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Service quality management in local authority sport and recreation services: a study of quality management methods in use and an evaluation of the efficacy of the ISO 9002 and Investors in People standards

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Kent at Canterbury

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Bob Lentell

Abstract

Two key research questions are addressed in this thesis. First, to ascertain what quality management methods are in use in local authority sport and recreation services. Second, to evaluate the effectiveness in these services of two management standards, namely the international quality assurance standard ISO 9002 and the UK Investors in People (IIP) standard.

A review of the literature indicated that little was known about how managers of sport and recreation services attempted to secure quality of service. The first stage of primary research therefore provided this knowledge through a postal survey of managers of sports and recreation facilities. The survey was mailed to 1700 sports and recreation facility managers in the UK and 388 fully usable responses were received, a response rate of 23%. The results indicated that two standards, ISO 9002 and IIP, were in frequent use.

The second stage of primary research assessed the effectiveness of the two standards in local authority sports and recreation services. The literature review showed a considerable volume of work on the subjects of quality management, service quality and the quality of public sector services. However, little had been done to develop a method for evaluating quality management practice in services generally or in public sector services in particular. The method developed by the researcher for the second stage of primary research was case study investigation of eight local authority sport and recreation facilities which were managing to one of the above standards or to no quality management standard. Each case was investigated in two ways. The perceptions of members of the management team were explored through structured interviews, a total of 24 interviews being conducted. The perceptions of service users were studied through administration of a multivariate customer questionnaire, which received 820 fully usable responses.

The management interviews showed support for ISO 9002 from those cases using it, and responses indicated that management of organisational processes was stronger than in the other cases. In those cases managing to the IIP standard, the interviews showed that people management was more robust than in the other cases; however there was a more varied view of the utility of the IIP standard. The customer survey showed that users of the IIP registered facilities evaluated service quality more highly than did customers of the ISO 9002 registered ones. This was true of questions about staff quality and of those about processes and tangible assets. It was concluded that whilst ISO 9002 helped managers to deliver a more consistent and less wasteful service, these results were not visible to customers. IIP had a beneficial effect on management of staff and this impacted on other service attributes.

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Particular thanks go to my partner Gill for proof reading much of the script. Finally, I would like to thank Gill and Nat for their support and encouragement and for putting up with me when I was focused on the research to the near total exclusion of other things.

Dedication

To Gill and Nat:

You've been great about this, I couldn't have done it without you.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The subject of the research detailed in this thesis is service quality management in local authority sport and recreation services. This brief introductory chapter sets out the purposes of the study, an outline of the importance of the topic and an explanation of how the thesis is organised.

1.0 Purpose of the study

The study consisted of two main stages, the first of which aimed to accomplish the following:

- to identify the range of quality management approaches available to such services;
- to ascertain the quality management approaches actually used in practice.

The first, exploratory, research stage established that International Standards Organisation standard 9002 (ISO 9002) and the United Kingdom standard Investors in People (IiP) were in frequent use in these services. However, the review of literature suggested that little was known about the appropriateness of these standards for the services under study; it also suggested that, unlike some of the other methods which proved to be in use, investigation of the operation of the two standards would be possible within the resources available to the researcher. Thus the following aims were formulated for the second, analytical, stage of the research:

- to elucidate the issues that arise through the deployment of two quality management standards (International Standards Organisation standard 9002 [ISO 9002] and Investors in People [IiP]) which proved to be in frequent use; and
- to evaluate the efficacy of these standards (ISO 9002 and IiP) in practice.

In support of these aims it should be said that there had been no systematic review of the appropriateness for these services of quality management methods developed and utilised in other circumstances. Although there had been considerable interest displayed by the trade and professional press in quality management, hitherto little was known about the means of managing quality actually deployed by managers of these services. There was not a substantial body of research on the effectiveness of ISO 9002 and IiP in local authority settings, and the methodology for conducting such investigations appeared to have had little consideration. It was therefore anticipated that the findings of this study would have interest and application outside the limits of local authority sports and recreation services.

1.1 Importance of the topic

The point of this section is to briefly outline the significance of this research as a topic of study; this is done below in terms of the economic, social and political significance of local authority sport and recreation services. These themes emerge more forcefully and in more detail in Chapter Two and in the literature review.

Chapter Two shows that sport and recreation goods and services account for 1.7% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Henley Centre 1992) in the United Kingdom. About £3 billion of consumer expenditure is spent annually on sport and recreation services (Henley Centre 1995; Leisure Consultants 1996). The annual subsidy provided to support sport and recreation services by local authorities in England and Wales is approximately £500 million net per annum (CIPFA 1995). Fiegenbaum (1956, 1991) suggests that without quality management the cost of quality is in the range of 25-30% of turnover. If this is applicable to the services under study, the implication is that very considerable savings could be made through the adoption of quality management practices, if the appropriate management practices could be identified.

Chapter Two also demonstrates that although sport is a minority activity, it is a significant social phenomenon both in terms of spectating and participating. Henley Centre studies (Henley Centre 1995) showed that 31% of their randomised sample population had visited a sport or leisure centre during the previous quarter; improvements in service quality might therefore be expected to impact on a sizeable proportion of the population.

As discussed in Chapter Five, increasing the public's participation in sport has been an object of public policy for many years. Improving the service provided through local government supported facilities should make this objective easier to achieve. It is also the case that the quality of public services has been an issue of importance to successive governments, as evidenced by various initiatives (e.g. Citizens Charter, Charter Mark, Best Value) which have laid claim to improve the quality of these services (Prime Minister 1991, Cabinet Office 1996; Filkin 1997). Because the end-users of local authority sport and recreation services usually pay for the service they receive, it has been suggested that such services may be provided for welfare reasons, but in a way which also, at least to some extent, resembles the market (Coalter 1990-b). *Prima facie* one might expect it to be more straight-forward to introduce management methods originated in commerce to this part of the public sector as compared to other services which are provided without direct payment by the end-user, making sport and recreation services a case of particular interest to the public sector overall. The degree to which this is indeed the case is examined in Chapter Five.

1.2 Organisation of the thesis

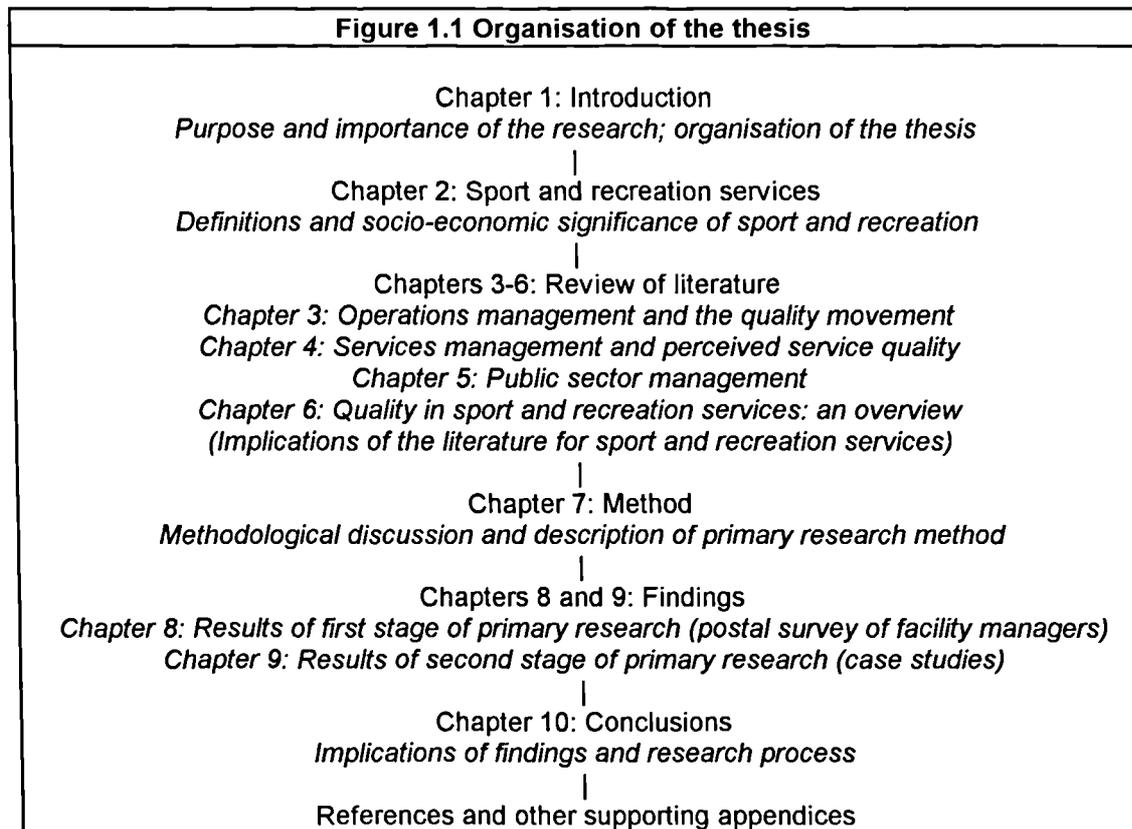
In this thesis the major elements are, first, a literature review which explores and evaluates the current state of knowledge about quality and quality management. The second major element is a discussion of methods available for the primary research undertaken, together with an explanation and evaluation of the methods utilised. The third element consists of the details of the results and an appraisal of their meaning.

Moving on to a more detailed description of thesis organisation (represented diagrammatically in Figure 1.1), in Chapter Two, entitled Sport and Recreation Services, terminology is clarified. The significance of sports services, both in social and in economic terms, is explored; the role of local authorities in service provision is also outlined.

The literature review falls into three categories, each one of which is allocated a chapter. Chapter Three deals with the literature produced by, or relating to the quality movement as it has developed from a focus early in the century on inspection and quality control, to the more holistic approach evident in the current Total Quality Management paradigm. This part of the literature is strongly associated with operations management in the manufacturing sector; it is therefore appropriate to review it in the context of the basic principles of operations management. This chapter also provides the framework for a review of the literature on the two standards, ISO 9002 and Investors in People (IIP), investigated during the primary research.

Because the type of operations under study are a form of service, it is important to review the research on the specific subject of service quality. This has been a major preoccupation of services researchers over the last fifteen years and has led to the development of "customer perceived quality" paradigms which are examined in Chapter Four of the thesis. As it is important to understand how services might be different from manufacturing in order to appreciate the need for quality concepts specific to services, a review of the general literature produced by service management researchers is the context for this part of the study.

However, the services under study are also public sector ones, and there exists a fairly substantial body of literature on the quality of public sector services. This is analysed in Chapter Five. Once again, it is important to understand the context for the particular discourse revealed by this literature; therefore a study is made of the special features of public services, and of how management in them might be different from management in the commercial sector.



It was apparent from the literature review that it fell fairly naturally into the three categories described above; there were relatively few instances of it being difficult to classify a piece of research under one of these headings. However, this is an exemplar of a problem uncovered by the review, that these three bodies of work tend to be self-referential and do not take very much account of one another. Thus in Chapter Six an attempt is made to reach an overview, in the light of the literature specifically on quality in leisure, sport and recreation services.

Chapter Seven of the thesis deals with method and methodology. It presents an evaluation of the different research philosophies and methodologies, situating the methods used within that context. A detailed description of methods employed is provided and the limitations of them are discussed. The primary research took place in two stages. In the first, exploratory, stage, a postal questionnaire was used to discover what quality management methods were in use in sports and recreation services. This showed that two methods in frequent use were the ISO 9002 and liP standards. These results were integrated with the findings of the literature review to devise a set of guiding hypotheses which framed the second, analytical stage of primary research. This examined the issues that arise when ISO 9002 and liP are used to manage quality in these services. The second stage was undertaken via a group of case studies, each case being investigated in two ways. First, interviews were conducted

with members of management; second a common questionnaire was administered to service customers.

As the investigation was conducted in two stages, the results of the primary research are reported in two chapters. In Chapter Eight the findings of the first stage of primary research using the postal questionnaire are reported and discussed. Chapter Nine reports and discusses the results of the second stage of primary research, that is the case studies, both the management interviews and the customer questionnaire methods. The final chapter, Chapter Ten, draws together the various themes of the study discussing the implications of the findings and of the research process for the aims of the study; implications for further research are also considered. References and other supporting material are provided in appendices.

Chapter Two

Sport and Recreation Services

Summary

In this Chapter the following terminology is developed:

- Sport is narrowly defined as involving some kind of physical test, within a competitive framework governed by specific rules or codes, and with continuity over time.
- Recreation is to be understood as physical recreation, activities away-from-home in which the participant has a role in actively producing the experience.
- Leisure is understood as time in which the individual is free from the demands of domestic and paid work, thus being relatively free to use it as s/he wishes.

In the UK, sport related economic activity accounts for 1.7% of GDP; sports services account for £3bn. of consumer expenditure per annum. Most economic activity is in the commercial sector. However it is likely that local authority activity is important in securing participation from many who would not otherwise be able to do so. Local authorities in England and Wales spend £0.5bn. net per annum on sport and recreation.

2.0 Preamble

This chapter provides the reader with background material necessary for understanding the scope of the thesis. First, some definitions of the terms sport, recreation and leisure are advanced. Second, sports participation and spectating data is presented so as to aid an evaluation of the social significance of sport. Third, economic data is briefly reviewed. Next, financial data relating to local authority leisure, recreation and sport provision is discussed so as to enable the reader to situate the services under study in their wider context. Finally, concluding remarks provide an overview of the issues at the end of the chapter.

2.1 Defining sport and recreation and leisure

Several authors (e.g. Caillois 1961; Huizinga 1972; Guttman 1978) have advanced their own definitions of sport; as there is a great deal of commonality and overlap between these, for brevity the synthesis put forward by Haywood, Kew and Bramham (1994: 42) is utilised here.

To conform to their definition sports must:

- "involve a symbolic test of physical or psycho-motor skills;
- there must be competitive framework; which requires:
- specific, codified rules which constitute the activity;
- there must be continuity over time - a tradition of past practices.

In combination, these necessary characteristics are sufficient for an activity to be called a sport...The utility of this approach is that it allows for a distinction between sport proper, and related areas of activity like games, pastimes, recreations and other play forms."

As Haywood et al go on to point out, this definition excludes activities such as jogging, fox-hunting or body-building, because they do not take a *form* that meets all the criteria for sport. On the other hand there are many sports forms which are frequently practised outside a competitive framework, and thus, in these circumstances, require no rules and involve no symbolic test. Swimming, for example, is more usually part of play with water than serious

competition; football is frequently a non-competitive 'knock-about'. Thus the social *context* of a particular form can determine if should be regarded as 'sport' or as 'recreation'.

Recreation, with its Latin root of "restoration to health" has strong overtones of purposive use of leisure time. However, writers such as Gray and Pelegrino (1973) have stressed the internalised psychological or emotional processes involved. For the purposes of this thesis, the direction set by Haywood et al (1994: 37) will be followed. Recreation is regarded as involving out-of-home leisure experiences in which the participant has a role in the active production of the experience, and hence a considerable measure of control over the outcome. This distinguishes it from other leisure activities, such as shopping or gambling, in which the dominant mode is consumption. In the usage developed by Haywood et al recreation includes sports, the arts and countryside recreation. The usage made here is of recreation as physical recreation, i.e. recreation with a prominent motor or psycho-motor element.

Although unitary definitions of both sport and recreation are possible, the term "leisure" is used in so many different ways, that a convincing single definition is not possible. Four distinct conceptions of leisure are identified by Haywood et al (op.cit.). First, leisure is frequently considered as "residual time", that is time left over when paid and unpaid work is done. Second, certain activities of a playful or recreational nature which people choose to do, are also considered as leisure. Third, leisure is often seen as having a social function, as being a means to some end, in the sense that recreation derives from the notion of re-creating oneself for working life. Fourth, leisure is also seen as freedom, a time when one can choose to develop towards self-actualisation. All these definitions have their own strengths and weaknesses and these authors conclude that no overarching definition is helpful. Rather, one must bear in mind these different dimensions of leisure and bring forward the appropriate one for any particular context.

2.2 Socio-economic significance

Having sought definitions of the key terms of sport, recreation and leisure, below the socio-economic significance of sport is investigated.

2.2.0 Sports and recreation participation

Information from the General Household Survey (GHS) is frequently used to indicate the extent of sporting participation. The GHS has the advantage of a large, randomised sample (nearly 20, 000 people), against which must be set the disadvantage that questions about sports participation are included only once every three years, and the delay (one to two years) between data collection and publication of the analysis. Although the GHS has

generated useful time-series data, comparability before 1987 is rendered more difficult by a change in the way of asking questions about sports participation. Under 16s are also not included in the survey. Another issue with the GHS format is that of necessity it involves respondents remembering the number of instances of participation over quite a long period (four weeks). Veal (1992: 105) observes that very little research has been done to establish the reliability of such questionnaire-produced data. When Chase and Goodbye (1983) asked about tennis participation they found that respondents tended to greatly exaggerate (by as much as 100 per cent) the frequency with which they played.

The Sports Council concluded from the 1990 GHS (Office for National Statistics 1992) that:

"some 29 millions adults took part in sport and recreation at least once a month in 1990. This represents almost two-thirds of the adult population of Great Britain, showing an increase of 2 million since 1987 (Sports Council 1993: 2)."

However, this statement should be treated with caution since it includes walking for leisure purposes which is responsible for by far the greatest number of instances of participation (Sports Council 1993: 3). From the nature of the activities which are most popular according to the GHS, it seems likely that they are being practised in a context which, according to Haywood et al's definition (op.cit.), would lead to their classification as recreations rather than sport. Participation in sport *proper* is the preserve of a much smaller proportion of the population.

Generally, the GHS gives some support to points made in Chapter One. Growth in participation in sports/recreation is countryside and water based recreation, and health and fitness related activities (though this may now be reaching a plateau). Participation in more traditional sports is static or in decline, with the exception of soccer, which remains popular. The information in Table 2.1 below underscores some of these points.

Walking	45
Swimming	22
Snooker/billiards/pool	14
Keep fit/yoga/aerobics	13
Cycling	11
Darts	08
Golf	07
Running (jogging, cross-country, road)	05
Weight training/lifting	05
Soccer	05

Source: Sports Council (1993: 3)

These results may be compared with those of the more continuous technique adopted by the Henley Centre, which involves a sample of one thousand people tracking their use of time over a three-month period (i.e. four thousand over the year). Although the sample is much smaller than that used for the GHS, it is still a large one. The use of time-diaries reduces the reliance on memory and should minimise the possibility of exaggerated participation frequencies. This approach shows broadly similar participation data to that of the GHS:

Table 2.2: % participation on basis of participating at least once a quarter	
Taking a long walk for pleasure	52
Sports or leisure centre	31
Swimming	31
Playing an individual sport	17
Team sport playing	12
Fishing	05

Source: Henley Centre (1995: 4:29)

These figures suggest that, if one excludes walking for pleasure, sports/recreation participation is of middle order importance as an out-of-home leisure activity, considerably less popular than going to the pub (67%) but more popular than activities such as bingo (9%) or going to classical concert or opera (6%). However, the above figures include many instances of irregular participation, as the importance of sport and physical recreation diminishes when weekly participation patterns are examined:

Table 2.3: % participation on basis of participating at least once a week	
Billiards/snooker	10
Aerobics/yoga/keep fit (away from home)	09
Jogging or running	08
Darts	06

Source: Henley Centre (1995: 4:28)

These figures compare less favourably with other out-of-home activities such as going to the pub in the evening (44%) (two of the activities in the table above are often pub based) or going to a fast food restaurant (25%). In particular it is noticeable that participation in team sports, swimming or individual activities apart from aerobics etc. or jogging/running do not feature as they have less than 4% participation. Thus regular sports and physical recreation participation is a minority leisure habit.

In order to gauge the significance of this leisure habit, two other dimensions need to be measured, frequency of participation and duration of the activity. The figures in Table 2.4 below show that those who do take part, do so often with sports participation being amongst the most frequent of out-of-home activities.

The duration of activities is also important, not least because it is a well known phenomenon of facility management that spend per head rises with length of stay. The Henley Centre data suggests that sports participation, like other out-of-home leisure is of short duration (no such activity receives an average of more than 5 hours per week from those participating). The

Table 2.4: Activity average frequency of participation per quarter (of those participating)	
Darts	28.8
Billiards/snooker	25.2
Aerobics/yoga/keep fit	22.8
Individual sports	11.8
Team sports	09.2
Visited a sports centre	08.9
Swimming	08.0
Fishing	07.1

Source: Henley Centre (1995: 4:31-32)

figures in Table 2.5, estimated from the GHS, shows some of the most popular activities in the form of activity days:

Table 2.5: Participation in active sport and recreation 1995	
<i>Adults taking part in:</i>	<i>millions</i>
Active indoor sports	18.1
Active outdoor sports	26.9
<i>Activity days in UK:</i>	<i>millions</i>
Walking	1991
Swimming	431
Athletics	183
Keep Fit, Yoga	673
Snooker	316
Darts	130

Source: Leisure Consultants 1996: 30

Thus a picture emerges of sports and recreation participation as something that a sizeable minority of the population engage in irregularly. A relatively small part of the population participate regularly, and they do so frequently, albeit that the duration of participation is small when compared against in-home leisure activities. Never-the-less the frequency of this activity is sufficient to generate a sizeable number of instances of participation. The nature of some of the most popular activities, and the social context in which activities are practised implies that many of the instances of participation are likely to be properly classified as recreation, rather than as sport.

2.2.1 Sports and recreation spectating

When examined on a quarterly basis, the incidence of sports spectating appears not dissimilar from that of participation (Table 2.6 below). However, Table 2.7 below shows that the frequencies of such spectator activity are quite low.

Table 2.6: % participation on basis of attending at least once a quarter in most popular quarter	
Spectator sports	24
Horse racing	03
Dog racing	01

Source: Henley Centre (1995: 4:29)

Table 2.7: % Activity average frequency of participation per quarter (of those participating)	
Spectator sports	3.7
Horse racing	2.7
Dog racing	1.1

Source: Henley Centre (1995: 4:29)

Thus attendance to watch live sports events is not as popular as taking part in sport or recreation, but never-the-less is of middle order importance as an out-of-home leisure activity, involving about a quarter of the population. In comparison with sports participation, frequency of attendance is low.

2.2.2 The size of the sport and recreation services sector of the economy

In this section the economic implications of participation and spectating are considered. It should be borne in mind that there is no simple relationship between these activities and economic or financial indicators as many instances of participation, spectating and some aspects of such instances are non-commodified and therefore do not figure in exchange relationships. It should also be noted that statistics about the sports and recreation economy are rarely collected in pure form, and that sampling studies and suppositions are required to model it.

The market for sports goods and services is ill-documented, partly due to its disparate nature. Official consumer spending figures draw on retail sales, but include toys, games and camping equipment. Sports clothing is put with other clothing, and sports services with other recreational and entertainment services. Expenditures on large ticket items like boats, aircraft and bicycles are particularly difficult to identify. (Leisure Consultants 1996: 30)

The most comprehensive investigation into the place of sport and recreation in the UK economy was published by the Henley Centre in 1992. Using the National Income method of accounting, they calculated that the contribution of sport through output value-added in 1990 was £8.27bn or 1.7% of GDP. They produced the sectoral breakdown shown in Table 2.8.

These figures demonstrate several points about the place of sport within the economy. First, the economic role of sport is considerable; second much of the value added through it is from outside the sports sector (e.g. through the provision of goods and services to sport from outside the sports sector); third, the commercial sectors are responsible for over two-thirds of

the value-added. At least in economic terms (though not necessarily in participation or social terms) the contribution of the voluntary and public sectors is relatively minor.

Table 2.8: Value-added (£bn.) by sport and related economic activity: by sector	
<u>Commercial Sport</u>	
Wages	1.06
Surplus	0.71
Total	<u>1.77</u>
<u>Voluntary Sector</u>	
Wages	0.58
Surplus	0.25
Total	<u>0.83</u>
<u>Commercial non-sport</u>	
Wages	3.66
Surplus	1.33
Total	<u>4.99</u>
<u>Central Government</u>	
Wages	0.02
<u>Local Government</u>	
Wages (education)	0.32
Wages (sports facilities)	0.28
Wages (transport and police)	0.06
Total	<u>0.66</u>
TOTAL Value-added	<u>8.27</u>

Source: Henley Centre (1992: 20)

These figures include value added in respect of both commodities and services. They are not separated in the 1992 study, although the Henley Centre routinely do so for their analysis in *Leisure Futures*. In 1995 they calculated consumer expenditure upon sports goods, clothing and services to be £8.309bn, with sports services accounting for £3.218bn. (Henley Centre 1995: 4:95). Leisure Consultants use an alternative calculation and counting procedure, based on the Business Monitor data for goods and the Family Expenditure Survey for services. This brings in very different figures for goods, but roughly similar ones for services (Table 2.9 below).

Table 2.9: Consumer spending on sport 1995 (£m)	
<i>Sports goods:</i>	
Sports equipment*	546
Sports clothing/footwear*	1072
Boating	604
<i>Sports services for active sport*</i>	2395
Sub-Total active sports	<u>4616</u>
<i>Spectator sports</i>	488
Total sports services	<u>2883</u>
<i>*Excluding Boating</i>	

Source: based on Leisure Consultants 1996: 26,30

Both the Henley Centre and Leisure Consultants aim to document consumer expenditure and to exclude business-to-business sports services. The difference between their figures is purely accounted for by definitions of sport and recreation, and by differences in methods used to model the sports economy (Table 2.10 below). An interview with the Henley Centre suggested that the wide variation in figures for sports goods is largely due to a difference in approach to large ticket items such as light aircraft. Henley Centre tends to include them, whereas as Leisure Consultants aim to exclude these items from their figures.

Item	£bn	% of all spend	% of all leisure spend
All leisure	125.6	27.3	100.0
All away from home leisure	92.3	20.1	73.5
Active sports (goods and services)	4.6	1.0	3.7
Sports services	2.9	0.6	2.3

Source: based on Leisure Consultants 1996: 50-51

Employment statistics are harder to ascertain, as an even greater mix of methodologies is required in order to arrive at a figure for a classification not recorded in the official employment statistics. One estimate for the number of jobs directly supported by sport is 262,000 (Henley Centre 1992); however, this figure also includes those working in the manufacture and retail of sports goods.

Whereas much of the leisure services sector is dominated by large commercial concerns (e.g. tourism, entertainment, gambling and hospitality) this is not the case in respect of sports and recreation services. They remain particularly heterogeneous with only a limited impact of organisations operating a large number of service outlets. A conspicuous feature is the role of voluntary and public sector bodies in the provision of services (Henley Centre 1992; Coalter 1990-b).

2.3 Public sector sport and recreation services

Many parts of the public sector are involved in the provision of sports and recreation services of one kind or another. The four national Sports Councils provide National Sports Centres, designed as centres of sporting excellence. Schools, the adult/community education sector, Further Education and Higher Education institutions are all active providers of sporting opportunity. The military, police and prison service have a long tradition of physical training and provision of sports facilities (which are not generally intended, or available for, public use). Of the public sector bodies, local authorities are the most prominent players in the provision of sports and recreation opportunities to the public. Their

net expenditure upon these services is far greater than the rest of the public sector put together.

Of the £1.55 bn. net of leisure revenue expenditure by local authorities in England and Wales according to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) some two-thirds is allocated to sports and recreation expenditure. They give the following breakdown of the total capital and revenue expenditure on leisure services (Table 2.11):

	£m (net)	% of leisure spend
<i>Sport and recreation</i>		
<i>Indoor</i>	437.2	28.2
<i>Outdoor</i>	517.2	33.3
Total Sport and Recreation	954.4	61.5
Arts Activities and Facilities	214.2	13.8
Grants and contributions	67.7	4.4
Other recreation & leisure	314.7	20.3
Total Leisure Spend	1551.0	100.0
Capital Accounting Costs	386.3	

Source: CIPFA 1997-a: 5

Once again, however, it is necessary to be cautious with these figures. The CIPFA definition of outdoor sport and recreation includes urban parks and open spaces, and it fair to assume that most use of such space is for non-sporting leisure purposes. Since parks and open spaces consume a considerable spend, the proportion of revenue spend on sport and recreation as defined for the purposes of this thesis is more correctly shown in the Table 2.12 below.

All local authorities in England and Wales		
	£m	%
<i>Sport and Recreation</i>		
<i>Indoor</i>		
Swimming Pools, Sports Halls, Leisure Centres	373.614	24.3
Community Centres, Public Halls	63.548	4.1
<i>Outdoor</i>		
Sports Facilities	41.245	2.7
Golf Courses	-9.029	-0.6
Sports Development	38.342	2.5
Total Sport and Recreation	507.72	33.0
Urban Parks and Open Spaces	484.976	31.6
Arts Activities and Facilities	214.242	13.9
Other Recreation and Leisure	314.743	20.5

Source: Based on CIPFA (1997-a:5)

Even with this adjustment, the services which form the focus of this research account for some £½ billion net annually, excluding capital accounting costs. This net expenditure on sport and recreation services can be further analysed as follows in Table 2.13:

Table 2.13: Income and expenditure on Sport and Recreation Services 1997/98					
All Local Authorities in England and Wales					
	Swimming Pools, Sports Halls & Leisure Centres	Community Centres & Public Halls	Outdoor Sports & Sport development	Golf	Total
Total Expenditure	529.39	87.83	100.13	24.66	742.01
<i>Income</i>					
Surplus on contracts	10.01	0.23	1.06	2.96	14.25
Other Income*	145.77	24.05	19.49	30.73	220.04
Total Income	155.77	24.28	20.54	33.69	234.29
<i>Net Expenditure</i>	373.61	63.55	79.59	-9.03	507.72

* Includes Fees and Charges, Receipts from other authorities and services, Sales and other income.

