oriented while tourism is an experience-oriented activity, and if sport is considered as a component of tourism, sport will then be regarded as inter-dependent on tourism. Although De Villiers (2001: 66) highlights the differences

between the two, one may argue that both activities can be regarded as performance-oriented, as well as experience-oriented. In present society, tourists do not only want to experience tourism products, but also want to participate, therefore, sport is interdependent on tourism. Standeven and De Knop (1998: 5) describe the relationship between sport and tourism in the modern world as symbiotic. In other words, it is not simply that sport furthers tourism by offering an ever-increasing range of valued visitor experiences, but, that tourism also aids sport. The relationship between sport and tourism is illustrated in Figure 2.2 below.

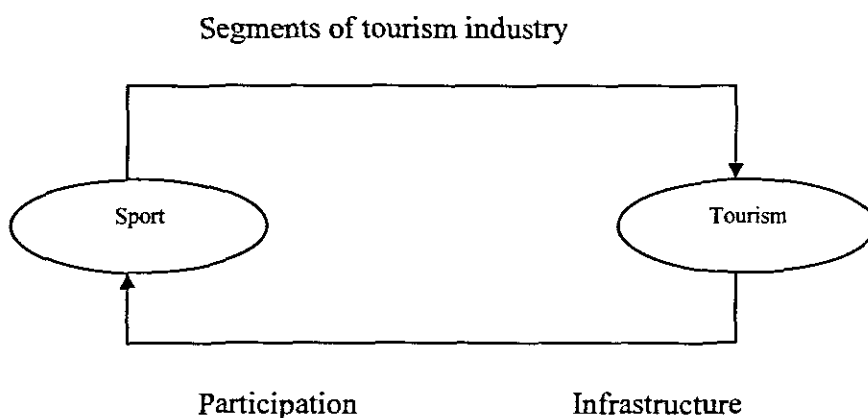


Figure 2.2: Basic model of sport tourism

Source: Standeven and De Knop (1998: 5)

The basic model of sport tourism identifies sport as a special segment of the tourism industry. The model illustrates the relationship between sport and tourism as interactive with the tourism industry, which in turn has an impact on sport participation and sport infrastructure (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 5).

Standeven and De Knop (1998: 5) further state that the nature of the tourism product has moved from a traditional oriented one, which means that people would travel to relax and to find relief from psychosomatic wear and tear, whilst they seek health and quality of life. A clear example would be of cultural tourism, where most tourists perform cultural activities in the host country and in this case, tourism becomes performance-oriented rather than experience-oriented. Also, within sport tourism people may travel to cheer on

and support athletes and participants (passive participation) (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 12).

Sport and tourism share common goals: understanding other cultures and lifestyles, contributing to the promotion and consolidation of peace among nations and forging closer relations between people of different cultures (Standeven & De Knop, 1998: 12). The differences between sport and tourism are as follows: sport can be based on a competitive or recreational environment where performances and results may be the key and also where friendship between rivals is commonplace. However, Saayman (2001) assert that there are some tourists who may travel to get away from other people. Tourism is based on selling sensations and experiences, getting to know people and sharing experiences.

Figure 2.3 clearly shows how sport fits into the tourism industry. Tourism can be divided into primary and secondary aspects. Primary aspects include accommodation, transportation, entertainment and attractions while secondary aspects focus on legislation, marketing and information, geography, psychology, anthropology, attractions and training and education. Recreation activities and facilities include entertainment, gambling, festivals, visiting friends and relatives, sport, public parks, picnic spots, markets and shopping centres. All these recreation activities should have the necessary equipment and facilities to meet the needs of spectators, as well as participants. The quality and accessibility of entertainment centres are important to attract tourists (Saayman, 2001: 5). Kurtzman (2001) further states that the nature of sport varies and that these fluctuations are dependent upon location, interests, facilities, traditions, climate, type of organisation and enthusiasm.

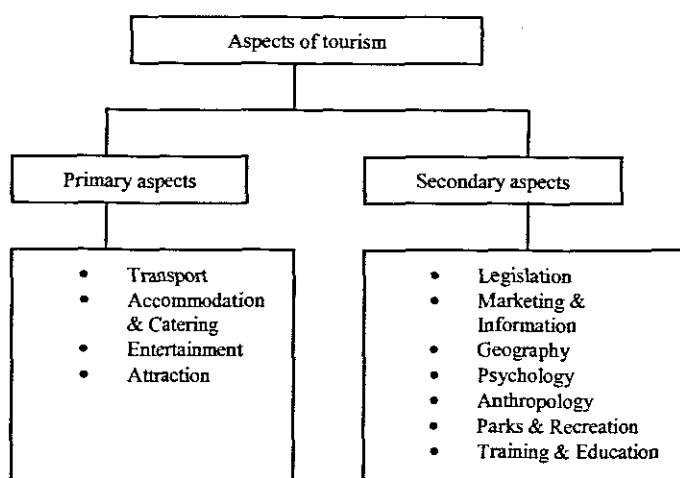


Figure 2.3: Aspects of tourism

Source: Saayman (2001: 5)

Thwaites (1999: 2) contends that sport tourism offers products that are similar to those that tourism offers. The author had divided the characteristics of sport tourism into two groups, namely supply-related and demand-related. The supply related facet shows that sport tourism is the multisectoral and complex nature of the product, which represents a combination of various elements such as the destination with its facilities, attractions and accessibility, the rigidity of the main elements of the offer that limits speedy responses to the changing consumer, the highly fragmented supply, as many businesses may contribute to the overall experience, intangibility, inseparability and perishability of certain aspects of the offer and finally the staff issues since tourism is a “people industry” as noted by (George, 2004: 307).

The demand-related facet explains the high elasticity of sport tourism because of the fact that the product is seasonal and that there are changing needs, attitudes and preferences of customers. Moreover, it is difficult for customers to be loyal to a tourism brand and, finally, there is a high heterogeneous customers grouping. Getz (1998) further illustrates the sport-event tourism model, which does not only include the demand and supply aspects but also the intermediaries. Intermediaries are referred to as event organisers; they link the sport tourist with the event or destination in different ways. These special features explain the nature of sport tourism products (George, 2004: 23). However, the

four main characteristics of sport tourism products will be discussed in more detail later in the research.

Saayman (2001: 7) notes that sport tourism has a special attraction for participants because they share a common identity with spectators. Some of the benefits of sport tourism, which can clearly be seen are the great contribution of sport in strengthening identification for a nation with positive consequences, which generate a substantial economic income, media exposure and quality of life impacts since sport tourism focuses not only on international events, but also includes local, regional and national events. In addition, Getz (1998) mention that both international and domestic tourists are motivated to visit sport events and attractions and to satisfy their various desires, needs and interests. Their desires are influenced by many factors such as planning the event, organising, its uniqueness, quality of service and facilities at the event. Therefore, there is a need to examine sport tourism as a niche market for tourism, which should be well planned, organised and meet customers' perceptions.

Moreover, Getz (1998) argue that the development of physical leisure was progressively realised through sport and sport activities. However, the birth of a leisure industry and the consequent emergence of mass tourism were only part of the general principle of paid holidays (Getz, 1998). The author adds that although an extension of these holiday periods and the decrease of weekly working timetables were aimed to accentuate the social role of leisure activities, this had never materialised as economic cycles created unemployment, longer work weeks, the demands of urban living, householding and commuting caused a majority of people to claim that they do not have enough time for leisure. As Getz (1998) indicates, the duration of pleasure trips has, on average, shortened, therefore, in order for sport tourism companies to survive, they should offer good service to be able to compete since the sport tourism market is shrinking. There is a need to understand the sport tourism product and how to deliver the product in order to meet sport tourists' expectations.

In sport tourism, the product is the specific sport or event and the experience, which derives from that includes the sport event organisers and all the goods and services needed to host the event. Turco *et al.* (2002: 41) describe the four characteristics of sport tourism as being *intangibility*, *inseparability*, *heterogeneity* and *perishability*, as discussed in the next section below.

2.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF SPORT TOURISM PRODUCTS

A sporting event has all the intrinsic characteristics of a service and the event is an experience and performance that is consumed rather than being a tangible or physical product (Pope & Turco, 2001: 71). According to Cronje, Hugo, Newland and Reenen (1994: 21), the most significant characteristics that distinguish tourism products from manufacturing products is the fact that tourism products cannot be touched, tasted and owned as compared to manufacturing products.

Most researchers, such as Bomona and Mills (1979), Enis and Roezig (1981) and Wyekham, Fitzroy and Mandray (1975) as cited by Pitt (1999), have disputed the need for a separate treatment of service within the tourism industry. However, most of them found difficulties in studying the quality of service, which results from its unique characteristics. These service characteristics should be discussed before evaluating the quality of service at certain events.

2.4.1 Intangibility

Intangibility stems from the fact that service comprises performance that cannot be seen, tasted or smelled, neither can it be possessed (Kotler *et al.*, 1996). Intangibility relates to the difficulty that consumers may have in understanding the service offering. While service may have a few tangible attributes typically called search qualities, which can be viewed to purchase, the resulting marketing problems of intangibility are significant as service cannot be stored, protected through patents, which are readily displayed or communicated, or the quality thereof assessed effectively (George, 2004: 23). However, with the recent technology some of the sport events such as soccer, rugby and canoeing

can be saved on tapes or compact discs in order to tangibilize the sport event. In this way the event can be kept and stored to be viewed at a later stage. Turco *et al.* (2001: 41) also state that apart from photos, videos and some memorabilia, little that is tangible carries over after the sport tourism services have been consumed. When the event is over, it is hard for sport tourists to compare between offerings because they cannot try the experience first. In order to enjoy the sport tourism experience, one should first pay for it and experience it later (Turco *et al.*, 2001: 42).

It is, therefore, clear that even though events contain intangible elements, they need tangible elements to become enhanced (Pope & Turco, 2001: 70). Events do contain tangible elements such as food, beverages and other products sold or given away, but are essentially a service as they consist of intangible experiences of finite duration within a temporary managed atmosphere (O'Neil *et al.*, 1999: 2).

2.4.2 Inseparability

Kotler *et al.* (1996) mention that sport tourism products are highly personalised since the product is the outcome of the performance of the event provider, while George, (2004) add that manufacturing goods are first produced, sold and then consumed, sport tourism products are first sold, produced and consumed simultaneously. Inseparability means that customers are also part of the product. If a fight breaks out amongst the fans and spectators, which has been the case with at some soccer events, other fans who are not involved in the fight will be affected and the game may not continue. For example, Van Der Wagen, (2001: 1) state that in 1991 in Orkney (South Africa) at least 40 people were killed when fans panicked after brawls broke out. As mentioned in Chapter One, in Johannesburg 90 people were crushed to death and many hundreds were injured when excited fans tried to enter a capacity stadium (Van Der Wagen, 2001: 1). While some died outside, others died inside as they were crushed against barricades on the side of the field.

Another implication of inseparability is that customers and employees should understand the service delivery system. Managers should manage their spectators so that they do not

create dissatisfaction for other customers. Apart from that, inseparability can also mean that, because of high consumer involvement in sport tourism production and consumption, the standardisation and control thereof are difficult to maintain (Kotler *et al.*, 1996). It is for this reason that training in customer care becomes so vital for the successful marketing of the sport tourism product and improved service quality, thus increasing repeat business.

The fact that the sport tourism product is a composite of several services leads to further problems associated with product development. For example, Kotler *et al.* (1997: 83), state that in a packaged holiday, tourists will normally expect to receive broadly comparable levels of quality in all components of their travel arrangements regardless of whether they had bought a cheap or expensive holiday. Therefore, all the tourism stakeholders, producers, event organisers, and travel agents should work together and be dedicated to offer a superior service since one mistake from one of the components can ruin the quality of service offered previously by the others. The implications for service quality and the measurement and management thereof, are thus evident.

2.4.3 Heterogeneity

Although the packaged tour concept has gone a long way to help the standardisation of the travel product with its combinations of flight, transfer and hotel room, there are elements of the tourism product over which the tour operator can have no control. Kotler *et al.* (1996: 83) argue that services are highly variable and their quality depend on who provides them and when and where they are provided. For example, an event, which takes place on a rainy day is totally different from an event, which takes place on a glorious sunshine day and, therefore, service may not be the same. Because most tourism products are labour intensive, they are susceptible to heterogeneity. People perform most services and they do not always perform consistently. There may be variations in the service where an individual provides a different service from day-to-day and from customer-to-customer (George, 2004: 25). The enjoyment and satisfaction of event visitors is shaped by complex interactions of consumers and the programme, setting, management system, staff and volunteers and other visitors (O' Neill *et al.*, 1999: 2). On

the other hand, a lack of service delivery can bring about the disposition of consumers and competitors in the event.

Thus, standardisation and quality of service are difficult to control. As Kotler *et al.* (1997: 83) argue that variation or lack of consistency in the product is a major cause of customer disappointment in the hospitality industry. However, this leads to large opportunities for the customisation of service in order to meet customers' needs. Because of this, tourism providers often face the dilemma of providing efficient standardised service at some acceptable level of quality, while simultaneously attempting to treat each customer as a unique individual. However, event marketers may be able to standardise peripheral services but not core sport experiences. The provision of good service is a major concern for all tourism providers and organisations and is often translated into a more personalised service (Suprenant & Solomon, 1987).

2.4.4 Perishability

An airline seat or hotel that is not sold today cannot be sold tomorrow; likewise, most events are annual events which means that if the tickets were not sold, they cannot be sold once the event is ended, unlike in the manufacturing company where a pair of shoes not sold today can still be sold the following day (Kotler *et al.*, 1996). The problem is compounded by the fact that the sport tourism industry suffers from a time variable demand; most events take place during specific seasons. For example, canoeing takes place during the rainy season when the level of water is at the required level and a flower festival event is held during Autumn when the flowers are in blossom. According to George (2004: 25), perishability means that sport tourism products cannot be stored or saved for later use. Because the production of the sport tourism product and its consumption are simultaneous, the product will be characterised by perishability.

Once again the focus of this study is on sport events and, in this case - the race, canoeing marathon. The sport tourism attraction has been identified as the race, namely the Berg River Canoe Marathon, which takes place annually. The history of the canoe dates back to ancient times when people first used the canoe as a mode of travel and later on people

saw the potential to use them for sport. Marathon racing is the most popular discipline in South African canoeing and a vibrant calendar of events takes advantage of the many excellent paddling rivers across the country, as discussed in the section below.

2.5 CANOEING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Morgan (2005: 2) state that South Africa is ranked fifth in the world for marathon racing and South African canoeing's love affair with river marathon events is a result of past international isolation. With no opportunities to compete internationally, a strong domestic calendar was established but it also meant that disciplines such as sprint canoeing, wild water and slalom were neglected (Morgan, 2005: 2).

Canoeing sport comprises various disciplines, namely sprints, marathon, slalom, wild water, canoe polo, surf ski and freestyle or rodeo. All the disciplines are managed by a sub-committee, which reports to Canoeing South Africa (CSA). For the purpose of this study, the discipline of marathon is dealt with. Canoeing marathon is the annual flat water championships raced over distances, which vary from 20 km to 36 km and normally includes compulsory portages, while river racing can vary from 10 000 m to multi-day ultra marathons (Western Province Canoe Union Manual, 2004: 1).

Even though canoeing is not a big name sport in South Africa, it has enjoyed growth during the first 10 years of the country's democracy (Morgan, 2005: 4). KwaZulu-Natal is the hub of canoeing in South Africa with strong support in Gauteng, Western Cape along and the Eastern Cape. South African canoeing is confined to certain places. This is mainly because of a lack of access to some of the areas within the country; there is simply not enough water available in some provinces to support the sport. Secondly, it is an expensive sport. McGregor (2005: 1) mentioned that canoe equipment is not cheap as it costs up to R5 000.00 for start-up equipment. However, participation in the sport has diversified in recent years as equipment has been built up for previously disadvantaged paddlers and transport concerns have also been addressed (Morgan, 2005: 1).

2.5.1 THE BERG RIVER CANOE MARATHON

Established in 1962, the Berg River Canoe Marathon is the first project produced by the Western Province Canoe Union (WPCU Manual, 2004: 2). It was the first marathon in the Western Cape and it was established by Williem Van Riet as part of an adventure and discovery programme. Marathon racing is presently the most popular discipline in South African canoeing (WPCU Manual, 2004: 2).

Collins (2005) mentions that during the 1960s, the Berg River Canoe Marathon operated differently to the status quo. The aim of the marathon was adventure and there was no luxury equipment provided. The paddlers had to camp on the farms and sleep on the straws instead of mattress, whilst there were neither sleeping bags nor pillows. However, they could arrange fresh food from the farmers where they would spend a night. The race began at Bridge Town to Velddrif, which is 16km. At present the marathon takes place over four days, covering 208 km after being reduced recently from 228 km, making it the longest race in South Africa.

At first there were twenty paddlers who came from all over South Africa and there was no criteria used to select them and no check for safety precautions. The changes began to take place from the middle of the 1970s, which was two years after Collins, the chairperson of WPCU, had joined the canoe club. People began to compete for money and other prizes (Collins, 2005).

According to Collins (2005), during the 1960s people who joined the marathon did so out of passion for the sport and to have fun, therefore, canoeing was considered an amateur sport. There were no winning prizes or rewards but people continued to race. However, this has changed and the winner of the 2005 Isuzu Berg River Canoe Marathon, McGregor, won himself a cheque of R20 000 for his unwavering efforts (Collins (2005).

Furthermore, Collins (2005) states that by the middle of the 1980s the number of participants had increased from 20 to 350. Most people who participated in the race

came from different parts of South Africa. Due to the low level of water in the Berg River, many people began to withdraw from competing and the number decreased to 200 (Collins, 2005). In 2005, however, the number had increased to 207, which was more compared to 2004's number, which was reported to be 190. Collins (2005) further agree that the reason for this was that the level of water had increased though it was not what the paddlers had expected. Since the race is mostly supported by families and friends, as the number of participants decrease, the number of spectators decrease as well, thus, the more people who take part, the more spectators will attend the event.

However, there has not been any reported information and research regarding the quality of service at the Berg River Canoe Marathon. According to Collins (2005), it is the interest of the WPCU to improve the current level of service, but this may take some time, as there are limited funds to support the event and to make the necessary improvements. However, there is a desire that the cooperation between Cape Town Route Unlimited (CTRU), the destination marketing organisation, Isuzu, the main sponsor and the WPCU, including other stakeholders, to bring some improvement such as viewing time from the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), which would increase coverage and awareness of the event.

The next section provides an in depth discussion of the importance of good service quality at events and what should be done in order to improve the quality of service within the events sector. The work of some researchers on service quality in events, has been highlighted.

2.6 SERVICE QUALITY AT EVENTS

2.6.1 INTRODUCTION

There are two connotations of service at events namely tangible and experiential elements, though guests are likely to think of service as the tangible reception they receive from staff and volunteers because these exchanges are personal, immediate and

important to the entire experience. In addition, most of the research conducted indicates the tangible element as the most important from the customer's perspective (O'Neil *et al.*, 1998: 3).

Crompton and Love (1995: 19) study showed that the tangible dimension appeared to be more important, especially ambiance, sources of information at the site, comfort amenities, parking and interaction with vendors. The actual performance measures were found to be substantially better predictors of quality than the importance assigned by customers to various service attributes and different disconfirmation operationalisations, which incorporated expectations of service quality.

Oliver (1981: 169) asserts that customer satisfaction has led most researchers to what is known as the "disconfirmation" paradigm. Customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction, according to Oliver (1981: 169), is a function of the disconfirmation, which arises from discrepancies between customers' expectations and perceptions. It has been demonstrated that expectations and perceptions of quality levels affect customers' satisfaction directly, as well as indirectly, via disconfirmation. According to an experiment carried out by Tse and Wilton (1988), it was observed that perceived performance exerts a direct influence on customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction, in addition to the influence from disconfirmation or expectations (Pitt, 1999: 27).

Tassiopoulos (2005: 268) states that in event management, event organisers produce a product, though the importance factor is how it is delivered. The author mentions that events are like services, which have special features such as *intangibility* (customers feel the benefit and enjoyment, but they cannot not touch the event), however, Turco *et al.* (2002: 41) discuss ways to make event services more tangible such as banners, well designed programmes and entertainment facilities.

On the other hand, *perishability* refers to the fact that sport tourism products cannot be kept or stored and consumed later or the next day. According to Turco *et al.* (2002: 41), sport events should proceed as scheduled whether or not sport tourists arrive.

Inseparability (customers associate one event with the next and identify with the organising agency's reputation for quality). Bateson (1989: 6) further defines service as a bundle of benefits for the consumer through the experience that is created for that consumer. Based on the above discussion, a conclusion can be drawn that service quality measures should address both tangible and experiential elements.

During the Dickens-on-the-Strand event, Crompton and Love (1995: 19) hypothesised that some event elements are 'dissatisfiers' and some 'satisfiers'. Dissatisfiers are described as maintenance factors, which should be provided to expected levels of quality, though in themselves they do not satisfy visitors. Examples of 'dissatisfiers', as identified by Crompton and Love (1995: 19), are parking, rest rooms and information, while ambience, fantasy, excitement, relation, escape and social involvement are identified as 'satisfiers'. Crompton and Love (1995: 19) also point out that high-quality events should meet expectations in both categories, but they are non-compensatory as a single or small number of attributes can determine perceptions of the overall quality. Tentative support for this model was confirmed and O'Neil *et al.* (1999: 3) believed that certain attributes were perceived to be of a poor or high quality that visitors disregarded or discounted other attributes when giving their overall appraisal.

Jackson and Schmader (1990) presume that some events deliver poor quality service because event organisers tend to place emphasis on quantity rather than quality, products rather than on market orientation, poor physical conditions and a lack of information as well as poorly selected or inadequately trained personnel. In addition, they emphasise that many event studies could be cited to confirm that physical conditions and information are common service problems. The next section therefore, deals with the importance of physical conditions in events and sport tourism in general. The physical condition of an event or tourism product is known as the serviceescape.

2.7 SERVICESCAPE

2.7.1 Introduction

The term servicescape relates to the physical surrounding that encompasses the interaction between customers and the service provider (Pope *et al.*, 2001: 86). The servicescape plays many roles simultaneously when customers and employees interact. Figure 2.4 illustrates the interaction between customers, employees, facilities and the setting during the event. The duration of tourism consumption and interaction with employees determine whether the consumer will assess the quality of service or offering based on its tangible or intangible element. The service encounters, which are of short duration consumption differ from those of a longer duration.

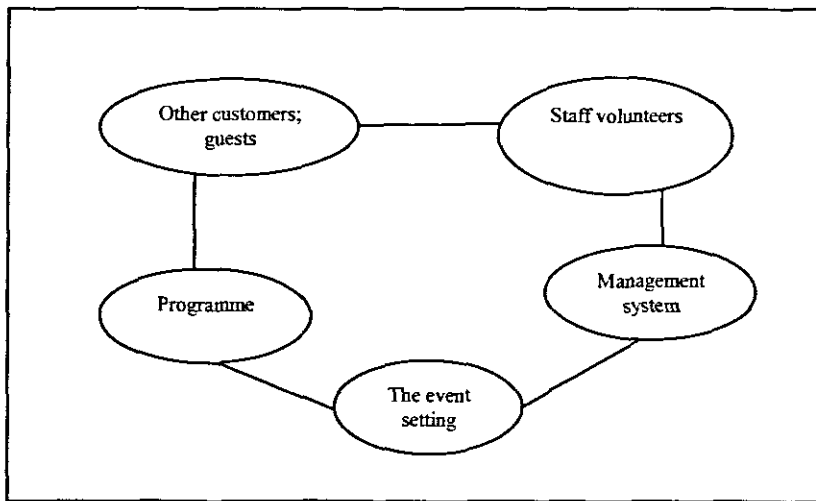


Figure 2.4 Interaction in event service management

Source: Getz (1997: 176)

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) state that in the case of short service encounters such as fast-food restaurants, travel agencies and banks, customers typically spend only a brief period of time inside the service facilities. Therefore, in such situations, service quality is apt to be perceived by customers primarily on the basis of intangible factors such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy and less on the tangible aspects such as the physical facilities of the service provider.