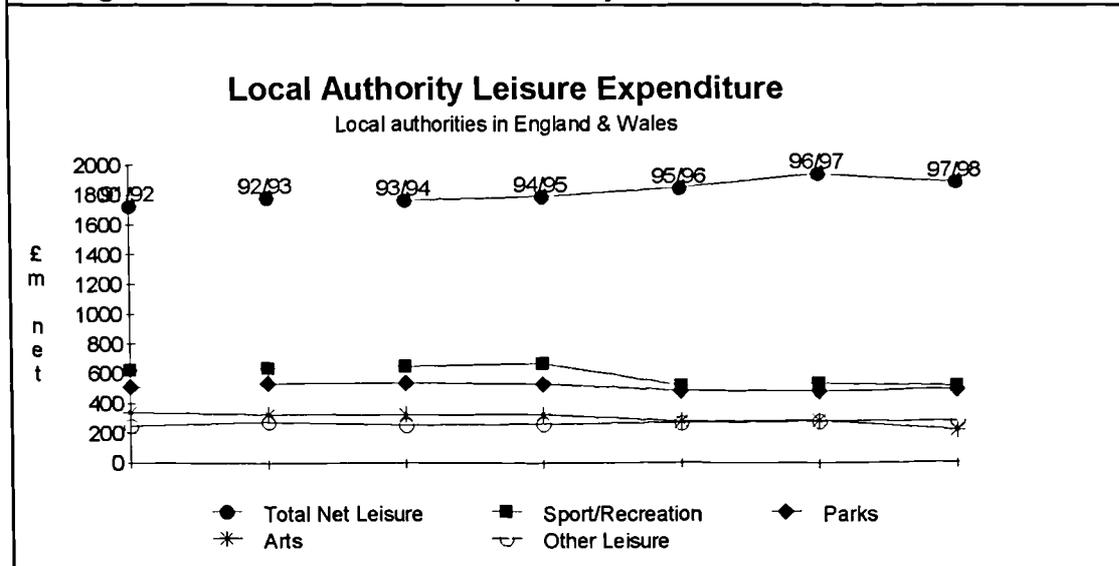
Source: Based on Cipfa (1997-a: 80-85)

The relative ease of gathering information about local authority activities, compared to the difficulties of the disparate commercial and voluntary sectors, gives them a high profile in the recreation management literature (for example see Cooke 1994 or Torkildsen 1993). However, in terms of consumer expenditure, the above analysis highlights the comparatively minor role they play within sports services: of a total UK consumer spend of around £2.3 bn. (Table 2.10 above), only some £220m is for local authority sports services in England and Wales (Table 2.12 above). In spite of increases in charges in recent years¹, the recovery rate on non-capital expenditure remains low at about 32% overall (from Table 2.13 above) and the consequent high level of subsidy imply a considerable public policy significance for these local authority services.

In recent years spending by local authorities on all leisure, including sport and recreation, has been static, or in decline in real terms, as is highlighted by the following chart (Figure 2.2).

¹Between 1990/91 and 1997/98 the index of local authority leisure services charges rose from 100 in April 1990 to 146.7, against an increase in the Retail Price Index from 100 to 124.9 over the same period (Source: Cipfa 1997-b).

Figure 2.1: Estimated net leisure spend by local authorities 1991/92 - 1997/98



Source: *Cipfa Leisure and Recreation Estimates: 1991/92 - 1997/98*

Thus the current situation stands in contrast to that of the 1970s and much of the 1980s, when local authority spending on leisure grew substantially. In sport and recreation financial pressures are also apparent from the spending figures set out in Table 2:14.

2.4 Concluding remarks

This Chapter has sought to define sport, recreation and leisure in order to clarify discussion within the thesis. Sport is narrowly defined as involving some kind of physical test, within a competitive framework governed by specific rules or codes, and with continuity over time. Recreation is to be understood as physical recreation, activities away-from-home in which the participant has a role in actively producing the experience. Leisure is understood as time in which the individual is free from the demands of domestic and paid work, thus being relatively free to use it as s/he wishes.

About two-thirds of the population can be understood as taking part in recreation; the figures for sports participation are considerably lower. Sports participation is a minority interest, but the frequency of participation generates a sizeable number of instances of participation from its adherents.

Table 2.14: Local Authority Expenditure on Sport and Recreation Services 1992-97

All local authorities in England and Wales						
	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98
	£m					
<i>Sport and Recreation</i>						
<i>Indoor</i>						
Swimming Pools*	131.762	118.957	119.825	98.013	103.531	
Sports Halls & Leisure Centres with Pools*	284.263	287.361	288.775	210.426	209.516	
Sports Halls & Leisure Centres without Pools*	91.414	83.03	91.016	65.129	79.103	373.614
Community Centres, Public Halls	80.163	78.536	82.432	67.521	64.863	63.548
<i>Outdoor</i>						
Sports Facilities	62.693	64.399	69.246	53.138	49.926	41.245
Golf Courses	-9.492	-10.595	-10.365	-11.245	-8.688	-9.029
Sports Development		26.813	27.083	30.827	35.004	38.342
Total Sport and Recreation	640.803	648.501	668.012	513.809	533.255	507.72
Urban Parks and Open Spaces	538.355	537.475	530.358	480.35	480.25	484.976
Arts Activities and Facilities	325.708	323.172	325.317	277.017	282.509	214.242
Other Recreation and Leisure	276.446	252.962	262.251	265.579	279.353	276.371
Grossed Total	1781.312	1762.11	1785.938	1839.252	1933.291	1869.579
Capital Accounting Costs**				302.497	357.924	386.27
* Not separately accounted in 1997/98						
* *Included in Grossed Total until 1995/96						

Source: *Cipfa Leisure and Recreation Estimates 1991-95*

Sport now accounts for about 1.7% of GDP, and sports services alone account for £3bn. per annum of consumer expenditure. Most of the economic activity is generated by the commercial sector; never-the-less it is clear the public sector also plays an important role, with local authorities being the biggest suppliers of services within the public sector. They have developed a considerable portfolio of sports and recreation facilities; in England and Wales they spend more than £0.5bn. net on providing sports services.

Chapter Three

Operations management and the quality movement

Summary

This chapter reviews the main tenets of the quality movement, analysing their relationship with the subject of operations management. Particular attention is paid to four developments in quality management thought: Total Quality Management, the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) European Quality Award (EQA) quality model, the International Standards Organisation Quality Systems Standards (ISO 9000 series) and the United Kingdom Investors in People standard (IIP).

Several characteristics of operations management and the quality movement are discussed:

- First, the heritage is based upon the challenges for commercial business in producing manufactured goods, with these paradigms still dominating contemporary quality management thought. Although claims are sometimes made that these concepts can be applied with little or no modification to services or to the public sector, the specifics of these services, or the general relationship with the services management literature, are rarely considered.
- Second, over time the emphasis has moved from a narrow, internal focus on failure detection and prevention, towards a more customer-driven, holistic conception of quality which embraces all aspects of the organisation and its workforce. Innovation and quality improvement have now come more to the fore. The EFQM EQA model represents a conception of quality which relates not only to customers, but to all organisational stakeholders.
- Third, the continuing interest in quality in the commercial sector is driven by its relation to competitive advantage and business success; however, the research demonstrates that there is not a straight-forward relationship between quality improvement measures and business success.

Research indicates that organisations using the EFQM EQA model for self-assessment report it generally successful, but evaluation of ISO 9000 is more mixed, especially in hospitality services. Studies of the impact of IIP are favourable, but the congruence claimed between it and the "people" factors of the EFQM Model cannot be demonstrated.

3.0 Preamble

The previous chapter has discussed the contemporary significance of the services studied in this thesis. This chapter forms the first part of the review of the quality-related literature, dealing with studies flowing from the quality movement. This literature is grounded in commercial manufacturing organisations. Subsequent chapters will review the literature specifically on service quality, and on the quality of public sector services, including leisure and sport services. In Chapter Six the implications of the quality-related literature for the services under study will be considered.

Since the quality movement is largely based on concepts derived from operations management, it is appropriate to give consideration to these and the chapter opens with a discussion of operations management. The second section deals with the history of quality management thought, with the modern paradigm of Total Quality Management (TQM) forming the subsequent section. The European Quality Award is also reviewed in this section. The Chapter then moves on to review material on two quality standards at the heart

of the research for the thesis; the fourth section discusses ISO 9000, and the fifth Investors in People. Finally, concluding remarks complete the chapter.

3.1 Operations Management

It was the industrial revolution which ushered in the systematic study of work processes. Bennett et al (1988: 3) argue that the move from low volume/ high variety to high volume/ low variety production was the essential dynamic for the development of production management, the forerunner of operations management. A contemporary feature, with which operations management is concerned, is the move to high volume/ high variety production, under the impact of modern information technologies. Adam Smith (1776) foresaw that the division of labour, allied to mechanisation of production would enable much greater productivity to be released. Although a number of nineteenth century pioneers, including Babbage, argued for the scientific study of work processes and organisation, it was not until Taylor (1911) developed "Scientific Management" that these ideas began to be influential. Work study was at the heart of Taylor's approach to management, and although his overall approach ran into difficulties amidst labour troubles and Congressional Inquiry, his concept of work study has continued to exert an influence upon the study of work processes. A view of operations management as efficiency management can be seen as an inheritance from Taylor.

Manufacturing made very great progress during and after the Second World War, with many of the new products having much greater orders of complexity than in previous epochs. The young discipline of Production Management found that gains from Tayloristic concentration upon efficiency of the sub-systems were lost elsewhere in the organisational system (e.g. Simon 1962). This heralded a move towards the now dominant systems view of organisation derived from the work of von Bertalanffy (1956). A paradigm of organisations as open systems is not unique to operations management, for example the "Contingency theorists", most notably Woodward (1965), have been greatly influenced by the sociotechnical systems concept developed by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations (Morgan 1986: 44). Thus there has been opportunity for interchange with other management approaches as operations management has developed.

The origins of operations management lie in the quantitatively based production management which emerged from the Second World War. As the discipline spread to include design and all other aspects of the product cycle, the terminology of operations seemed more appropriate. A number of definitions of the subject have been attempted, a concise version of Wild's (1977) earlier definition (see below) being provided by Johnston et al (1993: 5):

"Operations management is concerned with the design, planning, operation and control of the use of resources to produce goods and services for customers."

Johnston and his co-authors go on to point out the central problem facing operations managers:

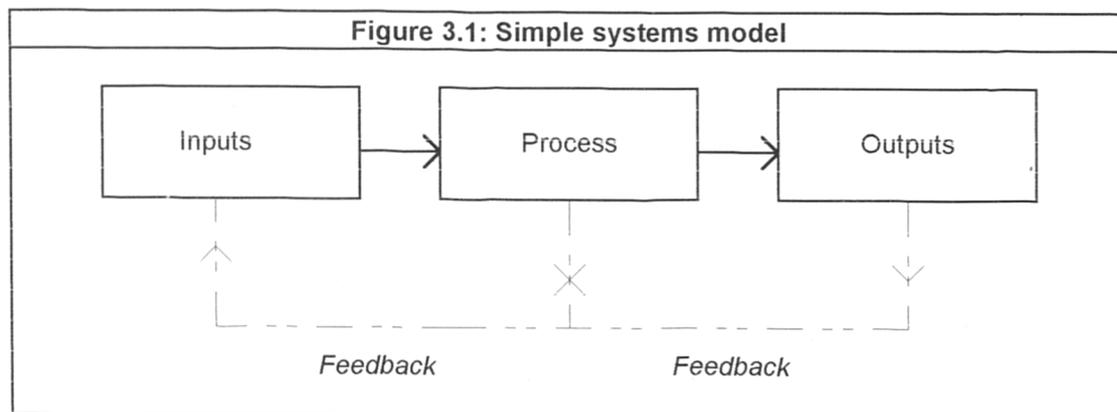
"The dilemma, or challenge, facing operations managers is how, with limited resources, to try to meet the needs of their customers in the most cost-effective way."

In a discipline concerned with efficiency and effectiveness, it is not surprising to find strong echoes of "Scientific Management". However, since the 1950s the influence of systems theories has been the predominant trend. Thus an organisational system represented in simple form below (Fig. 3.1) underpins much of operations management. Wild (1977: 4) defines an operating system as:

"a configuration of resources combined for the provision of goods or services"

He goes on to underline the centrality of the systems concept to the subject by including it in his definition:

"...operations management is the design and planning, operation and control of operating systems" (Wild 1977: 4).



Source: Adapted from Wild 1977: 26-28

Wild (1977: 25-42) was one of the first to draw attention to key features of what is now often referred to as the transformation model (e.g. Slack et al 1995: 11) which forms the basis for the consideration of operations both on a macro and micro scale (Slack et al 1995: 20, 83). Macro operations are usually contained within a single organisation, transferring inputs and outputs between the organisation and its environment, usually with many transformation processes having taken place. Micro operations usually consist of single or simple transformation processes which, whilst they may exchange inputs or outputs with the organisational environment, also make exchanges with other micro operations within the organisation.

These concepts lead on to that of the operations network (ibid.: 195 - 236). On the supply side the organisation has suppliers which supply it, but these will also have their own suppliers and so on. Thus the organisation may be said to have a supply network. Similarly,

the organisation will have first-tier customers for its outputs (e.g. wholesalers), but there may well be second (e.g. retailers) or third-tier customers (e.g. the consumer) who receive these outputs indirectly. Similar relationships can be said to exist within the organisation between different micro-operations. Thus the transformation model inevitably gives rise to the notion of internal suppliers and customers which is one of the cornerstones of Total Quality Management (see below).

Because the efficiency of transformation processes is affected by environmental change, the traditional approach to operations management involved buffering the operation from the environment (Slack et al 1995: 23-26). This may be done through physical buffering, for example by holding an inventory of raw materials or components, or a stock of finished goods. In services input buffering can be achieved through making the customer queue, although output buffering of the service itself (as opposed to any tangibles used in the service) is not possible owing to the inseparability of service production and consumption. These points are discussed in the next chapter.

Operations may also be buffered organisationally through "allocating the responsibilities of the various functions in the organization so that the operations function is protected from the external environment" (Slack et al 1995: 23). Once again, this is only partially possible within services, particularly services which process customers (e.g. Wild 1977: 43-54) rather than things, because the customer exists within the transformation processes.

However, contemporary operations management thought has moved in the direction of removing buffers between operations and the environment, partly under influence of Japanese quality management thinking (Shonburger 1990).

3.2 The development of quality management thought

The production management/ operations management discipline has provided much of the context for the development of the quality movement. As Slack et al (1995: 684) suggest, one can interpret this as the "operation's view" of quality. The development of this view has been rehearsed in many different texts. As Morrison (1990: 25) points out, there have been "three theatres for the development of quality assurance (*sic*) in the twentieth century: Europe, America and Japan". Garvin (1988: 3) suggests that the first quality management era was that of inspection, which arose through developments in production in Europe and the USA. The First World War was the first international conflict using industrialised weaponry; military requirements led to a greater interest in quality inspection in mass produced items. In the United Kingdom the forerunner of the Institute of Quality Assurance, the Technical Inspection Association, was formed. Similar progress was made in the United

States of America and by the 1930s strides were being made in the development of Quality Control, particularly through Statistical Process Control (Shewhart 1931). The 1930s also saw the first standard on quality control published by the British Standards Institute (BSI) (Morrison 1990: 25).

In the period immediately preceding and during the Second World War significant progress was made in the USA in developing a more comprehensive approach to quality control (Garvin 1988: 6, Bounds et al 1994: 53), and quality control was an established discipline by the late 1940s. "However, its methods remained largely inspection-based applications on the factory floor" (Bounds et al 1994: 56). The same authors follow Garvin (op.cit.) in describing the late 1950s and early 1960s as bringing the "Quality Assurance Era" which was concerned not only with quality control, but also with co-ordination with other aspects of the firm, particularly with design, engineering, planning and service activities. Four aspects of this discourse may be identified: the costs of quality (Juran 1951, Fiegenbaum 1956), total quality control (Fiegenbaum 1956), reliability engineering (Boehm 1963; Budne 1982; Juran 1974: 22-27) and zero defects programmes (Crosby 1979). In Britain these concerns provided the background to the BSI adopting Ministry of Defence procurement standards as BS 5719 in 1974, as a guide to Quality Assurance Systems (Bell et al 1994: 16). Further development of this guide standard led to the publication, in 1979, of the first British Standard for Quality Systems, BS 5750. In 1987 the standard was aligned with a series of standards on Quality Systems published by the International Standards Organisation as the ISO 9000 series. The content and application of the Standard is discussed later in this chapter.

However, it was in post-war Japan that many ideas which had developed in the USA in the context of military procurement, found implementation for civilian purposes. Courses for industrialists and top managers run by the Americans Deming and Juran, found a ready audience. It is clear that over several decades, quality has continued to be the central issue in Japanese industrial education and management (Hopper 1985), as reflected in the prestige conferred by the Deming prize, initiated in 1951 for progress in quality management (Logothetis 1992: 28). In particular, through Deming the Japanese have become associated with major developments of Shewhart's notions of continuous improvement (Bounds et al 1995: 54-55), particularly with the four-stage Shewhart/ Deming Cycle (Plan-Do-Study-Act). The contributions made by the Japanese are many and varied but include the following points: first, involving the whole workforce in improvement activity through the spirit of *kaizen*¹ (Imai 1986), as represented, for example, in the innovation of Quality Circles (Garvin

¹ Logothetis (1992: 19) identifies *kaizen* as the "step-by-step gradual improvement in the nature of refinements or enhancements, doing little things better, continuously setting and

1988: 188-190). The second point is promotion of the quality significance of managing the whole operations network (e.g. see Garvin 1988: 190-192, 209-211; Carr and Truesdale 1992). Third, is the exploration of the means of de-buffering the operations function, particularly through the introduction of Just-in-time (Bicheno 1991, Harrison 1992, Voss 1987). The fourth point is the demonstration of the Juran/ Deming principles that concentration on process can both improve quality and lower costs through the reduction of waste (Garvin 200-215). These principles are also evident in Total Quality Management (TQM), which as some authors (e.g. Bounds et al 1994: 61) suggest, is partially a translation back to the West of some of the quality advances made by the Japanese.

The current era has been described as one of Strategic Quality Management (Garvin 1988: 21-38; Bounds et al 1995: 60) in which top managers view quality positively as a source of competitive advantage, and place it at the heart of strategic planning processes. At the core of this era is the TQM concept. Later in this chapter TQM and its application will be discussed in more detail, but it is appropriate here to give an overview. TQM has been defined in various ways:

"The management philosophy and practices that aims to harness the human and material resources of an organisation in the most effective way to achieve the objectives of the organisation" (BSI 1992).

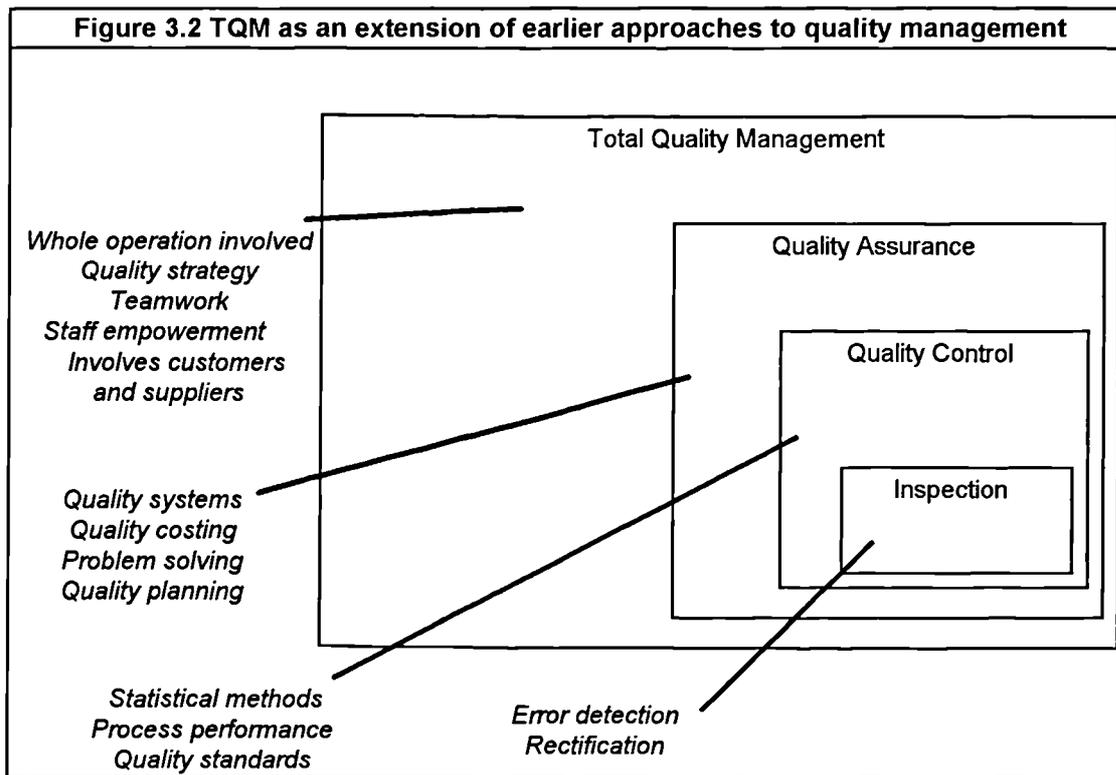
"(A) management approach of an organisation, centred on quality, based on the long-term success through customer satisfaction, and benefits to all members of the organisation and society" (ISO 1995).

"TQM is an approach to improving the competitiveness, effectiveness and flexibility of a whole organization. It is essentially a way of planning, organizing and understanding each activity, and depends on each individual at each level" (Oakland 1995: 18).

Hoyle (1994: 12) suggests that what is known as quality management can be understood as being formed of the three elements of quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement. Quality control is the operational requirements and activities that are used to fulfil requirements for quality (ISO 1994), in the sense of maintaining rather than devising, performance standards. Quality assurance is all those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that an entity will fulfil requirements for quality (ibid.). Quality improvement can be defined as the actions taken throughout the organisation to increase the effectiveness of activities and processes to provide added benefits both to the organisation and its customers (ibid.). The evolution of the quality management discourse can also be understood as an expansion from the early focus on detecting errors through inspection, towards a more systematic and statistically based quality control process,

achieving ever-higher standards...". Imai (1986) maintains that this is as important as innovation in achieving quality products and competitive advantage.

then focusing upon quality systems, and in the contemporary era, the more holistic approach of TQM. This point is made in Figure 3.2 below redrawn from Slack et al (1995: 817).

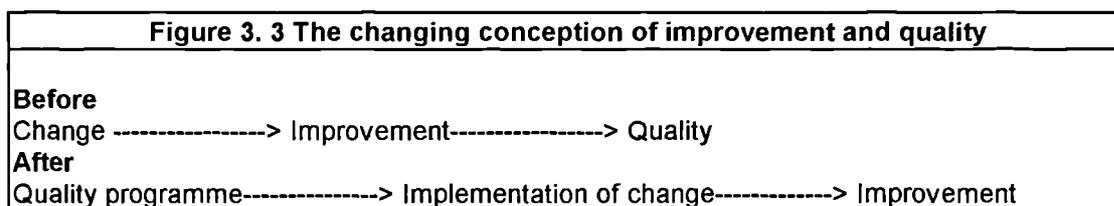


Source: Slack et al (1995)

Deming popularised Shewhart's notion of continuous improvement; the Japanese operationalised it through *kaizen*, and it forms a crucial component of the TQM approach (Logothetis 1992: 101). On the other hand, a more recent development, Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) (Hammer and Champy 1993) which seeks change generally in productivity management and not just in quality management, stresses a dramatic overhaul of operations, in some ways akin to Juran's universal breakthrough sequence (Juran 1992: 17). Armistead (1995) has suggested that TQM and BPR come together in the paradigm of Business Process Improvement which is at the heart of the European Foundation for Quality Management Awards scheme. This, he suggests, is of particular importance to services because it gives a central place to service processes, suggesting a service process alternative to management by business function.

Although quality management practices have been transmitted and transferred around the globe, some authors report continuing differences between countries in terms of the quality elements to which they give prominence. The work of Tomlinson et al (1991), for example, suggests that European and American managers see customers (closely followed by shareholders) as the most important interest groups; Japanese managers gave more weight to employees and the public at large. These considerations impact on the direction and timescale given to quality programmes. Hermel (1997) recorded significant differences

between the USA and Europe in how the quality movement had developed in the 1980s and 1990s. Whereas the former had responded to the problems of the, sometimes superficial, quality programmes of the 1980s by moving towards BPR, the latter had tried to reorientate their quality programmes in order to address the more fundamental issues. He suggests that the understanding of the place of quality programmes has changed in Europe between the two decades (Figure 3.3 below). Quality is no longer seen as a permanent improvement, rather quality programmes are intended to help positive changes which will lead to ongoing improvement.



Source: Hermel 1997: 137

"Companies' change processes are like icebergs: they have a very small visible part (the strategic, structural and technological aspects) and a large hidden part (the values, perceptions and implicit paradigms)...For historical reasons, European (and especially French) companies seem more inclined to take into account the 'hidden part' of TQM, while American organizations remain mainly attached to direct, transparent and fast-moving systems. That is the reason why the recent programmes of re-engineering translate, without making it obvious, a new approach, 'American', to total quality. Therefore, there is without doubt space for a European model of management, distinct from the classic American foundations" (Hermel 1997: 142).

The preceding review of the development of quality management thought has covered a time span approaching one hundred years, and the three theatres of the USA, Europe and Japan. It is not surprising that different definitions of, and perspectives on, quality should have grown up during this period. Garvin's (1988: 40-46) analysis of the five definitions of quality apparent in the literature is well known. The *transcendent* approach equates quality with innate excellence, in terms of the level of product or service provided. The *manufacturing-based* approach sees quality as providing products and services which are free of errors and conform to their design specification, as suggested by Crosby (1979). Both Juran (1974) and Deming (1982) pioneered the *user-based* approach which defines quality as fitness for purpose, thus bringing the design of the specification itself within the quality remit. The *product-based* definition suggests that there is a precise and measurable set of characteristics which are required to obtain customer satisfaction; quality involves meeting this set of characteristics. Finally, the *value-based* approach links the level of specification to what the customer is prepared to pay in terms of price, suggesting that the customer may trade-off price and specification level. Thus there may be a quality premium on reducing costs (and therefore price) as well as on raising specification level.

Garvin outlines the problems that can arise for organisations when different departments utilise different quality definitions, with (*sic*) marketing tending to think in terms of the user or product approaches, engineering utilising product-based approaches and manufacturing operations departments using the manufacturing-based approach (Garvin 1988: 46-48). He suggests that:

"...all the principal approaches share a common problem: Each is vague and imprecise when it comes to describing the basic elements of product quality" (ibid.: 48)

The above quotation highlights a difficulty in simply applying Garvin's work to the organisations under study. Although he generally refers to his definitions' applicability both to products and services, essentially his interest is in manufacturing organisations, and he does not consider the impact of the characteristics of services on quality management. The approaches to quality described by Garvin are quite different from the dominant approaches in the services management literature, and this issue will be addressed in the next chapter.

Similarly, the dimensions of quality disaggregated by Garvin (1988: 49-60) in order to give more definition to these approaches, overlap with those in the services literature, but are not identical to them. He lists these dimensions as:

- Performance
- Features
- Reliability
- Conformance
- Durability
- Serviceability
- Aesthetics
- Perceived quality (Garvin 1988: 49-50)

The appropriateness for services of the eight dimensions he suggests are considered below.

Garvin distinguishes the "primary operating characteristics of a product", which he refers to as "performance", from "features" which are the "secondary characteristics that supplement the product's basic functioning". He points out that whilst one can rank products on individual aspects of performance, overall rankings are much more difficult to establish, because the appeal to the customer needs to be considered. The heterogeneity of customer demand can also make it difficult to establish equivalence between performance, features and quality. In services, it is much more difficult to establish primary and secondary characteristics, because of the heightened role of customer perceptions. However, considerable use is made in the services literature of models which set up 'levels' of product or service offering (e.g. Sasser et al 1978, Levitt 1981, Grönroos 1984, Kotler and Andreasen 1991) and which are

reviewed in Chapter 4. Because of the inseparability of production and consumption in services, both the level of service and the way it is provided affect quality (e.g. Grönroos 1990, Parasuraman et al 1988).

For Garvin, reliability is the probability of the product failing within a given period of time. It is therefore generally a post-purchase issue for the customer. Reliability is a concept also found in the services literature, for example forming one of the dimensions measured by the SERVQUAL scale (Parasuraman et al 1988), although it is used in a somewhat different way to mean adherence to the service promise. In services, failure, and thus reliability are more likely to be issues before the service transaction (e.g. in gaining access to the service) or during the service itself, and thus the management implications such as service recovery (e.g. Albrecht and Zemke 1985, Grönroos 1990, Hart et al 1990) are considerably altered from the case of manufactured goods.

Garvin's fourth quality dimension is conformance, and he compares the "American" approach to this (meeting the specification), with the "Japanese" (meeting the target value). Conformance is also an issue in the services literature, although without the statistical overlay from SPC. For services, conformance to the standards set in the service specification is a major concern, for example featuring in the "Gap" model of service quality (Zeithaml et al 1990).

The fifth and sixth dimensions examined by Garvin, durability and serviceability respectively, have no meaning for services except in respect of any of the tangibles associated with the service. Thus they are not considered to any degree in the services literature.

The aesthetics of a product, how it "looks, feels, sounds, tastes or smells" form the seventh quality dimension (Garvin 1988: 59). Aesthetics is rarely discussed as such in the services literature, and is not cited as a quality dimension. Zeithaml and Bitner (1996: 423) point out that service aesthetics can be culturally determined. It also seems apparent that aesthetic considerations can play a part in the design of what Booms and Bitner (1981) refer to as the "physical evidence" (i.e. the front office tangibles).

The significance of the perceived quality dimension for products arises from the fact that consumers "do not always have complete information about a product's or service's (*sic*) attributes". They must therefore rely upon subjective assessments of image and reputation, and whether customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction results will depend on positive or negative perceptions of quality. This problem is much greater for services because service quality cannot be assessed pre-purchase. Much of the service quality literature follows

Grönroos (1982) in suggesting that perceived quality is *the* important element of quality and examines how customer expectations and perceptions of services arise (e.g. Zeithaml et al 1990, Bitner and Zeithaml 1996).