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) argue that customers at a bank or laundry are likely to assess the level of service based on how much time was taken to do the transaction (reliability and responsiveness) and on the personal touches, how courteous the teller was (assurance and empathy) than on the aesthetics of the bank or laundry respectively. However, in a case where customers spend a longer period at the service facilities, a tendency to assess the level of service relies heavily on the tangible elements such as seating availability and parking space, which, in turn, influences how long customers desire to stay in the facility, hence, how much money they will spend (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 46).

Customers who eat at fast-food restaurants tend to spend a longer period at the facility than customers who order take-away food. These two types of customers will evaluate the level of service based on different service elements. Kotler *et al.* (1997) mention that the customer who sits and eats at the restaurant will assess the quality of food, the personnel, atmosphere, architecture, layout and interior layout, which both intangible and tangible elements of service likely to influence the duration of their stay at the restaurant.

In contrast, the customer who orders take-away food will likely evaluate the level of service on the basis of intangible elements, which relates to how long it takes to prepare the food, the attitude of the personnel and less on the tangible elements such as seats, layout and interior of the restaurant (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 46). Likewise, the layout and design of a stadium or arena may partly determine whether sport fans will stay for the entire game or exit early to avoid congestion at crowded games, or decide to stay home to watch the game on television owing a lack of seating at the stadium (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 46).

While stressing the importance of servicescape in sport tourism, a closer examination should be made of the degree to which servicescape play in improving the level of service quality. How valid is it that sport events require tangible elements more than intangible elements owing to the duration of the event? Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 46)

conclude that since customers spend a longer period in the facilities during the event, more attention should be paid to the physical facilities rather than the intangible elements.

However, at present, customers need more than physical facilities to satisfy their needs; customers are searching for empathy. Tassiopoulos (2005: 269) writes that customer care is best achieved by putting oneself in the customers' shoes and by observing the event from their perspective. Customers want to be heard and recognised and require service to be delivered promptly and punctually. All these elements should be available to complement the physical elements. For example, sport fans become irritated when they have to wait for a long time while they wait to buy tickets. Turco *et al.* (2002: 126) state that people tend to become frustrated and tired from waiting in queues. During the event spectators buy food, drink and other refreshments, though some may argue that this does not form part of the event, the service level provided by stallholders, for example, also affects the level of service for the entire event. Thus, the personal touches, physical appearances, attitudes of stallholders and organisers (all event stakeholders) would have an influence on the level of service for the event (see Figure 2.4). In order to determine the level of service, there is a need to assess both tangible and intangible elements of the event. It is important to remember that sport is a tourism product, which consists of the four characteristics discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

The four characteristics of tourism products, namely *intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability*, indicate that there is a need to tangibilize the tourism product by using tangible elements, improving employees' attitudes and physical appearances in order to improve the level of service quality. Therefore, the level of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon should be assessed based on both tangible and intangible elements. The study conducted by Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) shows that the servicescape does have a significant impact on the leisure service and customer repatronage intentions and the length of time they desire to stay in the leisure service, as shown in Figure 2.5 and discussed further in the next section.

2.7.2 The effects of servicescape on customers' behavioural responses

In order to understand the effects of servicescape on customers it is important to understand the framework of servicescape, which is illustrated in Figure 2.5 below. The primary dimensions of servicescape, which influences customers' holistic perceptions of the servicescape such as perceived quality, are identified in Figure 2.5.

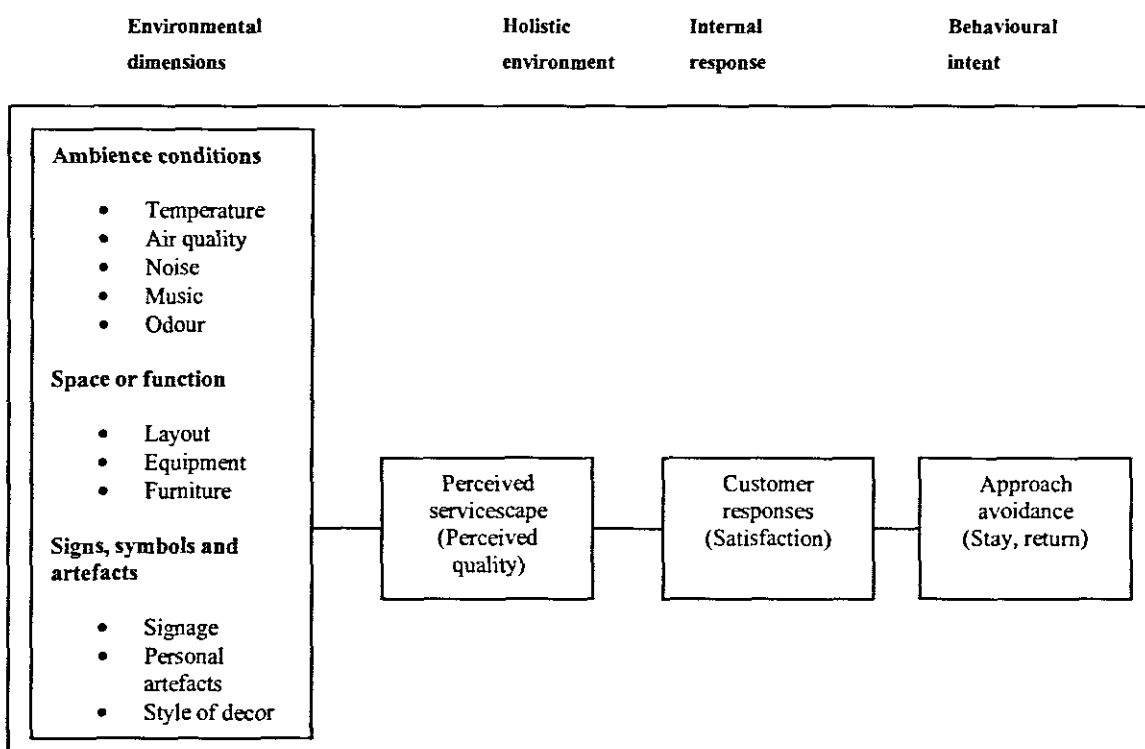


Figure 2.5: Framework to understand the environment-user relationship in a service organisation

Source: Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 46)

The second (space and function) and the third (signs, symbols and artefacts) dimensions are usually referred to as interior layout and design or built environment (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 47). They add that these dimensions are easily measured by management and researchers as they are easily controlled as opposed to the first dimension (ambience), which is usually difficult to control, hence the reason why most researchers

do not include it in their studies. Furthermore, they indicate the difficulties for incorporating ambience while assessing the quality of service. The authors mention that ambience becomes particularly difficult to assess in leisure field settings such as open-air stadiums or theatres, amusement parks and other outdoor settings.

However, these authors believe that some of the ambience elements such as air quality, noise, music and odours can be controlled to a certain extent while the weather and temperature cannot be controlled. This study should be evaluated on all three dimensions rather than two dimensions, bearing in mind that the evaluation on ambience dimension will be applicable to a certain degree thus on elements, which can be controlled by event organisers or managers.

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) hypothesized that perceived quality will have a positive effect on customer satisfaction with the servicescape, which, in turn, will affect how long customers desire to stay within the leisure setting and whether they intend to repatronize the service provider. The hypothesized model is illustrated in Figure 2.6 (see page 43) and discussed further in the next section.

2.7.3 Interior and exterior layout

There are five factors of servicescape that parallel the primary elements of interior layout and design, namely layout accessibility, facility aesthetics, seating comfort, facility cleanliness and electronic equipment and displays.

2.7.3.1 Layout accessibility

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 47) assert that layout accessibility refers to the way in which furnishings and equipment, service areas and passages are arranged and the spatial relationship among these elements. An effective layout will provide for easy entry and exit and makes ancillary service areas such as concessions, restrooms and souvenir stands

more accessible (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 47). Turco *et al.* (2002) also outline the importance of concessions and food service operations so that service stands should be designed and placed for maximum efficiency and easy spectators' access.

Moreover, the authors note that planning the removal of garbage, restocking paper supplies in the washing rooms and plumbing emergencies are fundamental to the success of the event. A relevant example can be one of the interior of discount stores and bank facilities, which, in most cases, fulfil the needs of the consumer. An interesting and effective servicescape layout may also facilitate fulfilment of hedonic or pleasure needs. Thus, by making ancillary service areas more accessible, customers will be able to spend more time enjoying the primary service. This supports Wakefield and Blodgett's (1996: 46) hypothesis (H1) in Figure 2.6 that layout accessibility will have a positive effect on the perceived quality of the servicescape.

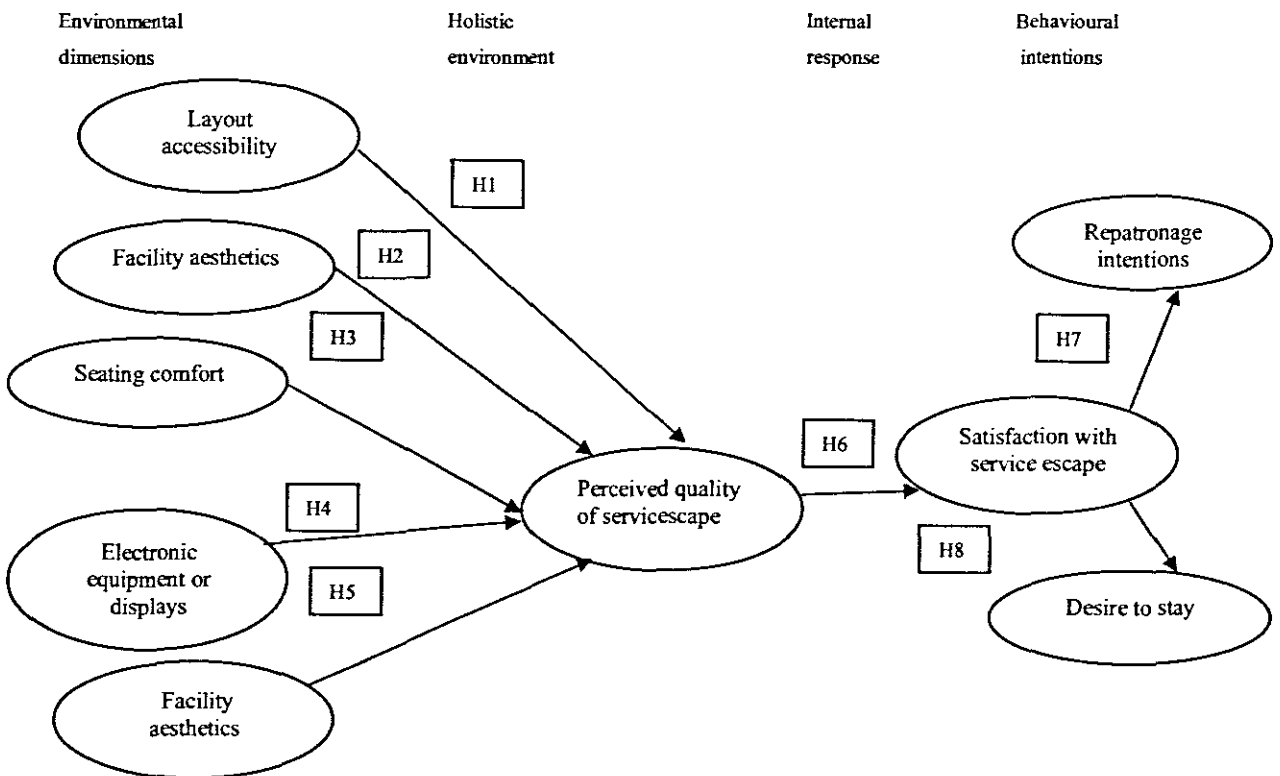


Figure 2.6: Hypothesized model.

Source: Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 46)

2.7.3.2 Attractions of the interior and exterior design

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 48) state that facility aesthetics are a function of architectural design, as well as interior design and décor, which contribute to the attractiveness of the servisecape. Customers are likely to evaluate the attractiveness of the exterior of the facility when they drive past the facility such as a stadium or on their arrival while waiting for the event to take place.

The event venue should fulfil all the technical requirements of the activity (Turco *et al.* 2002: 128). It should further provide adequate control for a variety of factors such as security, parking, sanitation, maintenance, concession and storage. Customers observe, consciously and subconsciously, the interior of facilities even during the event and their evaluations are apt to influence their attitudes towards the place. As Tassiopoulos (2005: 269) states, customer care should begin as soon as the customer reaches the event or begins the journey towards the event. The direction, vehicle parking, reception areas, premises and all the other facilities involved should be of the highest possible standard and ready for the customer's arrival and use.

Customers may also be affected by the colour schemes of the facilities walls, facades, floor covering and seats (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 48). Unpainted walls, seats, steps or walls painted in dull colours, may be relatively unattractive compared to brightly coloured walls and seats. Other aspects of interior and exterior design such as ornamental signs, banners, pictures and other fixtures also serve to enhance the perceived quality of the service quality. Tassiopoulos (2005: 264) refers to the above interior and exterior design as communication mix, arguing that they create an awareness of the event and the desire to participate. They are therefore, methods by which the event communicates with its various constituencies and markets.

Banners play a major role in open-air events where it is less possible to brighten the environment while they add bright colour and enhance the atmosphere. Once again the importance of interior and exterior design for repeat business and desire to participate in

the event, supports Wakefield and Blodgett's (1996) hypothesis (H2) that facility aesthetics will have a positive effect on the perceived quality of the servicescape.

2.7.3.3 Seating comfort

According to Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 48), seating comfort is a salient issue especially to spectators who tend to stay for hours observing and cheering on participants and also to participants who, in most cases, have to wait until their turn comes to participate in the event. Seating comfort is affected by both the physical seat itself and by the space between the seats.

Seats can either be comfortable or uncomfortable owing to their design, conditions (dirty and old) or because they are too close to each other, which is why customers may be physically or psychologically uncomfortable if they are forced to sit close to other spectators (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 48). This can happen when event organisers and managers are more concerned about increasing the number of participants and spectators even if the area where the event takes place is not sufficient or large enough to hold a large crowd. In this case spectators may be forced to sit closely next to each other.

In addition, Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 48) mention that the amount of space between the rows of seats is also an important dimension, as it affects the ease with which customers may exit their seats to use ancillary services area such as toilets. Therefore, hypothesis H3, suggested by Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 46), indicates that seating comfort will have a positive effect on the perceived quality of the servicescape.

2.7.3.4 Electronic equipment and displays

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 48) once again highlight the importance of electronic equipment and displays to improve the quality of events. The electronic equipment and displays are signs, symbols and artefacts, which can be used to enhance the leisure experience. There are two main types of equipment, which are used in the event namely;

one, which is used to deliver and enhance the primary offering, includes equipment such as high quality projection and sound used at some movie theatres and concert halls, which may have a positive impact on customers' overall perceptions of the servicescape (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 48).

The second one is ancillary, as it is used to display information and to entertain customers during breaks in the primary service offering such as between plays or periods at sporting events. During a short break such as half-time in the case of soccer or while waiting for the start time of a race, modern graphic scoreboards can be used to generate excitement. According to Tassipoulos (2005: 253), excitement is the key to making an event memorable. In addition, modern graphic scoreboards can be used to provide information and also as a means to advertise, which, in turn, encourages sponsors to support sporting events. Therefore electronic equipment and displays have a positive effect on the perceived quality of the servicescape, as illustrated in Figure 2.6.

2.7.3.5 Cleanliness

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 49) state that cleanliness is an important part of servicescape especially in cases where customers are required to spend long periods at the service facility such as concert halls and stadium. Many customers associate cleanliness with the quality of the servicescape. The carpets, floors, toilets, refuse and bins are the main concerns of customers while they attend any sporting events. There are two aspects to cleanliness, namely pre-event preparation and ongoing clean up. A leisure service provider should not only work to prepare the servicescape prior to customers' arrivals, but should also monitor the servicescape and maintain cleanliness throughout the event.

However, some event organisers do little or no monitoring of the servicescape beyond the pre-event preparation by janitorial personnel (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996: 49). In this case, restrooms and concession areas may overflow with dirt and spilled drinks by the middle and latter parts of the event. This can be the case especially at open-air events where it may not be possible to estimate the number of spectators well in advance or

when the entry to the event is free of charge, such as at a concert or soccer game. As indicated in Figure 2.5, cleanliness will have a positive effect on the perceived quality of the servicescape.

2.8 PERCEIVED QUALITY, SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS

The framework for understanding the environment-user relationship in service organisations (Figure 2.6), illustrates that positive responses, such as satisfaction with the overall perceptions of the servicescape, will result in approach behaviour. If customers are attracted to the facilities, they may want to stay longer at the facility or they may want to explore the facility and spend more money or even plan to return to the facility in future.

However, event organisers should be more concerned about two other factors; firstly, how long consumers will desire to stay in the facility once they have entered and, secondly, whether the customers will want to patronize the facility because of their interest in the primary service offering, but may not return if they are not satisfied with the physical surroundings of the event. Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) state that the length of time customers stay in the servicescape should also be a fundamental consideration for event organisers because in most event servicescape settings, the longer the customer stays in the facility, the more money the customer is likely to spend.

Moreover, the length of time that the customers will desire to stay in the event service setting, and whether they will repatronize the service provider, is, in part, a function of their satisfaction with the servicescape, thus, the quality \longrightarrow satisfaction \longrightarrow behavioural intention relationship. Based on this statement, Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 50) hypothesized as follows:

H6: The perceived quality of the servicescape will have a positive effect on customers' satisfaction with the servicescape.

- H7: Customers' satisfaction with the servicescape will have a positive effect on the length of time they desire to stay in the servicescape.
- H8: Customers' satisfaction with the servicescape will have a positive effect on their repatronage intentions.

The servicescape can be identified as an element of quality service though primarily based on the tangible element of the service quality. Customers evaluate their service satisfaction based on the quality of tangible elements such as seats, toilets, electronic equipment and displays. In some cases customers assess the quality of events on their intangible elements such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. In addition, customers do evaluate quality based on both the tangible and intangible elements of the events. A question whether quality should be judged on its physical appearance or intangible element depends entirely on the customer's judgment.

Some researchers believe that quality depends on the degree the person concludes that the quality of the event or product is of a high or less quality (O'Neil *et al.*, 1999). This, however, led to many or different definitions of quality. The next section (service quality) highlights different definitions of the term 'quality'. Researchers explain quality in different ways and from different perspectives but all agree that quality depends on the customer's perception. Some argue that customers can only define quality if there is a comparison to other superior products they may have used before, while others believe that customers evaluate the quality of products only if there are varieties of the same products.

2.9 UNDERSTANDING SERVICE QUALITY AT EVENTS

2.9.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter One, there is a lack of good service within the South African tourism industry in general. The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (1996: 10) states that customers do not bring their dissatisfaction

to management's attention and, therefore, as a result, service providers are not aware of the poor standard of service they deliver.

Event managers are often preoccupied with delivering a high quality programme, which is basically what visitors come to experience without realising that equal attention to service quality is essential to ensure visitor satisfaction (O'Neil, Getz & Carlsen, 1999: 1). It is also true that in some cases the performance or competition may be excellent, as O'Neil *et al.* (1999: 1) point out, but if customers experience low-quality service such as bad food, unclean or inadequate toilets or incompetent service delivery from staff, poor facilities and equipment such as sound, music and displays, their future attendance will be in doubt. Tassiopoulos (2005: 270) indicates that customer care at events involve the basics of looking clean, tidy and presentable whilst wearing the uniform or badge of the event. The author again stresses that many event organisers are not service-oriented and that their organisations are based on the knowledge or assumption that the event does well.

It is the responsibility of event managers to deliver an attractive event programme, which will entice visitors from overseas and locally to experience them (O'Neil *et al.*, 1999: 1). In order to achieve this, event managers should ensure that the level of competition is intense and the performance is optimal. In addition, they should ensure that the quality of both tangible and intangible elements are provided and managed so that ultimate visitor satisfaction may be offered.

Visitor satisfaction or dissatisfaction, as explained by Bolton and Drew (1991), is a function of the disconfirmation, which arises from discrepancies between prior expectations and actual performances. If the customer's expectations have been met the quality of service is regarded as good and the customer will come back and may even invite their friends to the next part of the programme or a future event planned by the same agency (Tassiopoulos, 2005: 269). However, in a case where the experience or the performance was below the level of the visitor's expectations, then the quality of service will be regarded as poor and it is likely that customers will not go back and also discourage any future attendance.

This chapter, therefore, highlights the importance of service quality within the tourism industry and explains what quality is and what should be done in order to provide the service quality that customers readily expect.

2.9.2 What is quality?

The ethereal notion of quality derives from the Greek word for ideal – *arête* (excellence) (Oliver, 1996: 166). Zeithaml (1988) defines quality as consumer's judgement about a product's overall excellency or superiority. The author has categorised quality into four perspectives:

- perceived quality (the customer's judgement about the superiority or excellence of a product relative to the available alternative) versus objective or actual quality (actual technical superiority or excellency of the product);
- higher level abstraction rather than a specific attribute of a product;
- global assessment, which, in some cases, resemble attitude; and
- a judgement made within a consumer's mind.

The notions of excellence and ideal performance do, however, provide an introduction to other definitions or subjective interpretations of quality that are commonly found in literature (Oliver, 1996: 166). These terms can be placed into three categories, namely attainment, desirability and usefulness, as shown in Table 2.1. The author refers to attainment as the achievement of a high standard of unspecified dimensions, while desirability refers to a more personal level of attractiveness to the consumer and usefulness refers to the ability of the product or service to serve the consumer's needs.

Oliver (1996: 166) believes that quality is metaphysical or transcendental, defies definition and exists at a level not accessible to human understanding and measurement. Thus, people may claim to know what quality is when they see it but fail to describe it when they deliver it. Quality can also exist only if something else is available to provide at least one other basis for comparison (Oliver, 1996: 166).

In other words, spectators will evaluate the level of service based on their previous experiences at events. In order to simplify this, Oliver (1996: 168) provides an example of water. Despite the fact that environmentally sophisticated consumers cognitively evaluate drinking water available to them, most consumers probably do not. The quality of tap water is rarely questioned because, in the absence of strong local odours, owing to mineral or chemical impurities, most large municipal water utilities scrub, filter and purify their water until little taste remains (pure water is both odourless and tasteless). It is also found that in blind taste tests, tasters preferred their own tap water to a number of premium brands available on the market (Oliver, 1996: 168).