Having outlined the development of the quality movement and the range of issues it encompasses, we now move on to consider the motive for the ongoing organisational interest in this field. It is apparent from the quality literature that the rationale for the interest of commerce in quality management is the prospect of securing or maintaining an advantageous competitive position. Gummesson (1990) has suggested that quality, productivity and profitability go together, proposing a cascade model to link better quality with increased profits (Gummesson 1992). Normann (1991) has suggested that, for service companies, quality and results are linked in "vicious circles" in which poor quality and poor results reinforce one another; similarly good quality and good results can be part of a "virtuous circle".

However, the relationship between quality measures, quality results and corporate financial health is difficult to substantiate. Buzzell and Gale (1987) found that companies that achieved the highest perceived quality rating were able to charge a higher price for their products and services. Although no similar study has been conducted for the services under study, results similar to Buzzell and Gale's were found by Walker and Salameh (1990) when they examined the hospitality industry. Also in the USA, the top scorers in the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award² have achieved improvement in critical performance measures (e.g. return on assets, market share) (US General Accounting Office 1991). However, a survey of firms that had installed quality manufacturing processes in the UK, found that 86% of firms that had done so had failed to realise any improvements in flexibility, quality, throughput time or delivery performance; 43% had not improved their competitive position (Department of Trade and Industry 1991). In the USA, the American Society for Quality Control (ASQC) found that only 28% of executives thought that their quality initiatives had increased their market share (Gallup 1989). Howe, Gaeddert and Howe (1992: 12) have concluded that the quality movement has taken on the characteristics of a social movement, and as such provides the framework for integrating quality into the firm, but does not provide a prescription. Many companies have gone wrong by concentrating upon internal processes rather than upon understanding the customer.

Redman and Snape (1995), reporting upon a survey of senior managers in the UK, noted that although quality management had made considerable progress, its development was

² See section 3.3.1 for a discussion of quality awards.

uneven, and there were concerns about its implementation and effects. It was significantly less common in construction, UK-owned, services and in public sector organisations than in foreign-owned manufacturing and production industries. Smaller organisations were also less likely to have a quality management approach, although they noted some evidence of catching up in this respect. These initiatives were predominately customer/ client driven, but led by senior management. Although moderate success was reported, particularly in raising staff awareness, improving customer satisfaction and reducing complaints, managers found it much more difficult to demonstrate impact on financial indicators, such as profitability or market share. To some extent this may be due to the relative youth of UK quality management practices, since it takes time for impacts to build up, on average about three years (Jackson 1990).

Having obtained an overview of the development of quality management thought, we now move on to consider some quality management approaches which are of particular relevance to this thesis. Because of the relative lack of literature concerning sports and recreation services, particular attention is paid to the more extensive literature on hospitality management (e.g. Callan (1992), Gilbert and Joshi (1992), Lockwood et al (1996), Pearce (1992). This because they are also predominately leisure services, which occupy a similar position on some of the classification schemes devised for services (see Chapter 4), and may also offer insights into the services under study.

3.3 Total Quality Management and the European Quality Award Model

3.3.0 TQM

According to Edvardsson et al (1994: 74) the use of the word 'Total' in TQM means that :

"it is not a special department that is responsible for quality improvement; all staff at all levels are involved and it is all these people in co-operation who can develop the quality of production. The Japanese sometimes prefer the term 'company-wide quality control' (CWQC) in order to underline the fact that all staff are involved."

TQM can be understood as a move beyond a focus on internal production processes, with the focus upon the external customer as the source point for internal changes. The intention of TQM is to use external customer needs and wants as a means of driving all internal organisational processes and relationships, as well as organisational relationships with suppliers.

TQM identifies internal customer-supplier chains (e.g. Oakland 1995: 5-8) as the chief means of linking internal processes to external requirements. Similar chains are identified to link supplies with the external customer requirements, the operations network thus becoming a quality chain network. However, there is no fixed or static arrangement of chains or

interactions between links which might represent the ideal; continuous improvement is the only ideal. This approach has a number of consequences which are part of the TQM approach.

First, design both of products themselves, but more especially of the systems which create them, is a crucial and continuing management priority (e.g. Oakland 1995: 33-49); techniques such as Quality Function Deployment (e.g. Bounds et al 1994: 279-282; Oakland 1995: 35-41), have been developed to relate customer value to product and process design. Second, because of the huge scope of TQM in terms of meeting customer requirements, identifying quality costs, opportunities and priorities is of particular significance. Third, the involvement of the entire workforce requires total commitment from top management, rather than obviating the need for it (e.g. Deming 1992, Oakland 1995: 20). Fourth, the quality chains within the organisation, and the responsibility of employees for improving them, imply a development in marketing. Internal marketing is important not just to sell a product to staff so that they can better sell it to customers (e.g. Edvardsson et al 1994: 53), but to ensure that all employees become customer-conscious (e.g. Grönroos 1990). Fifth, this itself implies that top management have to be prepared to transform their organisational culture towards a quality culture (e.g. Oakland 1995: 22-24).

Slack et al (1995: 816) suggest that TQM embraces the following elements:

- meeting the needs and expectations of customers;
- covering all parts of the organization;
- including every person in the organization;
- examining all costs which are related to quality;
- getting things 'right first time', i.e. designing in quality rather than inspecting it in;
- developing the systems and procedures which support quality and improvement;
- developing a continuous process of improvement

However, there are some significant differences between those who have been prominent proponents of the quality movement and TQM, which illustrate the dangers in regarding the quality movement as holding to a homogeneous set of principles. In their analysis of the quality management "gurus", Ghobadian and Speller (1994) developed a framework for comparison which identified common factors. Three key factors highlighted differences between the gurus and the resultant chart is reproduced as Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1 Comparing the gurus - summary of approaches			
<u>Guru</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Emphasis</u>	<u>Dominant Factor</u>
Deming	Customer-led	Process	Control of variation
Juran	Customer-led	People	Fitness for purpose/ use
Crosby	Supply-led	Performance	Conformance requirements/ zero defects
Fiengenbaum	Customer-led	Process	Total quality control
Grocock	Value-led	Process	Chain of conformance
Ishikawa	Value-led	People	Company-wide quality control/ quality circles
Taguchi	Supply-led - value to society	Process/ design	Quality loss function

Source: Ghobadian and Speller (1994)

This analysis also confirms the comments made by some operations management specialists about the weaknesses of the quality movement (e.g. Garvin 1987; Chase and Aquilano 1989).

"While Deming, Juran, Crosby and others have been strong on what is broadly needed, including detailed techniques, they offer little guidance of immediate and direct value or relevance to organizations. It is difficult to connect the general quality concepts and ideas to these specific circumstances of an organization - to its markets, management practices and workforce. All the various approaches to quality, of the gurus or others, are appropriate, depending on the circumstances. It is important that organizations do not apply the methods suggested by the gurus rigidly and in a formulaic fashion. They do need to examine the methods and match them to the specific requirements of their organization (Ghobadian and Speller 1994: 68)."

The operations management based literature is not the only one which considers TQM. Legge (1995: 224) suggests that the literature takes three forms, the "managerialist" success stories, the balanced accounts of academics, and the hostile critiques of labour process theorists (contending that the way labour processes are organised reflects the power relationship of capital-labour antagonism in capitalism). Godfrey et al (1995: 558) suggest that contributions from the operations management field should belong in the second group, but all too often fall in the first category. These authors point out that in order to reconcile the human resources management literature on quality (e.g. Parker and Slaughter 1993; Marchington 1995; McArdle et al 1995; Roberts and Corcoran-Nantes 1995; Kerfoot and Knights 1995) a multi-disciplinary approach is needed.

Three observations can be made upon the above outline of the TQM literature. First, like the quality movement itself, TQM has come from a manufacturing context. Although some of the literature deals with service, this is usually in the context of the service elements of a manufactured good. Those writing from a services management perspective (e.g. Edvardsson et al 1994) imply that TQM needs to be adapted for the service sector, and

this issue will be discussed in Chapter Four. There is very little consideration of public sector service organisations in the mainstream TQM literature; however, the public sector management literature does include examination of TQM, this being reviewed in Chapter Five.

Second, TQM is a philosophy which must be adapted and customised to the organisation which seeks to embrace it. There is no set of standards or external criteria which the TQM organisation must meet. The emphasis is upon the organisation working from within to change, improve and develop. The problem with this is that it can be difficult for organisations to know how good or bad their processes and results are in relation to those of other organisations. Thus a quality literature has grown up around the subject of benchmarking (e.g. Slack et al 1995: 732-736) as a means of obtaining external comparisons. A related difficulty is that it can be difficult for organisations to know how far they have travelled on their "quality journey" and to obtain wider recognition for the progress they have made. One means of doing this is through quality awards, and attention to these is given in section 3.3.1 below.

The third point relates to the focus given by TQM to the customer. Wood (1997) has argued that the priority given to the customer in TQM has been a way of shifting attention from internal "absolute" criteria, which may not actually be relevant in the "outside world", towards external, but relative criteria. However, the literature does not problematise the concept of the customer and tends to cover up the various roles customers can play:

"There are three important (customer) activities here: deciding what to have, paying the money, and using, consuming or benefiting from the goods or services. These activities correspond to the three roles of the customer: decision-maker, provider of money and consumer/ user" (Wood 1997: 183).

It is not difficult to think of examples, particularly in the public sector, where these roles are played by different people or agencies. In these cases the notion of "the customer" can confuse rather than clarify. Moreover, the TQM focus on the customer ignores the interests of other stakeholders and other evaluation criteria (e.g. environmental impact). Wood (op.cit.) therefore argues that total quality programmes need to take account of all stakeholders; it is argued below that the European Quality Award, goes some way towards recognising this need and is thus a development upon TQM.

3.3.1 Quality Awards

In the USA the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) was set up in 1987 by the Department of Commerce to:

- promote awareness of quality as an increasingly important element in competitiveness,

- to improve the understanding of the requirements for quality excellence, and
- to foster sharing of information on successful quality strategies and the benefits derived from implementation of these strategies. (Reimann, C quoted in Bounds et al 1994: 23)

The Award has ten core values and concepts, which can be grouped into seven areas:

"(1) Strong customer focus; (2) effective hands-on leadership; (3) good systems for acquiring, analyzing and using information; (4) a strategic, long-range outlook toward quality; (5) focus on human resource development and excellence; (6) effective process management; and (7) focus on a variety of results indicators. Interestingly these requirements seemed equally valid for businesses and non-businesses, including health care organizations, government agencies and education organizations." (ibid.: 24).

There are three categories in which companies can compete for the award: manufacturing, service and small business (U.S. Department of Commerce Technology Administration 1994). Organisations assess themselves and submit applications to a Board of Examiners who then visit the applicants to evaluate the applications.

Although the MBNQA has been significant in North America (Bounds et al 1996: 26-28), in the United Kingdom an alternative Award model, the European Quality Award is coming to play an analogous role. The European Foundation for Quality Management was set up by several large European companies in 1988. In 1992 the Foundation started the European Quality Award (EQA). As few national companies operate upon a Europe-wide basis, and thus could not enter for the EQA, awards patterned upon it are offered by national quality bodies. In the UK the award is promoted as the UK Quality Award (UKQA) by the British Quality Foundation (BQF), a body established in 1992 with the following mission:

"To enhance the performance and effectiveness of all types of organisation within the United Kingdom through the promotion of Total Quality Management." (British Quality Foundation 1994-1: 1)

The BQF aims to encourage organisations to assess themselves against the EFQM model criteria, and, if they believe their own performance is sufficient, to then apply for judgement by a panel of Assessors. Decisions on Award winners are made by a "distinguished panel of independent jurors" (BQF 1994-2: 2). To receive an Award, "an applicant must demonstrate that their approach to Total Quality Management has contributed significantly to satisfying the expectations of customers, employees, shareholders and other stakeholders" (ibid.) the first awards were made in 1994, and in 1995 the Foundation opened the UK Awards to public and voluntary service organisations.

The BQF have developed six methods for organisations to conduct the self-assessment process (BQF 1994-2: 30-40), including that of utilising a questionnaire. For the

questionnaire method, details of the pro-forma questions, methodology of use and scoring have also been set out (BQF 1994-3).

The model on which the Award is based divides quality elements into those factors which enable quality to happen (quality enablers) and those which may be considered as aspects of quality performance (quality results). These factors are summarised in Table 3.2 below.

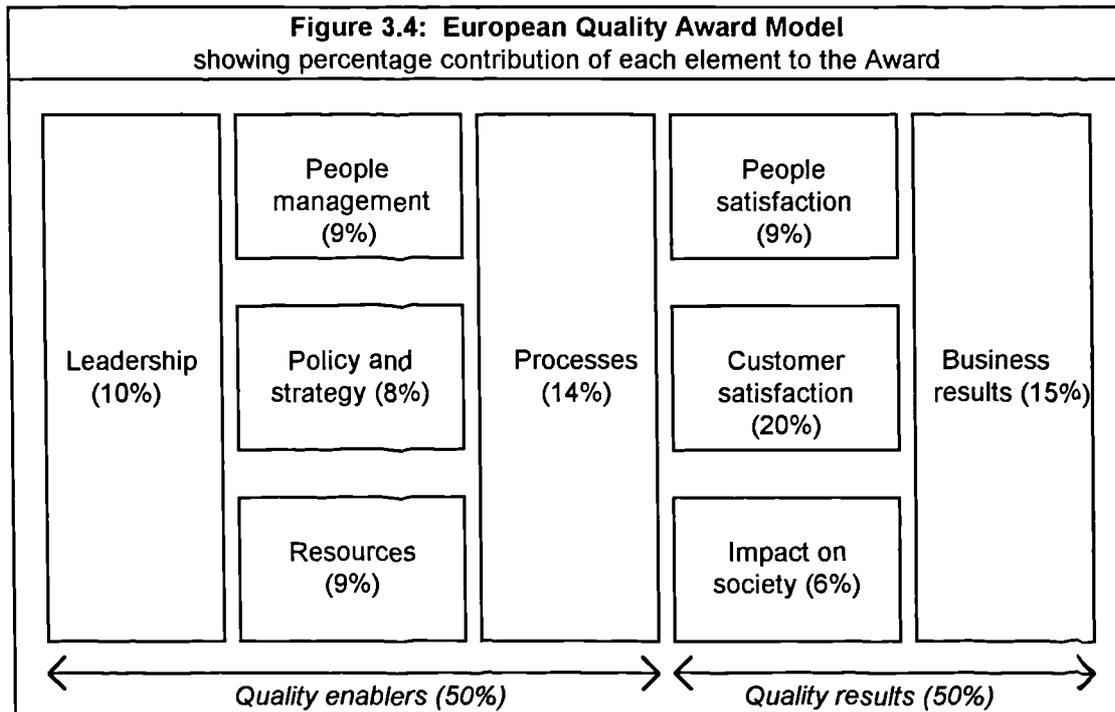
Table 3.2: EFQM Quality Factors	
Enablers	Results
Leadership explores the activities and the behaviour of all managers in driving the organisation towards Total Quality and their effort in striving for continuous improvement.	Customer Satisfaction evaluates what the organisation is achieving in relation to the to the satisfaction of its customers with respect to products, services and customer relationships.
Policy and Strategy examines how the organisation's planning activities, its aims and objectives reflect the drive for continuous improvement.	People Satisfaction evaluates what the employees feel about the organisation.
People Management examines how the organisation releases the full potential of its people, for example employees, to improve its business or service continuously.	Impact on Society evaluates the perception of the organisation amongst the community at large.
Resources examines how the organisation's finance, information, materials, suppliers and other resources are effectively managed.	Business Results assess what the organisation is achieving in relation to its planned performance.
Processes examines how all the value-adding activities within the organisation are managed and monitored to ensure the continuous improvement of business results.	

Source: BQF 1994-1: 9

The resulting quality model, shown in Figure 3.4, has some similarities with the MBNQA . The relationship of this EFQM quality model to the quality movement is discussed below, first in respect of the "quality enablers", then in respect of the "quality results".

The heritage of TQM can be clearly seen in most of the enablers. The significance of top management making a clear and ongoing commitment to quality as expressed in the "Leadership" and "Policy and Strategy" criteria (BQF 1994-2: 10-13) strongly reflects the work of the founders of the quality movement (e.g. Deming 1986: 24-28, 54-59) and the TQM paradigm (e.g. Oakland 1995: 18-32) who emphasised the critical role of top management commitment to organisational change. The "Resources" criterion (BQF 1994-2: 16-17) draws strongly upon the heritage of operations management (e.g. Slack et al 1995: 468-631), quality costing (e.g. Oakland 1995: 183-194) and the element of quality improvement within TQM. The "Processes" criterion clearly relates to the long-held axiom of

the quality movement, represented in TQM, that quality of processes and organisational arrangements has a fundamental bearing on product quality. The approach of EFQM (BQF 1994-3: 16) to this element is similar to that of ISO 9000, described later in this chapter.



Source: BQF-1: 8

The "People management" criterion represents a special contribution of TQM, that the involvement of all staff is necessary for a quality outcome (e.g. Oakland 1995: 26-27). Deming (1986) is often cited as one of the leaders who expanded quality management to embrace employee management; one of his "fourteen points" directly addresses this issue, and several of his other points touch upon it. Deming has a particular view on the methods which are appropriate to promote this involvement, evaluation of performance, merit rating or annual review forming one of his "deadly diseases" (Deming 1986: 101-120). However, the approach of the EFQM award includes a prominent element of personnel appraisal (BQF 1994-2: 14-15). The BQF also suggest that for public sector organisations, "application of 'Investors in People' principles will indicate progress in this area" (BQF 1994-2: 48); these principles are also discussed later in the chapter.

Similarly, the BQF does seem to encourage individual and team rewards for quality related effort. There is a strong view from the proponents of TQM that individual quality or results related rewards either contribute little or are harmful to quality (Crosby 1979; Deming 1986; Drummond and Chell 1992, Oakland 1993). Oakland (1993: 296) suggests that it may be possible to use financial incentives, as long as this is done in a way which avoids all focus on paying individuals by results. Most UK organisations seem to have operated some form of performance incentive alongside their quality programmes (Wilkinson et al 1996: 164), and

Snape et al (1996) found no evidence that use of performance appraisal and financial reward necessarily undermines TQM.

It should be noted that the TQM literature tends to speak of employee involvement, and what writers such as Deming (1986) include here is quite limited in scope, mainly associated with employees taking over quality control and work regulation from supervisors. On the other hand, the EFQM literature speaks of empowerment, which suggests a genuine shift of power towards employees (Sewell and Wilkinson 1992), for example in determining corporate strategy. According to Godfrey et al (1997: 564), the notion of empowerment has entered the quality literature from Peters (1987) and other "pop-management" writers who have oversimplified the issues involved. Study of both the TQM and EFQM literature shows that, despite the new language, what in fact is proposed is quite close to the employee involvement Deming had in mind.

Two of the "quality results" criteria have a clear heritage from the quality movement. The "Business results" criterion reflects the driving forces of the quality movement already discussed above, and the "Customer satisfaction" criterion reflects one of the traditional conceptions of quality (Garvin 1988) and the service quality literature. The "People satisfaction" criterion (BQF 1994-2: 22-23) represents an aspect of results not often stressed by the quality literature, in that measurement of success of the people management methods is not featured in the standard quality literature. Again, for public sector organisations, the BQF suggest that , application of 'Investors in People' principles will enable organisations to demonstrate progress in this area (BQF 1994-2: 49).

Lastly, the "Impact on society" criterion, has a weaker direct link with the quality movement and TQM, since generally quality movement figures have paid little attention to this aspect. However, Taguchi, one of the major Japanese figures within it, defines quality as:

"...the loss imparted to society from the time the product is shipped"
(Logothetis 1992: 17).

ISO 8402 also mentions benefits to society as a product of TQM (see ISO 1995, cited earlier). The EFQM's holistic approach encourages organisations to think about the social, environmental and financial impact of the quality of their work. The EFQM focus on this aspect may also reflect discourses on the Stakeholder approach to business (e.g. Cyert and March 1964; Freeman 1984) and on business ethics (e.g. Sethi and Falbe 1987).

From the brief foregoing analysis it can be seen that the EFQM model does contain within it the key strands of the TQM approach. However, it also modifies that approach through its treatment of employee issues, and through the introduction of notions of social responsibility

and ethical behaviour. Whereas TQM modifies the inheritance from the manufacturing-based quality movement of internal measures of quality results by a focus upon quality results that matter to the customer, the EFQM Model makes a further modification. "Quality results" are expressed in terms relevant to all stakeholders: employees, customers, shareholders and the wider community. This supports Armistead's (1995) previously cited suggestion that the EFQM/ TQM combination represents a wider paradigm than TQM alone.

The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) has commissioned research into the benefits, utilisation and effectiveness of self-assessment. Interim reporting suggested that:

"...self-assessment is becoming well established In European organisations and tangible business benefits are achieved. Organisations' objectives for starting self-assessment are generally met. By far the most important reason for organisations starting self-assessment is to: provide a driver for continuous improvement, and identify areas for improvement. The benefits derived from self-assessment match these remarkably well and demonstrate that the design intent of self-assessment is being delivered" (CIMA 1997: 1).

The foregoing section has examined the purpose and structure of the EFQM EQA/ BQF UKQA. It is in the nature of such awards that whilst many may benefit, by self-assessment, by external assessment if they formally submit an entry, or by learning from the example of award winners, only a few can actually win the competition to achieve the award. The position of organisations seeking registration under a quality standard is different. In order to justify the resources expended, it is normally necessary actually to achieve registration and this implies formal engagement with the registration process. On the other hand there is no restriction on the number of organisations which can place their names on the register - it is open to any that meet the requirements laid down. Below, two standards pertinent to this study, ISO 9000 and Investors in People, are considered.

3.4 ISO 9000

3.4.0 Overview

"ISO 9000 is a series of International Standards for Quality Systems. They specify requirements and recommendations for the design and assessment of a management system, the purpose of which is to ensure the suppliers provide products and services which satisfy specified requirements" (Hoyle 1994: 25).

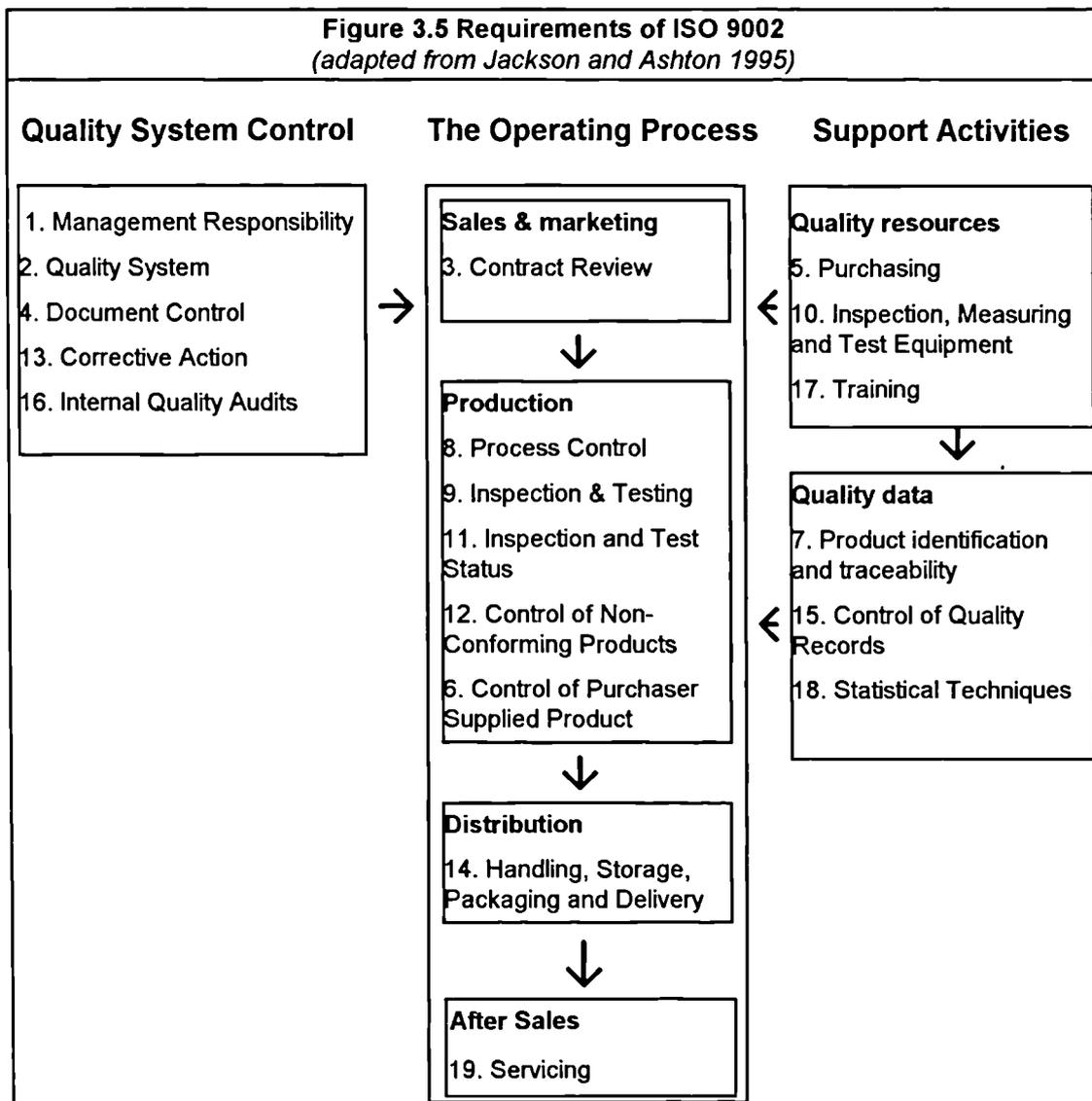
The series consists both of documents which specify the Standard and of guidelines for their use and implementation. Thus the Standards are contained in the following documents:

- ISO 9001 Quality Systems- Model for quality assurance in design/ development, production, installation and servicing.
- ISO 9002 Quality Systems- Model for quality assurance in production and installation.
- ISO 9003 Quality Systems- Model for quality assurance in final inspection and test.

The documents ISO 9000-1 to ISO 9000-4, and ISO 9004-1 to ISO 9004-7 are guidelines associated with the Standards. Those local authority services which have sought registration

under the Standard have done so against ISO 9002. The elements of the above relevant to this study are therefore ISO 9002 and the guidelines for services, ISO 9004-2.

The Standard sets out the requirements for a certificated quality system. It lists, under the so-called "eighteen points" the main features of the Standard, which set out the registration, audit and inspection regime. Jackson and Ashton (1995: 54) suggest that the main points of ISO 9001 can be understood as covering Quality System control, the operating system, and support activities. Their treatment is adapted below in figure 3. 3 for ISO 9002.



The manufacturing origins of the Standard are apparent in the terminology of the nineteen points. This alone may cause difficulties in implementing it in service industries, although interpretations of it for the hospitality sector have been made by Lockwood et al (1996: 17-20) and for BS 5750 by Mills (1992: 16-34) for leisure centres. Mills' work is based on the Oasis Centre in Swindon where he led the first public sector leisure centre registration under

the Standard, a registration which was disseminated widely (e.g. Department of Trade and Industry 1992).

3.4.1 Advantages and disadvantages of ISO 9000

Slack et al (1995: 828) organise their discussion of the advantages of ISO 9000 according to the bullet points below:

- "Many operations do find that it provides a useful discipline to stick to 'sensible' procedures."

Hoyle (1994: 30) suggests that it provides a way to enable the right task to be identified and specified in a way that will yield the right results. Because the organisation has a common documented system, it provides data which can be used to determine the performance of the operating processes.

- "Many operations have benefited in terms of error reduction, reduced customer complaints and reduced costs of quality."

Thus adoption of the Standard provides a means of identifying problems and preventing their recurrence, enabling people to perform the tasks right first time. This reduction of fire-fighting, frees managers from constant intervention in operations, because staff can take control of operational maintenance. Because there is a means of documenting organisational activity there is a basis for education and training (Hoyle 1994: 30).

- "The ISO 9000 audit is generally accepted and takes the place of other audits such as customer audits."

Thus these audits provide "objective evidence that can be used to demonstrate the quality of the service, and to demonstrate that organisational operations are under control" (Hoyle 1994: 30).

- "Adopting ISO 9000 procedures can identify existing procedures which are not necessary and can be eliminated."

Mills (1992: 12) argues that some paperwork will be created, but that much of the old paperwork can be thrown away, as part of a spring-clean of the organisation's work processes.

- "Gaining the certificate demonstrates to actual and potential customers that the company takes quality seriously; it therefore has a marketing benefit."

Since the Standard allows registered organisations to forgo many of the verification procedures upon supplies if they are received from an organisation which also has registration, there is an inbuilt marketing advantage in possessing it in these circumstances. However, these advantages are rather less in consumer service organisations, since the nature of the operations network tends to be different, with the role of incoming supplies

being comparatively smaller compared with major manufacturing concerns. In these situations of sale to the public rather than business-to-business, registration is perhaps of less marketing value since the public are less likely to grasp what the Standard entails (e.g. see Lockwood 1996: 162). Fewer customer service organisations are registered, and therefore there is less pressure upon their suppliers to undertake registration. However, the position is different in the public sector following the introduction of management by contract for some services, particularly in respect of some local authority services covered by the Compulsory Competitive Tendering legislation. Here some local authority purchasers of services do demand registrations from their contractors, even when the purchasers themselves are non-registered.

There is considerable discussion in the literature about the weight of the disadvantages of the Standard which must be set against these strengths. Once again the discussion below is organised in the manner set out by Slack et al (1995: 828-829).

- "The emphasis on standards and procedures encourages 'management by manual' and over-systematized decision making."

This point is linked to an internally orientated, rather than customer orientated focus such as Howe et al (1992: 12-13) describe as an "inside-out" focus. In the effort to keep to the procedures the external customer can fall out of the picture.

"Losing sight of the customer's logic can lead your organization to become introverted. Employees who don't understand the services they deliver in holistic terms easily get caught up in methods and procedures and lose sight of the effect their organizational apparatus has on the customer" (Albrecht and Zemke 1985: 95).

Although the concept of organisational culture can be difficult to define, the literature does indicate a concern that ISO 9000 might reinforce an inward-looking culture. There is some support for this proposition from the research of Mallak et al (1997) who surveyed 110 registered firms in the Great Lakes area of North America, using an instrument derived from O'Reilly and Chatman's (1986) Organisational Culture Profile. Management representatives were asked to identify values which either worked for ISO 9000 registration, were neutral, or worked against it. They identified organisational culture factors, possession of which would aid a firm in obtaining certification, obtaining sets of factors which either definitely or possibly worked in favour of certification. Evidence for factors working against certification was weak. The former are shown in Table 3.3. below.

Table 3.3 Factors definitely working towards ISO 9000 certification

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Key values</i>
Precision	Attention to detail, precise
Highly organised	Highly organised, rule orientated
Team orientated	Innovate, team orientated, share information
Decisive achievement	Flexibility, decisive, action orientated, taking initiative, orientated, results orientated
Risk averse	Careful, supportive, analytical
Stability	Stability, single culture, individual responsibility

Source: based on Mallak et al 1997: 335

Although some of these factors are qualified by others which "possibly work for certification", overall the impression of the values which are reinforced by ISO 9000 are those in which collective internal issues are prioritised, external issues being identified by the organisation's decision making system. This may be typical of traditional public sector services. However, the services literature (reviewed in the following chapter), particularly that about services where contact staff must use their judgement to a considerable degree, indicates that external customer issues may need to be dealt with as they arise, and this may mean breaching rules and procedures.

"...an entrepreneurial firm where individuals act independently, take high risks and are rewarded for these behaviours would be expected to have many cultural barriers to achieving ISO 9000 registration" (Mallak et al 1997: 335).

- "Choosing which of the various ISO 9000 series of Standards to apply for is not always easy."

The issues here are both strategic and technical. In response, Hoyle (op. cit.) suggests three possible approaches, first meeting the minimum requirements of ISO 9001 or 9002, second using ISO 9004-1, 2 or 3 to identify what would be good for your business in ISO 9001, 9002 or 9003, and third, using the appropriate Standard as a framework for creating a business management system. Whereas the former of these options is likely to enable the organisation to achieve certification with the smallest modification or addition to its procedures, the latter is likely to require a dramatic overhaul of management systems.

However, with respect to the services under study there is a major philosophical problem in terms of the nature of *design* which is covered by ISO 9001 but not in 9002. In the manufacturing and the construction industries, design occurs prior to the product being offered to the customer. In services, the service bundle can be redesigned, and aspects of the service remodelled at frequent intervals, even whilst the service is on offer. In sport and recreation services, changes in the activity programme can be said to constitute design and that a proportion of management activity (programming) is thus service design. However,

Mills (1992: 5) suggests that the Standard covering design control will apply only to those leisure services producing a design product to contract, such as landscape architecture. He suggests that the comprehensive application of ISO 9002 (*sic* BS 5750 part 2) will be sufficient to control variations in the mix of service delivery for other leisure services such as sports centres. Thus the organisations under study have sought and gained registration under ISO 9002.

An issue therefore is the organisational purpose in obtaining registration. Redman and Snape (1995) noted that some small businesses were 'unwilling converts' to certification, since it had been forced upon them on a 'no registration - no contract' basis. This may not be the best way to the organisational commitment which the leaders of the quality 'movement' agree is an essential for success. Lockwood et al (1996 :162) suggest hospitality organisations should consider carefully what they want out of registration before embarking upon it. They refer to one case where it was doubtful if the time and effort a hotel spent on achieving registration was worthwhile:

"It seems that rather than measuring before-and-after performance to identify market pay-off, the hotel group embarked on the project with the main criterion of success being ISO 9000 registration. Perhaps a lesson from this experience is the need to monitor from the start both costs and benefits of what will be a considerable investment in both management time and hard cash" (Lockwood et al 1996: 162).

If organisations are seeking to register simply to be able to tender, then they can aim to certificate their existing service and the processes leading to it, making the minimum additions and modifications necessary. Alternatively they can seek to use registration as a means of overhauling aspects of the service itself, their processes and their measurement and control regime. Taking that option is using registration as a quality improvement exercise, and is likely to consume more resources in consequence.

- "The standards are too much geared to the needs of the engineering industries and some of the terms used are unfamiliar in other industries."

The above point can be read as a consequence of a transfer to services of a manufacturing paradigm. The International Standards Organisation are aware of the issue, intending by the year 2000 to "remove the manufacturing bias that is present today" (Hoyle 1994: 27).

Although Mills (*op.cit.*) clearly feels that his interpretation of the Standard is sufficient for it to apply to leisure services, Lockwood et al (1996; 162) have considerable reservations about its use in the hospitality sector. Reflecting upon their case studies, they suggest that ISO 9000 still clearly retains its manufacturing origins, and has failed to adapt sufficiently to meet the needs of the hospitality industry. The problems have been amplified by the lack of hospitality service experience of consultants hired to support implementation and of the

external assessors. However, they suggest that the utility of the Standard lies in its potential to "install the disciplines of measurement, monitoring and control in place, to achieve consistency of performance". They concluded that the "jury is still out" on whether ISO 9000 is appropriate for use in hotels.

- "The whole process of writing procedures, training staff and conducting internal audits is time consuming and expensive."
- "Similarly the time and cost of achieving ISO 9000 registration is excessive."

Redman and Snape (1995) noted criticism from some managers of BS 5750 for being "overly bureaucratic and placing additional burdens on organisations". Cost implications have been significant in the hotel sector (Lockwood 1996: 162), and it is not always clear that this investment has been worthwhile (*ibid.*). The Sutcliffe catering group found that it could gain all the benefits of the standard by having only a small number of its sites registered, thus avoiding much cost (*ibid.*). This allowed them to undertake organisational learning about quality assurance and management, as well as meeting the requirement of those clients which asked for registration from companies bidding for their catering contracts.

- "There is little encouragement or guidance in ISO 9000 on such important issues as continuous improvement and statistical quality control."

Whilst the latter is unlikely to be of very great significance to the organisations under study, the former is of obvious relevance. Mills (1992: 12) suggests that the role of the system is to determine where initiative is appropriate, striking a balance between systematic and "seat of the pants" management.

Because the Standard certifies systems rather than specifying the quality level of the product or service, several authors (e.g. Pearce 1992:196; Mills 1992: 12) refer to an argument often voiced against the Standard, namely that it is possible simply to certify bad quality. The refutation of this argument is two-fold. First, the process of Contract Review, specified by ISO 9002, demands that the customer requirement is clear and that the organisation has the ability meet it. Thus "a registered firm can produce rubbish, although only if that is what the customer has requested" (Pearce *ibid.*). Second, if bad quality arises through inconsistency, that is through variation from the specification, then the system itself will generate non-conformance notices upon which management must act. "Assessors examining the quality system of an organisation providing a patently bad or inappropriate service are likely to pick up high customer complaints or poor corrective processes" (Mills *ibid.*).

Never-the-less it is clear that the responsibility for determining the quality level of the product falls squarely upon the registered organisation, and much will depend upon the thoroughness with which the Contract Review process is managed. In situations where the quality attributes and variables are complex, or, as in the case of services, intangible, it may be difficult for assessors to gauge the competence of Contract Review, particularly if they have little experience of the industry concerned. One could speculate that ISO 9000 might work best where there is an industry agreed specification for product or service quality, such as a BS, DIN (Deutsche Industrie-Norm), EN (European Standard) or ISO standard. Purchasers could then be confident that they were consistently obtaining an article produced to a verified external standard. For many services there are no such standards, though it is noticeable that industry-wide benchmarking is being promoted in the hotel (Confederation of British Industry 1995, Department of National Heritage 1996) and sports/ leisure centre (Sports Council 1996) sectors, as a way of establishing norms. In both cases this development is occurring a few years after the introduction of quality assurance.

3.5 Investors in People

3.5.0 Overview

The EFQM model and ISO 9000 series are both explicitly part of the international quality movement. The final quality model to be reviewed in this chapter, the Investors in People (IiP) Standard, is a purely United Kingdom initiative rooted in some of the same concerns about competitiveness (IiP UK 1997-a: 2), and is influenced by the role of quality standards (ibid: 5). However, its ancestry is rather more deeply connected with a UK discourse about the need for improved vocational training and development. Significantly, it was promoted by the Department of Employment (now Department for Education and Employment [DfEE]) rather than by the Department of Trade and Industry. It is therefore placed within this Chapter for convenience, rather than because of powerful organic links with operations management and the quality movement.

The objective of the Standard is:

"to improve business performance and secure competitive advantage. Investors in People gives a planned approach to setting and communicating business goals, and developing people to meet these goals for organisations of all sizes and in all sectors" (IiP UK 1997-a: 2).

The result claimed is that:

"what people can do - and are motivated to do - matches what the organisation need them to do" (ibid: 2).

The intention is to accomplish this result via the framework established by the Standard by:

- specifying the principles which tie training and development activity directly to business objectives;
- ensuring resources committed to training and development are put to the most effective use;
- providing a clear benchmark of good practice in training and development against which any organisation, large or small, can measure progress towards improved business performance (ibid: 3).

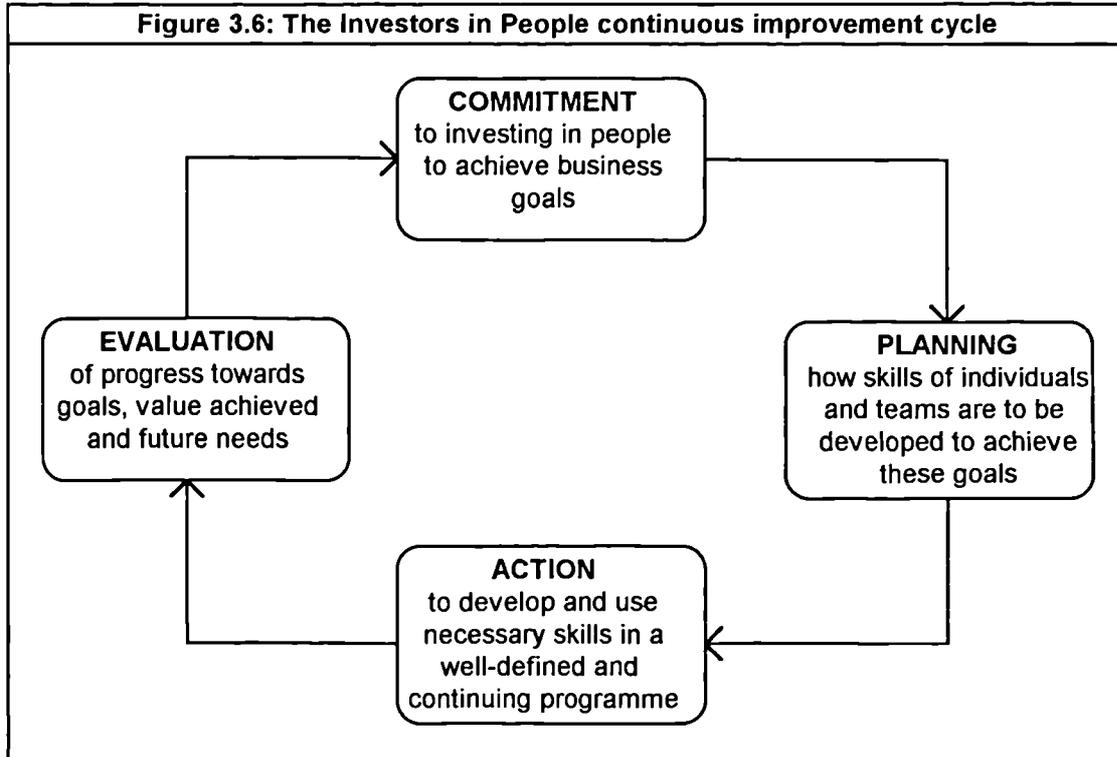
liP was developed as recently as 1990, by a National Training Task Force working with the Confederation of British Industry, Trades Union Congress, and Institute of Personnel and Development. It was tested in 1991 and launched nationally the following year; in 1995 the operation of the Standard was researched and a revised version was issued in 1997.

It has been noted above that ISO 9000 still displays its manufacturing origins. In contrast, liP was intended to cover manufacturing and services, commercial and public sectors (ibid.: 3). This emphasis continues today, with those responsible for the Standard keen to show its benefits in many different types of organisation. A collection of 40 "mini case-studies" of organisations benefiting from the Standard (liP UK 1997-b) cites concerns as diverse as a steel mill, schools, a bank, a local authority and a leisure service (Chessington World of Adventures).

Investors in People is a United Kingdom Standard promoted by the Department of Employment through the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in England and Wales, the Local Enterprise Councils in Scotland and the Training and Enterprise Agency in Northern Ireland. In 1993, the government established a company, Investors in People UK, to provide national ownership, business leadership and direction to the National Standard (liP 1997-a: 3). By the end of 1996, 5250 organisations within the UK had achieved recognition, and over 21,000 had committed themselves to work towards it.

3.5.1 Details of the Standard and of how it is achieved

The Standard is organised around a version of the Shewart/ Deming cycle as shown in Figure 3.6 below. The four stages, or principles, each gives rise to several indicators which comprise the 23 indicators of the Standard. A performance indicator is associated with each point; through these, the successful applicant organisation can demonstrate that it has attained the desired performance. These indicators are shown in Table 3.4.



Source: liP UK (1997-a: 9) redrawn

Achieving the Standard involves:

- "resolving as an organisation to meet the Standard;
- making an informed commitment to the TEC, (or equivalent in Scotland and Northern Ireland) to meet the Standard;
- planning and taking action to meet the Standard;
- formal assessment against the Standard;
- if the Standard is met, recognition as an Investor in People"

(liP UK 1997-a: 10).

In England and Wales, assessment is through approved Assessment and Recognition Units run by the TECs, although overseen by Investors in People UK. Different arrangements apply in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Assessors not only review the documentary evidence provided by applicants, but also interview a sample of staff at all levels in the organisation. It is stressed that assessors do not expect to see a predefined approach to human resources management; organisations may choose which way they shall meet the Standard (liP UK 1997-a: 11). However, applicants are expected to demonstrate compliance with employment legislation.

Table 3.4: Overview of the Investors in People National Standard

Principle One: Commitment

- 1.1 The commitment from top management to train and develop employees is communicated effectively throughout the organisation.
- 1.2 Employees at all levels are aware of the broad aims or vision of the organisation.
- 1.3 The organisation has considered what employees at all levels will contribute to the success of the organisation, and has communicated this effectively to them.
- 1.4 Where representative structures exist, communication takes place between management and representatives on the vision of where the organisation is going and the contribution of employees (and their representatives) will make to its success.

Principle Two: Planning

- 2.1 A written but flexible plan sets out the organisation's goals and targets.
- 2.2 A written plan identifies the organisation's training and development needs, and specifies what action will be taken to meet these needs.
- 2.3 Training and development needs are regularly reviewed against goals and targets of the organisation, team and individual level.
- 2.4 A written plan identifies the resources that will be used to meet training and development needs.
- 2.5 Responsibility for training and developing employees is clearly identified and understood throughout the organisation, starting at the top.
- 2.6 Objectives are set for training and development actions at the organisation, team and individual level.
- 2.7 Where appropriate, training and development objectives are linked to external standards such as National Vocational Qualifications or Scottish Vocational qualifications and units.

Principle Three: Action

- 3.1 All new employees are introduced effectively to the organisation and all employees new to a job are given the training and development they need to do that job.
- 3.2 Managers are effective in carrying out their responsibilities for training and developing employees.
- 3.3 Managers are actively involved in supporting employees to meet their training and development needs.
- 3.4 All employees are made aware of the training and development opportunities open to them.
- 3.5 All employees are encouraged to help identify and meet their job-related training and development needs.
- 3.6 Action takes place to meet the training and development needs of individuals, teams and the organisation.

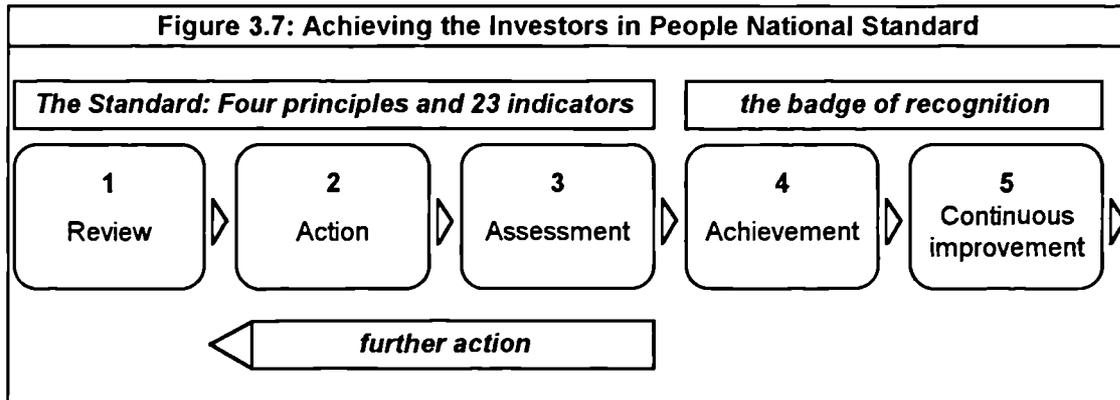
Principle Four: Evaluation

- 4.1 The organisation evaluates the impact of training and development actions on knowledge, skills and attitude.
- 4.2 The organisation evaluates the impact of training and development actions on performance.
- 4.3 The organisation evaluates the contribution of training and development to the achievement of its goals and targets.
- 4.4 Top management understands the broad cost and benefits of training and development needs.
- 4.5 Action takes place to implement improvements to training and development identified as a result of evaluation.
- 4.6 Top management's continuing commitment to training and development employees is demonstrated to all employees.

Source: IIP UK (1997-a: 6-7)

3.5.2 Advantages and disadvantages of the Standard

Like the self-assessment stage of the EFQM/ BQF award, it is clearly intended that organisations will benefit from self-calibration of their operation against external criteria. They may benefit from the Assessor's comments, from improved human resources management, and from any marketing advantage gained from the liP badge. Thus it is expected that organisations will gain advantages at all stages of the achievement process, which is shown in Figure 3.7 below.



Source: liP UK (1997-a: 12)

However, unlike the EFQM/ BQF award, it is clearly the intention that organisations will commit themselves to the whole recognition process prior to embarking upon it. In this sense the conception of the Standard is similar to ISO 9000. In another sense the conception of the two is quite different. There is no analogue in liP of the favoured status given to trade with other registered organisations in the ISO 9000 Standards.

Research studies commissioned by liP UK and by the DfEE suggest three main areas of advantage associated with the standard. First, a study by the Hambleton Group (1996) pointed to a correlation between liP registration and above average performance in key business results indicators such as profitability and productivity. This research suggested that liP companies achieve dramatically better results across several measures of business performance suggesting that they:

- "get higher prices for their goods and services
- control their costs better
- make their capital work harder
- can afford to buy the best people on the market to work for them
- get more out of their employees in terms of sales, productivity and profitability"

(liP UK 1997-b: 5)

The second area of benefit is that associated with improved human resources management. The Institute of Employment Studies (1996) has suggested that 60% of registered organisations see improvements in their workforce, which they attribute directly to the Standard. These benefits may be classified as those associated with training needs analysis

and the training system, those related to improved skills and workforce quality and those associated with better workforce motivation and morale. Although this study also sought to ascertain impact on business results, it did not find an unequivocal impact.

"In terms of developing human resources, the three biggest benefits of gaining the Standard are:

- much clearer links between operational plans and human resources strategies
 - training focused on business needs
 - improved evaluation of training."
- (liP UK 1997-b)

Thirdly, benefits are identified in the area of organisational change. The Centre for Research in Employment and Technology in Europe (1995) surveyed the Chief Executives of organisations which had registered under the Standard. About a half of the respondents believed that future trends are towards greater training and development of staff and one third thought that staff would need to be more flexible in future. About two-thirds of respondents believed that the Standard had helped them to initiate changes in these directions. The researchers concluded that liP could impact upon organisation change through being a catalyst, enabler and legitimiser of it.

Discussing the role of the Standard in the hospitality industry, Lockwood et al. suggest that its benefits as follows:

"... it is argued that the benefits of pursuing the liP Standard will include adding value to quality programmes by stressing the central importance of people in the delivery of quality. In addition, liP should help organizations recognize and meet the needs of individuals, and so promote motivation and morale, releasing their full potential to improve performance. Another benefit is that the Standard stresses the importance of all employees recognizing the importance of customers and how they can be satisfied, and encouraging a people-orientated approach to customers. Finally the achievement of the liP Standard should bring the organization public recognition and this will make the company more attractive to customers and for potential high-calibre employees" (Lockwood et al 1996: 20).

Thus improvement in people management should lead to higher levels of employee satisfaction, both of which are intended to work towards producing higher levels of customer satisfaction.

Reviewing their case studies, Lockwood et al (1996) concluded that many companies had found that liP complemented their strategies, because in service industries better people management had a more direct impact upon the customer relationship. However, when they also examined companies which had rejected the Standard, they speculated that it may be most appropriate to medium-sized concerns:

"Perhaps the larger ones can fashion their own programmes, and the smaller ones cannot cope with the burden of compiling written evidence?" (Lockwood et al 1996: 161)

In 1997 liP UK published a second edition of a study originally commissioned by Humberside TEC (liP UK 1997-c). This research examined the role of the Standard in relation to the achievement of World Class performance through considering how it related to other quality standards and awards. World Class is defined simply as:

"...operating at standards equal to the best in the world - standards of making money from *totally* satisfying the customer with high quality products and service, at the right price, delivered at the right time" (liP UK 1997-c: 22).

The initiatives examined included:

- The Deming Prize, awarded annually by the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers to the company that has achieved distinctive performance improvements through the application of Company-Wide Quality Control (CWQC).
- The EFQM EQA reviewed in this chapter.
- The MBNQA reviewed in this chapter.
- The Citizen's Charter - Charter Mark Scheme, for public services and utilities, set up by the Government following the Citizen's Charter (Prime Minister 1991) and the first award was made in 1992. It is discussed further in Chapter 5.
- The UK Quality Award, launched in 1994 by the BQF with five entry categories, including two for public and voluntary organisations. The criteria are the same as for the EFQM.
- The Best Factory Awards, which aim to promote manufacturing excellence and is administered by Management Today magazine and Cranfield School of Management.
- The National Training Awards, which focus upon a specific training programme or initiative whereas Investors in People looks at the development of people within an organisation as a whole. Awards are made annually by the Department of Employment.
- ISO 9000, reviewed in this chapter.

This research "identified five common 'people issues' that appear in one form or another in

Table 3.5: People issues in World Class organisations and role of liP	
<i>Issue</i>	<i>Role of liP</i>
Leadership	Spells out management responsibility for people development
Benchmarking and targets	Management to set up goals and targets, employees must understand business aims
Business Improvement Initiatives	"Links" with liP goal and target setting, development of employees, informing employees, management style
Clarity of focus	Addressed through the commitment principle
People and teams	liP addresses continuous improvement of people to support continuous improvement of business

Source: based on liP UK 1997-c

World Class and Best Practice Organisations" (liP UK 1997-c: 24), and goes on to discuss the role of the liP Standard in relation to each of the five. These are summarised in Table 3.5. Below an assessment is made of this aspect of the research.

The first of the five people issues is leadership. It is very clear from the philosophy and experience of the quality movement reviewed earlier in this chapter that complete and continuing committed leadership is necessary to bring about quality changes.

"In various research that has been undertaken, (lack of) management commitment has been identified as the major obstacle to sustained continuous improvement aimed at achieving World Class performance in areas of quality, customer satisfaction and employee involvement" (liP UK 1997-c: 25).

The report goes on to argue that through encouraging "leadership" rather than "management", organisations can secure this commitment.

"To facilitate this transition from a traditional 'command and control' style of management, many organisations in the World Class arena have defined the leadership role in standards or competence terms and used these definitions to develop stronger leadership attributes in their managers" (liP UK 1997-c: 24).

liP follows a similar theme in stressing that people policies must be driven by top management, not by a personnel or training department. The first principle of the Standard is "Commitment", and it is very much concerned with the development of competence at all levels of the organisation. The conclusion of the research is that liP is very much in line with this 'people issue', and that seems self-evident.

The second area identified is that of benchmarking and targets.

"Benchmarking and target setting forms an important part of the journey in achieving World Class performance. Recognised World Class companies claim to benchmark "anything that moves" and use the results of their experiences to establish new 'stretch' goals for all aspects of their business. Benchmarked targets form a key part of their future business plans and operational strategies" (liP UK 1997-c: 27).

The importance of external comparison is reflected in the EQA and UKQA: external comparisons are sought in each of the four "quality results" areas (e.g. see European Foundation for Quality Management 1994). liP clearly places a stress upon the development of targets, and the indicators for the second principle "planning", are largely concerned with goal formulation.

"Within the Investors in People national standard there is a requirement to establish business goals and targets. In a World Class scenario these would be longer-term goals and short-term targets that aim to bring the organisation up to the performance of a competitor, a recognised 'best in class' performer or any other measurable standard" (liP UK 1997-c: 27).

However, there is self-evidently no requirement in the standard itself for the organisation to have developed mechanisms for making external comparisons, or to demonstrate that their performance is equal to, or better than others. In fact achieving the Standard is very much

an "internal" exercise. Not only are competitor or partner organisations not featured, neither are customers. There is not really an equivalent to the ISO 9000 "contract review".

The third "people issue" identified is that of business improvement initiatives.

"Another feature that distinguishes World Class companies is their long term continuous quest for improvement and the use of various initiatives, as vehicles for constant improvement...Again there are clear links with Investors in People Standard in terms of goal and target setting, aligning the development of employees to the business goals and to support improvement initiatives, keeping them informed of strategies and progress, and managers acting in a supportive, coaching style" (liP UK 1997-c: 28-29).

Thus although the notion of standards is more associated with quality assurance than with TQM, there is an attempt in the way liP is written (e.g. indicator 4.5) to stress the concept of continuous improvement in human resources management. In contrast to ISO 9002, liP takes on elements of continuous improvement. The documentation around the Standard, unlike that around ISO 9000, also implies improvement activity post-recognition (e.g. see Figures 3.5, 3.7 above).

"World Class organisations have, through the development of a clear vision or mission and effective communication strategies, focused everyone's efforts on the achievement of their organisational goals. There are two common themes:

- common language/ common focus
- effective communication and reinforcement of the goal" (liP UK 1997-c: 30).

Clarity of focus thus comprises the fourth 'people issue' identified. The report concludes that liP contributes significantly through the first "Commitment" principle; this is reinforced through the indicators supporting the "Planning" principle.

The fifth and final 'people issue' identified is that of people and teams. It is worth quoting at some length from the research on these points.

"People and teams with a high degree of autonomy are seen as the prime vehicle for continuous improvement in World Class organisations. they are encouraged, developed and empowered to think and act as part of the management team.

People are developed in the use of continuous improvement techniques and to new high levels of flexibility and competence through multi-skilling. They understand their boundaries, have access to information and are encouraged to take initiative without fear of failure.

Teams are developed to become self-managing and are given the capacity to act upon any issues that get in the way of serving the customer or achieving objectives. They are also responsible for identifying improvements, preparing detailed recommendations, and lead the design, development and implementation" (liP UK 1997-c: 32).

The Standard clearly supports people development by ensuring that it is linked to business goals, that proper objectives for it are set, that the workforce are fully involved, and through

ensuring that training and development are evaluated. However, the Standard itself has very little to say about teams themselves. World Class organisations in the West, like their Japanese counterparts, stress team, rather than individual, recognition and reward, perhaps following Deming's critique of performance appraisal (see above), but the liP literature is silent on this issue. The EFQM literature likewise does not refer to it.

The report concludes that:

"The main similarities between Investors in People and other (quality) awards are in general to do with:

- management commitment to the process
- the business strategy or plan
- effective communication
- the development of people
- the measurement of performance.

...Investors in People quite clearly sits comfortably with the 'people' and 'results' sections of the other awards and is seen by some of the World Class organisations as an effective framework for developing that aspect of the (EFQM) Total Quality Model" (liP UK 1997-c: 24).

It is difficult to completely accept these conclusions. Although there are many areas where liP supports the EFQM model, there are also areas where the two are clearly incongruent. Thus aspects of the People Management enabling factor are supported by liP. However, the issues of employee empowerment and recognition/ reward of quality improvements by employees are not fundamental to liP as they are to the EFQM Model. Neither approach attempts to reconcile Western-style performance appraisal with Deming's view.

The liP Standard has no equivalent to the "Employee satisfaction" result factor of the EFQM Model. Thus although it secures feedback on training and development from employees, it does not ensure that organisations set up methods of monitoring and evaluating the totality of their human resources policies and the effect of other policies upon employees. In services, where employees are in direct contact with customers, there is a direct relationship between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. The absence of the former concept from liP might therefore represent a weakness for service industries.

The EFQM Model has mechanisms which are intended to ensure that organisations focus on their environment; in particular the results factors are stakeholder focused (with external stakeholders i.e. customers and 'society' forming two of the four factors). Each results factor is benchmarked against similar organisations. In contrast, liP is a much more "internal" process, which can be achieved with the limited environmental analysis required for a business plan.

3.6 Chapter 3: Concluding remarks

Reflecting upon the operations management and quality movement literature reviewed in this chapter, some points are particularly pertinent to the subject of this thesis.

First, the quality movement has largely emerged from production and operations management and continues to share much of the subject's intellectual framework. There remains a strong heritage from commercial sector manufacturing industry, in which the major quality concerns have traditionally been failure prevention through the reduction of variation and the achievement of consistency. The spur for organisational action on quality has been the military's need for reliable weaponry and, in the case of consumer goods, enhanced competitive position through improved quality. Empirical evidence (e.g. Buzzell and Gale 1987) points towards the market valuing companies which are perceived as offering a quality product or service.

Second, the quality movement has identified several definitions of quality (e.g. Garvin 1988), the utility of each being largely dependant on the organisational function to which they are applied. Definitions of quality from operations staff are likely to differ from those of marketers; quality as defined by the customer according to his or her perceptions are likely to be different again. Whereas some definitions of quality clearly represent a view from within the organisation (e.g. "manufacturing-based" quality - Garvin 1988), others suggest a role for the quality judgements and perceptions of the external customer (e.g. "user-based" quality - Garvin 1988).