Table 2.1: Single – Stimulus Definitions of Quality

Terms connoting attainment:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innate excellence • Superiority • Highest achievement • Uncompromising standards
Terms connoting desirability:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preference • Value • Worth • Affordable
Terms connoting usefulness:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness for use • Capacity to satisfy wants • Possessing desired characteristics

Source: Oliver (1996: 166)

Most people accept tap water because it does not enter one’s consciousness that local water is a variable, thus there is no variation in water because there is nothing to compare

it against. When comparisons are introduced, quality becomes an issue because the previous status quo can now be ranked on superiority and inferiority or other preference scale. A number of quality judgements have been used such as price, brand, store image and design to allude to a conceptual 'something' at a higher level of abstraction (Oliver, 1996: 168). At event settings the following can be used to evaluate the quality of events: servicescape, accessibility and atmosphere. That higher level of abstraction, then, becomes the comparative basis on which quality judgements are made. Discussion turns to the two most comparative abstractions found in the literature, namely ideals and expectations of excellence.

2.9.3 Ideal as the quality standard

The ideal product is one that possesses ideal levels of all its relevant features (Oliver, 1996: 168). In order to better understand the meaning of the ideal product, Oliver (1996: 168) suggests that a conceptual discussion should be taken into consideration of how one may operationalise the concept in the measurement of quality using some arithmetic notations. In doing so, it can be assumed that the relevant attribute set has been specified. It is assumed that the consumer is able to assess probabilities of the product or service, which possesses each of its attributes and that all attributes are equally weighted (silent) to the consumer.

Most brand attributes may fall short of ideal levels, while some may exceed these levels, such as when there is too much signage, too many electronic displays showing advertisements while the race has started or when the food is too sweet or spicy at events as Oliver (1996: 169) indicates by using an example of excessive sweet or spicy food at a restaurant, that if the food at a restaurant are too sweet or spicy they loss their original taste which may lead to customers complaining. However, Oliver (1996: 169) states that because interest centres on post purchase processes, one can assume that the consumer has previously observed performance levels and now holds them with some degree of certainty.

Oliver (1996: 169) outlines a good example of using water to express the extent at which customers can make a judgement on quality based on their past experiences or by comparison with other similar products. The researcher has made an assumption that if the consumer has experienced Q ideal (spring water) and that only Q_i (tap water) exists for inspection and Q_i appears as the paramount brand, there would be none better. Q_i is the standard for quality against which all other brands are judged. This case probably describes the situation for most products and services. The lack of perfect products and services compels the consumer to use reasonably perfect prototypes as an example of the highest quality of items in the marketplace.

From the example provided by Oliver (1996), it can be understood that the dual stimuli used for quality judgements at first appear to be the ideal level and the perceived performance level. This shows that there are two stages within this process, which each consist of two stimuli. The first stage consists of a comparison of the ideal against a good prototype brand (best brand) while the second is a comparison of other brands against the best brand. However, for the average consumer, the best brand may be the best that can be offered and appears as the marketplace ideal to the consumer. At this point one can take the position that the best brand is a proxy for the ideal brand.

Based on the above explanation, two conclusions may be drawn, namely that spectators will judge the quality of an event by comparing their experiences with the best events or they will evaluate the quality of events by comparing the best events with other events. However, Turco *et al.* (2001: 42) differ from Oliver's (1996) theory in that owing to the intangibility of sport tourism, it is not easy to judge the quality of the event based on past experiences because when the event is over, the sport tourists cannot try the product out first and compare it. The use of tangible elements such as video cassette may be used but the experience will differ.

2.9.4 Excellence as the quality standard: SERVQUAL revisited

Oliver (1996: 170) states that at the beginning Parasuraman (1991) and colleagues measured expectations in terms of what companies should do to be perceived as high – quality service deliverers. The use of should or desired levels of expectations was thought to access the correct referent for quality judgements at the time of their study. However, problems with the directive as to what companies should do, led them to reformulate the manner in which expectations were measured. Parasuraman *et al.* (1991), therefore, proposed assessing performance against standards of excellent service companies. Here, excellent companies could be either real or imagined. The specific wording of the question appeared as follows (Oliver, 1996: 170):

Please think about the kind of (service) company that would deliver excellent quality service. Think of a (service) company with which you would be pleased to do business with. Please show the extent to which you think such a (service) company would possess the features described by each statement. If you feel a feature is not at all essential for excellent (service) companies such as the one you have in mind, circle the number 1. If you feel a feature is absolutely essential for excellent (service) companies, circle the highest scale point.

Based on the above, it can be noted that two concepts were referred to: delivering excellence and possessing essential features. Two companies were used, namely an imagined and real company, which possesses essential and excellent (not real) levels of features.

Thus, a presumption is made that ideals are not necessarily the proper consumer referent, even for quality judgement. Secondly, the performance – excellence deviations are called gaps in the SERVQUAL instrument model. As such, they are more likely to take both negative and positive raw differences since excellence judgements are not as likely to come up against the ceiling effect commonly observed with ideal ratings. Thirdly, no absolute value sign is needed or intended because it is desired that firms exceed expectations. In such cases, the P - E difference or gap score is positive, where P stands

for Perceptions and E stands for Expectations. Positive scores are interpreted as good in the gap model and bad in the ideal – point model (Oliver, 1996: 170).

On the other hand, Webster (1989: 35-53) describes quality in terms of what customers say it is, therefore, for companies to be top service providers, they should strive for the most accurate and up-to-date picture of their customers' perceptions. It is, therefore, crucial to deliver service quality within the tourism industry based on how customers think, feel and behave. In order to deliver quality, it is important to see things from the customers' perspective. The service provider should think like a customer (Webster, 1998: 35; Tassiopoulos, 2005: 269). In addition, the service provider should provide service accordingly.

Parasuraman *et al.* (1991: 7) view perceived quality as the degree and direction of discrepancies between customers' beliefs concerning the service received or experienced service. They believe that expectations are the desires or wants of customers, meaning that what the customer expects, a service provider should deliver, rather than what the service provider offers. However, Garvin (1983) believes that quality is synonymous with innate excellence, which cannot be defined precisely and also that quality is a simple property, which customers learn to recognise only through experience. For example, event tourists will judge the quality of the same event differently based on the perceived service quality they had experienced.

In addition, Getz (1997: 176) notes that quality has many connotations such as a mark of excellence, being the best, error-free performance, safe (performance, activities, services and setting), promptness of service, efficient and effective performance of all services, correct solutions of problems and courteous, reliable and trustworthy behaviour. These quality connotations evolve around the five SERVQUAL dimensions developed by Parasuraman and colleagues in 1985. Parasuraman *et al.* in (1985), measures the level of interaction between event organisers and participants and spectators. In their original formulation Parasuraman *et al.* (1985), ten components of service quality were identified, namely; reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication,

credibility, security, understanding or knowing the customers and tangibles. However, in their 1988 work, these components were collapsed into five dimensions: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness. An understanding what quality is, will make it easy to understand the term service quality, as discussed in the next section.

2.9.5 Service quality

According to Kotler *et al.* (1996: 147), service is an activity or benefit that one party can offer another that is essentially intangible and does not result in ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product. Service quality, on the other hand, offers this activity or benefit to another party. Ideally, the service provider should make sure that the needs and expectations are met by the receiving party (customer). By measuring service quality, a tourism provider can identify and analyse service shortcomings, which offer a useful basis to consider how to focus on service improvement initiatives (Samson & Parker, 1994: 24).

Service quality is considered to be intangible, but much more attention has been paid to tangible quality issues such as the physical aspects of a building, which are easily defined and controllable (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985). Service quality can also be defined as a relationship, although service quality is a process that never ends and is not a series of functions. It is made up of interpersonal relationships. Successful service quality requires a dramatic shift in focus by service providers from transaction orientation to relationship building. The true success of this relationship depends on genuine interaction at a personal level, with an authentic understanding of customer requirements in order to be successful. Pope *et al.* (2001: 73) mention that this relationship should exist between the customer and the service provider.

Oliver (1996) mention that perceived service quality and the customer's expectations thereof, influences the customer's satisfaction level. It is important to note that satisfaction is the antecedent of service quality. Customer satisfaction is measured and management has the overall objective of satisfying or perhaps even delighting the

customers, both of which have become crucial to maintain service relationships. Exceeding expectations is now widely recognised as an effective route to strategic, market-driven organisations. Therefore, in order to attain a superior business performance in a service environment, it is important for a service provider to recognise its dependency on superior service quality behaviour (Kotler *et al.*, 1996: 350). Sport tourism providers should therefore, focus on the adequacies of service quality strategies, the customer-friendliness of their systems and policies, the competence and customer-focus of their service people, the commitment and support provided by service leaders, the degree to which their culture is customer oriented and the extent to which staff are empowered.

A distinction can be made between two types of service quality, namely product features that enhance customer satisfaction and freedom from deficiencies that increase customer satisfaction as well as product features and functional quality (Kotler *et al.*, 1996: 354).

Product features add to the cost of the product. Customers should either be willing to pay for the added costs of additional product features or those features should make them more loyal. For example, the lettuce and tomato found on McDonald's hamburgers make the hamburgers more expensive (Kotler *et al.*, 1996: 345). Free local telephone calls and Internet access in some hotel rooms, which encourage loyalty among salespeople, are another example. This type of quality relates to guest expectations.

In addition, Kotler *et al.* (1996: 345) argue that service can also be viewed as a technical and functional quality. Technical quality refers to what customers are left with once customer and employee interactions have been completed. For example, technical quality relates to the guest room in the hotel, the meal at the restaurant or the coach tour. Functional quality, on the other hand, is the process of delivering the service or product. While the service is being delivered, customers experience many interactions with the firm's employees. For example, a guest makes a reservation, is greeted by the door attendant, escorted to the reception desk by a porter, checks in with the receptionist, and is escorted to the room. Excellent functional quality may make up for a room that is not

quite up to expectations, or a destination, which is not up to expectations. If functional quality is unpleasant, a high-quality room may not overcome the tourist's previous dissatisfaction.

Figure 2.7 shows a model of service quality, which uses technical and functional quality as determinants of the total quality.

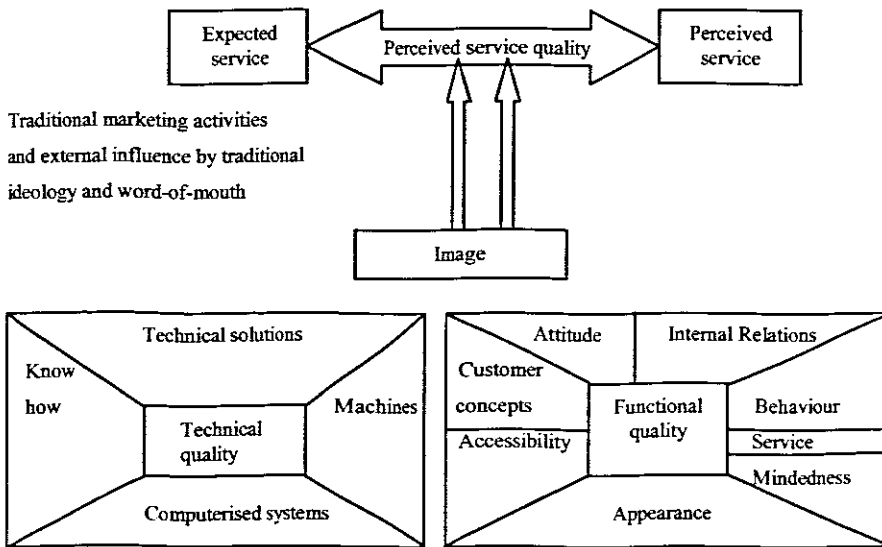


Figure 2.7 Managing the perceived service quality

Source: Kotler *et al.* (1996: 355)

2.10 MEASURING SERVICE QUALITY

2.10.1 Introduction

According to Pitt (1999), examples of the most commonly used tools and instruments for measuring service quality have been identified by various researchers, including Griffi and Hanser (1992), Gerson (1993), Brown (1989) and Clutterbuck and Kernaghan (1991). These instruments include the following: *Check sheets*, which are used to understand how often customer dissatisfaction and satisfaction occurs. *A pareto chart*, which is a vertical bar graph that helps to identify problems with quality and customer satisfaction by the frequency of their occurrence. *Histograms* are vertical bar graphs

similar to pareto charts, but differ because they display numerical information about the frequency of the distribution of continuous data.

In addition, *Scatter diagrams* are used to study the potential relationship between variables, such as responsiveness and service quality. *Cause-and-effect diagrams* try to determine the causes of client satisfaction or dissatisfaction by breaking up the causes into various categories. Moreover, Pitt (1999) describes a *runchart* as a collection of measurements over a specific period of time that is plotted on a graph. *Benchmarking* is a technique, which an organisation may use to compare its process, procedures and service quality rating with that of an organisation that is considered to be the best in its class.

Another technique, which is often used to generate ideas for continuous improvement, is *brainstorming* (Asher, 1996: 52), while *Force field analysis* is a technique that is used to understand the forces that drive the organisation towards service quality improvement and those that restrain the organisation from achieving higher levels of quality (Asher, 1996: 52). Getz (1996: 82) states that event managers face a number of planning, marketing and operational challenges when attempting to deliver high quality programmes and services and that no event or service can ever be truly perfected, so constant innovation and improvement are essential. The main problems that arise can be viewed as 'gaps', as indicated in Figure 2.8, and analysed in the next section.

2.10.2 The five-gap model of service quality

This model is used to identify the gaps or shortcomings of service quality in the service sector. It helps the service event manager to know where and why gaps or problems occur during service delivery.

The five-gap model of service quality is a widely used model. It defines the service as meeting customers' expectations or knowing what customers expect. It provides service that customers perceive as being excellent and requires the event companies to know

customers' needs and, mostly, actions that should be taken by event managers to close the gaps. The five-gap model is closely linked to marketing, since it is customer based (Bennett, 2000: 233). The model has five gaps, which are explained below:

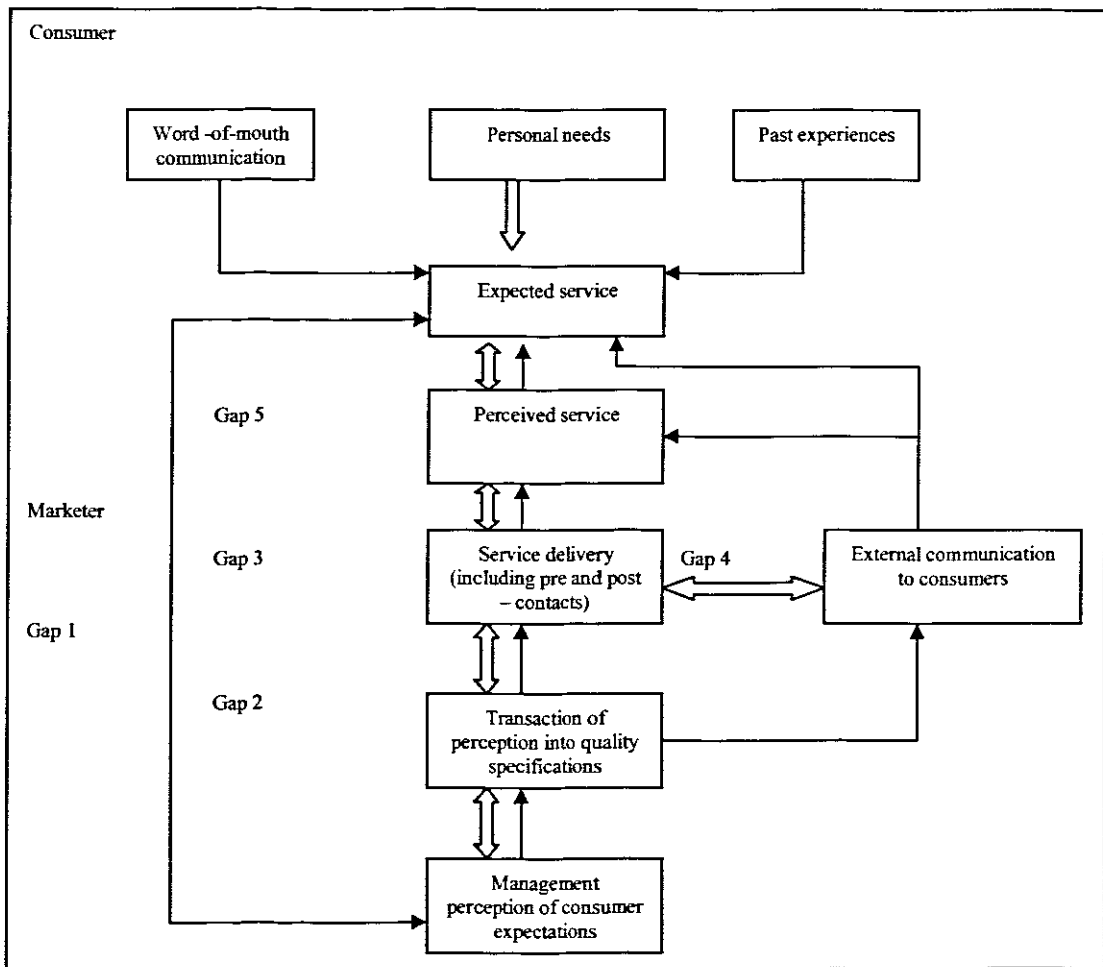


Figure 2.8: The five-gap model of service quality

Source: Kotler, Bowen and Makens (1996: 358)

- Gap 1: Customer expectations versus management perceptions

The event company may fail to understand what consumers expect from a service and which features are needed to deliver high quality service. When management does not understand what customers want, a Gap 1 exists. As Kotler *et al.* (1996: 358) state: the event manager may develop a system to ensure that all guests wait no longer than 15 minutes to check in. However, if guests become upset after 10 minutes, this system will

cause dissatisfaction. Talking to customers before developing the check-in system would enable the event manager to learn that the critical time was 10 and not 15 minutes.

Many service firms conduct initial studies to find out what their market wants, but later they become internally focused and oblivious to the fact that customers' needs have changed. If customer's needs change and the product does not, the marketing mix becomes less attractive to the target market and Gap 1 increases. Therefore, tourism managers should work around their operations, talk with customers and encourage feedback. Management can also gain information about customers from marketing information systems.

- Gap 2: Management perception versus service quality specifications

Gap 2 occurs when managers know what their customers want but are unable or unwilling to develop the system that will deliver it. This can be due to inadequate commitment to service quality, lack of perception of feasibility, inadequate task standardisation and the absence of goal settings or overwhelming sense from the results of market research (Getz, 1997: 83). Some sport tourism companies look for short-term profits and are unwilling to invest in people or equipment. This, almost inevitably, causes service quality problems.

It may happen that event managers feel that improving existing problems is not feasible. For example, most business travellers want to check out after breakfast at the hotel. They are usually in a hurry to get started with the day's business. Unfortunately, many hotel managers understand this but accept a 10-20 minute wait as the best they can do, since they are unwilling to hire extra employees to help during the rush period. Innovative thinking can also eliminate Gap 2 problems. At times event managers should look for unconventional solutions to the problem and translate customers' needs into service specifications, which is critical to service quality.

Lastly, sport tourism managers should ensure that their employees accept the company's goals whilst management should support employees through a measurement of results, communication and reward them for service quality as mentioned below.

- Gap 3: Service quality specifications versus service delivery

Gap 3 can be referred to as the service-performance gap. It occurs when management understands what should be delivered and appropriate specifications have been developed, but employees, on the other hand, are unable to deliver the service.

This gap normally occurs during the moment of truth (MOT), that is, when the employees and the customers interact (line of interaction). With regard to companies, which rely on computers to deliver service, Gap 3 is unlikely to appear, since computers do not make human errors. Besides, customers expect less from machines. For example, a customer who books on the Internet does not expect the computer to provide a cheerful greeting and directions to other service facilities such as coffee shops or destinations the way a human being can do.

However, this is not always the case in the event industry; customers want to interact with event experts (Turco *et al.*, 2001), hence they will choose to book through a travel agency to obtain more advice, information on the crime rate at a particular destination, events, clothes to wear, currency, culture and the attitude of hosts. Therefore, event employees are expected to act cheerfully and resolve customers' problems; this is mainly of importance to the front desk and those who interact with customers during the event. If they fail to solve problems, they should offer smiles and be helpful; their customers are likely to perceive a problem with functional quality.

- Gap 4: Service delivery versus external communication

Gap 4 is created when the event company promises more in its external communication than it can deliver. It occurs when the event organiser does not deliver what has been advertised. A lack of consistency can also cause Gap 4 problems.

- Gap 5: Expected service versus perceived service

As many of the other gaps increase in size, Gap 5 also increases. It represents the difference between expected quality and perceived quality. The expected quality is what the customer expects to receive from the company. If customers receive less than they expected, the customer is dissatisfied. The five-gap model of service quality provides insights into the delivery of the quality of service. By studying this model, events organisers can develop an understanding of the potential problem areas related to service quality. The insight will help to close any gap that may exist in the firm.

Parasuraman *et al.* (1985) developed a model of service quality, which summarises the nature of determinants of service quality as perceived by customers and the foundation of the model as the set of gaps, which is illustrated in Figure 2.9 and discussed in 2.10.3.

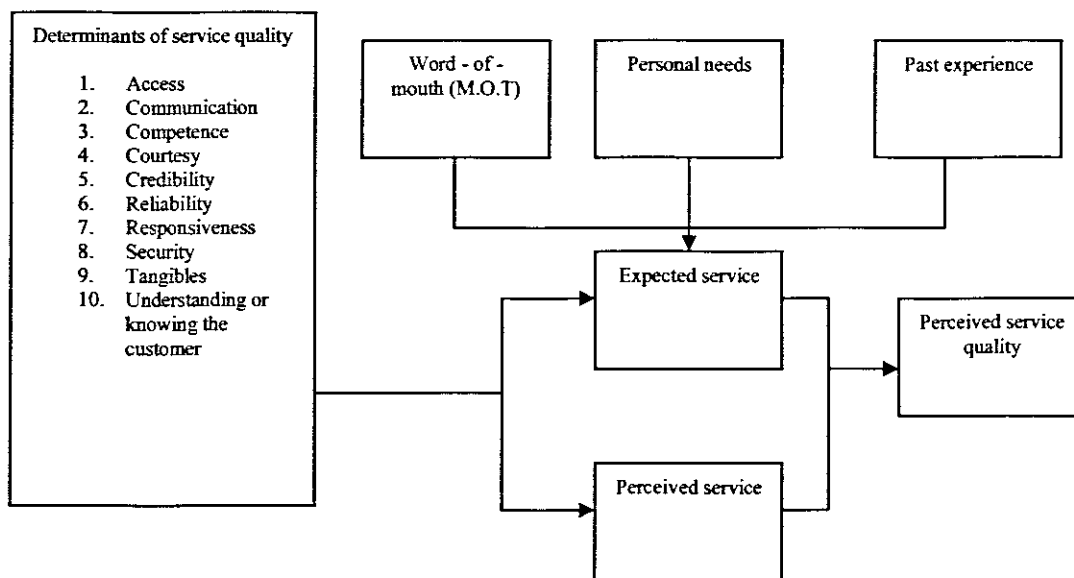


Figure 2.9: Service quality determinants

Source: Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985: 48)

2.10.3 CATERGORIES FOR SERVICE QUALITY DETERMINANTS

1. Reliability: Involves consistency of performance and dependability. It means that the firm performs the service right the first time. It also means that the firm honours its promises. Specifically, it involves:

- Accuracy in billing;
- Keeping records correctly; and
- Performing the service at the designated time.

2. Access: involves approachability. It means:

- The service is easily accessible by telephone (lines are not too busy and they do not put the customer on hold);
- Waiting time to receive service (e.g. at a bank) is not extensive;
- Convenient hours of operation; and
- Convenient location of service facility.