Third, as the quality movement has developed, there has been an evolution of the quality management paradigm. The pre-Second World War emphasis on inspection and quality control was succeeded by a focus on quality assurance, and, in the contemporary era, by the notion of strategic quality management (Garvin 1988; Bounds et al 1995). Today TQM represents the dominant quality management paradigm. TQM represents a shift to a more external focus for quality in its insistence that internal processes be driven by customer needs and wants, and in its highlighting of the necessity of management of the entire operations network. It also extends quality management in the direction of human resource management through a focus upon continuous improvement and the involvement of staff. However, the TQM concept has itself been extended by the EFQM model of quality which, through its categories for "quality results", suggests that quality organisations will not only take account of the needs of customers ("customer satisfaction") and stockholders ("business results"), but also of employees ("people satisfaction") and society ("impact on society"). Thus the evolution of the quality movement paradigm can be seen as a move of focus from internal, to external customers, and lastly towards stakeholders.

Fourth, ISO 9000, in its language and foci typifies the manufacturing provenance of much of the quality movement. It provides a systematic template through which organisations can certify that their processes are error-free. This it enables an organisation to remodel its processes and to show to external customers, suppliers and other stakeholders that internal processes (which would otherwise tend to be externally obscure) are managed appropriately. The requirement of the Standard that certified organisations should have a quality policy, with clear management responsibilities for quality, will also aid achievement towards the "leadership" and "policy/ strategy" "quality enabler" criteria. However, ISO 9000 is representative of a pre-TQM paradigm, as it is largely concerned with internal quality: failure prevention, error detection, error correction and consistency of output. Because of its origins, in services the Standard might be expected to impact more upon organisational processes and tangibles rather more than upon staff and the intangibles that are associated with the customer contact process.

The fifth point is, that in contrast with ISO 9000, liP does not hold an international operations management/ quality movement pedigree. It is a UK initiative aimed at increasing the profile of in-service education, training and development. However, the Standard is presented as a quality initiative (liP UK 1997-c), and its requirements make a contribution to some aspects of the "people management" EFQM "quality enabler" criterion. However, the Standard does not require regular evaluation of "people satisfaction" and thus is unlikely to assist organisations in demonstrating achievement against that EFQM "quality results" criterion. Because the Standard does require organisations to have relevant top-level strategies and plans it is also likely to help them to meet the EFQM "leadership" and "policy/ strategy" quality criteria.

The sixth point resulting from this part of the literature review is that although much of the literature concentrates upon prescriptions for quality management (e.g. Crosby 1979; Deming 1986; Oakland 1985) there is little external evidence about how effective these prescriptions are. Where there is research on this topic (e.g. Redman and Snape 1985; or the current CIMA sponsored research into the EQA) it tends to elucidate the views of senior managers rather than those of customers. There are also few studies which correlate quality management methods with better performance. An exception is that commissioned by liP UK which seems to show above average performance of liP registered organisations (liP UK 1997-b).

The seventh and final point made here is that for most of the history of the quality movement, services, especially the public services, have been absent from consideration or

have played a subordinate role. Certainly it is only in the "strategic quality management" era that service issues have come into consideration. Both the EFQM EQA and IIP explicitly claim to deal with services. Service industries and the public sector do indeed make use of IIP; ISO 9002 is also used in service industries and in the public sector although it has not been developed for this particular purpose.

Chapter Four

Service Management and Perceived Service Quality

Summary

This chapter reviews the literature that provides the context and substance of research on service quality, going on to discuss the much smaller literature on service quality in leisure, recreation and sports services.

- In the field of marketing, there appears to be growing agreement that the characteristics of services mean that traditional goods marketing concepts cannot be applied to them. There is widespread recognition of the discipline of service marketing, although there is disagreement between the North American and Nordic Schools on its connection with goods marketing.
- In operations management, despite some very significant contributions by service researchers, the subject retains a strong bias towards manufacturing without the sub-discipline of service operations management having acquired the status of its marketing counterpart.
- Research in service quality management therefore tends to take place in the context of the multifunctional subject of service management.

Several points emerge about how quality features in this literature.

- Like the research from the quality movement, service quality research is dominated by investigation into commercial concerns. However, there are some significant examples of research into public sector service quality from a service management perspective.
- The guiding definition of quality within this literature is externally focused, that is of quality as customer-perceived quality. This is in contrast to the internally-focused heritage of the quality movement, which has only latterly acquired an external focus.
- Service quality is generally conceived in a manner similar to that of customer satisfaction as a disconfirmation between customer expectations and perceptions of the service. However, not all researchers agree on this formulation, or upon the differences between service quality and customer satisfaction.
- There appears to be a consensus that service quality is harder for consumers to evaluate than that of goods.
- Unlike the research reviewed in the previous chapter, here the research emphasis is generally on measuring quality, rather than upon managing it.

The following points relate to the measurement of service quality.

- There are few examples in the literature of work on internal measurement of quality; much research effort has gone into the development of external measurement.
- Since research reporting the development of SERVQUAL appeared in 1988, it has become acknowledged as the most influential service quality measurement instrument. However, it has not been possible for other researchers to replicate either the item or dimensional structure of the instrument when applying it to other services, including recreation services. Partly in response to this critique the instrument itself has gone through two major revisions.
- It seems to be accepted that service quality levels can be adequately measured through perceptions only, since expectations are required only for establishing organisational action priorities.

4.0 Preamble

The previous chapter discussed the role of the operations management and the research generated by the quality movement. This chapter turns to examine research in services. First, under the heading of 'studies of services' the evolution of three disciplines is outlined; these are service marketing, service operations management and service management. Second, some of the key areas of service research are discussed; these are pertinent to building a conceptual framework within which service quality may be considered. Third, the focus falls on service quality, with discussion centred upon the perceived service quality paradigm in services, and critiques of it. Fourth, a concluding section identifies the key lessons from this part of the literature review.

4.1 Studies of service

4.1.0 Service Marketing

In the manufacturing-based "quality movement", reviewed in the previous chapter, the primary heritage is that from the discipline of production and operations management. The significance of marketing has been recognised comparatively recently, as the cardinal role of external factors has become apparent. In contrast, the situation of service quality is that marketing has played a prominent, and probably primary, role in initiating research into service quality and in forming the dominant management paradigms. In many respects, the debate about the inapplicability of general management concepts to service, and the consequent need for scientific study of services, was a debate within the discourse of marketing.

Below an overview is presented of the development of the service marketing discourse, with the intention of mapping the intellectual territory to which it has laid claim. A more detailed discussion of some of the themes is given in the subsequent section on the cross-functional discipline of service management. Fisk et al (1993) have reviewed the development of the service marketing literature. They divide its evolution into three stages:

- Crawling Out: 1953-1980
- Scurrying About: 1980-1985
- Walking Erect: Post 1985

These authors describe the first phase as an attempt at innovation in the face of an orthodoxy that marketing was about goods and products. Increasingly, the literature became concerned with the differences between goods and service marketing and with the necessity of a separate approach for services. They record the first doctoral dissertations on the subject (McDowell 1953, Parker 1958, Johnson 1969) and the first journal papers (Regan 1963, Judd 1964, Rathmell 1966, George 1977). These papers highlighted the growing significance of services in

the economy and their impact on changing consumer preferences, suggested fundamental differences between goods and service marketing and began the process of elaborating definitions of service (Rathmell 1966) and service typologies (Judd 1964). Wright (1995: 35-36) has applied Kuhn's (1962) concept of paradigm shift to this phase, suggesting that the phenomena uncovered by researchers in services could not be assimilated into the traditional marketing paradigm, so that researchers began to elaborate an alternative that offered a better explanation.

"These early service researchers found it difficult to publish their work since established marketing scholars insisted that services were just a modest extension of goods marketing and thus did not merit special attention (Fisk et al 1993). This sparked fierce debate on "whether services are different" that lasted throughout the Crawling Out period. The debate represented a fundamental challenge to the legitimacy of services marketing as a subdiscipline, and the outcome would determine the fate of the entire services marketing paradigm. Services marketers understood the seriousness of this challenge: in virtually all of their papers and articles written during this period, they argued that services marketing was different. The heated "goods v. services" controversy led to the identification of four unique services characteristics - intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability - which provided the foundation for the services marketing sub-discipline" (Wright 1995: 36).

Both Fisk et al (ibid.) and Wright (op.cit.) comment upon the great significance of Shostack's (1977) attack upon the marketing discipline, which she accused of failing to develop theories or ground rules that could be applied to services. This helped to open up space for scholars to argue that new concepts were needed for marketing the service sector (e.g. Bateson 1979, Lovelock 1979, Berry 1980).

The "Scurrying About" phase saw the waning of the debate about the differences between goods and services as other research problems began to be formulated (Fisk et al 1993). These authors also suggest that the growing academic interest in service was reinforced by the deregulation of major service industries in the USA by the Reagan Administration. Services such as airlines, which had formerly traded in a more limited environment were faced with sudden change in their competitive conditions, and turned to the new service marketers for assistance.

The growth of service marketing was underpinned by increasing willingness of journals to publish, the creation of new journals (The Services Industries Journal was founded in 1980, the Journal of Professional Services Marketing in 1985), and the development of specialist academic centres of study. This period also saw the first textbooks published (e.g. Lovelock 1984) adding to the attraction of the new ideas within the academy. Themes identified by Fisk et al (1993) as prominent in this phase include classification of services (e.g. Lovelock 1985),

service encounters (e.g. Solomon et al 1985) and service quality (e.g. Parasuraman et al 1985). The latter theme was due to become a prominent, if not dominant, theme in service marketing in the next phase of its development.

The "Walking Erect" stage, roughly dating from 1985, was characterised as a period of what Fisk et al (1993) refer to as "explosive growth" in the number of publications, and by the increasing empirical exploration of concepts developed by the marketers. It saw the initiation of the *Journal of Services Marketing* (in 1987). Several important books dealing with service marketing appeared in this period (e.g. Heskett 1986, Johnson, Scheuing and Gaida 1986, Lovelock 1988, Bateson 1989, Grönroos, 1990, Payne 1993, Palmer 1994, Zeithaml and Bitner 1996).

According to the count of journal papers conducted by Fisk et al (1993), the most researched area is service quality, and they suggest that the roots of this research are in Europe with the 'Nordic School', the development paralleling wider quality concerns in business and management studies. Other areas of research interest are service encounters, service design, customer retention and relationship marketing and internal marketing.

The new self-confidence of service marketing has been questioned by some scholars (e.g. Bharadwaj et al 1993, Wright 1995).

"...the acceptance of a paradigm is unavoidably accompanied by drastically reduced vision as disciples of the new approach seek more precise and robust solutions to issues that the paradigm has identified as important. In the services marketing field, this has created a tendency to emphasise similarities between different types of services while explicitly ignoring the variation within the services sector...the literature to date has focused primarily on identifying and resolving marketing issues that relate primarily to what might be termed "classic services" - those market offerings that have most of the characteristics that the discipline has established as unique (that is, intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability)" (Wright 1995: 39).

Fisk et al (1993) have acknowledged that the focus on the so-called "low tech, high touch" services represents a potential problem. These points are relevant to this thesis, because the service marketing and service management literature has a strong tendency to concentrate service quality research in certain industries (e.g. airlines, banking and financial services), the assumption being that research findings may be applied to all services. There is very little service marketing literature on public sector services or upon sport/recreation services.

A more fundamental critique of the approach of Fisk et al to the subject is prompted by consideration of their treatment of "Relationship marketing." They use this expression in the

context of retaining customers long-term, reflecting the first usage of the word (Berry 1983). This use has been criticised by Morgan and Hunt (1994: 22) on the basis that:

"...many instances of relationship marketing do not have a "customer" as one of the exchange participants. Strictly speaking, in strategic alliances between competitors...there are neither "buyers", "sellers", "customers" nor "key accounts" - only *partners* exchanging resources."

Here it is necessary to dwell upon certain conceptual differences between the North American and Nordic Schools, because they provide insights into differences within services management which impact on how service quality is conceived. The two schools do not have mirror-image views of each other. Researchers from the North American School such as Fisk et al (op. cit.) do sometimes recognise the contribution of researchers such as Grönroos and Gummesson, but as contributors to a shared service paradigm. However, the Nordic School writers appear more aware of North American contributions than vice-versa; they also highlight differences with the North Americans in their conceptualisation of the place of service research. In particular, the Nordic School has increasingly used the term "relationship marketing" to denote a network approach to marketing, based on a fundamental critique of the transaction focus of traditional marketing, as it applies to all sectors (not just to services).¹

"The relationship paradigm also applies to other relationships with and among partners/stakeholders which are more or less peripheral to the central direct customer-seller exchange process. Relationships with and among customers, technology, and people - employees, peers, union officials and suppliers - are often critical and interrelated success factors in the competitive environment..."(Glynn and Lehtinen 1995: 93).

Thus, as Aijo (1996: 11) has pointed out, the usage of the term, relationship marketing, by Grönroos (1994-b) and other Nordic School adherents includes the following crucial elements:

"...interactivity; network approach; long-term perspective; internal marketing; trust; and exchange of promises."

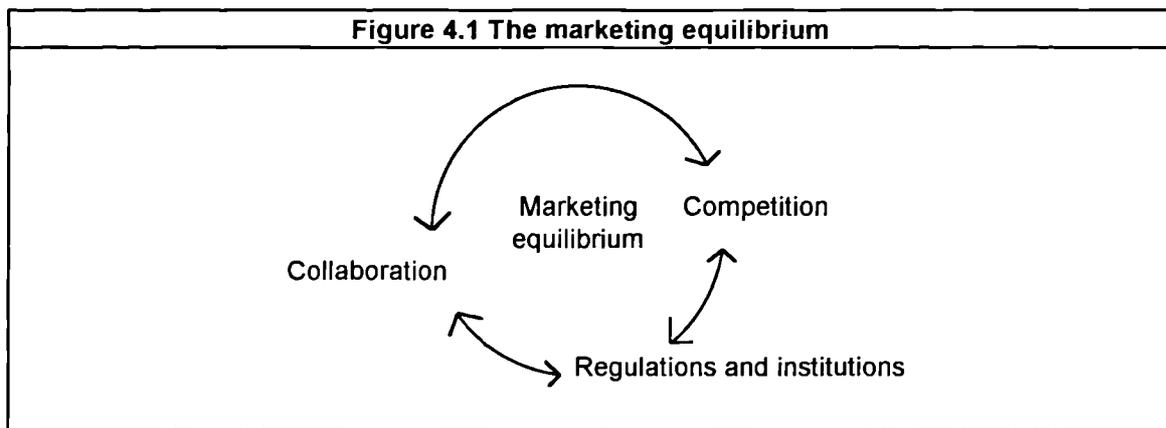
Gummesson (1996) has developed the idea of the marketing equilibrium in which the forces of competition, collaboration and regulation by institutions achieve a balance.

"Whereas traditional marketing sees competition as the driving force of a market economy, RM (Relationship Marketing) puts collaboration in focus."

¹ Transaction(al) marketing is the term "used to describe the more conventional emphasis on acquiring new customers, rather than retaining them" (Zeithaml and Bitner 1996: 40). "Transaction marketing refers to an occasional deal (Jackson 1985). It can also refer to repeated deals each being independent of the previous one and with no forecasting capacity as to the probability of a future deal. (Gummesson 1995)."

Collaboration suggests that all parties actively assume responsibility to make relationships and networks functional. Regulations and institutions are core parameters of planned economies, while deregulation and privatization are buzz-words in Western market economies. In marketing rhetoric, regulations/institutions, and to some extent collaboration between firms, are treated with suspicion as inhibiting competition and the dynamics of a market economy. In marketing practice, however, they are ubiquitous...Western economies are mixed economies in which competition co-exists with collaboration and regulations/ institutions" (Gummesson 1996: 34).

These elements of the marketing equilibrium are shown in Figure 4.1. Because of the neglect of these issues in traditional marketing, the relationship marketers have developed their own



Source: Gummesson (1996: 34)

critique, which shares some strands with the service marketers, but also has its own distinct elements.

"Relationships, networks and interaction have been at the core of business since time immemorial and they have not gone unnoticed by business people, so there are also important practical underpinnings. The sad story is that the phenomenon has gone unnoticed by most marketing professors, economists, marketing textbooks writers and business school educators. Currently, a number are stepping forth, claiming that they were the first to use the word relationships. This is no great achievement. The real achievement - and, mind you, this is no small one - is to have been consistently able to avoid relationships, networks and interaction in the development of marketing theory" (Gummesson et al 1997).

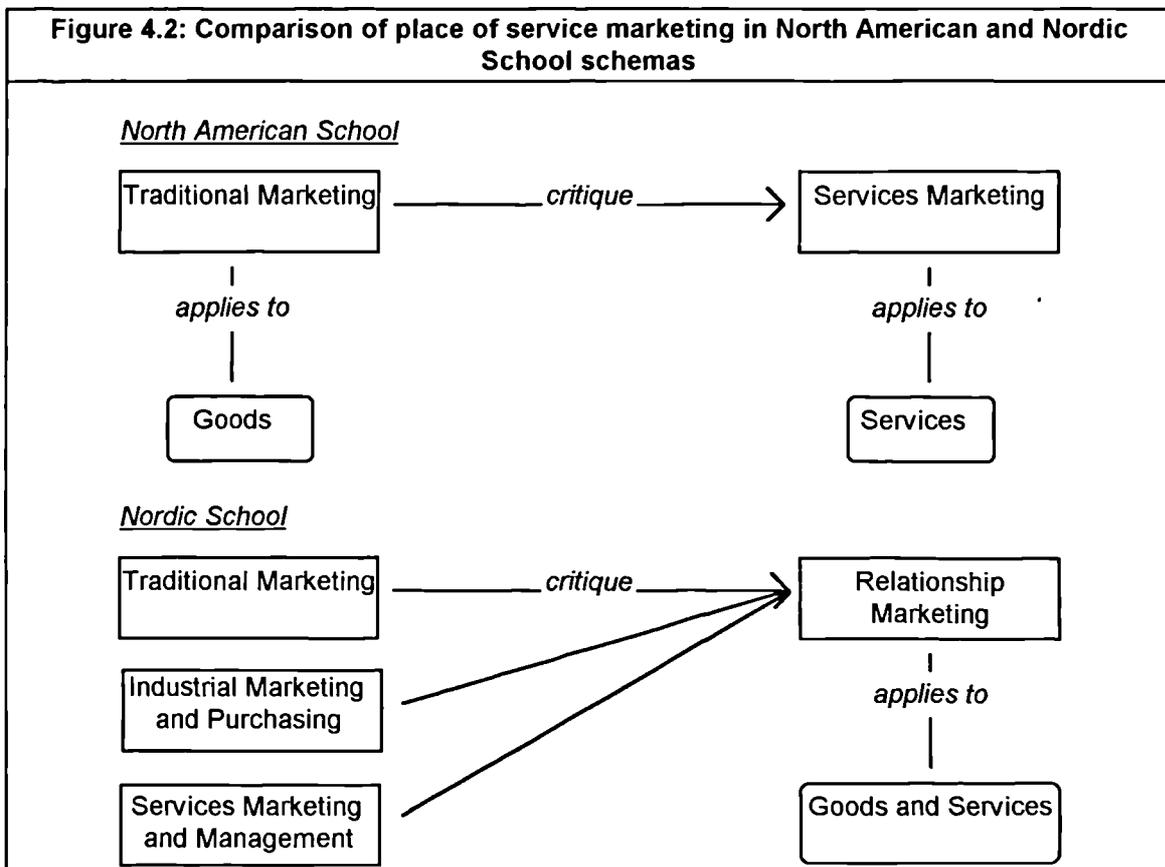
A considerable literature on relationship marketing, much of it focused on services, has grown up in recent years (e.g. Grönroos 1994-a, Gummesson 1994, Glynn and Lehtinen 1995, Aijo 1996, Takala and Uusitalo 1996, Ravald and Grönroos 1996). Two commentaries (Gummesson 1996, Gummesson et al 1997) on the conceptual development of the Nordic School are relevant here. Gummesson (1996: 31) counts service marketing and its extension into service management as one of the two research traditions which have informed the Nordic School. The second is:

"...the network approach to industrial marketing and the contributions from the Industrial Marketing and Purchasing Group...These two traditions are likely to continue to develop. Together with certain concepts and frameworks from traditional marketing management, however, it is possible to discern a trend towards a merger into relationship marketing (RM). It is too early to call RM a tradition, although its period of incubation covers at least two decades. RM lays out a blueprint for future directions in marketing; its impact in the years to come is likely to be substantial" (Gummesson 1996: 31).

Thus relationship marketing is defined as:

"Relationship marketing (RM) is marketing seen as relationships, networks and interaction" (ibid.: 32).

Figure 4.2 below summarises the different intellectual space occupied by service marketing for the two service marketing schools.



Source: the author

This dissimilar intellectual provenance of the North American and Nordic Schools accounts for the differing emphases within their treatment of services. North American authors, for example, follow traditional marketers in giving a significant place to the marketing mix. However, the original "4Ps" mix (McCarthy 1960), the first four listed below, is extended through the addition

of factors which enable marketing and operations considerations to unite, as in this version from

Booms and Bitner (1981):

- Product
(What is offered)
- Price
(What is charged for the product)
- Place
(How or where the product can be bought by customers)
- Promotion
(How potential customers are told about the product)
- Participants
(Service personnel, customers)
- Physical Evidence
(Environment provided by the service outlet plus tangibles which the service involves)
- Process
(How the customer is brought to the service and the service is brought to the customer)

A slightly different version is offered by Christopher et al (1993)

- Product
- Price
- Place
- Promotion
- People
(Service personnel, customers)
- Customer service
(A clearly differentiated and superior value proposition provided to specific market segments)
- Processes
(How the customer is brought to the service and the service is brought to the customer.)

However, adherents of the Nordic School view the marketing mix concept as more appropriate to transaction marketing, substituting the concept of networks of exchange. Gummesson (1995: 252) suggests that adherence to the marketing mix paradigm is dangerous:

"Some understand RM (Relationship Marketing) to be getting a firmer grip on the customer through a smart bag of tricks that help the company to trap customers and chain them to it. This may be relationship selling but does not qualify as relationship marketing. RM involves relationships, not just a series of repeated transactions. Interpreted in the light of the marketing mix paradigm, the inherent strengths of relationship marketing will not be exploited."

In the previous chapter it was suggested that there were differences in emphasis between the American and European views of quality (sections 3.2 and 3.3.1) and that an important issue was the weight given to customers as against other stakeholders. The issues discussed above seem to suggest a related difference in the views taken of marketing. Whereas the American view is that marketing is orientated solely to customers, the Nordic view implies that other players must also be considered in marketing activity.

4.1.1 Services operations management

In Chapter 3, the production management heritage of the discipline of operations management was discussed. Early pioneers of operations management were amongst the first to explore the management peculiarities of services. In Wild's (1977) work for example, operations are classified according to four dimensions, manufacture, transport, supply and service. A theme in some of this early work is how the fundamentals of manufacturing operating systems might find application in services (e.g. Levitt 1972, Wild 1977). However, when researchers came to examine operating systems in services, they found that modes of analysis developed for manufacturing had limited applications (e.g. Armistead and Killeya 1984), and new conceptual models were required. Researchers in the UK and USA played a prominent role in developing this new branch of the subject.

Early concerns were to elucidate the characteristics of service (e.g. Sasser et al 1978; Mills and Moburg 1992; Morris and Johnston 1987), models of service operating systems (e.g. Chase 1978, 1991; Shostack 1984; Kingman-Brundage 1989, 1991, 1993; Shostack and Kingman-Brundage 1990; Armistead 1990; Congram and Epelman 1995), the examination of operations control (e.g. Johnston and Morris 1985), studies of capacity management (e.g. Sasser 1976; Lovelock 1984; Northcraft and Chase 1985; Bechtold and Showalter 1987) and quality management (e.g. Haywood-Farmer and Stuart 1988; Johnston 1987). Studies also included productivity (e.g. Heaton 1977; Blois 1984; Fitzsimmons 1985; Haywood-Farmer and Nollet 1985; Schroeder and Anderson 1985; d' Alcantra 1987; Armistead et al 1988), performance measurement (Fitzgerald 1988, 1991) and the service encounter (e.g. Czepiel et al 1985-a).

The primary focus of the service operations management literature has tended to be on major mass service enterprises, such as banking, retail, hotel and restaurant chains. There has also been a less pronounced, but significant exploration of professional services (e.g. Maister and Lovelock 1982; Brown and Swartz 1989; Haywood-Farmer and Stuart 1990). In the UK literature, rather more than the American literature, contributions have also been made about public sector services, especially health services, both as part of an investigation of service operations (e.g. Voss et al 1985) or as means of illustrating more general operations management principles (e.g. Slack et al 1995). Leisure or sports and recreation services have not been considered except as case studies in text books (e.g. Voss et al 1985, Johnston et al 1993, Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons 1994, Slack et al 1995).

However, service quality research has very much come to the fore in service operations management research. Initially the focus was largely upon an application of mainstream quality

movement approaches, such as quality control and quality assurance, to service businesses (Hostage 1975, Armistead 1985). Over the last decade, the perceived service quality paradigm, drawn from service marketing and management, has asserted a strong influence. Thus operations management research in quality now possesses two different foci: in manufacturing it remains with the mainstream quality movement, but in services follows service management.

This seems indicative of an unsatisfactory place for services within the operations management discipline. In his extensive review of the operations management literature, Johnston (1993: Ch. 2) concluded that as a subject it remains dominated by its manufacturing heritage. Whilst the literature on service operations is extensive, there is as yet only a small range of textbooks available to help students and practitioners develop their understanding of service operations management (e.g. Sasser et al 1978, Fitzsimmons and Sullivan 1982, Voss et al 1985, Harris 1989, Murdick et al 1990, Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons 1994; Schmenner 1995). There are no specialist journals, with research contributions being made either to operations management or (more recently) to general service management journals. Thus the trend has been for service operations management to develop within the context of the multifunctional subject of service management, which is now reviewed.

4.1.2 Services management

In this section we now proceed to examine the multifunctional discipline of service management, which has increasingly provided the intellectual context for services researchers, including those focusing upon service quality. Cross-disciplinary journals such as the *Service Industries Journal* and the *International Journal of Service Industry Management* (founded in 1990), and textbooks such as Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (1994) and Glynn and Barnes (1995) are playing an important role in the development of the subject.

The term "Services management" was popularised by Normann (1984). In his review of the development of the subject, Grönroos (1994-b) suggests that:

"...major impacts on this perspective have come from at least six different areas: marketing, operations management, organizational theory and human resources management, and service quality management, and finally as a sixth area business executives and consultants. The approach by business executives and consultants was originally heavily influenced by the Scandinavian experience in turning around and managing service firms, particularly SAS Scandinavian Airlines System (see Albrecht and Zemke 1985; Carlzon 1987). In addition to these areas, there are scattered contributions from other disciplines as well (e.g. economics)" (Grönroos 1994-b: 6).

Both Albrecht (1988) and Grönroos (1990) have proposed definitions for service management:

"Service management is a total organizational approach that makes quality of service, as perceived by the customer, the number one driving force for the operations of the business" (Albrecht 1988: 20).

"Service management is:

(1) To understand the utility customers receive by consuming or using the offerings of the organization and how services alone or together with physical goods or other kinds of tangibles contribute to this utility, that is to understand how total quality is perceived in customer relationships, and how it changes over time;

(2) To understand how the organization (personnel, technology and physical resources, systems and customers) will be able to produce and deliver this utility or quality;

(3) To understand how the organization should be developed and managed so that the intended utility or quality is achieved; and

(4) To make to the organization function so that this utility or quality is achieved and the objectives of the parties involved (the organization, the customers, other parties, the society etc.) are met" (Grönroos 1990: 117).

Grönroos (1994-b: 7) recognises five facets of the service management perspective which are useful in understanding the conceptual background upon which service management researchers are drawing.

"1. It is an *overall management perspective* which should guide decisions in all areas of management (not only provide management principles for a separate function such as customer service);

2. It is *customer driven* or market driven (not driven by internal efficiency criteria);

3. It is a *holistic perspective* which emphasizes the importance of intraorganizational, cross-functional collaboration (not specialization and the division of labour);

4. Managing *quality is an integral part* of service management (not a separate issue)

5. *Internal development* of the personnel and reinforcement of its commitment to company goals and strategies are strategic prerequisites for success (not only administrative tasks)" (Grönroos 1994-b: 8).

The customer orientation of service management is clearly related to the key place of service quality in its conceptual universe. Researchers such as Heskett et al (1991) have shown the great significance of customer retention and loyalty in service businesses. This is also apparent from the Anglo-Saxon relationship marketing literature (e.g. Christopher et al 1993) which concentrates upon ongoing organisation - customer relationships. Service quality is represented as critical to the maintenance and strengthening of these relationships. Grönroos (1994: 11) cites his own research and that of Gummesson and Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, as showing the need for quality management to be included as an integral part of the developing service management paradigm. The customer orientation apparent in Total Quality Management (TQM), and the findings of the Profit Impact of Market Strategy (PIMS) research (Buzzell and Gale 1997) have also influenced the development of service management.

It is not surprising therefore, that it is the service marketing view of service quality, that is customer perceived service quality or customer satisfaction, which is dominant in service management research. Grönroos (1994: 12) argues that the involvement of those with an externally (i.e. external customer) focused view of quality is a source of strength for service management.

"Here is a big difference between TQM and service management. TQM has been developed by non-marketing people who only recently have observed that customers are important to the success of the business. The customer-perceived quality focus and quality management models inherent in service management have been developed by marketing and operations as part of the interface between those two areas. Marketing and quality are seen as two sides of the same coin. Hence the contact with marketing is more natural in service management than in TQM" (ibid.: 8).

4.2 Concerns of Services Management

4.2.0 Features of services

In the early literature on service there is a concern to demonstrate that services are significantly distinct from goods to justify study as a subject in their own right. In 1963 Regan highlighted the vital point of the inseparability of production and consumption in services. Goods are produced, sold and then consumed; services tend to be sold and then produced and consumed simultaneously. Inseparability means that the service buyer participates, to a greater or lesser degree depending on the service, in the service production processes.

Rathmell (1966) proposed a goods-services continuum, with pure goods and pure services at either end. Most purchases fall somewhere in the middle.