3. Courtesy: involves politeness, respect, consideration and friendliness of contact personnel (including receptionists, telephone operators, etc.) It includes:

- Consideration for the customer's property; and
- Clean and neat appearance of public contact personnel.

4. Credibility: involves trustworthiness, believability, and honesty. It involves having the customer's best interests at heart. Contributing to credibility are:

- Company name;
- Company reputation;
- Personal characteristics of the contact personnel; and
- The degree of hard sell involved in interactions with customers.

6. Responsiveness: concerns the willingness or readiness of employees to provide service. It involves timeliness of service:

- Mailing a transaction slip immediately;
- Calling the customer back timeously; and
- Giving prompt service (e.g., setting up appointments).

7. Communication: means keeping customers informed in a language they can understand and listening to them. It may mean that the company has to adjust its language for different consumers. It involves:

- Explaining the service itself;
- Explaining how much the service will cost;
- Explaining the trade-offs between service and cost; and
- Assuring the consumer that a problem will be handled.

8. Competence: means possession of the required skills and knowledge to perform the service it involves:

- Knowledge and skill of the contact personnel;
- Knowledge and skill of operational support personnel; and
- Research capability of the organisation, e.g., securities brokerage firm.

9. Security: is the freedom from danger, risk or doubt. It involves:

- Physical safety (Will I get mugged at the automated teller machine?);
- Financial security (Does the company know where my stock certificate is:); and
- Confidentiality (Are my dealings with the company private?).

9. Understanding or knowing the customer: involves making the effort to understand the customer's needs. It involves:

- Learning the customer's specific requirements;
- Providing individualized attention; and
- Recognizing the regular customer.

10. Tangibles: includes the physical evidence of the service:

- Physical facilities;
- Appearance of personnel;
- Tools or equipment used to provide the service;
- Physical representations of the service, such as plastic credit cards or brochures;
and
- Other customers in the service facility.

2.11 THE SERVQUAL INSTRUMENT

Since customers' needs and expectations continuously evolve over time, consistently delivering high quality products and service requires ongoing tracking and responsiveness to changing marketplace needs. The drive for excellent customer service has led to the development of SERVQUAL, which is an instrument used to measure the extent of an organisation's service quality.

Moreover, service markets can do several things to increase service effectiveness in the face of intrinsic service characteristics. The SERVQUAL instrument helps sport tourism providers to assess service quality in the industry by comparing perceptions against expectations. If service quality is to maximise revenue, organisations should manage capacity and demand since it cannot carry forward unsold inventory. As mentioned in previous sections, Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) developed the SERVQUAL instrument with the objective of attaining a general measure for perceived service quality, which could be applied to assessing customer perceptions of service quality within the service industry. They developed a 22-item instrument, which identifies five blocks or dimensions of service quality, emerging from the ten categories of service quality determinants previously discussed in this chapter. The five dimensions are as follows:

- **Tangible:** Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication material.

- Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
- Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence.
- Empathy: Caring, individualised attention, which the firm provides to its customers.

The 22-item instrument consists of two sections. The first is an expectation section, comprising 22 statements, which ascertains the general expectations of service that customers have. The second is a perception section, which consists of a specific service provider's service (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1988). By comparing perception against expectations, managers can obtain a true assessment of service quality. The SERVQUAL instrument is, therefore, a way to track changes in an organisation's standard of service quality, measured over time.

2.12 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Firstly, the chapter provides an understanding of sport tourism and how sport relates to the tourism sector. Moreover, the characteristics of sport tourism products have been discussed, which clearly indicates that the nature of sport tourism products differ to any manufacturing products. The chapter also highlights the importance of improving the service quality in events owing to the nature of sport tourism. A brief discussion of canoeing in South Africa has been outlined, including the background of the Berg River Canoe Marathon.

Furthermore, an overview of service quality at events has been provided. The importance of servicescape at events were discussed which also included the effects of the servicescape on customers' behavioural responses. A highlight on the role of interior and exterior layout was provided. Moreover, the chapter provides a discussion on quality and

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a detailed plan for the study. In order to provide an indication of service delivery in the South African sport tourism sector, a survey was conducted during the 2005 Berg River Canoe Marathon. The purpose of the study was to highlight the importance of service quality in sport tourism.

This chapter, therefore, will explain the research design of the study and describe the survey population, as well as the methods and tools of data collection. The sample size of the study will be clearly discussed and will include the sampling procedures, type of respondents and, lastly, a brief discussion on data analysis.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study consists of both descriptive and analytical research design. Descriptive research assists to find out factual data about what happens at the sport tourism event, while analytical research will help to understand the respondents' behaviour and attitude towards the sport tourism event. Quantitative research was used to collect facts and figures, while the qualitative research method was used to explore participants and spectators' behaviour, experiences and feelings of the event.

3.3 THE SURVEY POPULATION

The survey population includes spectators and participants. The respondents were interviewed at various viewpoints of the Berg River, including the starting and finishing points. The total number of viewpoints for the marathon was 31, however, it should be noted that not all these viewpoints were used for data collection. Only 13 were identified for the purpose of the study. These areas were selected for data collection and were identified based on:

- The starting point of the race;
- The finishing point;
- The viewpoints that will capture more sport tourists; and
- The distance and the time allocated from one viewpoint to another.

Based on the above selection criteria, the following 13 viewpoints were selected: Paarl, the starting point and the area where the trial took place, the day before the actual race resumed. The data was collected simultaneously at both the Market Square (starting point) in Paarl and the Dal Jasafat Bridge (the first viewpoint) in Paarl. Two members of the team were selected to collect data at the Dal Jasafat Bridge while the rest were based at the Market Square. The second viewpoint was Lady Loch Bridge, followed by Pieter Abrahams Farm (Rondegewe), Hermon Bridge, Zonqiasdrift, Gouda Bridge, Bridgetown, Misverstand Dam, Moravia, Low Level Bridge, Zoutkloof, and finally Velddrif (finishing point). Some of the viewpoints are clearly identified on the map below. It should be noted that the map shows the areas, which are located along the national roads such as R44, R234 and R399. However, an indication of those viewpoints not indicated on the map is provided below.

- Dal Jasafat and Market Square are located in Paarl;
- Lady Loch is located in Wellington;
- Pieter Abrahams Farm and Hermon Bridge are located between Wellington and Zonquasdrift; and
- Morovia and Low Level Bridge are located between Misverstand Dam and Zoutkloof.

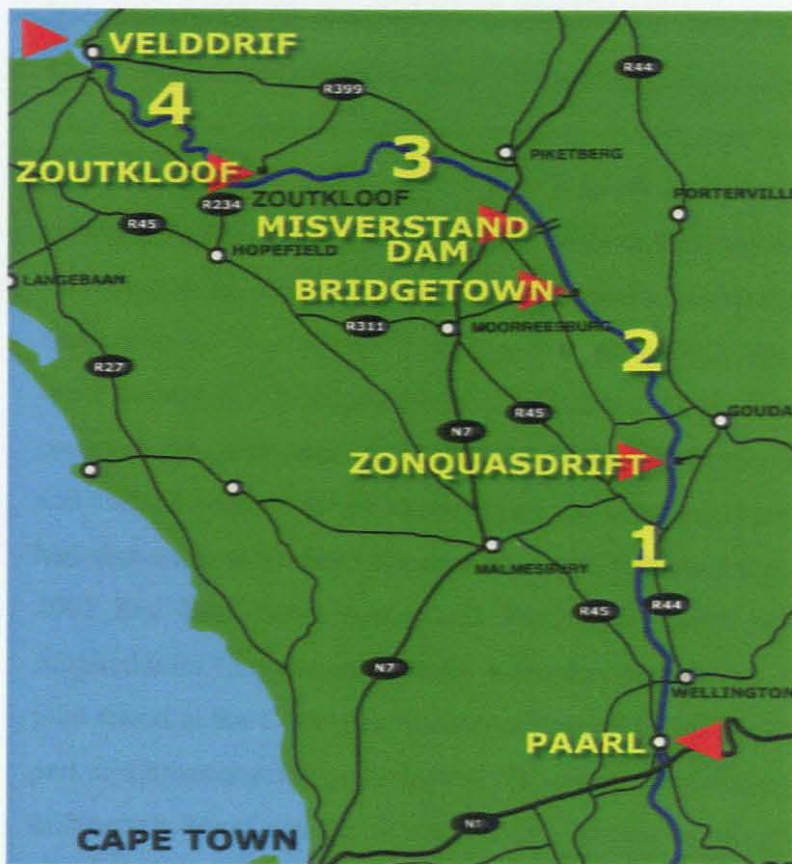


Figure 3.1 Berg River Canoe Marathon map

Source: www.canoesa.org.za/IsuzuBerg (accessed on

30 April 2006

3.4 METHODS AND TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

Surveys are generally the best means of collecting descriptive information (Holloway & Robison, 1995). In addition, the behaviour of respondents was observed systematically.

Two types of data collection used for the study were:

- Survey, which was conducted in the form of face-to-face interviews; and
- Observation method.

The two techniques of survey methods that were used were questionnaires and direct observation. Ten interviewers were selected from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology; the selection of the interviewers were based on the merit that the

interviewers should currently be enrolled for a Doctorate Degree, Masters Degree or Btech Degree and have an understanding of gathering information timely and accurately. The identified students were expected to be familiar with sport events and research expertise and skills and be able to communicate fluently. In addition, the students were provided with training to improve their skills in data collection. The training covered the following areas: approach, communication skills, understanding of the questions, how to encourage the respondents to co-operate and how to complete the questionnaires. In order to ensure a high quality data collection, the students were told to use pencils to complete the questionnaires, to ensure that the questionnaires were numbered accordingly and that the name of the event, including the locations, were written clearly. The students had also worked on data collection at events such as the 2004 Cape Town Jazz Festival, 2005 Red Bull Wave Africa and 2005 Cape Town Festival. Each interviewer was supplied with 13 questionnaires for a one-day completion. The questionnaires used were pilot tested at the Comrades Marathon (June 2005) as the Berg River Canoe Marathon is part of a broader study investigating the management and impacts of sport tourism events in Kwazulu-Natal and the Western Cape. Moreover, direct observation was used as the survey tool to observe the quality of service at the event.

The spectators were expected to complete the questionnaire at the respective viewpoints, while the participants were interviewed at the starting point and the finishing point of each day. For each item, respondents were requested to rate their perceptions with the five-scaled anchored statements of very satisfied and dissatisfied. As Oliver (1996) states, this shows the extent of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that a customer has with a particular service encounter, which is determined by the disconfirmation between the customers' expectations of performance and the actual perceived performance of the value. In this case, past attendance and participation served as an anchor on which the respondents could base their comparison of actual performance and perception of service quality.

O'Neill *et al.* (1999) state that any differences between the two (expectations and perceptions) is referred to as disconfirmation. Thus, if the service experienced is better

than expected, a positive disconfirmation or high level of satisfaction will result. If, however, the service performance falls short of what was expected, then a negative disconfirmation or dissatisfaction will result. Confirmation or zero disconfirmation results occurred when perceived performance meets the customer's expectations or when the service experience is more than what was expected (O'Neill *et al.*, 1999).

The service quality survey method took the form of a 22-item SERVQUAL questionnaire. Thus, the original SERVQUAL dimensions were included in the service quality questionnaire. The five dimensions of SERVQUAL, namely assurance, empathy, reliability, responsiveness and tangibility were represented in the service quality questionnaire. See attached questionnaire, Annexure A.

The above service quality elements have been identified by several researchers, including Wakefield and Blodgett (1996), Parasuraman *et al.* (1994) and Costa and Glinia (2003) as a clear visitor determinant of service quality at events and the tourism sector in general. One hundred questionnaires were distributed to spectators and participants, though these questionnaires did not fully capture each dimension or element of the SERVQUAL, as some of the questions were adapted from the literature of service quality and, therefore, provided general questions on service quality. In addition, a number of questions were posed to establish demographic profiles of the respondents.

3.5 SAMPLE

Purposive sampling was applicable for the study and was used to distribute the questionnaires during the event. As explained in 3.3 on page 71, stratified sampling was used to determine the locations in which the questionnaires were distributed.

The division of the groups were based on various variables, such as viewpoints. Since this study was based on the Canoe Race along the Berg River, the sample was drawn from visitors from all over South Africa. Most of the respondents were expected to come from Gauteng, Kwazulu-Natal and the Western Cape provinces and, in addition, from the

local community situated at near the Berg River popular viewpoints. The respondents included both spectators and participants.

A total of 100 service quality questionnaires were distributed to spectators and participants using purposive sampling, while stratified sampling was used to determine the viewpoints. The questionnaires were distributed over a period of 4 ½ days (½ day indicates the trial day). Table 3.1 shows the sample distribution at each of the 13 viewpoints, including the starting and finishing points.

Table 3.1: Sample distribution for the Berg River Canoe Marathon (2005)

Locations	Type of respondents	
Starting point Paarl: Market Square	Spectators	Participants
View points		
• Dal Jasafat Bridge	Spectators	
• Lady Loch Bridge	Spectators	
• Pieter Abrahams Farm	Spectators	
• Herman Bridge	Spectators	
• Zounquasdrift	Spectators	
• Gouda Bridge	Spectators	
• Bridgetown	Spectators	
• Misverstand Dam	Spectators	Participants
• Morovia	Spectators	
• Low Level Bridge	Spectators	Participants
• Zoutkloof	Spectators	Participants
Finishing point Velddrif	Spectators	Participants

Table 3.2 shows the sample procedures at each viewpoint, including the starting and finishing points.

It should be noted that there was no specific selection criteria used to identify the respondents, however, the following were considered: age, race and gender. The interviewers were asked to interview anybody who attended or participated in the events

to complete 13 questionnaires a day. However, the interviewers were faced with some challenges such as when certain people refused to respond. In such instances, the interviewers were encouraged to thank the respondents for their time and to proceed to the next person. The respondents were given letters (see Annexure B), which indicated the purpose of the survey, the name of the University and, in addition, the interviewers wore badges, which indicated their names and the University's name. The interviewers were trained to introduce themselves and to provide the letter if requested.

Table 3.2: The 2005 Berg River Canoe Marathon sample procedure

Location	SAMPLING PROCEDURE	
TRIAL DAY & STARTING POINT	Spectators	Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paarl: Market Square 	<p>15 minutes before the trial starts and during the trial:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialising with friends and family. <p>45 minutes before the race starts the following day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialising with friends and family; and Assisting paddlers to unpack the equipment. 	<p>1 hr 30 minutes before the trial starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting dressed for the race; Preparing equipment; Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting to be called for the trial. <p>2 hrs before the race starts the following day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting dressed for the race; Preparing equipment; Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting for the race to start.
VIEW POINTS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dal Jasafat Bridge 	<p>30 minutes before the race starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting for the race to start. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lady Loch Bridge 	<p>30 minutes before the paddlers pass the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialising with friends and family; and • Waiting for the race to start. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pieter Abrahams Farm 	<p>1 hr before the paddlers pass the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialising with friends and family; and • Waiting for the race to start. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hermon Bridge 	<p>1 hr before the paddlers pass the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialising with friends and family; and • Waiting for the race to start. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zounquasdrift 	<p>1 hr before the race starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialising with friends and family; and • Waiting for the race to start. 	<p>2 hrs before the race start:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting dressed for the race; • Preparing equipment; • Socialising with friends and family; and • Waiting to be called for the trial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gouda Bridge 	<p>1 hr before the paddlers pass the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialising with friends and family; and • Waiting for the race to start. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridgetown 	<p>While waiting for the paddlers finish the race and 1 hr before the race starts the following day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialising with friends and family; and • Waiting for the race to start. 	<p>2 hrs before the race starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting dressed for the race; • Preparing equipment; • Socialising with friends and family; and • Waiting to be called for

		the trial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misverstand Dam 	<p>1 hr before the race starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting for the race to start. 	<p>2 hrs before the race starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting dressed for the race; Preparing equipment; Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting to be called for the trial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morovia 	<p>1 hr before the race starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting for the race to start. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low Level Bridge 	<p>30 minutes before the race starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting for the race to start. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoutkloof 	<p>1 hr before the race starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting for the race to start. 	<p>2 hrs before the race starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting dressed for the race; Preparing equipment; Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting to be called for the trial.
FINISHING POINT		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Velddrif 	<p>1 hr before the race ends and during the finishing period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialising with friends and family Waiting for the race to finish; and Waiting for the winner to be announced. 	<p>Once the race has ended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting undressed; Loading equipment; Socialising with friends and family; and Waiting for the winner to be announced.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

In order to analyse the level of service quality for the event, the following categories were identified:

- Participants; and
- Spectators.

Although the questionnaires were aimed at both spectators and participants, there was no indication to differentiate spectator questionnaires from the participant questionnaires. Therefore, the same questionnaires were used for both spectators and participants.

The computer software Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS for Windows) was used to analyse the quantitative data through various frequencies tests, which generates tables and bar charts. The qualitative data was analysed into conceptual categories by using the constant comparative method.

3.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter provided an overview of how the survey of the study was carried out. Two methods of survey were used, questionnaires and direct observation. The areas along the Berg River have been identified based on the number of factors such as the duration of the event at the most popular viewpoints. Moreover, the chapter discussed the time during which the survey was carried out.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four provides the results of the study. Purposive sampling was used to collect data and stratified sampling was used to determine the viewpoints. The results were then analysed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The objectives of the study were:

1. To evaluate the level of service quality in the South African tourism industry, particularly the Berg River Canoe Marathon.
2. To identify the shortcomings of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon.
3. To provide an understanding of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon in particular and in South African sport tourism.
4. To improve the level of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon in particular and in South African sport tourism, in general, and finally to highlight the role of service quality in South African sport tourism.

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a survey was used at the Berg River Canoe Marathon, which was identified as part of a broader study that will provide a comparative analysis of sport tourism in Kwazulu-Natal and the Western Cape.

The service quality questionnaire was designed to capture knowledge of the service, which was based on Objective 3. In order to evaluate an understanding of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon, respondents were assessed whether they were aware

of or used the facilities. The perceptions and attitudes of respondents were also evaluated by incorporating the five SERVQUAL dimensions namely reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy. Some general questions regarding the service quality were also included and, finally, the demographic profiles of respondents were also incorporated to identify the types of spectators and participants that the event attracts.

In order to analyse the results of the study, frequency tables were used to determine the total number of respondents. In addition, the comparison analysis was used to be able to assess the relationship of service quality with various variables such as location.

The survey was conducted across 13 viewpoints, which included the starting and finishing points. However, the questionnaires were completed over 9 viewpoints as indicated in Table 4.1 owing to the following: language barriers, a lack of interest and having the same spectators in more than one viewpoint.

Table 4.1: Sample distribution by location (%)

	(n=100)
Market Square & Dal Jasafat Bridge (starting point)	43.0
Velddrif (Finishing point)	7.0
Lady Loch	9.0
Pieter Abrahams	12.0
Hermon Bridge	3.0
Zonquasdrijf	8.0
Gouda Bridge	7.0
Misverstand Dam	2.0
Morovia	9.0

As indicated in Table 4.1, Market Square and Dal Jasafat Bridge (Paarl) had the highest percentage (43%) because of the following factors: Paarl has a higher population density compared to other areas; most companies and businesses supported the event and allowed their employees to attend the event for a maximum of 2 hours; and the survey was conducted over 1 ½ days (the trial day and the start of the race). In addition, the respondents were willing to be interviewed. Pieter Abrahams had 12% respondents. In Pieter Abrahams, the respondents were willing to be interviewed and, also, the area is fairly remote with less entertainment.

Although Velddrif was the finishing point of the event, and attracted many people, only 9% were interviewed because of the following: the spectators were reluctant to respond; the majority of the interviewers could not speak Afrikaans (local language); and most of the local residents could not speak English. The rest of the viewpoints had fewer respondents because of the duration of the event at each viewpoint, which was at most, 10 minutes. Moreover, these areas have a low population density since there are many farms and, finally, the language was also a problem as indicated earlier. The response rate is indicated in Table 4.1.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

4.2.1 Age

As indicated in Figure 4.1, the majority of the respondents were between 41-50, 31- 40 and 21-30 years.

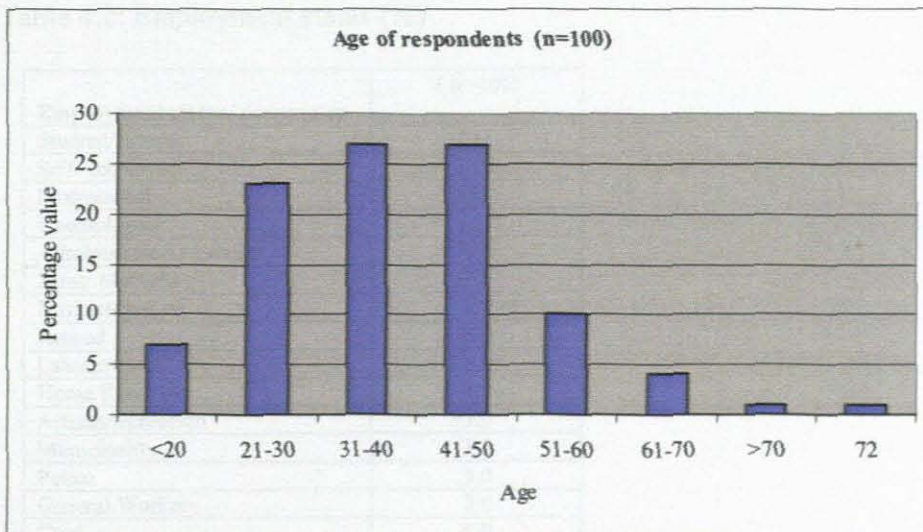


Figure 4.1: Age of respondents (%)

The event attracted mostly people between the ages of 21-50 years. Furthermore, the event attracted professionals and business people who have stable incomes (see

comments on income next page) and, once again, there were more men than women who attended the event see (Figure 4.4). The average age of the respondents is 38 years. It should be noted that age was captured in ranges as indicated in Annexure A, as it was observed from previous research data collection that the majority of respondents were not comfortable to disclose their age when age was not placed in ranges and they were more open to disclose their ages when indicated in ranges. However, it was difficult to work out the respondents' age average since the data was captured in ranges, therefore, the middle number for every age range was used to work out the average. For example, for the range 20-30 years old, 25 was considered as the appropriate number to work out the age average.

4.2.2 Employment status and occupation

Respondents were asked to state their employment status and the results are represented in Table 4.2. The highest number were students (14%), followed by self-employed (12%), professionals (12%) and unemployed people (11%).

Table 4.2: Employment status (%)

Employment status/ occupation	(n=100)
Student/Scholar	14.0
Self- employed	12.0
Professional	12.0
Unemployed	11.0
Administrator/ Manager	9.0
Sales/ Marketing	7.0
Business person	7.0
Retired	5.0
Labour/unskilled	5.0
Home Executive	4.0
Artisan/technician	3.0
Municipality	3.0
Police	3.0
General Worker	2.0
Chef	1.0
Food assistant	1.0
Operator	1.0

4.2.3 Monthly income

Furthermore, the respondents were asked to state their monthly income, as indicated in Figure 4.2. The results show that 18% of the respondents do not work and 13% earn more than R12000.00 per month, while 4% earn between R11001-R12000, R10001-R11000, R8001-R9000 and R1-R1000, respectively. It was also found that 7% earn between R1001-R2000, R5001-R6000 and R6001-R7000 per month, respectively. Moreover, 5% earn between R9001-R10000, R7001-R8000 and R4001-R5000, respectively. However, it should be noted that 11% were not willing to disclose their monthly income.

The results show that the highest number of people who attended the event did not have a monthly income (18%), followed by people who earn more than R12000 (13%). The reason being that most of the participants were students and, in addition, parents came along with their children, hence the highest percentage. These results are presented in Figure 4.2.

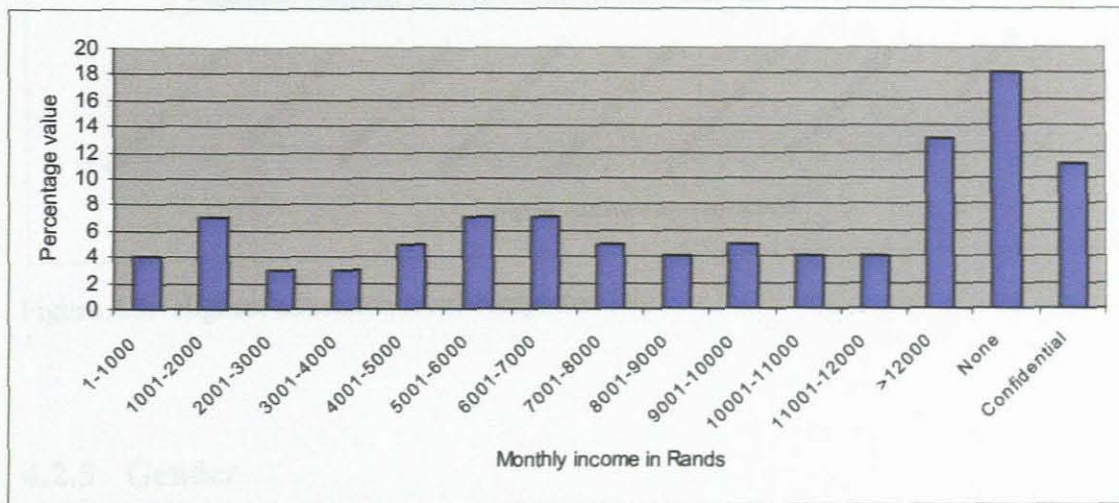


Figure 4.2: Monthly income (%)

4.2.4 Highest education level completed

The respondents were also asked to state their highest education level. As can be seen in Figure 4.3, 26% of the respondents completed a certificate or diploma course, 25% completed secondary certificate, and 18% completed post graduate degree, while only 4% had no formal education and 1% did not disclose their qualifications obtained. Most of the participants were students.

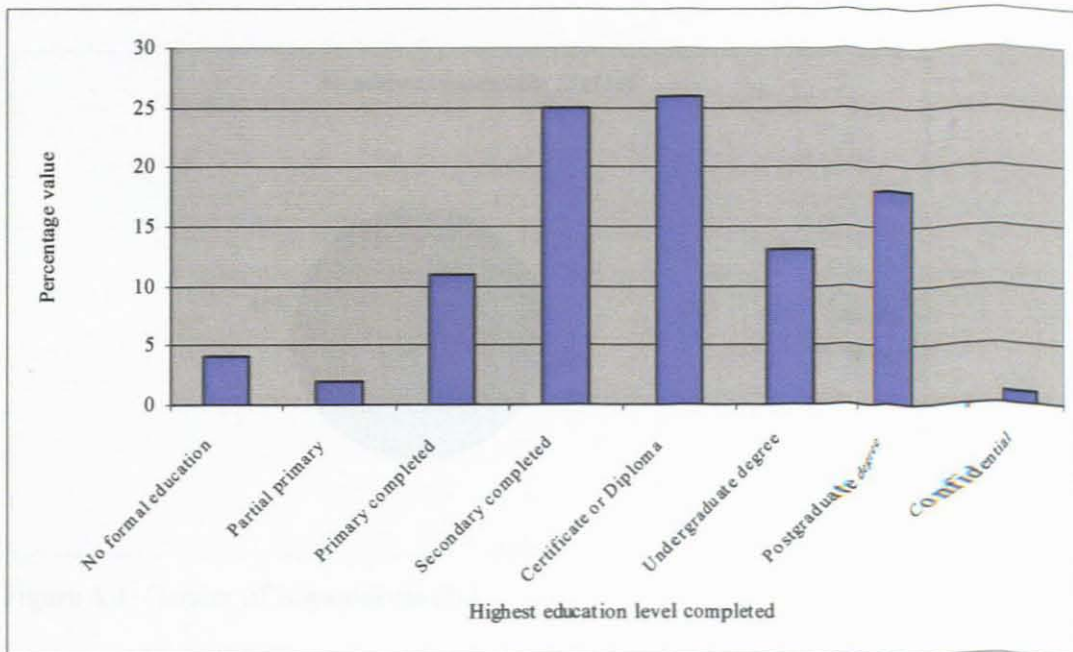


Figure 4.3: Highest education level completed (%)

4.2.5 Gender

The Berg River Canoe Marathon is classified under the extreme sport category. It is understandable that most extreme sport attracts more males than females (Standeven & De Knop, 1999). The Berg River Canoe Marathon is not an exception since there were more men (56%) than women (44%) who were interviewed at the event as illustrated in Figure 4.6. Moreover, as Turco *et al.* (2003) mention, it is typical that when a couple,

family or group of respondents approached to respond to a questionnaire, adult males usually took the responsibility of answering the questions. The same behaviour was observed at the Berg River Canoe Marathon when a couple, family or group was interviewed, males were more willing to respond to the questionnaire than females. It is clear, therefore, that although the event is classified under extreme sport, which mostly attracts more men than women, the results may not indicate that there were more men than women. The results may reflect the gender of the respondents rather than the gender profile of people who attended the event. The results can be seen in Figure 4.4.

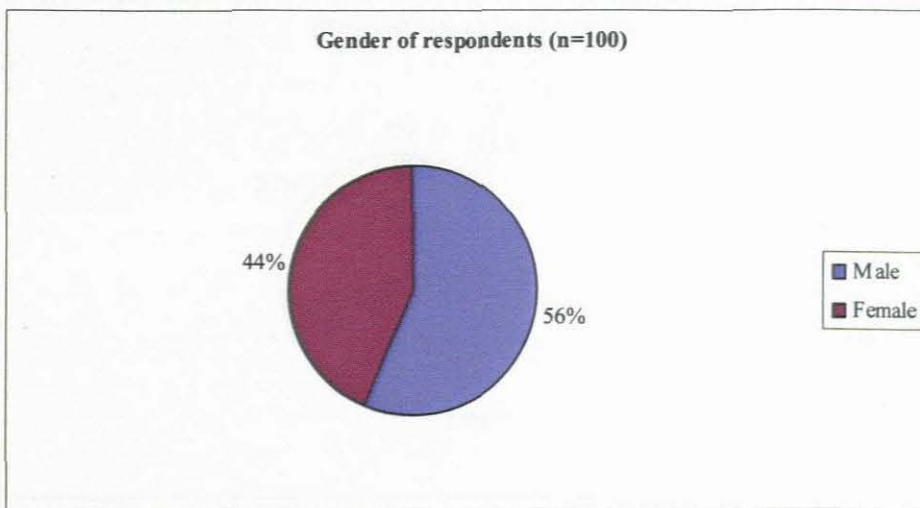


Figure 4.4: Gender of respondents (%)

4.2.6 Historical race category

As indicated in Figure 4.5, the majority of the respondents were Whites (54%), followed by Coloureds (27%) and Blacks (18%), while Indians represented 1%. The Berg River Canoe Marathon has attracted White people since the 1970s. One of the reasons is the apartheid system which restricted different races to participate or attend the same sport events; and another is that the equipment, such as canoeing boats are expensive to purchase, which makes it difficult for other races to buy owing to imbalances in the economic status of South Africans. In addition, Turco *et al.* (2003) highlight that, among

the racial groups within South African society, the Whites dominate most of the sport events with an exception of soccer, which is mostly viewed as a Black sport.

Moreover, there are few sponsors interested to support the event; as a result, poor people cannot afford to participate. There is a lack of publicity, while the majority of supporters and spectators, as well as participants take part in the event because their family members participate and, therefore, it becomes a norm to have a family member participating in the sport.

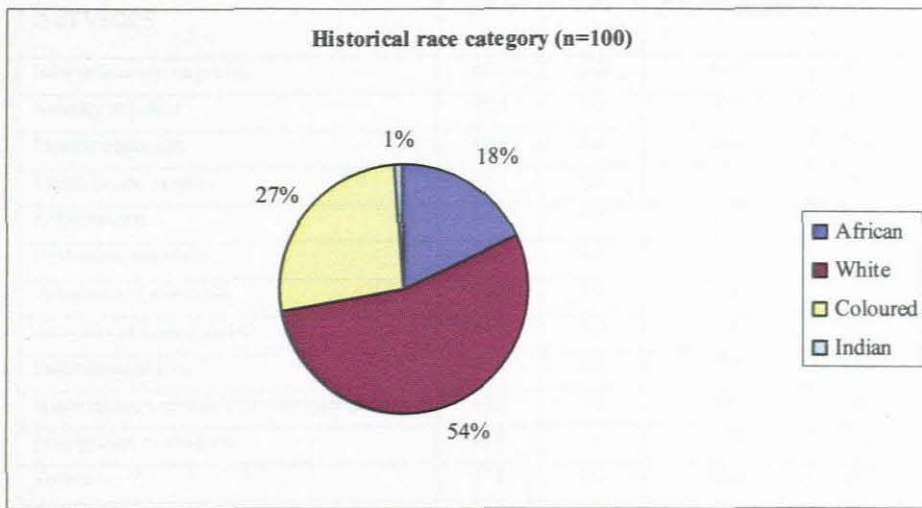


Figure 4.5: Historical race category (%)

4.3 KNOWLEDGE OF SERVICE

The respondents were asked whether they were aware of and used the service facilities at the event. In addition, the respondents were asked to rate each service facility. The likert scale model was used where 1 = excellent, 2 = good, 3 = satisfactory and 4 = poor. The "n/a" was used to indicate no response for the particular question. The results are presented in percentage form in Table 4 .3 and Table 4 .4. In addition, the average for Table 4.4 was worked out for each service to determine the service standards where, 1 = excellent, 2 = good, 3 = satisfactory and 4 = poor.

The tangible element of the event plays a major role in enhancing the event's environment. However, spectators and participants should be aware of the facilities in order to use them since if they are not aware of the facilities, they may complain, which would then result in poor service quality. Analysis was performed to determine whether the spectators were aware of and used the event's tangible elements such as toilets, refreshments, parking areas and security. As a result, Table 4.3 was generated.

Table 4.3: Awareness, knowledge and used services (%)

Services environment	(n=100)			
	Aware	Used	Aware and Used	n/a
Information and enquiries	42.0	5.0	11.0	42.0
Security or police	70.0	7.0	5.0	18.0
Parking attendants	46.0	5.0	10.0	39.0
Ticket booths or sales	18.0	2.0	1.0	79.0
Refreshments	35.0	4.0	7.0	54.0
First-aid or marshalls	46.0	4.0	1.0	49.0
Volunteers or marshalls	53.0	3.0	7.0	37.0
Activities or entertainment	43.0	1.0	4.0	52.0
Entertainment area	37.0	2.0	4.0	57.0
Waste management or litter removals or bins	40.0	4.0	8.0	48.0
Stall holders or vendors	21.0	-	5.0	74.0
Toilets	37.0	4.0	20.0	39.0

Table 4.3 indicates that 70% of respondents were aware of the security and police and 5% were aware and used the security and police, followed by volunteers and marshalls with 53% aware of the facilities. About 45% of respondents were aware of the following facilities: information and enquiries (42%), parking attendants (46%), first-aid and marshalls (46%), activities and entertainment (43%) and waste management (40%).

Only 18% were aware of tickets and booths. However, it should be noted that there were no ticket booths at viewpoints since these facilities were provided at the starting point. In addition, the majority of participants had purchased tickets electronically prior to the event, hence the lowest awareness rate of 18%. However, 2% were aware and used the facilities. Moreover, it was observed that there were no stallholders at most viewpoints, since spectators spent little time there, however, 21% of respondents were aware and 5%

used the stalls at Velddrif (discussed later in this chapter). It was found that the locals felt that it was a waste of money to have their stalls at viewpoints since the event took place for only a short period.

The overall results show that 20% of respondents were aware and used the facilities, this percentage was the highest in comparison to other facilities, while 1% of respondents were aware and used ticket booths and sales and security and police had the highest percentage (70%) of respondents who were aware of these facilities.

4.3.1 Comparison between aware and used services

In order to determine the differences between aware and used services, Figure 4.6 was generated. It was found that more respondents were aware of the services while few used the services. It was observed that, based on the nature of the race, the respondents spent, at most, 10 minutes at the viewpoints, which then affected the use of some services such as waste management.

Furthermore, as mentioned later in this chapter, most respondents (86%) stated that they did not experience any problems during the event, which again affected the use of some services such as security and policing (7%), volunteers or marshalls (3% used the services) and first-aid and medical (4% used the facilities). Other services such as parking attendants (5% used), refreshments (4% used) and ticket booths (2% used), were not available at most viewpoints.

However, the fact that respondents were aware of these services, indicates that the event organisers were well organised although very few respondents used the services. It is also true that the level of service quality will be better obtained when facilities had been used. The differences between aware and used services are presented in Figure 4.6 below.

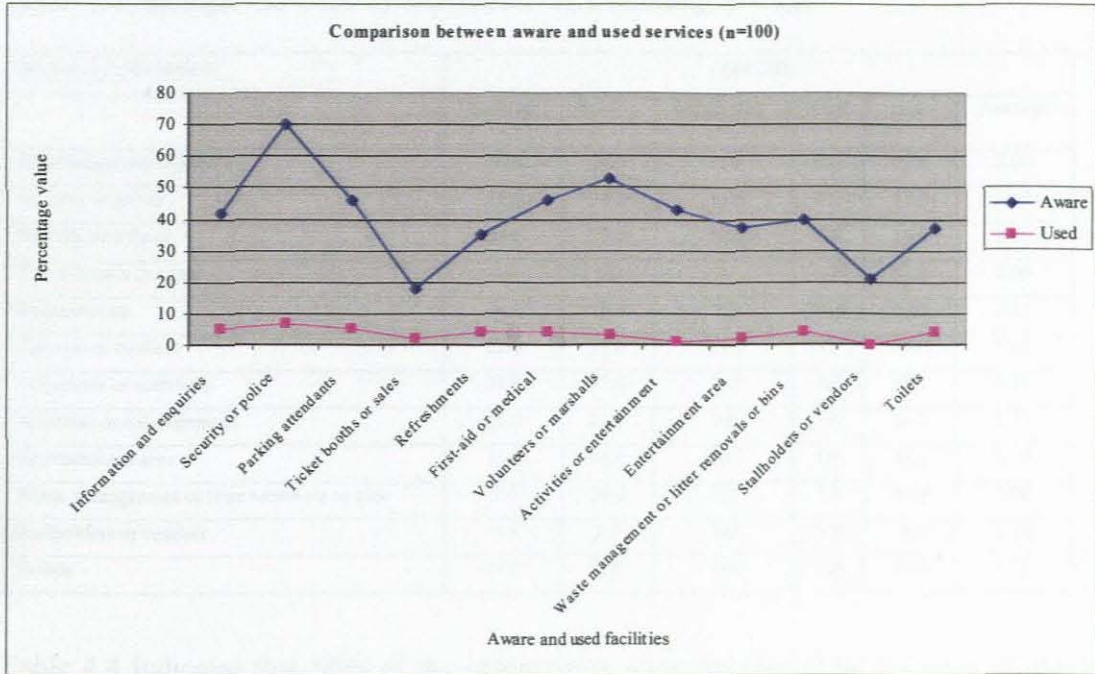


Figure 4.6: Comparison between aware and used services (%)

The presence of tangible elements and physical facilities at the events do not guarantee good service delivery at the event. Therefore, in order to evaluate the quality of tangible elements, the respondents were asked to rate the level of service quality on the tangible elements, as shown in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Ratings: Services environment (%), excluding average

Services environment	(n=100)					
	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a	Average
Information and enquiries	10.0	24.0	11.0	6.0	49.0	2.80
Security or police	32.0	34.0	11.0	4.0	19.0	1.83
Parking attendants	23.0	20.0	13.0	8.0	36.0	2.09
Ticket booths or sales	4.0	8.0	-	6.0	82.0	2.00
Refreshments	14.0	16.0	7.0	10.0	53.0	2.31
First-aid or medical	18.0	15.0	13.0	4.0	50.0	2.06
Volunteers or marshalls	24.0	17.0	8.0	4.0	47.0	2.27
Activities or entertainment	11.0	21.0	9.0	5.0	54.0	2.17
Entertainment area	11.0	14.0	10.0	5.0	60.0	2.22
Waste management or litter removals or bins	7.0	20.0	7.0	7.0	59.0	2.00
Stallholders or vendors	6.0	3.0	8.0	5.0	78.0	2.54
Toilets	17.0	18.0	14.0	8.0	43.0	2.22

Table 4.4 indicates that 66% of the respondents were impressed by the level of service delivery from the security and or police (rated excellent and good) and were happy with the service delivery received from the parking attendants (43%) and volunteer or marshalls (41%), followed by the first-aid and medical facilities (33%) and toilets with 33% agreeing that the service delivery was excellent and good.

More than 50% of respondents did not respond on the following facilities: ticket booths or sales (82%), refreshments (53%), activities and entertainment (54%), entertainment area (60%), waste management (59%) and stallholders (78%). It was also found that these were facilities which were rated poor at most viewpoints for instance, approximately 10% of respondents were not happy with the service delivery of refreshments while there were no refreshments at viewpoints such Market Square and Dal Jasafat, Lady Loch, Pieter Abrahams, Hermon Bridge, Gouda Bridge and Low Level Bridge. Thus, of the 13 viewpoints, only 5 areas (Velddrif, Bridgetown, Zonquadrif, Misverstand Dam and Zoutkloof) provided refreshments. These were the areas where the event started and ended each day. It was clear that the event organisers were keen to provide refreshments at the starting and the finishing points of the race. These results are discussed later in this chapter.

The average results depicted in Table 4.4 indicates that the respondents were more positive with security and police (1.83) in comparison with the rest of facilities and more especially the information and enquiries (2.80) which indicates that the respondents were less happy with these facilities.

As Getz (1997: 176) states, the servicescape of the event plays many roles simultaneously when spectators and event organisers interact. In addition, Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) assert that the physical appearance of the event's facilities influences the duration of stay at the event. Spectators tend to stay longer when the layout design is appealing, the seats are comfortable and the event venue is attractive, thus the primary dimension of servicescape such as ambiance, layout and style of décor influence spectators and participants' holistic perception of the event. Therefore, in order to assess the attractiveness of the event, the respondents were asked to rate (from excellent to poor), the event facilities and its attractiveness, as indicated below in Table 4.5.

The respondents were then asked whether the event's environment and servicescape was excellent, good, satisfactory or poor. Table 4.5 indicates that 79% of respondents rated the cleanliness of the event as excellent and good, while only 4% rated it as poor. The electronic scoreboards or display were also rated excellent and good by 77% of respondents. The ambiance and atmosphere followed with 54% for excellent and good and accessibility was rated by 55% of the respondents excellent and good. However, the service environment was rated the poorest of all the elements with 69% and the aesthetics was rated as poor by 67% of the respondents, while seating availability was rated by 59% of respondents. Once again, this was because entertainment, electronic score boards and TV screens were available at only four viewpoints namely, Market Square, Zounquasdrift, Bridgetown, Misverstand Dam and Velddrif. In addition, Market Square, Velddrif and Zoutkloof were the only areas with seats available, the atmosphere was good and complemented by music. The results will be shown later in this chapter.

Table 4.5: Ratings: Servicescape or physical facilities (%), excluding average

Services environment	(n=100)					
	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a	Average
Cleanliness	41.0	38.0	12.0	4.0	5.0	1.77
Service environment	4.0	6.0	8.0	69.0	13.0	3.63
Electronic scoreboards or display	38.0	39.0	11.0	7.0	5.0	1.86
Ambience or atmosphere	18.0	36.0	15.0	12.0	19.0	2.25
Aesthetics	5.0	4.0	12.0	67.0	12.0	3.60
Seating availability	5.0	7.0	12.0	59.0	17.0	3.50
Seating comfort	10.0	23.0	22.0	27.0	18.0	2.80
Appearance of physical facilities	10.0	30.0	20.0	25.0	13.0	2.64
Design and layout	10.0	30.0	22.0	25.0	13.0	2.71
Shelter and layout	5.0	6.0	19.0	54.0	16.0	3.45
Accessibility	29.0	26.0	16.0	18.0	11.0	2.25
User-friendly facilities for disabled	7.0	3.0	18.0	56.0	16.0	3.46

Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45), as mentioned in Chapter One, state that event organisers have control on service elements such as aesthetics, layout, seating and cleanliness (space and function), while the temperature, air quality, noise, music and odour (ambient conditions) may not be easily controllable. It is, therefore, clear from the results that the event managers for this event did not have much control over space and function, signage, symbols and artefacts due to the fact that the event took place across different viewpoints.

It can be seen in Table 4.5 that the tangible facilities such as shelter (54%), user friendly facilities for disabled (56%), seats (59%), aesthetics (67%) and service environment (69%) were poor; this implies that the physical surroundings of the event, known as the servicescape, was poor especially the service environment. However, it was also found that the above mentioned facilities were rated high for the following areas: shelter (50% excellent) at Misverstand Dam and Gauda Bridge, user-friendly facilities for disabled (50% excellent) at Zoungusdrift and (50% excellent) at Misverstand Dam; seating availability and comfort (100% excellent) at Misverstand Dam while aesthetics was 50% excellent and electronic scoreboards and displays also had 50% excellent (See Table 4.16

to Table 4.18). Misverstand Dam had the highest rating across all the event facilities in this area.

The results in Table 4.5 indicate that the respondents were more positive that the cleanliness of the event (1.77) and electronic scoreboards or display (1.86) were excellent and good and less positive with the event's service environment (3.63) and aesthetics (3.60).

It should be noted that the majority of the respondents did not respond to some of the statements as indicated in Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 due to the nature of the event (the event took place across different viewpoints), thus, some of the facilities such as ticket booths or sales and stallholders were not available at most viewpoints which then had an impact on the average results.

4.4 PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDES

The Berg River Canoe Marathon event is an ideal example of the sport tourism product, which required the level of service quality to be rated on both tangible and intangible elements. Since it has been seen that sport tourism products require both tangible and intangible elements to compete effectively, the five SEVQUAL dimensions namely, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility (already discussed in this chapter), assurance and empathy, were included in the questionnaire in order to assess the perceptions and attitudes of spectators and participants. The results are presented in Table 4.5. The respondents were asked to rate each question and the likert scale model was used where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. The results are represented in Table 4.6 to Table 4.10.

Moreover, Table 4.6 to Table 4.10 indicate the average of each dimension where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree and 0 = neutral and n/a. It should be noted that in the case where the difference between strongly disagree and disagree, and the difference between strongly agree and agreed is less than ten the two

were grouped for better interpretation and understanding. For instance, in Table 4.5, the first statement indicates that 26% of respondents agreed with the statement while, 34% strongly agreed. The two percentages were then added together and interpreted as 60% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed with the statement.