"Most goods are a complex of goods and facilitating services; most services are a complex of services and facilitating goods" (Rathmell 1966: 34).

In his notes on the marketing characteristics of services, Rathmell goes on to record the heterogeneity and intangibility of services. Further, he states that the buyer is a client rather than a customer, placing himself 'in the hands of' the service provider.

"The buyer is not free to use the service as he wishes, as would be the case in the purchase of a good; he must abide by certain prescripts laid down by the seller in order for the service to make any contribution" (Rathmell 1966: 35).

Shostack (1977) emphasised the importance of the intangibility of services, proposing a scale of intangibility. In goods the tangibles are dominant, in services it is the intangibles. Grönroos (1978) suggested that the three most important characteristics of services were intangibility, the production/consumption interaction and the lack of ownership and transaction of ownership.

The orthodox view now appears to be that services differ from goods in the following ways:

- "intangibility - services are to a large extent abstract and intangible;
- heterogeneity - services are non-standard and highly variable;
- inseparability - services are typically produced and consumed at the same time, with customer participation in the process, and;
- perishability - it is not possible to store services in inventory" (Payne 1993: 7).

However, some scholars (e.g. see Jones and Hall 1995) argue that service management has typically conceived services as "different" from Fordist manufacturing. As manufacturing increasingly becomes post-Fordist and the competitive regime undergoes fundamental shifts, it has a tendency to look more like service. This "servitisation" of manufacturing is prompting a reassessment of service management paradigms. It highlights the problem with all of the defining characteristics reviewed above in that it is possible to conceive of activities which would generally be thought of as services and yet do not readily correspond with one or other of these characteristics. Examples include wholesale supply (intangibility), McDonalds type fast-food (heterogeneity), mail-order (inseparability and perishability).

Morris and Johnston (1987) proposed that the presence of customers within the core operations of many service organisations (or customer processing organisations) as a consequence of inseparability, meant that service organisations have to deal with inherent variation. Processes dealing with customers are thus qualitatively different from other processes. In a sense this difference lies behind the four "orthodox" characteristics of services cited above, which in fact only apply when the customer is present.

4.2.1 Classifications of services

It was apparent to early service researchers that the term "services" covered widely disparate types of activity and enterprise; it was important therefore to develop a language which allowed scholars and practitioners to draw distinctions and highlight similarities. Contributions were from both marketing (Judd 1964; Rathmell 1974; Shostack 1977; Kotler 1980; Lovelock 1980) and operations management perspectives (Hill 1977; Sasser et al 1978; Thomas 1978; Chase 1978, Schmenner 1986). Lovelock (1983) drew on this work in order to develop his five-fold classification scheme. This aims to answer each of the following questions:

- "1. What is the nature of the service act?
2. What type of relationship does the service organization have with its customers?

3. How much room is there for customization and judgement on the part of the service provider?
4. What is the nature of supply and demand for the service?
5. How is the service delivered?" (Lovelock 1983: 11).

Below this classification is applied to the sports and recreation services under study, the analysis being complicated by the diversity of the service bundle available. The analysis is thus directed to the core services associated with participation in sport and recreation activities. The service act is directed at people's bodies, though it may also include their minds where education and development are involved (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Lovelock's scheme "understanding the nature of the service act" showing position of recreation services

What is the nature of the service act?	Who or what is the direct recipient of the service?	
	People	Things
Tangible actions	Services directed at people's bodies: <i>Recreation services without tuition</i> <i>Recreation services with tuition</i>	Services directed at goods and other physical possessions:
Intangible actions	Services directed at people's minds: <i>Recreation services with tuition</i>	Services directed at intangible assets:

Source: based on Lovelock (1983)

The service is experienced in a series of discrete transactions, although the nature of the relationship between customer and provider varies according to whether a membership system is in place, and whether the individual is a member or an occasional, casual customer (Figure 4.4).

The degree of customisation and judgement involved in service is related to the particular kind of activity being offered and undertaken by the customer (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.4: Lovelock's scheme "relationship with customers" showing position of recreation services		
	Type of relationship between the service organisation and its customers	
Nature of service delivery	Membership relationship	No formal relationship
Continuous delivery of service		
Discrete transactions	<i>Recreation centre members</i>	<i>Casual recreation centre users</i>

Source: based on Lovelock (1983)

Figure 4.5: Lovelock's scheme "customisation and judgement in service delivery" showing position of recreation services		
Extent to which customer contact personnel exercise judgment in meeting individual needs	Extent to which service characteristics are customised	
	High	Low
High	<i>Coaching programmes</i>	<i>Class tuition</i>
Low		<i>Activities without tuition</i>

Source: based on Lovelock (1983)

Like most leisure services, demand for sport and recreation services fluctuates according to daily, weekly and seasonal cycles. There is a great deal of variation between facilities on how peak demand is met, depending both on the market and upon the capacity management strategies in use (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6: Lovelock's scheme "nature of demand relative to supply" showing position of recreation services

Extent to which supply is constrained	Extent of demand fluctuation over time	
	Wide	Narrow
Peak demand can usually be met without delay	<i>Most recreation services</i>	
Peak demand regularly exceeds capacity	<i>Some recreation services</i>	

Source: based on Lovelock (1983)

The services under study are local authority recreation centres. Generally local authorities have been concerned to ensure an element of equity in access to their facilities, this implying that their facilities are distributed across the borough or district, rather than being spatially located close together. This implies that most customers, once the opportunity costs of a visit to a recreation centre are taken into account, have little choice apart from their nearest recreation centre (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7: Lovelock's scheme "method of service delivery" showing position of recreation services

Nature of interaction between customer and service organisation	Availability of service outlets	
	Single site	Multiple set
Customer goes to service organisation	<i>Recreation service (for most customers)</i>	<i>Recreation service (for some customers)</i>
Service organisation comes to customer		
Customer and service transact at arm's length (mail or electronic communications)		

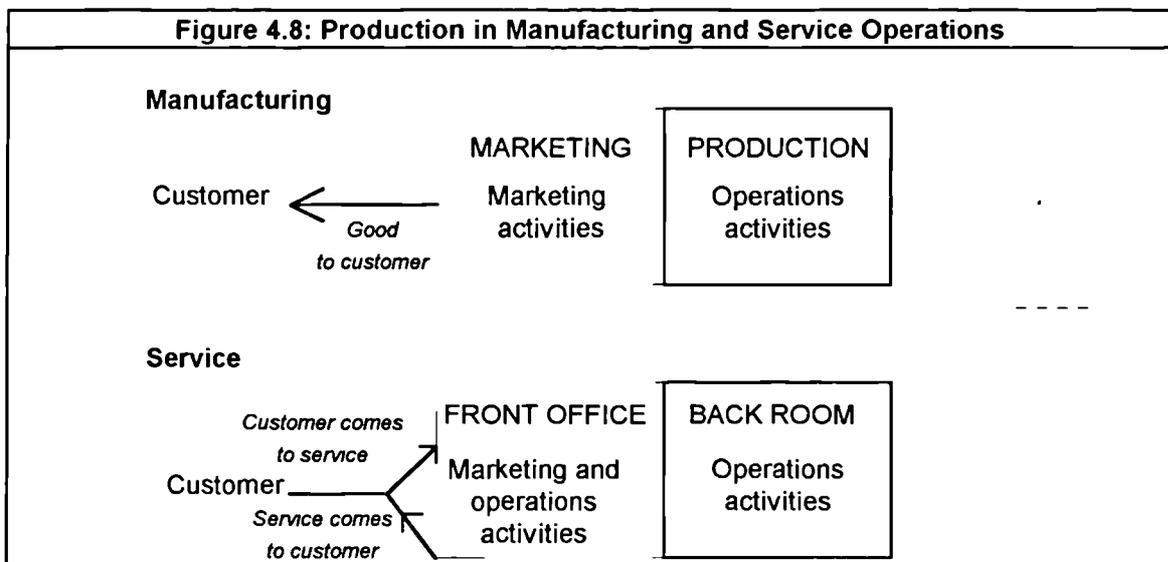
Source: based on Lovelock (1983)

Two major points emerge from this application of the Lovelock scheme. First, it highlights the substantial differences between services. Service quality research relating to one kind of service may not be readily transferable to another, positioned differently in the classification system (as suggested by Wright 1995, quoted earlier in this chapter). Second, it highlights the heterogeneity of sport and recreation services themselves. Local authority sport and recreation centres offer a particularly wide range of services, quality mechanisms. Customer expectations and perceptions of service are likely to vary between them.

4.2.2 Classifications of service processes

An element of service management classification schemes has been a consideration of service processes. Because the quality movement has developed quality management techniques which take into account operations processes, it is convenient to examine the service processes classifications separately and this is done below.

One of the key concepts of service management, which can be traced back to Levitt (1972) and Chase (1978) is that of the front office and back room. The front office is the area in which the customer, servers and tangibles interact to produce and consume the service (service delivery). The back room is an area from which customers are excluded and is devoted to the production of tangibles involved with the service and with support activities (see Figure 4.8 below). The relative role of front office and back room varies according to the nature of the service, in particular according to the amount of customisation and whether this is done in the front office or back room.



Source: after Armistead, in Voss et al (eds.) (1985: 8)

In the service under study the back room is typically small both in relative physical size and in the proportion of operations activities that go on within it. Plant rooms are associated with production of certain tangibles (treated air and water) and offices with support activities; where bar/ cafeteria services are provided there are associated back room areas. All other activities go on in the front room.

Manufacturing based operations management identified five process types: project, jobbing, batch, line and continuous process operations (e.g. Hill 1983, 1985; Wild 1971). The key

dimensions which differentiate these processes are product variety and product volume. Sasser et al (1978) proposed an application to services of this typology. Chase (1978) suggested that a key element was the length of time the customer was in contact with the service. Maister and Lovelock (1982) added the extent of customisation to this element, producing the matrix shown below in Figure 4.9.

Several other scholars have discussed service process classification (Maister 1983; Morris and Johnston 1987; Schmenner 1986; Shostack 1987; Haynes 1990; Wemmerlov 1990), which has led to the following being proposed as elements for classification: people or equipment based, product or process based, amount of discretion of customer contact staff, and value-added in front office or back room. Silvestro et al (1992) investigated these classifications in a study of eleven major service organisations. They found that they could use the measure of volume to integrate the various service classifications in the literature into a single service process model. This is shown in Figure 4.10 below.

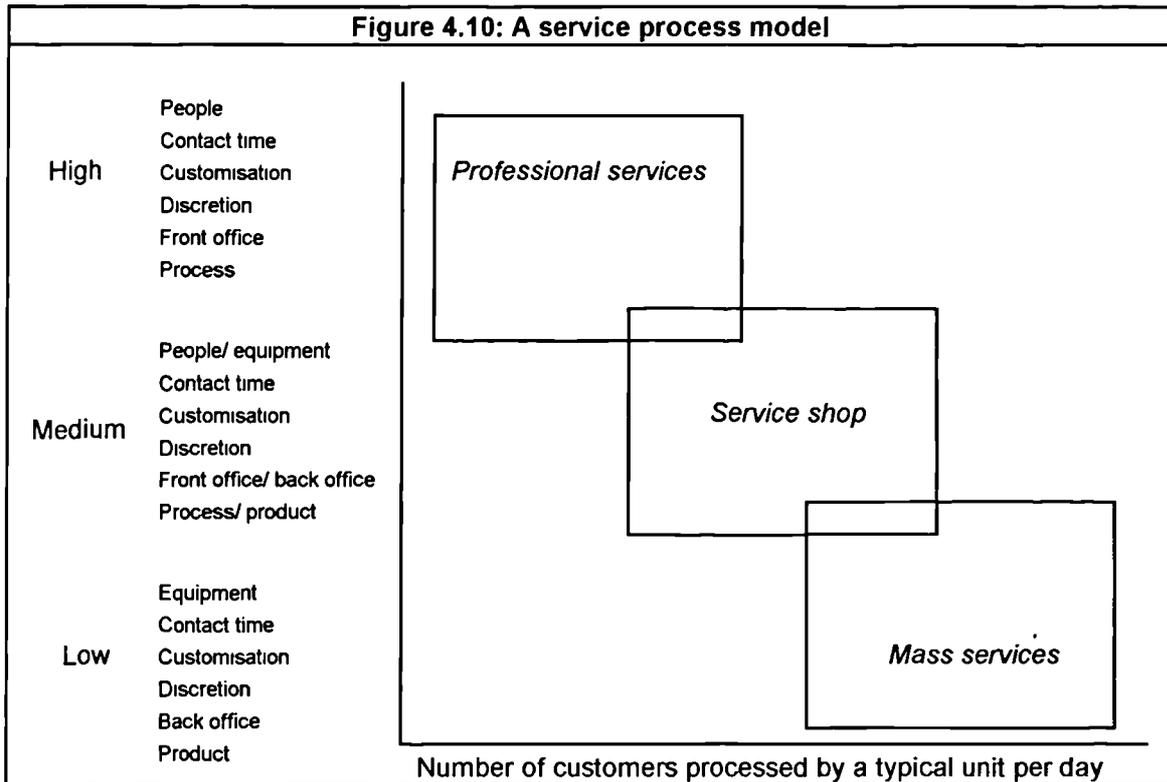
Figure 4.9: Maister and Lovelock's service process classification scheme

Extent of customisation	Extent of customer contact	
	Low	High
Low	Service factory	Mass service
High	Job Shop	Professional service

Source: Maister and Lovelock 1982

We now turn to a brief consideration of how the service process model might be applied to the sport and recreation services offered by leisure centres. A particular issue is that they supply different kinds of services which occupy different places on this model. Typical "pay and play" activities such as casual swimming, unsupervised use of a gym/ fitness suite or hire of a sports hall court involve the service organisation in little more than hire of facilities and equipment. There is little or no service customisation and customer contact staff play a relatively minor role. These activities may be considered examples of mass service. However, other activities, such as classes, fall within the service shop archetype since the contact time with staff is greatly extended, and there is more scope for customisation of the service and for discretion by the

tutor. The process is also at least as significant as the product offering supplied. Some centres also provide professional services in the form of one-to-one coaching and tuition, or sports injuries clinics; however they are a relatively minor component of the service bundle provided by most centres. Most of the activities supplied by the organisations under study fall into the mass service or service shop categories.



Source: Silvestro et al 1992

In fact, relatively little appears to have been done to elaborate service management models for sport and recreation services. Notable work was accomplished by Chelladurai, Scott and Haywood-Farmer (1987) in developing and modifying after empirical testing, a model for fitness services. They distinguished four dimensions of fitness services as described below. First, influenced by the work of Sasser et al (1978: 17) and Schmenner (1986), they distinguished between primary and secondary elements of the service:

"The primary segment includes all aspects of the service that relate to fitness, such as instructors, equipment, reservation system, and courts. The secondary segment includes all those goods and services within the fitness club that do not relate to fitness per se. Food and beverage services are examples of the secondary segment" (Chelladurai et al 1987: 161).

Second, drawing on ideas from Normann (1984), Sasser et al (1978) and Wyckoff (1984), they postulated a "core and peripheral services" dichotomy. The essential features of the service are

the core services (e.g. fitness testing and instruction) whereas peripheral services are items which surround and support them, such laundry services or car parking. Third, referring to various service process classification schemes (e.g. Maister and Lovelock 1992) they distinguished between professional services and consumer services where the latter approximates to a combination of the service shop and mass service categories of the Silvestro et al (1992) model described in Figure 4.10. The fourth category is a combination of Fitzsimmons and Sullivan's (1982) categories of facilitating goods and supporting facility:

"...when a customer rents a squash court, he/she is buying the exclusive right to use that specific facility for a specified time. His or her main reason for making the rental is to get access to the facility. For this reason we believe that in a fitness club the supporting facilities become facilitating goods; we have therefore combined them" (Chelladurai et al 1987: 163).

However, the facilitating goods used for primary and secondary service will not be co-terminus and are therefore separated on the model. Lastly the authors overlay Lovelock's classification of user benefits (utilities) derived by service customers:

1. Place: convenience of the service facility location;
2. Monetary: cost of service;
3. Psychic: psychological benefits of the service;
4. Time: timeliness of the service;
5. Form: sensory impact of the service" (Chelladurai et al 1987: 163).

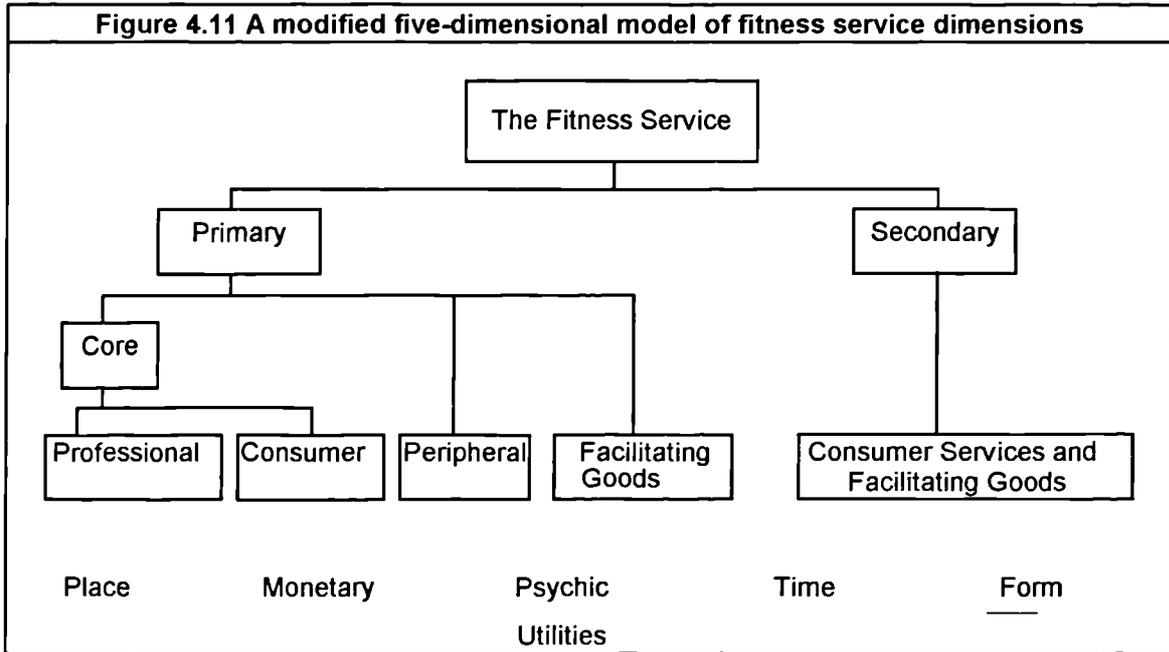
The post-verification modified "five-dimension" model is shown in Figure 4.11 below. Chelladurai (1992) extended the above work in two ways.

"First, the proposed classification includes services offered by a comprehensive variety of sports and physical activity organizations, not just fitness clubs. Second, because client participation is needed in the production of a service, client involvement is included in the analysis. Specifically, client motives for participation in sport and physical activity (gleaned from existing literature) are used as a dimension for classifying sport and physical activity" (Chelladurai 1992: 40).

Thus there is a two-fold focus, first upon the type and extent of employee involvement, and second upon the nature of the client motive. Understanding of the nature of professional services is enhanced through application of the work of Hasenfeld and English (1974) and Hasenfeld (1983). The type of professional services involved are human services, that is those services in which the professional is involved in transforming the individual in some way.

Dickens (1994, 1996) suggests that such services are:

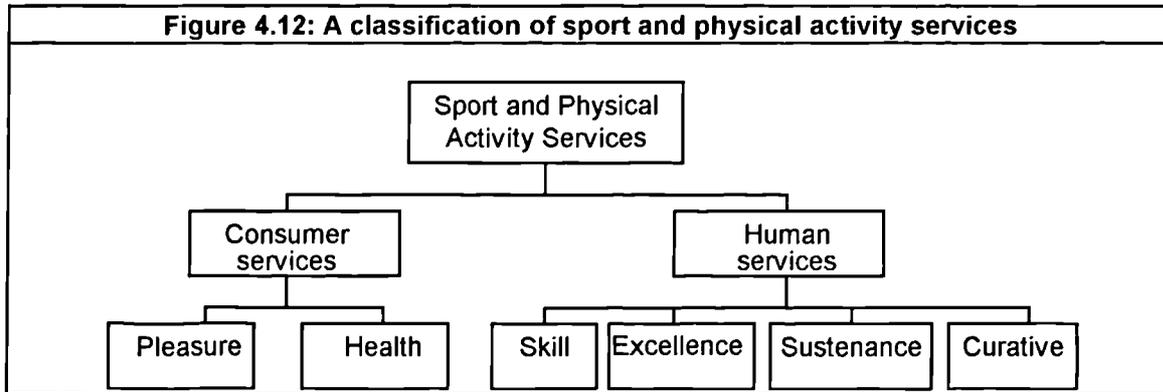
"the sub-set of service industries that deal in the provision of services to consumers with the aim of bringing about some beneficial change in those consumers" (Dickens 1996: 82).



Source: Chelladurai et al (1987)

These therapeutic services are unusual in the influence of values (typically rooted in humanitarian concern), the source of payment (which is often from the state rather than from the service recipient), the restricted choice available to the service recipient, and the considerable heterogeneity of service involved. In applying this work to sport and recreation services, Chelladurai is suggesting that in addition to consumer elements evident in these services, there are also elements of welfare. Some of these themes are explored in more detail in the succeeding chapter (section 5.7.0).

Motives for participation in sport and physical activity are described as pursuit of pleasure, pursuit of skill and pursuit of excellence, and this yields the classification scheme shown in Figure 4.12 below.



Source: Chelladurai (1992)

The above models are relevant to this study because they highlight the disparate types of service activity conducted under the umbrella term of sport and recreation services. Further, they show that the service essentials, both from the point of view of the provider's operations and from the customer's perception, are strongly determined by the place of the service along the professional service - mass service continuum. Because of the large element of contribution by the customer to the production of these services, both the service person and the customer must be included within the scope of an analysis. The implications of the above for quality management is that control of quality of both staff and front office tangibles are likely to be important. However, the nature of the activity undertaken by customers may influence the importance of each component to them.

The two papers discussed above take account of the particular contribution of customers. In services generally, this contribution has been the subject of enquiry by several service researchers. For example, the concept of a "servuction" system (Langeard et al 1981), recognises that consumers also produce the service. Edvardsson et al (1994: 12) use the term "co-service" in order to highlight the production role of the service consumer:

"In services, production, delivery and consumption are overlapping processes and the consumer participates as an active co-producer. We use the term 'co-service' to highlight the unique nature of creating, rather than 'producing' a service, in a process with the service receiver as an active participant...Often persons in need of service work with others to meet their own needs - they take the fullest part they can in co-producing the service by co-assessing, co-planning and co-providing" (Edvardsson et al 1994: 12).

4.2.3 The Service Experience

In this section of the literature review, research relating directly to the customer-organisation interaction is considered. Since customers' perceptions of the service organisation and the

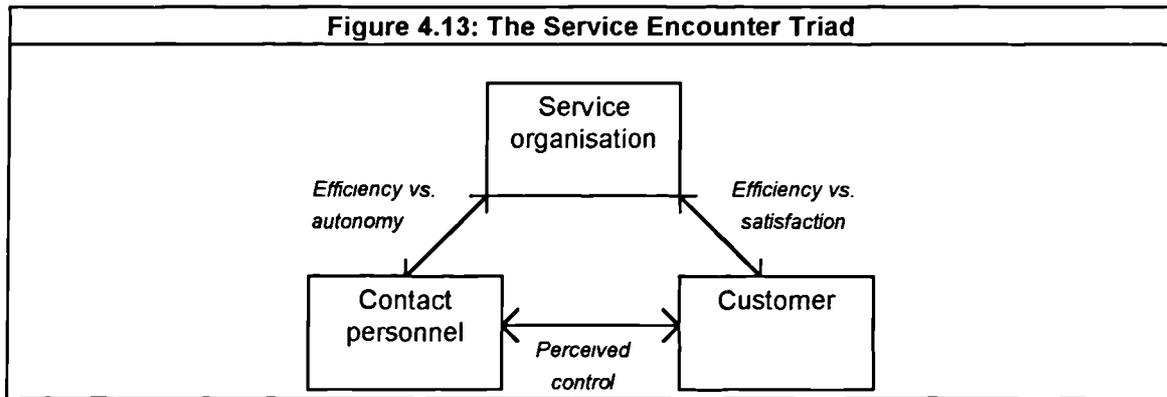
quality of service it provides are likely to be influenced by these interactions, this is of consequence to any discussion of service quality.

Normann (1984) drew attention to the importance of those instances in the service process when the customer is in direct contact with the service provider, coining the term "moments of truth", which was itself popularised by Carlzon (1987). Although Normann's term highlights the uniqueness and importance of each encounter between service person and customer (Mattsson 1994) some authors have preferred more neutral words, such as service encounter (Shostack 1984, 1985) or service meeting (Gummesson 1991, cited in Mattsson 1994: 46). The term "service encounter" is used in slightly different ways in the research, some researchers (e.g. Czepiel et al 1985-b; Bitner 1990) taking it to mean those elements of the service where there is a direct customer-service staff interpersonal element, others (e.g. Shostack 1984) using it to cover any direct interaction with the service organisation, including those with facilities and equipment.

Mattsson (1994: 47) points out that in spite of a lengthy period of research on consumer behaviour, there is still a substantial lack of knowledge about how consumer evaluations are formed. It is clear that interaction with service persons is an important component, but that it is closely bound up with other elements. Research in service marketing has underlined the significance of the evidence that surrounds the service encounter (e.g. Shostack 1977; Bitner 1990). Since customers find the intangible aspects of service impossible to judge pre-purchase, and frequently difficult to judge post-service, they make some evaluations about the quality of the offer based on cues provided by the physical evidence. Customers also make judgements about the whole service process about which they have knowledge (e.g. Brown and Swartz 1989).

The literature has been concerned with several aspects of the service experience including: to classify types of service encounter (e.g. Shostack 1984); to elaborate paradigms for understanding customer-server interactions (e.g. Czepiel et al 1985-b; Surprenant and Solomon 1987; Solomon et al 1985; Hui and Bateson 1991; Grove et al 1992) to identify which part of the service process leads to critical encounters (e.g. Bitner et al 1994, Johnston 1995); to build a framework for understanding what constitutes good management of an encounter (Bitner et al 1990), and to examine the consequences for customer service and customer care programmes (Lewis 1990, 1995). Mattsson (1994) extended consideration of service encounters to those interactions which involve internal, rather than external, customers.

Service encounter research has been useful for understanding service quality through highlighting the importance of the roles of customer, service person and service organisation/ service operation manager. Bateson (1985) suggested a service encounter triad in which a vital quality issue is how the interaction is controlled, inappropriate forms of control leading to unsatisfactory encounters for one or more of the parties (Figure 4.13 below).



Source: Bateson (1985)

The triad is useful in several respects. First, whilst much of the service quality literature (e.g. Zeithaml et al 1990) stresses the unity of interest between service organisation and its customers in the pursuit of service quality, Bateson's work shows how they can also come into conflict. If one considers service quality and customer satisfaction on the transaction level, it is clear that the needs of a particular customer in a particular transaction can be in conflict with the efficiency objectives of the service organisation, since satisfying the customer may require a trade-off with resource management which the service organisation does not wish to make. Second, it suggests that in certain circumstances perceived quality may depend upon the amount of control desired or needed by the customer, which may vary between services and between encounters (e.g. Armistead 1989). Thus achieving service quality for the customer may be connected to the organisation's ability to customise the service where required. Third, the possible need for customisation underscores the need for decisions about control of the service encounter between the organisation and the contact personnel. Notwithstanding the inherent difficulties of controlling the result of an encounter before it starts, in some cases the organisation may be able to prescribe the encounter through service design, written procedures, service standards, or scripting the staff contribution to the encounter. Staff will need to be trained to follow this framework which form the "hard" encounter management tools (Mattsson 1994). However, there are many circumstances when this is not possible and "soft" encounter management tools are appropriate. This is particularly likely to be the case in "high contact" services (Bitran and Hoeh 1990). Here, the theme of empowerment of staff, already discussed

in Chapter Three (3.3.1 and 3.5.2) , is taken up with the emphasis on values, motivation and respect for customers (Bitran and Hoehch 1990). The theme of the inter-related nature of care of customers by staff, care of staff by management and relationship of customers with the service organisations is also evident in the literature on customer service and customer care (e.g. Lewis 1990, 1995).

Studies of the service encounter have also helped to increase the profile of service recovery within the service literature. Bitner et al (1990) used the Critical Incident Technique to develop the following classification of contact employee behaviour which impacts on customer satisfaction.

- Recovery - the employee response to service system failures;
- Adaptability - the employee response to customer needs, preferences, and requests;
- Spontaneity - unprompted and unsolicited employee actions;
- Coping - employee response to problem customers.

Reflecting back on the literature researching the service experience, several points are evident.

First, although person-to-person interactions can be critical in customers' service quality judgements, they are closely connected with other factors such as corporate image, tangibles and service processes. Second, in order to understand the processes at work in service encounters, and how quality arises within them, it is necessary to combine insights from the external (customer) perspective with internal (contact person and management) ones. Third, organisations can increase the likelihood of satisfactory encounters through taking steps to manage the framework in which they occur. However, there is no universal pattern for these steps, since appropriate management of the encounter is related to the precise nature of the service, particularly to the length and type of service and to the customisation and judgement required of contact personnel. Fourth, this research has highlighted the issue of service recovery. Should an encounter lead to customer dissatisfaction, the customer relationship can be maintained, or even enhanced, through appropriate service person or management action.

4.3 Service Quality

4.3.0 Perceived Service Quality

"The term (service quality) is ambiguous and subjective: quality is like beauty, it is in the eye of the beholder" (Edvardsson et al 1994).

"Service Quality is rather like a duck-billed platypus; rare and difficult to describe but something you recognise the moment you come across it" (Hughes 1988).

In this section the literature review of service quality begins with an examination of the relationship between service quality and perceived service quality. In the following section the relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction will be examined. A subsequent section considers determinants of perceived service quality and customer satisfaction. These reviews involve issues of some complexity; as Cronin and Taylor (1992) point out, the terms "perceived service quality" and "customer satisfaction" are sometimes used without sufficient rigour, rendering interpretation of the literature more difficult.