Both spectators and participants need more than the availability of physical facilities when attending an event as the level of interaction between the event organisers and service providers with the spectators and participants determines the level of service delivery. The respondents were then asked to rate their level of interaction with event organisers, knowledge of the event organisers, their caring and willingness to help and deliver the service. Therefore, the reliability dimension was analysed as indicated in Table 4.5.

4.4.1 Reliability

Table 4.6: Perception and attitude (%) excluding average

SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS	Level of satisfaction (n=100)						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral	n/a	Average
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	10.0	10.0	26.0	34.0	20.0	-	3.05
Services are provided on time	8.0	8.0	26.0	27.0	25.0	6.0	2.92
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	10.0	6.0	25.0	24.0	29.0	6.0	2.96
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	7.0	9.0	33.0	25.0	19.0	7.0	3.01
The programme of events is followed	6.0	5.0	27.0	36.0	22.0	4.0	3.25

Customers want to be heard and recognised and require services to be delivered promptly and punctuality. Therefore, in order to assess if the spectators and participants felt recognised and heard at the event, the reliability dimension for the event was assessed, the respondents were asked whether the event organisers and service providers were efficient, 60% strongly agreed and agreed with the statement. Only 10% strongly disagreed with the statement. The respondents were also asked whether the event

organisers provided services on time, to which 53% strongly agreed and agreed while 8% strongly disagreed, thus, half of the respondents were happy with the programme.

In addition, 49% strongly agreed and agreed that the event organisers gave prompt service to spectators and participants, and 10% strongly disagreed. As to whether the event organisers and service providers were dependable, it was found that 58% strongly agreed and agreed while, 7% strongly disagreed. Finally, the respondents were asked whether the programme of the event was followed and 63% strongly agreed and agreed while 6% strongly disagreed, thus, the reliability dimension of the event was found to be good. Therefore, it can be concluded that the event organisers and service providers provided reliable service, the programme was followed and the services were delivered punctually, which then shows that the expectations of service delivery were met although about less than half of the respondents agreed that service providers gave prompt service to spectators and participants.

The average results show that the respondents were more positive that the service organisers followed the programme (3.25) and were dependable (3.02) and slightly less positive with the first three statements.

4.4.2 Responsiveness

Table 4.7: Perception and attitude (%) excluding average

SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS	Level of satisfaction (n=100)						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral	n/a	Average
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	14.0	8.0	24.0	21.0	31.0	2.0	2.08
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests/ queries	15.0	6.0	29.0	14.0	34.0	2.0	2.65
Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies	8.0	7.0	31.0	27.0	22.0	5.0	3.05

Three questions were constructed to evaluate the responsiveness of the event organisers, as demonstrated in Table 4.7. The first question asked if the event organisers showed a

genuine interest in solving spectators and participants' problems, of which 45% strongly agreeing and agreeing while 14% strongly disagreed. Furthermore, 43% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the event organisers were not too busy to respond to spectators and participants, and 15% strongly disagreed. The last question asked whether the event organisers were well equipped to handle problems and emergencies, to which 58% strongly agreed and agreed, while 8% strongly disagreed. However, 32% of respondents were not sure whether the event organisers were showing a genuine interest in solving spectators and participants' problems and were not too busy to respond to their enquiries hence less than 50% agreed with the first two statements. This was because most of the spectators had never requested any service from the event organisers. Although the respondents were not too sure whether the event organisers were effective in this area, the results showed that the respondents believed that they would receive help and care and their problems would be solved should they require any such service from the event organisers.

The average results show that the respondents were more positive that the event organisers were well equipped to handle problems and emergencies (3.05) and showed a genuine interest to solve problems (2.08) and less positive that the event organisers were never too busy to respond (2.65).

4.4.3 Tangibility

Although this dimension was analysed under the knowledge of service, it was found that knowledge questions were specific to certain physical facilities; therefore, it was necessary to have questions directed at all the physical elements of the event, as indicated in Table 4.8. The first question asked whether the physical facilities were functioning, to which 39% strongly agreed and agreed while 18% strongly disagreed, however, the majority of respondents (69%) were not sure since they had not used all the physical facilities. Approximately 54% strongly agreed and agreed that the event had up-to-date equipment, while 15% strongly disagreed. Moreover, 53% strongly agreed and agreed that the event's marketing materials were attractive while 16% strongly disagreed. The

results show that the respondents were happy with the physical facilities of the event and, particularly that the event’s physical facilities had up-to-date equipment and marketing materials were appealing. Whether the event’s physical facilities were functional and operational the respondents were less positive (39%).

Table 4.8: Perception and attitude (%) excluding average

SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS	Level of satisfaction (n=100)						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral	n/a	Average
This event’s physical facilities are functional and operational	18.0	10.0	23.0	16.0	27.0	6.0	2.64
This event has up-to-date equipment	15.0	3.0	31.0	23.0	21.0	7.0	2.86
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	16.0	7.0	32.0	21.0	21.0	3.0	2.76

These average results indicate that the respondents generally neither agreed nor disagreed with all the statements with an average above 2.55 in all the statements, but more positive with the statement the events, physical facilities had up-to-date equipment (2.86).

4.4.4 Assurance

Table 4.9 presents the five questions of assurance dimension, which were constructed to evaluate the assurance dimension of the event. The first question asked whether the event organisers instilled confidence in the spectators and participants, to which 56% strongly agreed and agreed while 13% strongly disagreed. In addition, 55% strongly agreed and agreed that the event organisers instilled trust in the spectators and participants, although 11% strongly disagreed. The spectators were again asked whether the event organisers were constantly courteous toward spectators and participants to which 50% strongly agreed and agreed, while 13% strongly disagreed.

Table 4.9: Perception and attitude (%) excluding average

SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS	Level of satisfaction (n=100)						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral	n/a	Average
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instils confidence in the spectators and participants	13.0	6.0	32.0	24.0	22.0	3.0	2.89
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instils trust in the spectators and participants	11.0	5.0	32.0	23.0	25.0	4.0	2.94
Event organisers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators and participants	13.0	11.0	30.0	20.0	25.0	1.0	2.77
Event organisers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	6.0	5.0	35.0	32.0	15.0	7.0	3.19
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	9.0	6.0	20.0	34.0	23.0	8.0	3.14
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	8.0	9.0	18.0	27.0	26.0	12.0	3.03

Whether the event organisers had the knowledge for their job, 67% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed while 6% strongly disagreed with the statement. The respondents were then asked whether the event organisers treated the local community, domestic tourists and international tourists alike, which resulted in 54% strongly agreeing and agreeing while 9% strongly disagreed with the statement. The overall results show that the respondents felt that the event organisers knew their job and that they were well organised but mostly the results show that the respondents were very positive that the event organisers had knowledge to do their job.

The average for the assurance dimension indicates that all the respondents were positive towards all the statements but they mostly positive to the statement event organisers or service providers had the knowledge to do their job well (3.19). Other results are reflected in Table 4.8.

4.4.5 Empathy

Table 4.10: Perception and attitude (%) excluding average

SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS	Level of satisfaction (n=100)						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral	n/a	Average
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	19.0	11.0	29.0	10.0	29.0	2.0	2.43
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	18.0	11.0	30.0	13.0	27.0	1.0	2.52
Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	15.0	7.0	27.0	19.0	30.0	2.0	2.73
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	20.0	7.0	27.0	13.0	32.0	1.0	2.49
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	19.0	10.0	24.0	15.0	30.0	2.0	2.51
The services are provided during convenient business hours	9.0	8.0	20.0	23.0	29.0	11.0	2.95

Tassiopoulos (2005: 269) states that customer care is best achieved by placing oneself in the customers' shoes and observing the event from the customers' point of view. Therefore, in order to find whether the event organisers of the Berg River Canoe Marathon practised customer care, the respondents were asked if the event organisers paid spectators and participants individual attention, which resulted in 39% strongly agreeing and agreeing and 29% were not sure, while 19% strongly disagreed as indicated in Table 4.10. When asked whether the event organisers dealt with spectators and participants in a caring fashion, 33% strongly agreed and agreed, while 27% were not sure and 18% strongly disagreed.

The respondents were further asked if the event organisers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart in which 46% respondents strongly agreed and agreed, while 15% strongly disagreed. The respondents were further asked if the event organisers understood their specific needs, which resulted in 40% strongly agreeing and agreeing while 15% strongly disagreed. In addition, 43% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the event was provided during convenient business hours, while 29% were not sure and 9% strongly disagreed.

The average results are indicated in Table 4.10. In all statements the average is above 2, which show that the respondents were proportionate in their opinions. Although the respondents neither agreed nor strongly agreed in some of the statements, they strongly agreed with an average of (3.42) that the event organisers understood their needs.

It can be seen that most of the spectators and participants agreed that event organisers showed empathy to both spectators and participants although they were not as positive as they in the first four dimensions. Overall results show that the respondents were more positive with reliability and assurance dimensions and less positive with empathy dimensions. Moreover, the responsiveness and empathy dimensions had the highest percentage of respondents who were neutral to most statements, while reliability dimensions had the highest percentage of respondents who did not respond on most statements. It can also be concluded that that the event organisers delivered an effective service, although some spectators stated that it was difficult to evaluate the effect of the event organisers since they had less contact with them.

It should be noted that some of the respondents were neutral to some of the statements as indicated in Table 4.6 to Table 4.10 because they had less contact with the event organisers due to the nature of the event. Furthermore, some of the respondents felt that some of the statements were not applicable for the event so they did not respond in all the statements, this, however, had an impact on the average results as indicated in the tables.

4.5 LENGTH OF STAY

The length of stay at the event can be influenced by factors such as the availability of physical facilities. Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) mention that in the case where customers spend a longer period at the service facilities, a tendency to assess the level of service, relies heavily on the tangible elements such as seating availability and other physical facilities. Therefore, respondents were asked to state their actual length of stay and intended length of stay, if there was a difference between the two, the respondents were asked to state the reason. The results are represented in Figure 4.7 below.

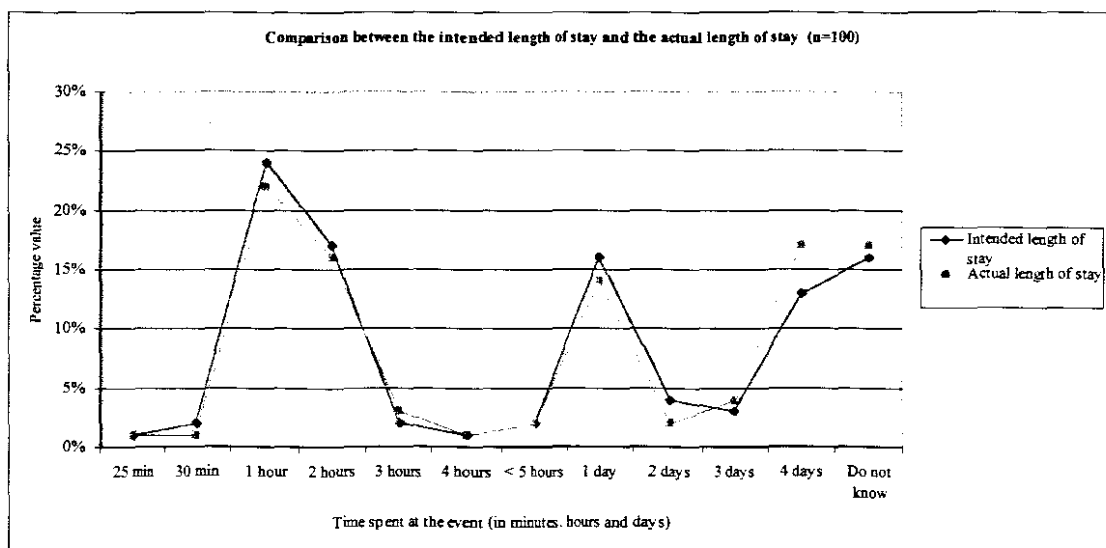


Figure 4.7: Comparison between the intended length of stay and the actual length of stay

4.5.1 The intended length of stay

Most of the respondents intended to stay for 1 hour (24%) and 2 hours (16%) because the majority had requested a 2-hour break from their employees since the event started during the week (Wednesday to Saturday), which then indicated that most respondents were local residents. Families and friends wanted to watch the start or the end of the race and, therefore, intended to stay from 1 day (17%) to 4 days (14%). The results also show that the event attracted new people; these were people who did not know how much time they would spend at the event (17%). It can be concluded that the event attracted local people, family and friends. The locals intended to stay for hours (maximum 2 hours), while sport tourists intended to stay for days (maximum 4 days). The respondents were further asked to state the actual length of their stay at the event. The results are indicated in Figure 4.2.

4.5.2 The actual length of stay

As mentioned earlier, the majority of spectators from Paarl mentioned that they had permission from their employers to stay for at least 2 hours at the event, hence the reason why the 17% stayed for 2 hours and 22% for 1 hour. The families and friends of the participants stayed for 4 days (17%) and a few had requested a day off either to attend the

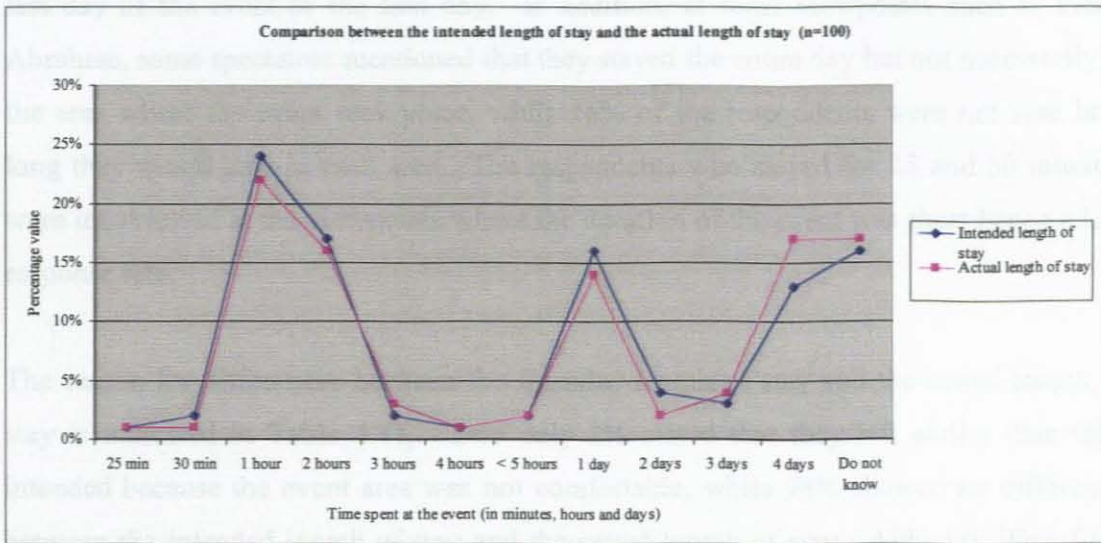


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last day of the event or the first day. In addition, at some viewpoints such as Pieter Abraham, some spectators mentioned that they stayed the entire day but not necessarily at the area where the event took place, while 16% of the respondents were not sure how long they would stay in each area. The respondents who stayed for 25 and 30 minutes were interviewed at the viewpoints where the duration of the event was short hence a low response rate.

The reason for differences between the intended length of stay and the actual length of stay is indicated in Table 4.11, where only 2% stated that they left earlier than they intended because the event area was not comfortable, while 98% showed no difference between the intended length of stay and the actual length of stay. Although Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) point out that the availability and seating comfort have an impact on the duration of stay, the respondents stated that the availability and comfort was less important because of the nature of the event – the event took place across many areas which made it difficult for the event organisers to provide enough facilities in each area, while the event was also part of adventure tourism.

Table 4.11: The reason for differences between the intended length of stay and the actual length of stay (%)

If there is a difference between actual and intended, give reason	(n=100)
n/a	98.0
The place is not comfortable	2.0

The respondents were then asked to state whether they had experienced any problems, which related to service quality during the event. The results are presented in Figure 4.8, where 86% said they did not experience any problems, while 9% did not respond and 5% experienced problems.

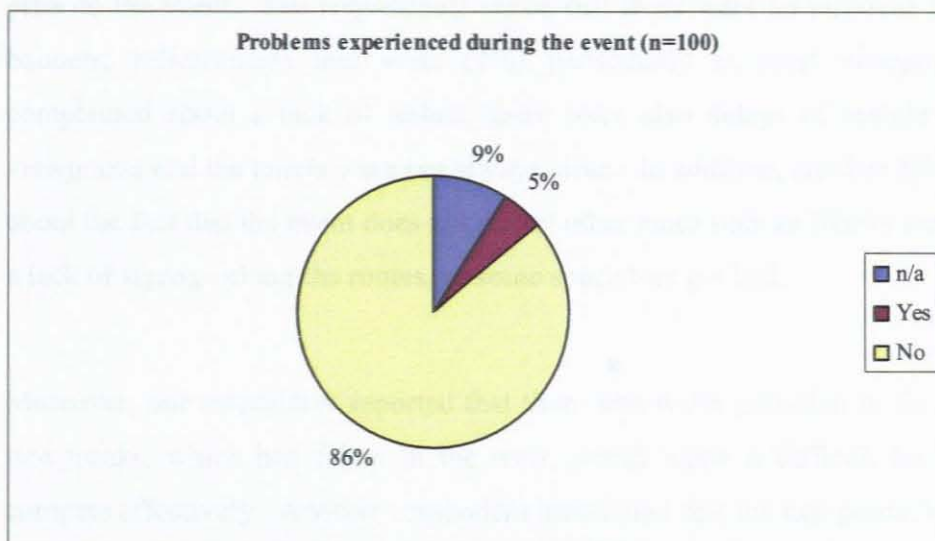


Figure 4.8: Problems experienced during the event (%)

In order to find out the nature of the problems encountered at the event, Table 4.12 was generated and the results are indicated below.

Table 4.12: The nature of the problem experienced during the event (%)

If yes, describe the nature of the problem	(n=5)
n/a	82.0
Lack of marketing	3.0
Lack of physical facilities	2.0
Lack of seating	2.0
Lack of untidy toilets	2.0
Racial discrimination	2.0
Lack of advertising	1.0
Littering	1.0
Lack of signage to viewpoint	1.0
Pollution "in the river"	1.0
Lack of hot water "Zonquasdrijf"	1.0
Poor exit from the river	1.0
The river over flooded (80s) the paddlers drowned	1.0

Of the 5% the majority of respondents (82%) did not respond, while only 18% stated the nature of the problems as follows: 5% complained about the lack of marketing, thus the South African Broadcast Corporation (SABC) should cover the entire race in order to increase the awareness of the event. Local papers should also cover the event 6 months

prior to the event. The respondents stated that there were no physical facilities such as banners, refreshments and seats (2%) particularly at most viewpoints, while 2% complained about a lack of toilets; there were also delays of mobile toilets at some viewpoints and the toilets were not always clean. In addition, another 2% were not happy about the fact that the event does not attract other races such as Blacks and 1% mentioned a lack of signage along the routes, as some spectators got lost.

Moreover, one respondent reported that there was water pollution in the Berg River and tree trunks, which had fallen in the river, which made it difficult for the paddlers to compete effectively. Another respondent mentioned that the exit points were poor owing to heavy rain, which causes wet surfaces, and may cause injuries to paddlers and this may hinder them to participate in canoeing in the future.

The respondents were further asked to provide suggestions to improve the service quality of the event. The results are illustrated in Table 4.13. As shown on Table 4.13, 36% had no suggestions, 7% suggested more signage along the routes and another 7% requested more mobile toilets at all viewpoints. Furthermore, 6% emphasized an increase of marketing activities through different media and another 6% requested more community involvement in support of the event and more viewpoints (6%). The respondents also suggested more seats at all viewpoints (6%) more refreshments (4%) and more publicity (13%). The rest of facilities and services were suggested by 1% and 2% of respondent, respectively.

Table 4.13: Suggestions to improve the service quality of the event (%)

Do you have any suggestions to improve the service quality of the event in the future	(n=100)
n/a	36.0
More toilets	7.0
More signage	7.0
More marketing	6.0
More seats	6.0
More involvement from the community	6.0
More space (viewpoints)	6.0
Refreshments	4.0
More publicity	3.0
Time management	2.0
More entertainment at event	2.0
Extend the duration of the race	2.0
More advertising	2.0
Update the community and education about the event	2.0
More facilities	2.0
Service delivery	1.0
Provide programme to all spectators	1.0
Clear directions	1.0
Improve viewpoints, in particular, Hermon Bridge	1.0
More stallholders	1.0
More blacks people	1.0
Facilities for disabled	1.0

4.6 COMPARISON OF SERVICE QUALITY AT DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS ALONG THE BERG RIVER

So far the results have showed the level of service quality in general, regardless of the location. However, it was found necessary to evaluate the level of service quality at the Berg River Canoe Marathon, based on the location. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Berg River Canoe Marathon took place across various locations and these locations are unique to each other. In order words, assessing the level of service, based on the overall results may provide misleading results since each area is different and the provision of service facilities varies from one area to another.

Moreover, as Kotler (1996) indicates, the tourism product varies from one location to another and from one event organiser to another. It is, therefore, clear that the level of

service for the marathon will not be the same in all areas. A comparison of service quality across all the areas identified, is indicated in Table 4.14.

4.6.1 Knowledge of service

Table 4.14. Knowledge of service: comparison of different viewpoints (%)

Knowledge of service (in %)										
Knowledge of service (n=100)					Level of service					
Viewpoints	n/a	Aware	Used	Aware and Used		n/a	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Were you familiar or aware with the information and enquiries?										
Market Square	32.6	46.5	2.3	18.6		7	48.8	11.6	25.6	7
Velddrif	42.9	57.1	-	-		-	57.1	-	-	42.9
Lady Loch	66.7	11.1	22.2			-	44.4	-	33.3	22.2
Pieter Abrahams	33.3	58.3		8.3			33.3	16.7	41.7	8.3
Hermon Bridge	87.5	-	12.5	-		-	-	-	-	-
Zonquasdrif	87.5	-	-	12.5		-	50	12.5	37.5	-
Gouda Bridge	28.6	57.1	-	14.3		-	71.4	-	14.3	14.3
Miverstand Dam	50	-	50	-		-	50	50	-	-
Morovia	55.6	33.3	-	11.1		-	66.7	22.2	11.1	-
Were you familiar or aware of the security and police?										
Market Square	16.3	74.4	-	7		20.9	2.3	14	44.2	18.6
Velddrif	28.6	71.4	-	-		28.6	14.3	-	14.3	42.9
Lady Loch	22.2	55.6	22.2	-		-	-	-	66.7	33.3
Pieter Abrahams	16.7	83.3	-	-		16.7	80.3	8.3	33.3	33.3
Hermon Bridge	100	-	-	-		-	33.3	-	33.3	33.3
Zonquasdrif	25	50	25	-		25	-	50	12.5	12.5
Gouda Bridge	28.6	28.6	28.6	14.3		14.3	-	-	28.6	57.1
Miverstand Dam	-	50	-	50		-	-	-	-	100
Morovia	11.1	88.9	-	-		33.3	-	-	-	66.7
Were you familiar or aware of the parking attendants?										
Market Square	46.5	34.9	-	18.6		4.7	46.5	16.3	16.3	16.3
Velddrif	14.3	85.7	-	-		28.6	14.3	-	-	57.1
Lady Loch	44.4	44.4	-	11.1		-	22.3	22.2	33.3	22.2
Pieter Abrahams	41.7	50	8.3	-		8.3	41.7	-	16.7	33.3
Hermon Bridge	33.3	66.7	-	-		33.3	-	-	66.7	-

Zonquasdrif	50	37.5	12.5	-		-	25	12.5	25	37.5
Gouda Bridge	42.9	-	42.9	14.3		14.3	42.9	-	28.6	14.3
Miverstand Dam	-	100	-	-		-	-	-	-	1.10
Morovia	11.1	88.9	-	-		11.1	33.3	33.3	22.2	-
Were you familiar or aware of the tickets and booths and sales?										
Market Square	86	11.6	2.3	-		2.3	90.7	-	7	-
Velddrif	57.1	42.9	-	-		-	-	-	42.9	57.1
Lady Loch	77.8	22.2	-	-		-	77.8	-	22.2	-
Pieter Abrahams	91.7	8.3	-	-		8.3	83.3	-	8.3	-
Hermon Bridge	66.7	33.3	-	-		33.3	66.7	-	-	-
Zonquasdrif	62.5	25	12.5	-		25	62.5	-	12.5	-
Gouda Bridge	71.4	14.3	-	14.3		-	85.7	-	14.3	-
Miverstand Dam	50	50	-	-		-	50	-	-	50
Morovia	77.8	22.2	-	-		11.1	88.9	-	-	-
Were you familiar or aware of the refreshments?										
Market Square	48.8	37.2	2.3	11.6		2.3	55.8	9.3	16.3	16.3
Velddrif	14.3	71.4	14.3	-		14.3	14.3	-	-	71.4
Lady Loch	55.6	11.1	22.2	11.1		-	55.6	-	44.4	-
Pieter Abrahams	83.3	16.7	-	-		8.3	75	-	16.7	-
Hermon Bridge	66.7	33.3	-	-		33.3	66.7	-	-	-
Zonquasdrif	62.5	37.5	-	-		50	25	-	25	-
Gouda Bridge	71.4	-	-	-		14.3	57.1	-	14.3	14.3
Miversstand Dam	-	100	-	-		-	-	50	-	50
Morovia	44.4	55.6	-	-		11.1	66.7	22.2	-	-
Were you familiar or aware of the first-aid and medical?										
Market Square	65.1	34.9	-	-		4.7	62.8	11.6	18.6	2.3
Velddrif	14.3	85.7	-	-		14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	42.9
Lady Loch	55.6	22.2	22.2	-		-	-	-	-	-
Pieter Abrahams	75	25	-	-		-	75	-	16.7	8.3
Hermon Bridge	33.3	66.7	-	-		33.3	66.7	-	33.3	-
Zonquasdrif	25	75	-	-		-	12.5	37.5	12.5	37.8
Gouda Bridge	28.6	28.6	28.6	14.3		-	14.3	-	14.3	71.4
Miverstand Dam	-	100	-	-		-	-	50	-	50
Morovia	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Were you familiar or aware of the volunteer and marshalls?										
Market Square	34.9	51.2	2.3	11.6		42.7	48.8	7	25.6	14
Velddrif	42.9	57.1	-	-		-	42.9	-	-	57.1
Lady Loch	33.3	33.3	22.2	11.1		-	55.6	-	-	44.4
Pieter Abrahams	58.3	41.7	-	-		-	58.3	8.3	8.3	25
Hermon Bridge	66.7	33.3	-	-		-	66.7	-	-	33.3
Zonquasdrif	37.5	62.5	-	-		-	25	37.5	12.5	25
Gouda Bridge	28.6	57.1	-	14.3		-	42.9	-	42.9	14.3
Miverstand Dam	-	100	-	-		-	-	50	-	50
Morovia	22.2	77.8	-	-		22.2	44.4	-	11.1	22.2
Were you familiar or aware of the activities and entertainment?										
Market Square	41.9	48.8	2.3	7		2.3	44.2	7	27.9	18.6
Velddrif	42.9	57.1	-	-		-	42.9	14.3	-	42.9

Lady Loch	77.8	22.2	-	-		-	77.8	-	22.2	-
Pieter Abrahams	75	25	-	-		-	75	-	25	-
Hermon Bridge	66.7	33.3	-	-		66.7	33.3	-	-	-
Zonquasdrif	37.5	62.5	-	-		-	25	25	50	-
Gouda Bridge	57.1	28.6	-	14.3		14.3	57.1	28.6	-	-
Miverstand Dam	-	100	-	-		-	50	50	-	-
Morovia	66.7	33.3	-	-		11.1	88.9	-	-	-
Were you familiar or aware of the entertainment area?										
Market Square	46.5	44.2	2.3	7		4.7	46.5	11.6	20.9	16.3
Velddrif	42.9	57.1	-	-		-	42.9	14.3	-	42.9
Lady Loch	88.9	11.1	-	-		-	100	-	-	-
Pieter Abrahams	100	-	-	-		-	100	-	-	-
Hermon Bridge	66.7	33.3	-	-		66.7	33.3	-	-	-
Zonquasdrif	50	37.5	12.5	-		-	37.5	12.5	50	-
Gouda Bridge	57.1	28.6	-	14.3		14.3	71.4	-	-	14.3
Miverstand Dam	-	100	-	-		-	50	50	-	-
Morovia	44.4	55.6	-	-		-	66.7	22.2	11.1	-
Were you familiar or aware of waste management, litter removal and bins?										
Market Square	46.5	37.2	2.3	14		4.7	58.1	11.6	23.3	2.3
Velddrif	28.6	71.4	-	-		-	28.6	14.3	-	57.1
Lady Loch	33.3	44.4	22.2	-		-	77.8	-	22.2	-
Pieter Abrahams	91.7	-	-	8.3		8.3	83.3	-	-	8.3
Hermon Bridge	66.7	33.3	-	-		66.7	33.3	-	-	-
Zonquasdrif	50	37.5	12.5	-		-	62.5	-	-	-
Gouda Bridge	57.1	28.6	-	14.3		28.6	71.4	-	-	-
Miverstand Dam	-	100	-	-		-	-	50	-	50
Morovia	22.2	77.8	-	-		-	44.4	-	55.6	-
Were you familiar or aware of the stallholders and vendors?										
Market Square	69.8	25.6	-	4.7		4.7	81.4	7	2.3	4.7
Velddrif	28.6	71.4	-	-		-	28.6	28.6	-	42.9
Lady Loch	100	-	-	-		-	100	-	-	-
Pieter Abrahams	100	-	-	-		8.3	91.7	-	-	-
Hermon Bridge	66.7	33.3	-	-		66.7	33.3	-	-	-
Zonquasdrif	37.5	37.5	-	25		-	37.5	25	25	12.5
Gouda Bridge	71.4	-	-	14.3		-	85.7	14.3	-	-
Miverstand Dam	100	-	-	-		-	100	-	-	-
Morovia	88.9	11.1	-	-		-	100	-	-	-
Were you familiar or aware of the toilets?										
Market Square	32.6	48.8	-	18.6		7	48.8	11.6	20.9	11.6
Velddrif	42.9	57.1	-	-		14.3	42.9	-	14.3	28.6
Lady Loch	55.6	11.1	11.1	22.2		-	55.6	33.3	-	11.1
Pieter Abrahams	50	25	-	25		-	55.6	-	16.7	25
Hermon Bridge	66.7	33.3	-	-		66.7	33.3	-	-	-
Zonquasdrif	62.5	12.5	-	25		-	25	25	50	-
Gouda Bridge	28.6	14.3	28.6	28.6		28.6	14.3	-	14.3	42.9
Miverstand Dam	-	50	-	50		-	-	50	-	50
Morovia	22.2	44.4	-	33.3		-	33.3	33.3	11.1	22.2

Based on the results in Table 4.14, it can be seen that the respondents were most aware of information and enquiries at Velddrif (57.1%) and Gouda Bridge (57.1%) while at Market Square only (18.6%) were aware and used information and enquiries facilities, although Gouda Bridge (71.4%) was rated poor for information and enquiries. The results also show that the majority (80%) of the respondents felt that the security and police at Pieter Abrahams was poor, while 100% rated Misverstand Dam and 66.7% rated Morovia for excellent security and police services.

The results indicate that the respondents were happy with parking facilities at Velddrif (57.1%), while 18% or respondents were aware and used the facilities at Market Square and Hermon Bridge rated 66.7% for awareness and 66.7% rates the area good. As indicated in Table 4.14, the ticket booths were visible at Misverstand Dam (50%), Velddrif (42.9%) and Hermon Bridge (33.3%). Refreshments were available at Velddrif and, were rated excellently with 71%, followed by Misverstand Dam (50%) and poor at Pieter Abrahams (75%), Hermon Bridge and Morovia (66.7% each), Gouda Bridge (57%) and Market Square (55%). First-aid was rated as excellent at Gouda Bridge (71.4%) and poor at Hermon Bridge (66.7%) and Market Square (62.8%).

Volunteers and marshalls were rated as excellent at Velddrif (57.1%) and 66.7% rated Hermon Bridge poor, while entertainment was rated as excellent at Velddrif (42.9%) and Market Square (18.6%), though poor at most viewpoints such as Morovia (88.9%) and Lady Lock (77.8%). The results show that respondents were aware of the stallholders and vendors although 100% rated the following areas as poor: Lady Loch, Misverstand Dam, Morovia and Pieter Abrahams (91% each), while Velddrif was rated as excellent (42.9%). Velddrif was rated as excellent (57%) for the removal of waste management and litter, while Pieter Abrahams (83%) and Lady Loch (77.8%) were rated as poor. Toilets were rated excellent at Gouda Bridge (42.9) and poor (55.6%) for both Lady Loch and Pieter Abrahams including Market Square (48.9%) and Velddrif (42.9%).

The comparison between the viewpoints were further analysed by comparing the servicescape of each viewpoint and the results are indicated in Table 4.15. Hermon

Bridge was rated as the cleanest area with 66.7% of the respondents rating the area clean, while Velddrif was rated as poor by 14.3% of the respondents. With regard to electronic scoreboards, display and TV screens, Misverstand Dam was rated as the best since 50% rated this area as excellent and Morovia was rated as poor (77.8%) and Hermon Bridge (100%). The results also indicate that 100% found Misverstand Dam, Pieter Abrahams 33.3% and Hermon Bridge (33.3%) to have excellent aesthetics, while Velddrif was rated as poor (42.9%). The seating availability and seating comfort was rated as excellent at Misverstand Dam (100%) while Market Square (57.1%) Velddrif (72.1%) were rated poor including Hermon Bridge (100%) as well as Pieter Abrahams (83%).

The respondents found the appearance of facilities excellent at Misverstand Dam (100%), Hermon Bridge (33%), Gouda Bridge (28.6%), Morovia (22%) and Velddrif (14%), while Pieter Abrahams (66.7%) and Hermon Bridge (66.7%) were rated as poor. The respondents rated Misverstand Dam (100%) and Velddrif (42.9%) excellent in terms of design layout with Hermon Bridge being the poorest (100%). It was found that shelter was excellent at Misverstand Dam (50%), while Velddrif was 28.6%. The event was found to be more accessible, particularly at Pieter Abrahams with 75% of the respondents rating it as excellent. However, Morovia (33.3%) and Velddrif (28.6%) were found to have poor accessibility to the event. Misverstand Dam (50%) and Hermon Bridge (33%) were rated as excellent for user-friendly facilities for the disabled, while Hermon Bridge (77.8%) Pieter Abrahams (66.7%) and Hermon Bridge (66.7%) were rated as the poorest.

It is clear from the results in Table 14.15 that the physical facilities, which included entertainment facilities, were available and appealing, particularly at Velddrif, the finishing point, and also at the starting point (Market Square), although Velddrif was rated as poor in terms of accessibility. Misverstand Dam was the only viewpoint where the physical facilities were competitive with the starting and finishing points. With regard to security and safety, the viewpoints were rated as excellent. The events aesthetics were good at Pieter Abrahams although there were no entertainment facilities.

Table 4.15. A comparison of servicescape or physical facilities at different viewpoints.

Viewpoints	Servicescape or physical facilities														
	Level of service (n=100)														
	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	n/a
	Cleanliness					Secure environment					Electronic scoreboards or display or TV screens				
Market Square	39.5	39.5	14	4	2.3	32.6	52.2	7	9.3	-	2.3	7	4.7	76.7	9.3
Velddrif	42.9	28.6	14.3	14.3	-	28.6	42.9	14.3	14.3	-	-	28.6	14.3	57.1	-
Lady Loch	11.1	66.7	22.2	-	-	22.2	77.8	-	-	-	-	-	44.4	33.3	22.2
Pieter Abrahams	58.3	25	-	8.3	8.3	33.3	58.3	-	8.3	-	8.3	-	-	83.3	8.3
Hermon Bridge	66.7	33.3	-	-	-	66.7	33.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-
Zongquasdrif	62.5	25	12.5	-	-	25	50	12.5	12.5	-	12.5	-	12.5	75	-
Gouda Bridge	42.9	42.9	-	-	14.3	42.9	57.1	-	-	-	-	14.3	-	28.6	57.1
Miverstand Dam	100	-	-	-	-	50	50	-	-	-	50	-	-	50	-
Moravia	11.1	44.4	22.2	-	22.2	22.2	22.2	22.2	11.1	22	-	-	-	77.8	22.2
	Ambiance atmosphere					Aesthetics					Seating availability				
Market Square	34.9	41.9	18.6	4.7	-	16.3	44.2	11.6	9.3	19	4.7	4.7	14	72.1	4.7
Velddrif	42.9	28.6	-	28.6	-	-	28.6	14.3	42.9	14	14.3	-	14.3	57.1	14.3
Lady Loch	66.7	33.3	-	-	-	-	33.3	44.4	-	22	-	-	22.2	66.7	11.1
Pieter Abrahams	50	16.7	-	25	8.3	33.3	16.7	25	8.3	17	-	-	8.3	83.3	8.3
Hermon Bridge	66.7	-	33.3	-	-	33.3	-	33.3	33.3	-	-	-	-	100	-
Zongquasdrif	25	75	-	-	-	25	75	-	-	-	-	25	25	50	-
Gouda bridge	14.3	42.9	14.3	-	28.6	14.3	28.6	-	-	57	-	-	-	28.6	71.4
Miverstand Dam	100	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-
Moravia	11.1	55.6	11.1	-	22.2	11.1	22.2	11.1	33.3	22	-	-	-	77.8	22.2
	Seating comfort					Appearance of physical facilities					Design and layout				
Market Square	4.7	7	14	62.8	11.6	2.3	25.6	32.6	20.9	19	2.3	46.5	30.2	16.3	4.7
Velddrif	14.3	28.6	-	57.1	-	14.3	14.3	28.6	28.6	14	42.9	14.3	14.3	28.6	-
Lady Loch	-	-	22.2	44.4	33.3	-	44.4	22.2	22.2	11	-	22.2	22.2	22.2	33.3
Pieter Abrahams	-	-	-	83.3	16.7	-	8.3	8.3	66.7	17	-	16.7	16.7	58.3	8.3
Hermon Bridge	-	-	-	100	-	33.3	-	-	66.7	-	-	-	-	100	-
Zongquasdrif	-	-	50	50	-	12.5	50	12.5	12.5	13	-	50	37.5	12.5	-
Gouda Bridge	14.3	-	-	28.6	57.1	28.6	28.6	14.3	-	29	28.6	-	14.3	-	57.1
Miverstand Dam	50	50	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-
Moravia	-	11.1	-	55.6	33.3	22.2	-	-	11.1	33	22.2	11.1	-	33.3	33.3
	Shelter					Accessibility					Use-friendly facilities for disabled				
Market Square	-	9.3	18.6	62.8	9.3	23.3	37.2	11.6	20.9	7	2.3	2.3	25.6	55.8	-
Velddrif	28.6	14.3	-	57.1	-	28.6	28.6	14.3	28.6	-	14.3	28.6	14.3	42.9	-
Lady Loch	-	-	33.3	44.4	22.2	33.3	-	22.2	22.2	22	-	-	33.3	44.4	22.2
Pieter Abrahams	-	-	8.3	75	16.7	75	8.3	8.3	-	8.3	8.3	-	8.3	66.7	16.7
Hermon Bridge	-	-	-	100	-	33.3	33.3	-	33.3	-	33.3	-	-	66.7	-
Zongquasdrif	12.5	-	50	25	12.5	25	12.5	50	12.5	-	25	-	-	75	-
Gouda Bridge	14.3	-	28.6	-	57.1	-	42.9	28.6	-	29	-	-	28.6	14.3	57.1
Miverstand Dam	50	50	-	-	-	50	50	-	-	-	50	-	-	50	-
Moravia	-	-	11.1	55.6	33.3	11.1	11.1	11.1	33.3	33	-	-	-	77.8	22.2

4.6.2 Perception and attitudes

In order to analyse the perception and attitude of respondents at different viewpoints Table 4.16 –Table 4.20 were generated as indicated below and the results are discussed thereafter. Firstly the reliability dimension was discussed, then the responsiveness, followed by the tangibility, assurance and finally the empathy dimension.

Table 4.16. A comparison of service quality dimension (Reliability) at different viewpoints

Service quality dimension (Reliability) %						
Berg River Canoe Marathon viewpoints	Level of service (n=100)					
Market Square						
	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	9.3	16.3	20.9	30.2	23.3	-
Services are provided on time	9.3	7	27.9	32.6	16.3	7
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	11.6	9.3	30.2	25.6	18.6	4.7
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	2.3	14	18.6	44.2	20.9	-
The programme of events is being followed	4.7	9.3	23.3	39.5	20.9	2.3
Velddrif						
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	14.3	-	14.3	-	71.4	-
Services are provided on time	-	-	28.6	14.3	57.1	-
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	-	-	14.3	-	57.1	28.6
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	-	-	28.6	-	42.9	28.6
The programme of events is being followed	14.3	-	28.6	-	57.1	-
Lady Loch						
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	22.2	-	11.1	11.1	55.6	-
Services are provided on time	-	-	33.3	22.2	44.4	-
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	-	-	33.3	33.3	22.2	11.1
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	22.2	-	11.1	33.3	22.2	11.1
The programme of events is being followed	-	-	33.3	33.3	3.3	-
Pieter Abrahams						
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	25	8.3	25	8.3	33.3	-
Services are provided on time	33.3	8.3	25	8.3	25	-
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	33.3	-	25	16.7	25	-
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	33.3	-	25	8.3	33.3	-
The programme of events is being followed	8.3	-	16.7	8.3	66.7	-
Hermon Bridge						
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	-	-	67	-	33	-

Services are provided on time	-	-	100	-	-	-
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	-	-	100	-	-	-
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	-	-	67	-	-	-
The programme of events is being followed	23	-	67	-	-	-
Zongquadrif						
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	-	25	12.5	-	62.5	-
Services are provided on time	-	25	25	-	37.5	12.5
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	-	25	37.5	-	37.5	-
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	-	25	25	25	25	-
The programme of events is being followed	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	50	-
Gouda Bridge						
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	-	-	14.3	42.9	42.9	-
Services are provided on time	-	14.3	-	57.1	28.6	-
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	-	-	28.6	42.9	28.6	-
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	-	14.3	14.3	42.9	28.6	-
The programme of events is being followed	-	-	28.6	42.9	28.6	-
Miverstand Dam						
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	-	-	-	100	-	-
Services are provided on time	-	50	-	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	50	-	-	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	-	-	-	50	50	-
The programme of events is being followed	-	-	-	-	100	-
Moravia						
Event organisers or service providers are efficient	-	-	22.2	66.7	11.1	-
Services are provided on time	-	-	-	44.4	33.3	22.2
Event organisers or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants	-	-	11.1	66.7	11.1	11.1
Event organisers or service providers are dependable	-	-	-	44.4	22.2	33.3
The programme of events is being followed	-	-	-	22.2	44.4	33.3

It can be seen in Table 4.16 that the respondents agreed that the reliability element was better at Market Square than at other areas, followed by Misverstand Dam. The respondents could assess the reliability dimension easily at the starting point since they could evaluate the starting time much easier.

Table 4.17. A comparison of service quality dimension (Responsiveness) at different viewpoints

Service quality dimension (Responsiveness) %						
Berg River Canoe Marathon viewpoints	Level of service (n=100)					
Market Square	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	16.3	9.3	27.9	34.9	11.6	-
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries	11.6	7	32.6	37.2	11.6	-
Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies	7	7	14	44.2	25.6	2.3
Velddrif						
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	14.3	-	28.6	-	42.9	14.3
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries	28.6	-	28.6	14.3	28.6	-
Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies	14.3	-	42.9	14.3	14.3	14.3
Lady Loch						
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	22.2	-	33.3	44.4	-	-
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries	33.3	-	22.2	44.4	-	-
Event organisers/ service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies	-	-	33.3	55.6	11.1	-
Pieter Abrahams						
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	25	-	16.7	25	33.3	-
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries	33.3	8.3	25	25	8.3	-
Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems/ emergencies	33.3	-	25	16.7	25	-
Hermon Bridge						
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	33.3	-	66.7	-	-	-
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries	-	-	100	-	-	-
Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies	-	-	100	-	-	-
Zongquadrif						
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	-	25	37.5	12.5	25	-
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries	-	25	50	12.5	12.5	-

Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies	-	37.5	12.5	12.5	37.5	-
Gouda Bridge						
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	-	-	57.1	-	42.9	-
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries	-	-	57.1	-	42.9	-
Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies	-	-	14.3	42.9	42.9	-
Miverstand Dam						
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	-	-	50	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries	5	-	50	-	-	-
Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies	-	-	50	-	50	-
Moravia						
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving spectators' and participants' problem/s	-	22.2	22.2	11.1	33.3	11.1
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries	-	-	11.1	44.4	22.2	22.2
Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies	-	11.1	11.1	-	44.4	33.3

The responsiveness element was found more at Lady Loch and Morovia. At Morovia, for example, one of the participants fell from the boat and the organisers showed that they were eager to help and they responded to the emergency rapidly, therefore, the respondents could make a conclusion that the event organisers were not too busy to respond to participants' needs.

Table 4.18. A comparison of service quality dimension (Tangibility) at different viewpoints

Service quality dimension (Tangibility) %						
Berg River Canoe Marathon viewpoints	Level of service (n=100)					
Market Square	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational	20.9	7	30.2	32.6	7	2.3
This event has up-to-date equipment	11.6	4.7	11.6	51.2	16.3	4.7
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	11.6	-	20.9	39.5	25.6	2.3

Velddrif						
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational	20.9	7	30.2	32.6	7	2.3
This event has up-to-date equipment	11.6	4.7	11.6	51.2	16.3	4.7
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	11.6	-	20.9	39.5	25.6	2.3
Lady Loch						
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational	14.3	-	28.6	-	42.9	14.3
This event has up-to-date equipment	28.6		14.3	-	42.9	14.3
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	14.3	14.3	28.6	-	42.9	-
Pieter Abrahams						
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational	22.2	-	11.1	33.3	33.3	-
This event has up-to-date equipment	22.2	-	33.3	44.4	-	-
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	22.2	22.2	-	55.6	-	-
Hermon Bridge						
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational	41.7	8.3	25	8.3	8.3	8.3
This event has up-to-date equipment	41.7	8.3	25	8.3	8.3	8.3
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	41.7	8.3	25	8.3	16.7	-
Zongquadrif						
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational	-	25	37.5	37.5	-	-
This event has up-to-date equipment	12.5	-	37.5	-	50	-
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	25	12.5	37.5	12.5	12.5	-
Gouda Bridge						
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational	-	-	28.6	14.3	28.6	28.6
This event has up-to-date equipment	-	-	14.3	42.9	42.9	-
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	-	-	14.3	71.4	14.3	-
Miverstand Dam						
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational	-	-	-	-	100	-
This event has up-to-date equipment	-	-	-	-	100	-
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	-	-	-	50	50	-
Moravia						
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational	11.1	44.4	-	11.1	22.2	11.1
This event has up-to-date equipment	-	-	33.3	11.1	33.3	22.2
The event marketing materials are eye-catching	-	22.2	11.1	22.2	22.2	22.2

The tangibility element was found to be high at the starting and finishing points, since the event organisers provide banners, seating availability and other tangible facilities at the beginning and the end of each day. Moreover, the respondents strongly agreed that Velddrif provided tangible facilities more than any other areas, while Market Square

offered more assurance and empathy. Velddrif was the finishing point and entertainment facilities, stall holders and refreshments were clearly visible to respondents. However, the respondents agreed that at Market Square the respondents were assured that the event organisers had knowledge of their jobs and programmes ran accordingly as indicated in Table 14.19 below.