Researchers agree that service quality is a concept hard to define and measure (e.g. Rathmell 1966, Crosby 1979, Garvin 1983, Parasuraman et al 1985, 1988, Brown and Swartz 1989, Carman 1990). Johnston and Morris (1987) suggested that in practice service managers monitor aspects of quality which are easy to measure, generally neglecting the less tangible attributes which require customer involvement in measurement. Garvin's (1988) five definitions of quality include one, "user-based quality", which implies a role for consumer perceptions, and two, "manufacturing-based" and "product-based" which can be said to be objective. Parasuraman et al (1988: 15) quote Holbrook and Corfman (1985) in distinguishing between mechanistic and humanistic quality:

"...mechanistic (quality) involves an objective aspect or feature of a thing or event; humanistic quality involves the subjective response of people to objects and is therefore a highly relativistic phenomenon that differs between judges."

A similar distinction is made by Townsend and Gebhardt (1988) in their concepts of 'Quality in Fact' i.e. conforming to service specifications and 'Quality in Perception' i.e. quality as perceived by the customer. This reflects a consensus between scholars (Garvin 1983, 1988, Holbrook and Corfman 1985, Jacoby and Olson 1985, Zeithaml 1987, Parasuraman et al 1988) that some aspects of quality are objective and some perceived.

However, unlike the "quality movement" literature reviewed in Chapter Three, the service quality literature is strongly concerned with customer-perceived service quality (e.g. Sasser et al 1978, Grönroos 1982, 1984, Lehtinen and Lehtinen 1982, Parasuraman et al 1985, 1988, Cronin and Taylor 1992, Boulding et al 1993). There is a marked tendency to assume that service quality and perceived service quality are the same thing and such an approach is effectively endorsed by Zeithaml et al (1990: 16):

"The only criteria that count in evaluating service quality are defined by customers. Only customers judge quality; all other judgements are essentially irrelevant" (Zeithaml et al 1990: 16).

However, it is important to separate the concepts of perceived service quality, and of service quality, particularly when considering the services under study in this thesis. There are four arguments for so doing, three of which apply to all services with the fourth applying to public sector services.

The first two arguments have been rehearsed in Chapter Three (sections 3.3.0 and 3.3.1). As Wood (1997) has pointed out, there are several different roles played by customers; in one transaction they are not always played by the same person. Second, as was demonstrated in the analysis of the EFQM EQA, a stakeholder conception of business leads one to stress the perceptions both of customers and of others affected by the service business, or in a position to affect it. Thus although perceived service quality is a highly important means of evaluating quality (in the EFQM model, the related construct of customer satisfaction accounts for 40% of the "quality results"), it is only one of four means of making a "results" evaluation (the other three being people satisfaction, impact on society and business results).

The third argument flows from the concept of a marketing equilibrium discussed above. The implication is that businesses need to consider both the collaborative networks, and the regulative regime in which they operate. Service quality judgements by partners, potential and actual, and by regulators, may have a very significant impact on the business.

Concentrating now upon public sector services, one finds that their provision outside normal market mechanisms provides a raft of reasons for separating the notions of service quality and customer perceived service quality. These arguments are covered in more detail in the succeeding chapter of this thesis, but they largely relate to the separation of service provision (to the client) from service payment (by the taxpayer), and to the frequent power differential between service provider and recipient which makes it difficult to consider the recipient as a "free" customer.

Thus service quality and perceived service quality should be seen as separate, but related concepts. The latter can be seen as a product of the former. It is a highly important product, but not the only significant one. Edvardsson et al (1994: 77) make this point, quoting Townsend's and Gebhardt (1988) concepts of 'Quality in Fact' / 'Quality in Perception' distinction, referred to earlier in this section. They suggest that it is no use achieving factual quality if perceived quality is not right. However in addition to this 'external' measure of quality, 'internal' measures are also important. Øvretveit's (1992) work in health services distinguishes between customer quality (whether a service gives patients what they want), professional quality (whether a service meets

patients' needs as diagnosed by professionals), and management quality (whether a service is provided with no waste and errors, at low cost and within legal and other regulations).

Edvardsson et al (1994: 79) suggest that the customer-perceived quality paradigm has been helpful in moving providers from purely internal measures of quality, but is not in itself sufficient to embrace all aspects of service quality.

"...more multidimensional general definitions of quality take into account customer satisfaction as one element of quality, but recognize that customers do not always know what they need."

Thus there is a contrast between the heritage of the "quality movement" and of service management. In the former the tradition is of internal definitions of quality, only latterly being supplemented with a stress on external customer perceptions. In service management the emphasis on external customer perceptions has all but eclipsed a focus on the role of internal quality definitions. However, in both the quality movement and service management there are indications of an emergent move from a customer to a stakeholder focus for quality. In the former this is evident in the EFQM model and in the latter from the Nordic School network approaches which suggest replacing a notion of "best" quality with that of "right" quality for stakeholders.

4.3.1 Perceived Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

We now move on to consider the theoretical background to the concept of perceived service quality, and to consider its relationship to that of customer satisfaction.

Grönroos (1978, 1982) was one of the first to propose that service quality was a function of customer expectations of service and perceptions of it, subsequently going on to elaborate the first service quality "model" based on this definition (Grönroos 1984). This was very much in line with the findings of other early service scholars (e.g. Sasser et al 1978, Grönroos 1982, 1984, Lehtinen and Lehtinen 1982). A study conducted by Lewis and Booms (1983: 99) led them to conclude:

"Service quality is a measure of how well the service delivered matches consumer expectation. Delivering quality service means conforming to customer expectation on a regular basis."

Subsequent work by Parasuraman et al (1985) led them to emphasise the relationship, not simply between customer expectations of service quality and actual levels of quality provided, but between customer expectations and perceptions of quality. This paper was succeeded by several other by the same authors reporting upon a major investigation funded by the US

Marketing Science Institute, leading to a service quality model (the "Gap Model" [Parasuraman et al 1985]), an approach to perceived service quality measurement and an instrument for so doing (SERVQUAL [Parasuraman et al 1988]) and a proposition for the determinants of perceived quality (ibid.). It is not surprising therefore that their view of service quality has become the predominant one, a reference point and a subject for critique. Some of the problems identified by critics have led to modifications of the original SERVQUAL instrument (Parasuraman et al 1991, 1993, 1994). Because of the central nature of this work, and because of its bearing on an aspect of the methodology of the primary research described in this thesis, it is necessary to summarise the research programme below.

The study reported in 1985 was based upon focus group interviews of customers of four different service sectors (retail banking, stock brokerage, credit cards, appliance repair and maintenance). This led the researchers to a definition of service quality, as perceived by customers as:

"..the degree and direction of discrepancy between customer service perceptions and expectations" (Parasuraman et al 1985).

"...service quality, as perceived by customers, can be defined as *the extent of discrepancy between customers' expectations or desires and their perceptions*" (Zeithaml et al 1990: 19).

Their findings led the researchers to posit a service quality continuum as follows:

"Perceived service quality is further posited to exist along a continuum, ranging from the ideal quality to totally unacceptable quality, with some point along the continuum representing satisfactory quality. The position of a consumer's perception of service quality on the continuum depends on the nature of the discrepancy between the expected service (ES) and the perceived service (PS). When $ES > PS$ perceived quality is less than satisfactory and will tend toward totally unacceptable quality, with increased discrepancy between ES and PS; when $ES = PS$, perceived quality is satisfactory; when $ES < PS$, perceived quality is more than satisfactory and will tend toward ideal quality, with increased discrepancy between ES and PS" (Parasuraman et al 1985: 48-49).

This work also led to the definition of ten dimensions of service quality which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. In a subsequent stage of the research, reported in 1988, these dimensions were "operationalised" into a comprehensive set of statements, 97 in all, which were applied first to customer expectations and then to customer perceptions. Expectations were represented by statements of what service organisations in that sector *should* be like. Perception statements were about the particular organisation of which the respondents were customers. Customers responded to these via a seven point Likert scale indicating agreement/disagreement (Parasuraman et al 1988: 18; Zeithaml et al 1990: 181-186). Through factor and

other analysis of the responses to two successive questionnaires sent to customers of companies in the five sectors of retail banking, stock brokerage, credit cards, appliance repair and maintenance, and long-distance telephony, it was possible to eliminate items thus "purifying" the instrument. The SERVQUAL instrument thus had 22 statements for each of expectations and perceptions, which were grouped into five dimensions. It is clear from Parasuraman et al (1988) and Zeithaml et al (1990) that the researchers believed that SERVQUAL in the expectations-perceptions form they had developed it, and in its dimensional structure, had validity across a wide range of services. However, further research, reported in 1991, and consideration of research of others, caused them to reformulate SERVQUAL, and these changes are described later in this section.

It is useful at this point to consider the literature on the differences between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction. Several authors (Bateson 1992, Cronin and Taylor 1992, Barron and Harris 1995, Zeithaml and Bitner 1996) suggest that the literature is confused on this point. Olshavsky (1985) suggested that perceived quality is an attitude, being an overall evaluation of the service. Bateson (1992) sums up the consensus of the literature in this way:

"Quality is generally conceptualised as an *attitude*, the customer's comprehensive evaluation of a service offering. It is built up from a series of evaluated experiences and hence is less dynamic than satisfaction. Satisfaction is the *outcome of the evaluation a consumer makes of a specific transaction*."

Originally, Parasuraman et al (1988: 14) took a position very similar to Bateson's, but in their more recent work (1994) they suggest that both concepts operate on a global and transaction level. Zeithaml and Bitner (1996: 123) have concluded that:

"...current thinking suggests that both service quality and customer satisfaction can be viewed at the individual service encounter (transaction) level or at a more global level. Thus rather than distinguishing quality and satisfaction in terms of level of analysis, consensus is growing that the two concepts are fundamentally different in their underlying causes and outcomes. While they have certain things in common, satisfaction is generally viewed as a broader concept than service quality assessment, which focuses specifically on dimensions of service. With this view, perceived service quality is a component of customer satisfaction."

Thus for these authors, the cardinal difference between the two concepts is that customer satisfaction is the product not only of perceived service quality, but also of other factors such as the quality of any products associated with the service, price, situational and personal factors that relate to the customer. Other authors (e.g. Anderson et al 1994; Ravald and Grönroos 1996) have suggested that it is value, rather than price alone which is significant for customer satisfaction.

A third distinction between these two concepts is made by Cronin and Taylor (1992) and Anderson et al (1994); here, the issue is how disconfirmation is operationalised. Effectively, their argument is that the comparison level (i.e. expectations) of customers is different between these two concepts. For perceived service quality the comparison level is what the customer *should* expect (based on knowledge of the service sector as a whole); for customer satisfaction it is what the customer *would* expect, based on knowledge of that particular organisation coming from pre-service cues, previous experience and word-of-mouth communication. Parasuraman and his co-workers have responded to these points (Zeithaml et al 1993) by stressing that SERVQUAL is intended to capture perceived service quality, not customer satisfaction. Thus it attempts to capture the difference between *desired* and *perceived* service, whereas a satisfaction instrument would attempt to capture difference between *predicted* and *perceived* service. Parasuraman et al. (1991) developed a refined version of SERVQUAL which modifies the expectations statements, through replacing the "*should*" terminology with statements about what excellent companies "*will*" do.

There is some discussion in the literature about the logical/ causal relationship between perceived service quality, customer satisfaction and customer re-purchase intentions (e.g. Parasuraman et al 1988; Oliver and DeSarbo 1988; Tse and Wilton 1988; Brown and Swartz 1989; Bitner 1990; Zeithaml et al 1990; Bolton and Drew 1991-a, 1991-b; Cronin and Taylor 1992; Erevelles and Leavitt 1992; Swan 1992; Rust and Oliver 1994; Bitner and Hubbert 1994). The weight of the empirical evidence appears to be that perceived service quality is an antecedent to customer satisfaction; but customer satisfaction exerts a stronger influence on purchase intentions than perceived service quality. The implication is that:

"...managers may need to emphasize total customer satisfaction programs over strategies centring solely on service quality. Perhaps, consumers do not necessarily buy the highest quality service; convenience, price, or availability may enhance satisfaction while not actually affecting consumers' perceptions of service quality" (Cronin and Taylor 1992: 62).

We now turn to critiques of the expectations-perceptions structure of SERVQUAL. Parasuraman (1995: 157) suggested that these fall into three categories. First, whether expectations need to be measured in order to measure service quality (Babakus and Mangold 1992, Cronin and Taylor 1992); second how expectations should be interpreted and operationalised (Teas 1993), and third the reliability of the difference score formulation (Babakus and Boller 1992, Brown, Churchill and Peter 1993). To this list it is necessary to add a fourth concern, the reliability of the scale over time (Clow and Vorhies 1993; Lam and Woo 1997).

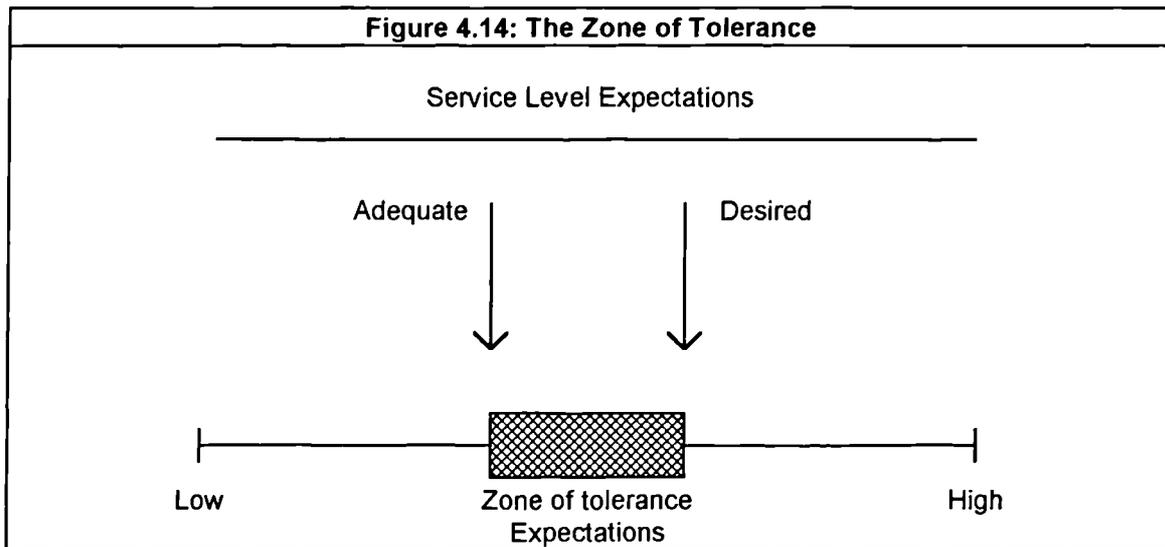
The focus group research of Parasuraman et al (1985) led them to conclude that perceived service quality is similar to an attitude, being an overall evaluation about a service. In their critique of the SERVQUAL research, Cronin and Taylor (1992) suggest that the conceptualisation of SERVQUAL is incongruent both with the theoretical models and empirical evidence of attitude research and with some of the findings of service quality research (e.g. Cohen, Fishbein and Ahtola 1972; Mazis, Ahtola and Klippel 1975; Oliver 1980; Churchill and Surprenant 1982; Woodruff, Cadotte and Jenkins 1983; Bolton and Drew 1991-a). Thus although the weight of evidence for customer satisfaction measurement appears to support the use of disconfirmation scales (e.g. Devlin et al 1993; Rust et al 1994; Danaher and Haddrell 1996), it cannot be assumed that these disconfirmation paradigms are valid when applied to an attitude such as perceived service quality.

"A review of alternative models suggests that the 'adequacy-importance' form is the most efficient model to use if the objective is to predict behavioral intention or actual behavior (Mazis, Ahtola and Klippel 1975). In this model an individual's attitude is defined by his or her importance-weighted evaluation of the performance of the specific dimensions of a product or service (see Cohen, Fishbein and Ahtola 1972). However, experimental evidence indicates that the performance dimension alone predicts behavioral intentions and behavior at least as well as the complete models (Mazis, Ahtola and Klippel 1975). This finding suggests using only performance perceptions as a measure of service quality" (Cronin and Taylor 1992: 60).

Using the 22 perception statements of SERVQUAL, Cronin and Taylor (op. cit.) developed an alternative scale, SERVPERF, which they applied to customers of banking, pest control, dry cleaning and fast food service organisations. They concluded that their performance only scale was better at accounting for variation in perceived service quality than the expectation-performance difference score of SERVQUAL. This point has effectively been conceded by Parasuraman et al (1994) in that they accept that measuring expectations is not necessary in order to predict service quality. However they point out the desirability of expectations measurement in order to achieve a diagnostic validity, that is to enable organisations to identify the most crucial areas for action on quality.

A number of researchers (e.g. see Woodruff et al 1991; Boulding et al 1993; Teas 1993) have discussed reservations about the precise way Parasuraman and his colleagues operationalised customer expectations in SERVQUAL. The concern arises from lack of agreement about the appropriate comparison standard (e.g. ideal, normative or predictive). However, empirical work (e.g. Teas 1993) suggested that the original SERVQUAL wording was unreliable and has prompted a reconceptualisation of the principles behind the instrument (Zeithaml et al 1993).

Thus an enhanced format for the instrument asks respondents to identify both *desired* and *adequate* levels of service. Separating these two levels is a *Zone of Tolerance* (see Figure 4.14 below) that represents the range of performance that a customer would consider satisfactory.



Source: Parasuraman et al (1991)

A critique of the psychometric validity of SERVQUAL has been offered by several researchers (e.g. see Carman 1990; Babakus and Boller 1992; Brown et al 1993). It is suggested that non-difference measures of the expectations-perceptions gap are superior. However, as Parasuraman et al (1993) point out, the empirical evidence is not definite on this issue and it remains unresolved.

The fourth area of concern about SERVQUAL relates to the timing of its administration. Clow and Vorhies (1993) have shown that the timing of expectations questioning affects the response, since the experience of service delivery impacts upon expectations. Lam and Woo (1997) administered the questionnaire to the same respondents several times over a period of one year. They found that whereas the expectations scores remained stable between tests, performance scores did not. The Assurance and Empathy items (see section 4.3.2 below) were particularly subject to instability even over a one week test-retest interval.

4.3.2 The Determinants of Perceived Service Quality

Several different scholars have proposed factors or determinants which influence the perceptions of customers of the service organisation. These are reviewed below, with a discussion on the influences of quality expectations taking place in the subsequent section on quality models.

Grönroos (1984, 1990) proposed two determinants of perceived service quality; technical quality and functional quality. The former relates to:

"what is done...what the customer is left with when the production process and buyer-seller interactions are over" (Grönroos 1990: 37-38).

Functional quality relates to how the service is provided, including the service encounter, the attitude and behaviour of staff, the physical environment, and the accessibility of the service. These are related by customers to the corporate image dimension of quality.

Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1982, 1991) have suggested a three factor structure for the determinants of customer quality perceptions. Physical quality refers to tangible products and facilities; interactive quality arises from the interaction between the organisation and the customers, and corporate quality which is the quality of the organisation's image and profile. They also distinguish between process quality which relates to judgements made by customers whilst the service is in progress and output quality judged at the end of the service.

The most influential work on the structure of perceptions arises from the research of Parasuraman et al (1985, 1988), referred to above. They found that their qualitative work yielded a ten factor structure, which they then reduced to five through quantitative factor analysis in the development work of SERVQUAL. The relationship between the ten and five determinants is shown in Figure 4.15 below.

However, other researchers have had difficulty in replicating this five factor structure in their SERVQUAL studies. Cronin and Taylor (1992) found only one dimension, whilst other studies have shown either two (Babakus and Boller 1991, Mels et al 1997) or eight dimensions (Carman 1990), or between these ranges (Bresinger and Lambert 1990; Cliff and Ryan 1994; Schneider et al 1992). Taylor et al (1993) could not confirm the five dimension structure when they examined a range of recreation and leisure settings.

Figure 4.15: Correspondence between SERVQUAL dimensions and Parasuraman et al's original ten dimensions for evaluating service quality

Original ten dimensions for evaluating service quality	SERVQUAL Dimensions				
	Tangibles	Reliability	Responsiveness	Assurance	Empathy
Tangibles					
Reliability					
Responsiveness					
Competence					
Courtesy					
Credibility					
Security					
Access					
Communication					
Understanding the Customer					

Source: Zeithaml et al (1990: 25)

Returning to the question of dimensionality in 1991, Parasuraman et al suggested that the five dimension structure may generally correspond to how customers conceive of quality, but that other dimensional structures could arise through the way they perceive the service provided by particular organisations. Parasuraman (1995: 167-168) records investigations into the dimensionality of the enhanced SERVQUAL (Zeithaml et al 1993) which supported both the five factor hypothesis and the following possibility:

"a three dimension structure wherein responsiveness, assurance and empathy meld into a single factor" (Parasuraman 1995: 168).

Reviewing the work on determinants of perceived service quality one is forced to the conclusion that a universal five factor structure, as claimed by Zeithaml et al (1990) cannot be sustained across all service types (e.g. Taylor et al 1993). One is struck by the fact that the services investigated by the Parasuraman et al occupy similar positions on the Lovelock classification grid (see section 4.2.1). Great caution would need to be exercised in applying SERVQUAL or the five factor structure to human services or public services, or to services outside North America (Taylor et al 1993: 82). Where such services have been investigated through a scale development procedure similar to Parasuraman et al's different item pools, different dimensional structures have been observed (Howat et al 1996).

Further, if the high factor structures are artefacts of factor analysis, as Parasuraman (1995) admits is possible, it seems to be the case that there may be a return to a simpler structure similar to that originally proposed by members of the Nordic School (e.g. Mels et al 1997). In other words, the five dimensional structure of SERVQUAL may prove to partially coalesce into a smaller number of dimensions, similar to the "technical"/ "functional" dimensions proposed by Grönroos (1984, 1990).

4.3.3 Models of Service Quality

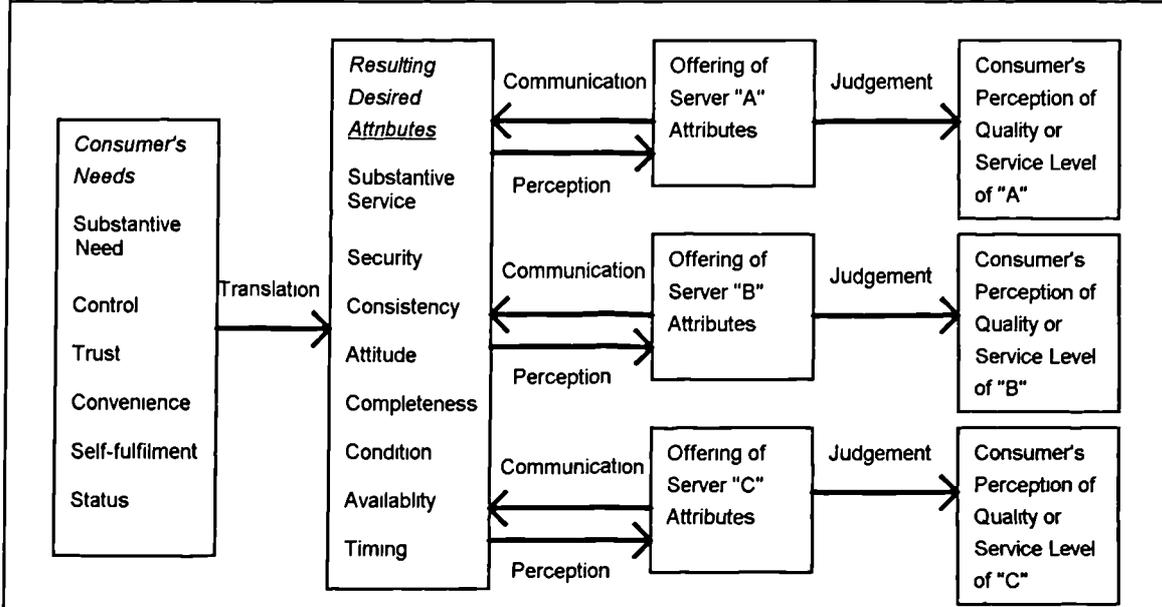
One of the precepts of service quality research is that perceived quality arises from an interaction between the customer's expectations of service, the processes in which customers and the organisation work to create the service, and the encounters between service people and customers. Thus having discussed the nature of perceived service quality, and the methods adopted for its measurement, we now move on to examine models which attempt to show how good or poor customer perceptions of service quality arise from these interactions. Some of these models also attempt to show how perceived quality relates to other quality definitions.

One of the first service quality models proposed was that of Sasser, Olsen and Wyckoff (1978) who argued that the consumer's perception of service quality was the outcome of their attempt to translate their needs into the desired attributes of a service. How the service organisation met the particular mix of desired attributes would affect the perception of the customer about the quality of service. Different consumers are searching for different mixes of attributes and hence, in a competitive environment, it is important that service providers sense consumers' wishes and accurately communicate the service level of their own offering. Figure 4.16 below sets out the proposed consumer judgement model with the consumer need and desired attributes.

Grönroos (1983, 1990) made a fundamental contribution through an emphasis on customer expectations which are compared with perceptions of the service. His Total Perceived Quality model is based upon his two-dimension determinant hypothesis, previously described. This is shown in Figure 4.17 below. Later, Grönroos went on to define six criteria of good perceived service quality:

- "professionalism and skills;
- behaviour and attitudes;
- accessibility and flexibility;
- reliability and trustworthiness;
- recovery (corrective action when something goes wrong), and;
- reputation and credibility" (Grönroos 1988).

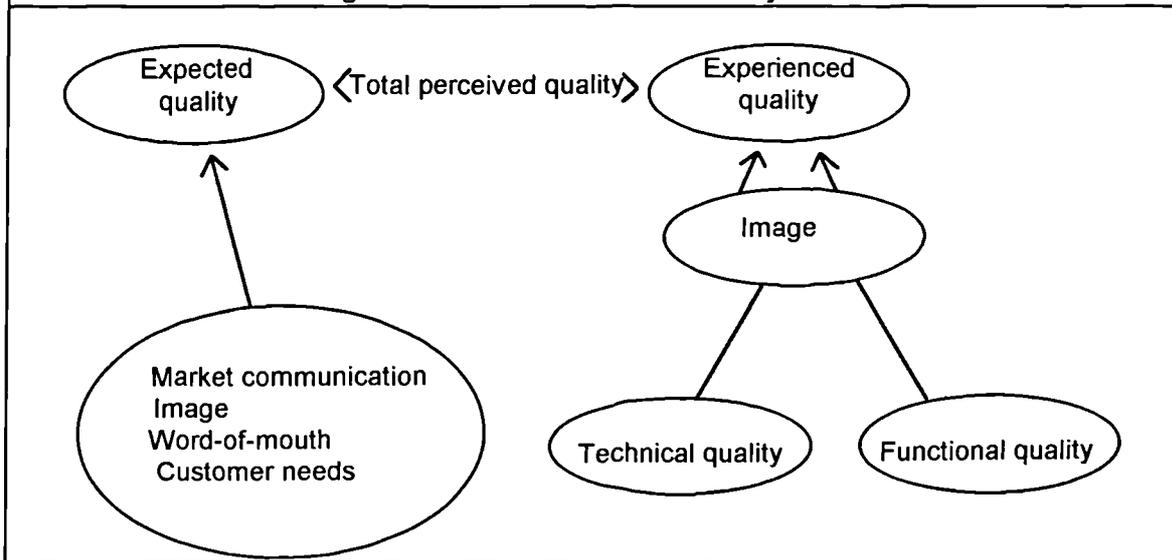
Figure 4.16: Sasser et al's model for consumer establishment of quality and service levels



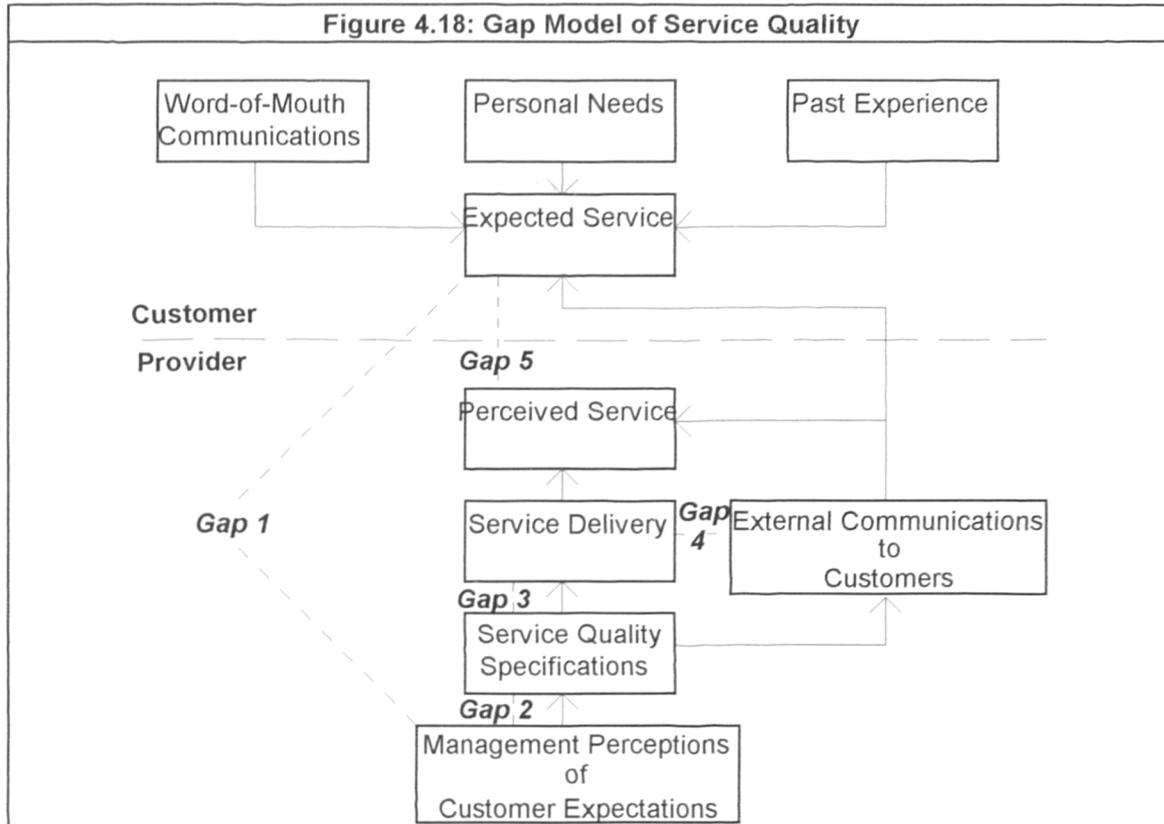
Source: Sasser et al 1978: 178

The most influential model of perceived service quality is the Gap model of Parasuraman et al (1985). This attempts to show how gaps between expected and perceived service quality can arise either through factors working external to the organisation, or through factors arising within it. The original model has been extended to cover more stages of the customer awareness and action process (e.g. Bitner 1988; Zeithaml et al 1988, 1990; Zeithaml and Bitner 1996). The basic Gap model is shown in Figure 4.18 following. Any gap between expected and perceived service (5 on Figure 4.18 below) is seen as arising from one or more of the gaps arising between

Figure 4.17: Total Perceived Quality model



Source: Grönroos (1990)



Source: Parasuraman et al 1985

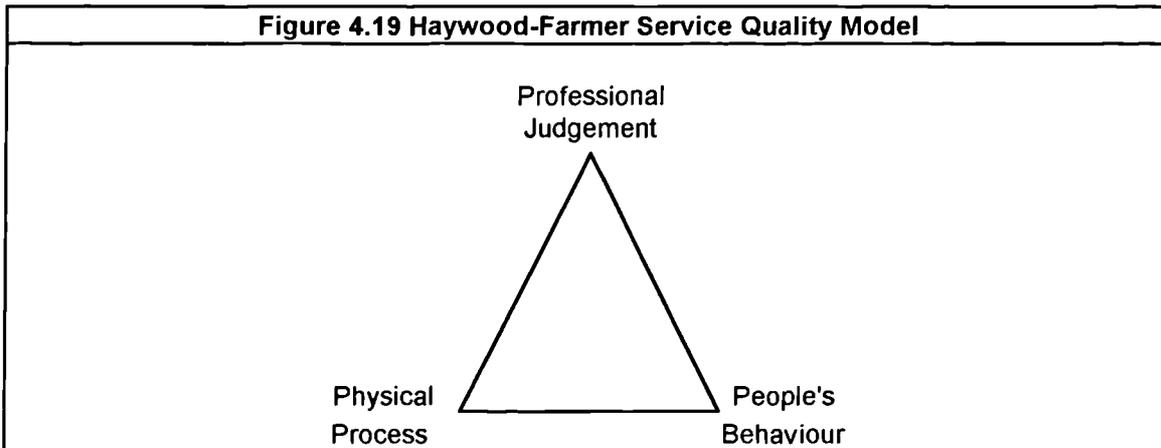
the entities shown on Figure 4.18 above. These causal gaps are those between customer expectations and management perceptions of these expectations (1 on Figure 4.18 above), those between management perceptions and the service specifications they set out (2 on Figure 4.18 above), gaps between service specifications and the delivery of the service (3 on Figure 4.18 above), and those between the service delivery and those of external communications to customers which impact on customer perceptions and expectations (4 on Figure 4.18 above).