Table 4.19. A comparison of service quality dimension (Assurance) at different viewpoints

Service quality dimension (Assurance) %						
Berg River Canoe Marathon viewpoints	Level of service (n=100)					
Market Square	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills confidence in the spectators and participants	9.3	11.6	18.6	39.5	20.9	-
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills trust in the spectators and participants	7	9.3	18.6	44.2	18.6	2.3
Event organisers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators and participants	11.6	16.3	25.6	34.9	11.6	-
Event organisers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	2.3	7	16.3	41.9	27.9	4.7
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	9.3	9.3	27.9	23.3	27.9	2.3
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	9.3	4.7	27.9	23.3	20.9	14
Velddrif						
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills confidence in the spectators and participants	28.6	-	28.6	14.3	28.6	-
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills trust in the spectators/ participants	28.6	-	28.6	14.3	28.6	-
Event organizers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators and participants	28.6	-	14.3	28.6	28.6	-
Event organizers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	14.3	-	14.3	28.6	42.9	-
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	14.3	-	28.6	14.3	42.9	-
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	28.6	14.3
Lady Loch						
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills confidence in the spectators and participants	-	-	33.3	44.4	22.2	-

The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills trust in the spectators/ participants	-	-	33.3	44.4	22.2	-
Event organizers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators/ participants	-	-	33.3	44.4	22.2	-
Event organizers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	-	-	-	44.4	33.3	22.2
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	-	-	22.2	33.3	22.2	22.2
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	-	-	66.7	33.3	-	-
Pieter Abrahams						
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills confidence in the spectators and participants	41.7	-	25	8.3	25	-
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills trust in the spectators and participants	41.7	-	25	8.3	25	-
Event organisers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators and participants	41.7	-	33.3	16.7	8.3	-
Event organizers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	33.3	-	8.3	33.3	25	-
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	33.3	-	8.3	8.3	41.7	8.3
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	25	-	8.3	8.3	41.7	16.7
Hermon Bridge						
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills confidence in the spectators and participants	33.3	-	33.3	33.3	-	-
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills trust in the spectators/ participants	-	-	66.7	33.3	-	-
Event organisers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators and participants	-	-	66.7	33.3	-	-
Event organisers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	-	-	66.7	-	33.3	-
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	-	-	66.7	-	33.3	-
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	-	-	66.7	-	33.3	-
Zongquasdrif						
The behaviour of the event organizers or service providers instills confidence in the spectators and participants	12.5	12.5	25	-	37.5	12.5
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills trust in the spectators/ participants	12.5	12.5	25	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators/ participants	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	50	-
Event organisers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	-	25	12.5	12.5	50	-
Event organizers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	-	25	50	-	25	-
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	-	25	37.5	12.5	25	-

Gouda Bridge						
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills confidence in the spectators and participants	-	-	14.3	71.4	14.3	-
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills trust in the spectators/ participants	-	-	42.9	42.9	14.3	-
Event organisers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators/ participants	-	-	28.6	42.9	28.6	-
Event organisers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	-	-	14.3	71.4	14.3	-
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	-	-	-	28.6	42.9	28.6
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	-	14.3	-	14.3	42.9	28.6
Miverstand Dam						
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills confidence in the spectators and participants	-	-	-	-	50	50
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills trust in the spectators and participants	-	-	-	50	50	-
Event organisers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators and participants	-	-	50	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	-	-	50	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	-	-	-	-	100	-
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	-	-	-	-	100	-
Mrovia						
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills confidence in the spectators and participants	-	-	22.2	33.3	33.3	11.1
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instills trust in the spectators/ participants	-	-	22.2	22.2	22.2	33.3
Event organisers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators and participants	-	33.3	-	22.2	33.3	11.1
Event organisers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well	-	-	11.1	11.1	44.4	33.3
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike	-	-	-	33.3	44.4	22.2
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike	-	33.3	11.1	11.1	33.3	11.1

In most viewpoints the respondents agreed that the event organisers paid spectators and individual attention, the results are indicated in Table 4.20

Table 4.20. A comparison of service quality dimension (Empathy) at different viewpoints

Service quality dimension (Empathy) %						
Berg River Canoe Marathon viewpoints	Level of service (n=100)					
Market Square						
	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	9.3	16.3	34.9	32.6	4.7	2.3
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	9.3	11.6	32.6	39.5	7	-
Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	9.3	7	34.9	30.2	18.6	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	16.3	7	46.5	20.9	9.3	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	14	7	44.2	20.9	11.6	2.3
The services are provided in convenient business hours	11.6	9.3	30.2	25.6	18.6	4.7
Velddrif						
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	42.9	-	28.6	14.3	14.3	-
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	28.6	-	28.6	28.6	14.3	-
Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	28.6	-	28.6	28.6	14.3	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	28.6	-	42.9	28.6	-	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	28.6	-	42.9	14.3	14.3	-
The services are provided in convenient business hours	14.3		42.9	14.3	28.6	-
Lady Loch						
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	11.1	-	44.4	44.4	-	-
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	-	11.1	22.2	44.4	22.2	-
Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	-	-	33.3	33.3	33.3	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	-	-	22.2	77.8	-	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	-	-	22.2	77.8	-	-
The services are provided in convenient business hours	-	-	66.7	33.3	-	-
Pieter Abrahams						
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	41.7	8.3	25	16.7	8.3	-
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	41.7	8.3	16.7	25	8.3	-

Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	41.7	8.3	16.7	25	8.3	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	41.7	16.7	8.3	25	8.3	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	41.7	16.7	8.3	25	8.3	-
The services are provided in convenient business hours	8.3	8.3	8.3	16.7	33.3	25
Hermon Bridge						
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	66.7	-	33.3	-	-	-
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	66.7	-	33.3	-	-	-
Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	33.3	-	33.3	33.3	-	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	66.7	-	33.3	-	-	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	66.7	-	33.3	-	-	-
The services are provided in convenient business hours	33.3	-	66.7	-	-	-
Zongquasdrif						
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	25	-	25	12.5	37.5	-
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	25	-	25	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	12.5	25	25	-	37.5	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	25	-	25	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	25	12.5	25	-	37.5	-
The services are provided in convenient business hours	-	12.5	37.5	-	50	-
Gouda Bridge						
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	-	14.3	28.6	42.9	14.3	-
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	-	14.3	42.9	28.6	14.3	-
Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	-	14.3	28.6	28.6	28.6	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	-	14.3	-	42.9	42.9	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	-	14.3	28.6	28.6	28.6	-
The services are provided in convenient business hours	-	-	14.3	28.6	28.6	28.6
Miverstand Dam						
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	-	-	-	-	100	-
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	50	-	-	-	50	-

Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	50	-	-	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	50	-	-	-	50	-
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	50	-	-	-	50	-
The services are provided in convenient business hours	50	-	-	-	-	50
Moravia						
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention	22.2	22.2	-	44.4	-	11.1
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion	22.2	33.3	11.1	22.2		11.1
Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart	11.1	-	33.3	33.3	-	22.2
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants	11.1	11.1	33.3	3.33	-	11.1
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants	11.1	33.3	-	22.2	22.2	11.1
The services are provided in convenient business hours	-	22.2	-	11.1	33.3	33.3

4.7 DIRECT OBSERVATION

The level of service quality varied from one location to another. At the start and finishing points, the physical facilities such as toilets, seats, entertainment and banners were excellent, but these facilities were not available at the viewpoints. In comparison to the starting and finishing points, the finishing point (Velddrif) had excellent ambiance, the atmosphere was good, there was lots of entertainment such as music, food and other stalls. Many of the spectators arrived before the participants since they regard the event as more than a mere race, but part of an entertainment. This once more indicates that the provision of the necessary facilities and meeting the expectations of the spectators do have an influence on their length of stay.

At most viewpoints, such as Bridgetown and Misverstand Dam, there were few locals to support the event. It was found that the locals do enjoy the event and were ready to support it, however, they were disappointed that the event organisers do not include them in the planning and management of the event. They suggested that there should be more involvement of locals in entertainment and the provision of food, which will then improve the level of service at the event. There was a bit of a crisis with regard to toilets

as the event used mobile toilets from one place to another and although the toilets were clean at all times, the problem was that sometimes the spectators would arrive at the place before the trailer for the toilets arrived. At some of the viewpoints such as Gouda Bridge there was not enough space for parking and the bridge was too narrow to allow spectators and vehicles to pass through easily, which can be dangerous especially for children. However, the local traffic officers did an excellent job controlling the movement and, to-date, no accident had been reported.

As indicated earlier, at some places the river was full of fallen trees, which made it difficult for the paddlers to paddle easily. In addition, at some finishing points, the exits were slippery and this posed a danger to paddlers.

The spectators and participants alike were impressed by the services provided by the event organisers. The programme was followed and the event organisers had a good knowledge of their work. However, it was found that there is a need to improve the level of interaction between the spectators and the event organisers, regardless of the fact that the event is an extreme sport. The signs along the route were only made visible on the day of the race and some of the spectators had lost their way owing to the lack of signs.

It was also observed that participants spent more time in preparation for the race and spectators used this time as part of socialising, which again improves the ambience condition of the event. During their time there, the spectators and participants exchanged ideas regarding the race and words of encouragement were offered to participants. This was a crucial moment for both spectators and participants, hence the need to ensure that there is entertainment to enhance the event. In addition, this was the most effective time to interview the participants and it was found that participants were willing to respond during this time rather than at the end of the race. Some of the respondents were tired after the race and needed to rest immediately, while some were not willing to respond, especially if they were not happy with their performance.

4.8 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter provides the results and discussion of the study. It also highlighted the methods that were used to collect the survey, namely, questionnaire survey and direct observation. The analysis of the results was two-fold: firstly by looking at the overall race and later by assessing the level of service at each area individually.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Having discussed the results and the major findings, the study concludes with some highlights, limitations and certain recommendations. The limitations provide a brief overview of the problems encountered in completion of the study, while recommendations are made with regard to future research in the area of service quality within sport tourism and managing sport tourism events for service quality.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE KEY FINDINGS

The study provides the level of service quality within South African sport tourism and, in particular, the Berg River Canoe Marathon. The aim and objectives were to measure the current level of service quality for a South African sport tourism event, to identify any shortcoming with regard to service quality and sport tourism and to highlight the role of service quality within sport tourism.

In order to achieve the aim and the objectives of the study, the level of service quality for the Berg River Canoe Marathon was evaluated based on the five SERVQUAL dimensions namely, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy. Although some researchers such as Wakefield and Blodgett (1996: 45) emphasize the need to evaluate the quality of service for the event by assessing the tangible element, arguing that most spectators perceive the service quality of the event on the basis of their tangible elements owing to their lengthy stay at the event, others, such as Costa and Glinia (2003: 287), believe

that all five elements should be evaluated in order to assess the service quality of the event. They argue that spectators and participants alike need the event organisers to be caring and to provide prompt and excellent quality of service. It was, therefore, found necessary to evaluate the level of service quality of the Berg River Canoe Marathon on the basis of all five elements.

It is clear from the results that it was not easy to evaluate the level of service for the Berg River Canoe Marathon owing to the nature of the event. The fact that the event took place across various areas made it difficult for the event organisers to have all the necessary facilities such as toilets, refreshments, music, TVs, and display boards at each area. However, the respondents were happy with the tangible element, such as seats, TVs, toilets and entertainment areas at the starting and finishing points. The level of tangible elements for this study did not affect the level of service owing to the nature of the event. Most respondents argued that it would not be necessary to have some of the facilities such as entertainment, electronic scoreboards and TVs as well as seating comfort at the viewpoints, since they only stay at some viewpoints for less than 10 minutes. However, the majority of locals at most viewpoints pointed out the need to have good, tangible facilities so that they can have entertainment, stalls, refreshments, toilets, seats, music and shelter before and after the participants passed their areas. This will encourage the locals to have entertainment throughout the day, with or without the participants, therefore, increasing the level of service at all areas and their economic status.

In addition, both spectators who live in the areas and tourists alike agreed that all the areas where the event took place were clean, but that there was no shelter, should it rain, or any seats especially for elderly people. There was less interaction between spectators and event organisers. However, the majority of respondents believed that the event organisers showed a genuine interest and knowledge regarding the event, although they believed that both spectators and participants should not expect too much attention from the event organisers since canoeing is an extreme sport, therefore, people should be able to survive on their own. Furthermore, there was no difference between the actual time of stay and the intended time of stay because in most viewpoints spectators only stayed for the period, which was intended

owing to the lack of entertainment, toilets, refreshments and seats. This seems to indicate that people tend to stay for a longer period at the event if they are happy with the physical facilities or tangible elements, which was not the case at most viewpoints.

It can be concluded that the nature of the event may determine how people perceive the level of service. Again, South African society, as it was pointed out by the White Paper on the Development of Tourism in South Africa (1996), became comfortable with the service being delivered, which then made the service providers believe that the product they offer is acceptable. The majority felt satisfied with poor quality of facilities at most viewpoints because, since the event began, the physical facilities had been available at the starting and finishing points only, therefore, they do not see why there should be any changes. The study also indicates the importance of service quality in the event throughout the areas where the event took place.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There were some limitations, which made it difficult to obtain the desired results. The problems encountered during the study are outlined below:

- Most literature focus on service quality in the hospitality sector and few on sport tourism and on South African events in particular.
- In order to evaluate the level of service (P-E) where P stands for perception and E stands for expectations, the following equation should be applied: If $P=E$ or $P>E$, the level of service is regarded excellent. Perception is obtained from customers (spectators and participants), while E is obtained from the service providers (event organisers) and other customers. However, for this study, the level of service was measured from the customer's point of view only.
- Some of the questions were not answered, while people showed less interest to complete the entire questionnaire since they had to move from one place to another. Time constraints were, therefore, a major problem.

- In order to assess fully the level of service quality, all stakeholders should be evaluated. However, this was beyond the scope of this study.
- Post event assessment was not included in the questionnaire. It was, therefore, difficult to assess the level of service quality on the basis of spectators and participants' past experiences. The comparison between past and present experience provides a clear picture whether the service quality of a particular event has decreased or increased, moreover, some people judge the quality of the event better when they compare the event with previous events.
- The current literature do not address the relationship between service quality and other variables such as age, gender, highest education level, monthly income and employment status.
- At the beginning of the race there was a negative attitude from the respondents towards the fieldworkers because of their race (Blacks) who were first regarded as strangers, whilst later on, the respondents' attitude changed and were willing to participate.
- The number of respondents who declined or refused to be interviewed was not captured, which then became a problem when the results were analysed. It should be noted that the capturing of the number of respondents who refused to respond could have assisted to assess whether the majority of South Africans are not willing to complain or raise their concerns regarding the service quality delivery as reported in the White Paper on the development and promotion of tourism in South Africa (1996) (see Table 3.2), or if the majority of South Africans are indeed willing to raise their opinions regarding the service they receive within the tourism industry, particularly the sport tourism sector.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

For further research on service quality in sport tourism, researchers should consider the following recommendations:

- The survey should incorporate all stakeholders since a bad service delivery from one stakeholder can ruin the entire event.

- The questionnaires should include a question on past experience or a comparison of service quality with other events in South Africa or internationally. This will help to assess Oliver's (1996) theory that quality can be judged if there is a comparison of an ideal product.
- The cross tabulation between service quality dimensions and the demographic profiles can be used to determine whether there is a relationship between age, monthly income, employment status, highest education level and race with the perceived service quality.
- Further studies should consider assessing the level of service delivery at the event from all the role players, particularly the event organisers and sponsors. A comparison between the spectators and participants perceived service with the event organisers' service delivery will assist to evaluate the service gaps between management and customers. Moreover, to evaluate the level of service delivery from the event sponsors will assist to assess the influence of the event sponsors in quality service delivery.
- In order to be able to capture more data from the participants, further studies should consider a post-event questionnaire method. This method can be done in the form of e-mail or telephone once the event has ended, while the participants will have sufficient time to respond to the questionnaires and it will also reduce the pressure of dealing with research fieldworkers while preparing for the race.

Recommendations to improve the level of service for the Berg River Canoe Marathon and sport tourism in general:

- There should be consistency of service quality at all viewpoints regardless of the duration of the event.
- The event organisers should conduct research on an annual basis to determine whether the spectators and participants, including the locals, are happy with the service delivery, whether the event organisers meet and exceed the customers' expectations, as well as to identify the shortcomings.
- The locals should be encouraged to participate by providing jobs for them such as collecting litter and providing refreshments, toilets and entertainment at viewpoints.

Various areas are outlined by different researchers such as Wicks and Fesenmaier (1993), which should be taken into consideration when assessing the quality of service at events. These areas include the distribution of questionnaires to all stakeholders involved in the event, such as vendors, local businesses and sponsors. Input from all stakeholders regarding service quality assist event organisers to improve their level of service standard, though from Wicks and Fesenmaier's study (1993), which was conducted to assess the quality of service on event visitors and vendors at an arts festival, showed that the response they received on the quality of service evaluation was negative as compared to visitors and also that vendors preferred a large group of spectators while visitors preferred a small group of spectators.

5.5 CONCLUSION

Most of the researchers cited in the literature review highlighted the importance of service delivery in sport tourism and the need to evaluate service quality for benchmarking. With an increasing number of countries, which are in the process of hosting mega sport events, there is more pressure on sport tourism organisers to deliver quality service.

It was highlighted in Chapter One that there is generally poor service within the South African tourism industry and related sectors and that many tourism companies perform well as a result of the unexpected new demands and many owners and managers believe that the products that they offer are acceptable. In addition, there is poor service quality in events, in general, which is the result of too much emphasis on quantity rather than quality, a product rather than a market orientation, poor physical conditions and a lack of information and poorly selected or inadequately trained personnel.

Although it may be difficult to standardise the level of service quality at the event, such as the Berg River Canoe Marathon, which took place across different areas, there should be more effort to improve the level of service mostly at the starting and finishing points of the event. These points of the race attract the majority of spectators, hence the need to ensure good service quality delivery. Moreover, the event organisers should ensure that all the service quality dimensions are considered to improve the level of service quality at sport events.

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ANNEXURE A

Name of event: _____ Location: _____ Schedule nos: _____

KNOWLEDGE OF SERVICE

1. What services are you familiar with at this event and which did you use?

If aware, please rate service (1 – excellent 2 – good 3 – satisfactory 4 – poor)

SERVICE	AWARENESS	USED	RATING
Registration			
Information and enquiries			
Security or police			
Parking attendants			
Ticket booths or sales			
Refreshments			
First aid or medical			
Volunteers or marshalls			
Activities or entertainment			
Entertainment area			
Waste management or litter removal or bins			
Stall holders or vendors			
Toilets			
Other (specify)			

2. Please rate the quality of the following at the event.

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Cleanliness				
Secure environment				
Electronic scoreboards or displays or TV screens				
Ambience or atmosphere				
Aesthetics				
Seating availability				
Seating comfort				
Appearance of physical facilities				
Design and layout				
Shelter				
Accessibility				
User- friendly facilities for disabled				

PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES

1. Please indicate the level of agreement with the following statements about the service quality at the event (select one option for each variable). 1 - strongly disagree 2 – disagree 3 neutral 4- agree 5 – strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
RELIABILITY					
Event organisers or service providers are efficient					
Services are provided on time					
Event organiser or service providers give prompt service to spectators and participants					
Event organisers or service providers are dependable					
The programme of events is being followed					
RESPONSIVENESS					
Event organisers or service providers show genuine interest in solving					

spectators' and participants' problem/s					
Event organisers or service providers are never too busy to respond to spectators' and participants' requests or queries					
Event organisers or service providers are well equipped to handle problems and emergencies					
TANGIBLES					
This event's physical facilities are functional and operational					
This event has up-to-date equipment					
The event marketing materials are eye-catching					
ASSURANCE					
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instils confidence in the spectators and participants					
The behaviour of the event organisers or service providers instils trust in the spectators and participants					
Event organisers or service providers are constantly courteous to spectators and participants					
Event organisers or service providers have the knowledge to do their job well					
Event organisers or service providers treat international and domestic tourists alike					
Event organisers or service providers treat locals and tourists alike					
EMPATHY					
Event organisers or service providers pay spectators and participants individual attention					
Event organisers or service providers deal with spectators and participants in a caring fashion					
Event organisers or service providers have the spectators and participants best interest at heart					
Event organisers or service providers understand the specific needs of spectators and participants					
Event organisers or service providers understand the needs of the spectators and participants					
The services are provided in convenient business hours					

LENGTH OF STAY AT THE EVENT

Actual length of stay	Minutes	Hours	Days
Intended length of stay	Minutes	Hours	Days
If there is a difference between actual and intended, give the reason for being.			

PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED

1. Did you experience any problems related to the event, including service quality?

Yes (specify)	No
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SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

2. Do you have any suggestions for improving the service quality at this event in the future?

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

1. What is your age?

<20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	> 70 (specify)
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2. Employment status or occupation

Unemployed	Student or scholar	Retired	Labour or unskilled
Sales or marketing	Administrator or manager	Businessperson	Professional e.g. doctor
Artisan or technician	Self-employed	Home executive	Other (specify)

3. Monthly income in Rands

None	1-1000	1001-2000	2001-3000	3001-4000	4001-5000	5001-6000
6001-7000	7001-8000	8001-9000	9001-10000	10001-11000	11001-12000	>12000 (specify)

4. Highest education level completed

No formal education	Partial primary	Primary completed	Secondary completed
Certificate or diploma	Undergraduate degree	Postgraduate degree	Other (specify)

5. INTERVIEWER TO NOTE

Gender of respondent		Historical racial category			
Male	Female	African	White	Coloured	Indian

6. Country of Residence (non South Africans)

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE. HAVE A NICE DAY!

ANNEXURE B

July 2005

To Whom It May Concern

The Berg River Canoe Marathon service quality survey

The Cape Peninsula University of Technology is currently undertaking research regarding the level of service quality delivered during the Berg River Canoe Marathon event that takes place from the 12-16th of July 2005.

Various students enrolled for courses at the University are involved with gathering the data for this particular survey. Your assistance is highly valued in completing the relevant questionnaire. Should you wish to verify the authenticity of this project contact Dr Kamilla Swart on 0829282881.

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