Haywood-Farmer (1988) proposed a service quality model with three components:

- physical surroundings, processes and procedures;
- personal behaviour of service staff; and,
- professional judgement of service staff.

To achieve consistent good quality the manager must choose an appropriate mix of these elements as suggested by Figure 4.19. Further, he suggested that control of the mix of contact and interaction, customisation and labour intensity was important, in that it should be appropriate for the customers of each service. In a later paper, Haywood-Farmer and Stuart (1990) went on to develop a means of operationalising the model via a methodology for measuring the 'degree of professionalism' in professional service.

Heskett (1986) produced a strategic service vision which linked service customers, service concept and the service processes. Similarly, a number of attempts have been made to link customer-perceived quality (Edvardsson et al 1994: 88) models with the process which create the service. In a sense, it was also Grönroos (1990) who gave impetus to these attempts through



Source: Haywood-Farmer 1988

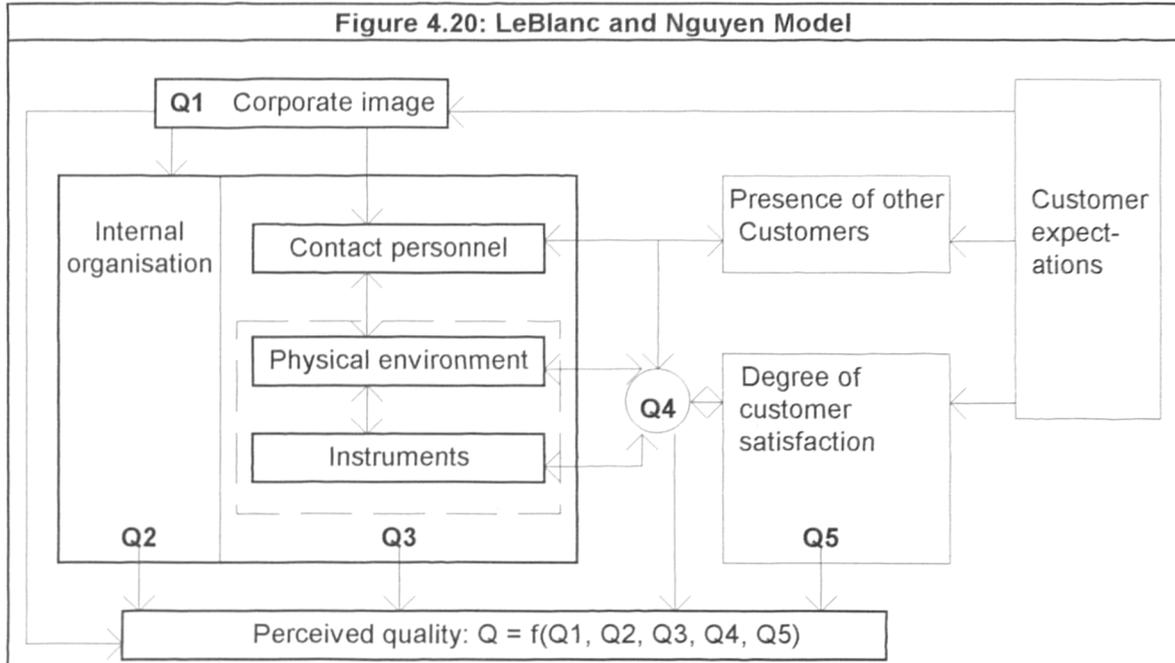
his division of the service into three parts, each of which is subject to consumer evaluation in the light of their service expectations:

- core service - what is being offered, (e.g. for a hotel...lodging);
- facilitating services - necessary services for consumption of the core service, e.g. receptionist; and,
- supporting services - those services which increase the attractiveness of the core service, e.g. a sauna at the hotel.

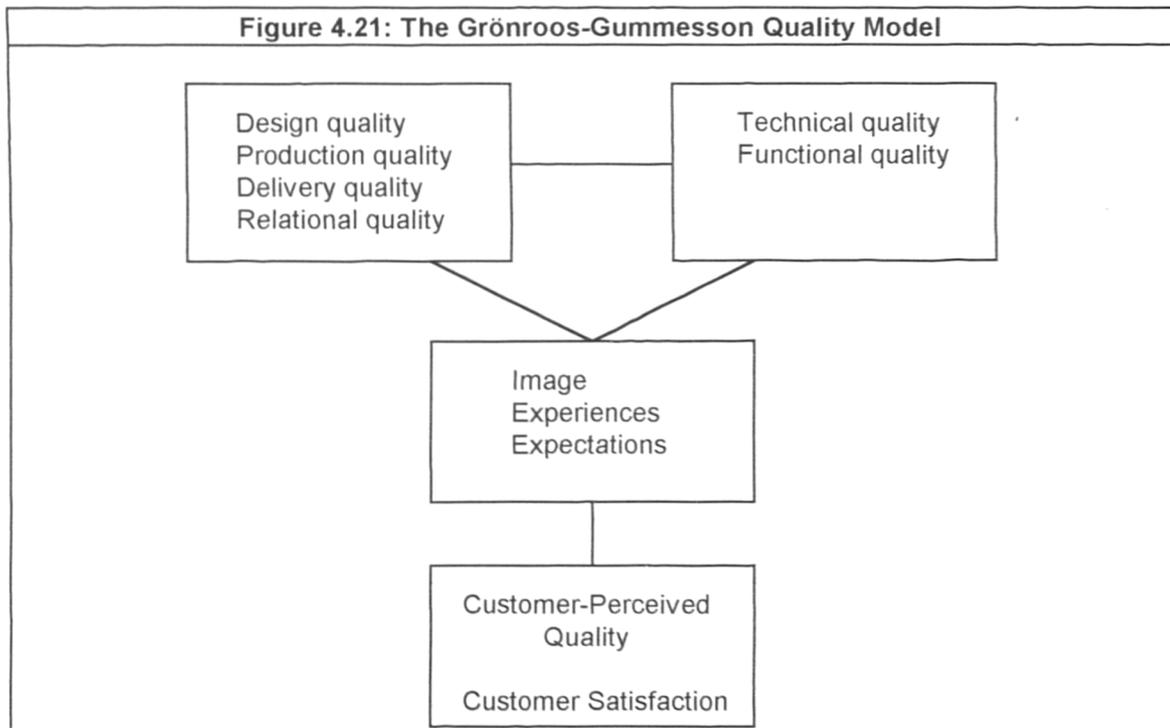
LeBlanc and Nguyen (1988) put forward a holistic model in which customer expectations, perceptions and the image of the service provider were linked with the attributes of the service offering and service system. Perceived quality is a function both of corporate image, internal and interaction factors and customer satisfaction. This is shown below as Figure 4.20 below.

Øvretveit's (1992) Wel-Qual framework, developed for health services, bears some similarities to Heskett's approach. Johnston (1995) investigated the relationship between the series of service encounters which are involved with a service process and the customer "zone of tolerance".

Gummesson and Grönroos (1989 - quoted in Edvardsson et al 1994: 91) drew on the former's empirical work on a manufacturing company (the Gummesson 4Q model) to develop an integrated process/ perception model (see Figure 4.21).



Source: LeBlanc and Nguyen 1988: 10



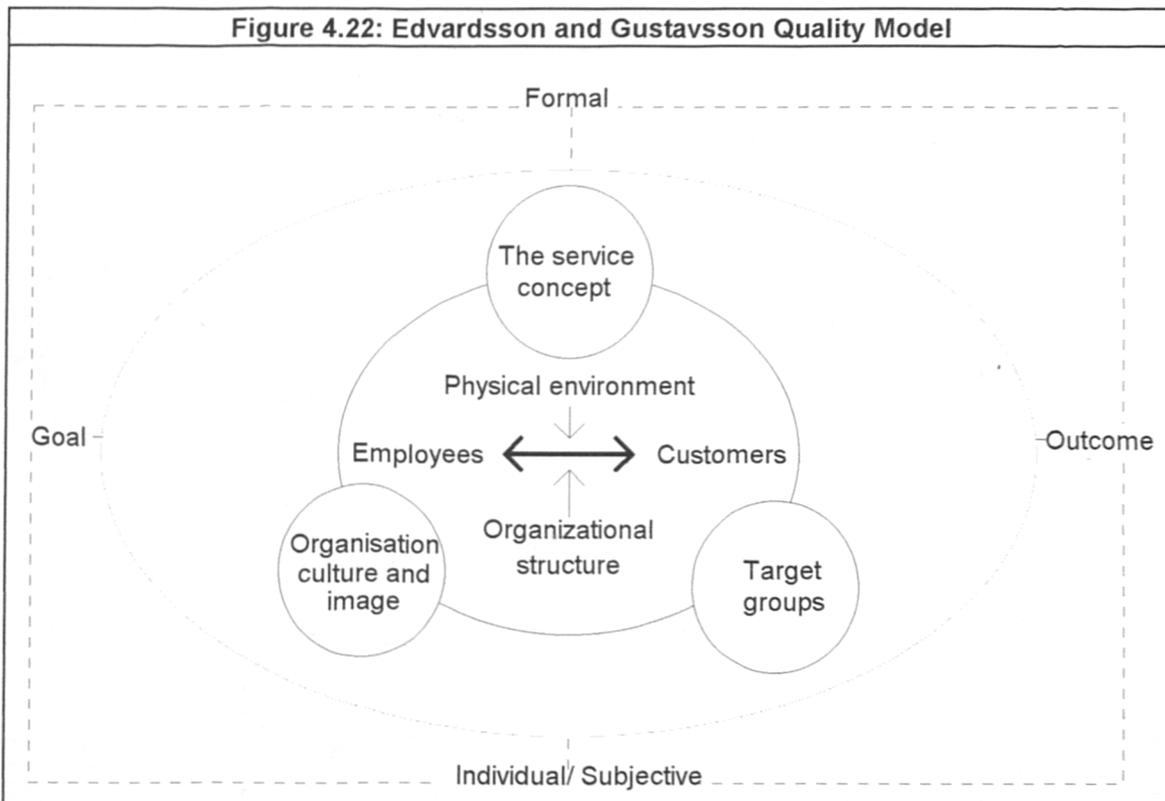
Source: Gummesson and Grönroos (1989)

Edvardsson and Gustavsson (1991) proposed a quality assessment model, shown in Figure 4.22, based upon Normann's (1984) management model. Thus the components of target group, service concept, organisational culture and image and co-service system are linked to both the

organisation's goals and the outcomes of its activities. They suggest that quality results when all of these elements are consistent with one another.

In their review of service quality models and associated literature Brogowicz et al (1990) suggest that the main features of the contribution of the Nordic School are:

"...analysing the interactive nature of buyer-seller relationships; the greater importance of functional quality (which is more difficult, for both consumers and producers, to evaluate than technical quality); the elements of design, production, delivery and relational quality with the two conditions of specialisation and integration. Also important are the concepts of consumer participation, internal marketing, management of "moments-of-truth", and the augmented service offering as related to service quality perceptions, expectations and the experiences of the consumer" (Brogowicz et al 1990: 29).



Source: Edvardsson and Gustavsson 1991

The contributions of the North American School are seen as:

"First, five determinants of service quality were empirically determined....Second, differences between expected service quality and experienced service quality constitute gaps which, once identified, should lead to corrective marketing programmes. Third, work has also been done on the measurement of professional service quality and related gaps with a conceptual model. Fourth, emphasis on service delivery systems replicates the functional and operational emphases from the Nordic School. Additionally, the widespread interest in and emphasis on service

quality occurs in a strategic management framework where the service culture supports the notion of quality as an important strategic issue for competitive organisations" (Brogowicz et al (1990: 32).

These researchers developed their own synthesised service quality model which seeks to take account of the fact that customers make service quality judgements about organisations even when they have not yet experienced the service. This highlights the importance of management not only of the actual service, but also customers' perceptions of it. Using the technical/functional quality distinction, they suggest that managers must determine what customers expect and how they expect to receive that quality. The resultant model is shown in Figure 4.23. The model implies specific management tasks to be undertaken, these are also set out in Appendix 1.

Reviewing the various models of service quality, Edvardsson et al, (1994: 111) suggest a relationship between these models, the main interest groups, and the aspect of co-service examined in them:

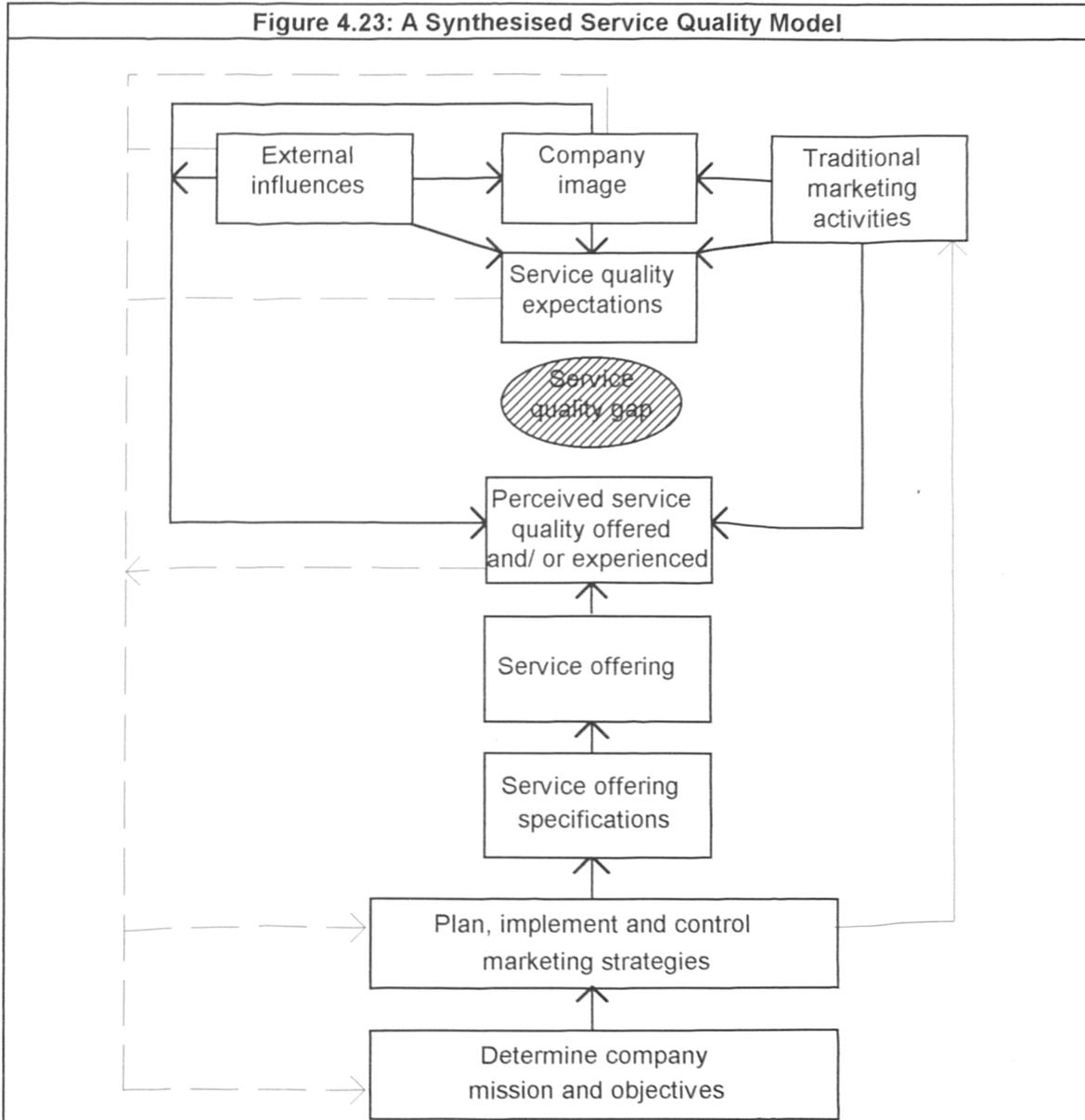
- Customer's View: Customer perceived quality, focusing on the service concept.
- Staff's View: Process view of quality, focusing on the co-service processes.
- Owner's View: Overall view, focusing on co-service.

Reflecting on the development of service quality models one can detect the customer view, with expectations disconfirmation at its core in many models; this develops in parallel with process models. More recently there have been attempts at holistic models which include aspects of both the customer and staff views. However, apart from the work of Haywood-Farmer and Stuart (1990) and Øvretveit (1992), the emphasis is on models which aim to suit all services, rather than on specific types of service. A number of models effectively stress the consumer-producer co-operation (co-service) necessary for service production, reviewed earlier in this chapter (4.2.2).

None of these models relate explicitly to an established quality management method, although several researchers (e.g. Edvardsson et al 1994) refer to TQM as an influence. Potentially, most models support both people based and process based forms of quality management in services, since they recognise the role both of service personnel and of the service process itself in creating customer perceptions of quality.

4.3.4 Management of Service Quality

Having discussed models of service quality, the intention of the following section is to review academic work dealing with the efficacy of different approaches to service quality. Managing, as opposed to merely measuring, service quality is clearly of interest to practitioners, as evidenced by the number of popular texts canvassing various management approaches (e.g. Peters and Waterman 1982; Carlzon 1987; Sewell and Brown 1990). However, the bias of the research appears to be towards studies of measurement, rather than of management, of service quality.



Source: Brogowicz et al 1990: 40

Work more closely related to management includes that on applications of some quality movement approaches to services, such as Haywood-Farmer and Nollet 1993, Edvardsson et al 1994 (TQM); Stuart and Tax 1996 (Quality Function Deployment) or Barnes and Cumby (quality costing). Others have attempted to deepen understanding of concepts derived from service management; examples include Bitner et al 1990, Armistead et al 1995, Jonsen and Knudsen 1995; Johnston 1995 (service encounters and service recovery); Fisk and Grove 1995 (dramaturgy); or Fitzgerald et al 1991 (performance measurement/ management). This literature is highly diverse and often context-specific. In general there appears to be little literature on how, in practice, services manage quality (as opposed to prescriptions for management) and little in the way of comparative studies that enable different approaches to service quality management to be evaluated against each other.

4.4 Chapter Four: Concluding remarks

In reflecting upon the preceding chapter, one is struck by the considerable difference in focus and tenor compared to Chapter Three. The literature reviewed in Chapter Three mostly treats service by extrapolation from manufacturing; the service literature has mainly been concerned to show why such extrapolation is inappropriate and to devise modes of analysis specific to services. This has been true of operations management topics (e.g. process types) and marketing (e.g. marketing mix). Moreover, the quality movement is dominated by operations management and has only recently aimed to integrate marketing considerations. In the service literature marketing plays a prominent role, but this has been in conjunction with service operations management. However, important distinctions exist between the North American and Nordic Schools of service management about the scope of the conceptual changes required to the general marketing paradigms.

Like the quality movement literature the service quality literature, with the exception of some work on human services and professional services, mainly considers the commercial sector. Moreover, the tendency has been to concentrate upon some types of service (e.g. financial and banking services, auto-repair, airlines) and to assume that the results will be generically applicable to all services. Given the very wide range of activities covered by the term "service", such assumptions may be suspect.

Such issues permeate all considerations of quality. The service literature has constructed its own quality definitions, dimensional structures, and models, distinct from those of the quality movement. The key quality differential between products and services is the presence of the customer in some processes which means that he/ she is aware of how those processes operate,

as well as of their end-result (Morris and Johnston 1987). The dominant view of quality is based on the disconfirmation by the customer's perceptions of his/ her expectations of service; This view of quality has all but eclipsed a focus on the role of internal quality definitions. However, there is an emergent move from a customer to a stakeholder focus for quality, evidenced by some of the service quality models which suggest the significance of quality judgements made by staff (particularly professionals involved in service delivery), and the owners of the enterprise, as well as of customers. The Nordic School network approaches, and work on human services, suggest replacing a notion of "best" quality (for the end-user) with that of "right" quality for stakeholders.

Since service quality is understood as hard to define and measure, the greater part of the academic service quality literature revolves around measurement. Measurement is understood as measurement of customer perceived quality, and there is little in the mainstream service literature on the measurement of the quality perceptions of other stakeholders. For customers, the SERVQUAL format is the reference point for studies. Whilst any quality measurement attempt must take account of SERVQUAL, the utility of asking about customer expectations depends on the purpose of the study. The dimensional structure of the instrument must be regarded as unproven for services in general; other studies have not been able to replicate it. Moreover, it is clear from work in leisure and recreation services that this format requires very considerable modification in order to be relevant to such services.

Chapter Five

Public Sector Management

Summary

This chapter reviews the literature on the management of public sector services and on quality management in these services. It includes a review of literature on public sector services generally, and of that on the management of local authority sport, leisure and recreation services. The following general points can be made:

- In recent years there has been increased interest in the quality of public services. This interest has been politically driven and has focused on the Value for Money delivered by such services, as well as on their level of service and appropriateness to the end-user and public.
- The previous Conservative administrations linked quality in public services to the introduction of competition; other approaches have emphasised the need to construct more transparent management regimes, or reform of the political process. Much of the literature reflects, or is a critique of, the link between competition and service quality.
- In spite of many changes brought about in the public sector, there remain significant differences between it and the commercial sector. Because public services rely upon taxation, ultimate control is via the political process; stakeholders intervene in the service and the relationship between professionals and the service end-user is often quite different from that pertaining in commerce.
- There is a considerable body of literature on the quality "movement" and public services. A conclusion drawn from it is that although quality management techniques may be applied, quality "movement" models and philosophies are generally inapplicable.
- There is a much smaller literature reviewing the operation of standards such as ISO 9000 and liP in the public sector. Services management approaches are also relatively scarce.

When one examines the literature specifically on local authority sport and leisure services one finds:

- The structure of local authority services has been considerably altered by the introduction of competition; welfare rationales have been overlaid by other rationales in recent years.
- The professionals in these services have sought to embrace a management role, and have often seen the service end-user as a customer.

5.0 Preamble

Chapter Three of this thesis has shown how the quality movement has its roots in concerns of manufacturing industry to eliminate product failures, to reduce waste and embark upon quality improvement programmes so as to enhance their competitive position within the marketplace. Latterly, in the "strategic quality era" (Garvin 1988) the focus has been upon using customer wants and needs to drive all aspects of the organisation, including quality. Chapter Four detailed the rise of services management, and the "customer-perceived service quality" paradigm. Once again concerns about service quality have been largely driven by competitive needs (e.g. Albrecht and Zemke 1985).

In this chapter public sector services are considered. After a brief introductory statement, the competing rationales for the role of the public sector are considered, based upon the concepts of market failure and government failure. Next, the differences between

management in the state and commercial sectors are examined, with particular reference to local authority services. These considerations provide a backdrop to the fourth section, a discussion of quality management in the public sector, which focuses on the obstacles to the use of quality "movement" ideas in these services. Fifth, the literature on the use of ISO 9000 and liP in public sector services is reviewed. Sixth, the applications of services management paradigms to public sector services are discussed. Seventh, the development, management and organisation of public sector leisure, sports and recreation services are investigated, together with the nature of the professionalism associated with them, with particular reference to those issues which may have a bearing on service quality. Concluding remarks reflect on the significance of the review for the services under study.

5.1 Introduction

The services under study are public sector services, provided at the behest of, and with subsidy from, local government. Historically, public sector services have been understood as existing outside market relationships, using the power of the state to provide a service on a monopoly basis. As will be detailed in this chapter, there has been increasing quality management activity in public services and an increasing study of public sector quality particularly in the UK. This chapter attempts to understand such growth, and to relate it to changes in the historical pattern of public sector provision. It also attempts to understand the specific position of local authority sports services through reviewing their development. Attention is also given to the professional discourse of those who deliver these services, because it has a bearing on how these professionals conceive of quality and quality management.

5.2 Market failure and government failure

5.2.0 General arguments

A general argument for the provision of services by the state is that there are some necessary activities which cannot satisfactorily be performed by voluntary or commercial arrangements made by citizens.

"Even those who argue that the state should play a minimal role will generally accept that there are some matters over which government intervention is necessary, for example national defence or the maintenance of law and order...At the very least it is necessary for the state to create the institutional framework and legal structure which make social life and market activity possible. Most thinkers would see a need for the state to go beyond this minimum level of activity, and to intervene either in the production or distribution process" (Walsh 1995: 4).

One of the key concepts in this justification of state involvement is that of *market failure*, in that there are circumstances where the market cannot create an optimal mix of goods and

services (e.g. see Gray 1989: 20-36). Walsh (op. cit.) discusses five aspects of market failure which can be summarised as follows:

- **Public goods:** The market will not produce sufficient goods which are inherently available to all, and where one person's use does not preclude the use by another (e.g. peace and public open space). However the supply of other public services is limited relative to the demand for them (e.g. hospital beds and some public leisure services).
- **Increasing returns to scale:** This term refers to situations where a very large capital investment is necessary to supply a need, such as water, gas and electricity. The so-called "natural monopolies" tend to arise in these situations, and avoidance of private monopoly was the justification of a state monopoly. Of course, many of these utilities have since been privatised.
- **Externalities:** There are numerous examples of situations where some cost and benefits are not taken into account by the producer or consumer. Often cited are environmental pollution (cost not taken into account) or mass-transit (benefits not taken into account).
- **Merit goods:** Here the argument is that there are some goods which it is socially beneficial for all to take part in more than they would if left to themselves (exercise is an example). There are also demerit goods, considered harmful, and to which access should be restricted in some way (e.g. alcohol, gambling).
- **Information asymmetries:** These arise when the producers and consumers do not have similar understandings about the utility of a good or service. This is particularly a problem where the goods or services are complex and underpins many discussions about the role of professionals relative to their clients (e.g. the health service).

It could be said that these concerns fully came together as part of the justification of the post-war welfare state. Marshall (1963) suggested that this represented an extension of citizenship rights from the civil and political spheres to social rights. Local authorities played a key role in delivering these social rights through housing, town planning, education and social services, but the period since the end of the 1960s was marked by continual critiques of the way in which these duties were carried out, and their cost (e.g. Leach et al 1994; Walsh 1995-b). In 1972 the Bains Report (1972) proposed a weakening of the departmentalism that had evolved within the local welfare state, stressing the need for a more corporate approach. This was followed in 1974 by a reorganisation of local government which established much larger authorities than had hitherto been the norm. Leach et al's (1994: 33) analysis is that the approach of local government post-Bains was still highly traditional:

"Apart from the emphasis on the corporate approach which had a limited, if significant, impact on the working of local authorities, the Bains Report was constricted by existing organisational assumptions, and set the new local

authorities' organisation and management within those assumptions. Changes took place within the organisational structures set up at the time of reorganisation but for a time at least they did not significantly challenge the basic elements and the dominant assumptions of local authorities."

Walsh (ibid.: 13) suggests that these traditional methods of organisation had the following features:

First, state services were organised through a high degree of vertical and horizontal division of labour producing departmentalisation on functional lines and considerable hierarchy. Second, they were highly self-sufficient, in the sense that the tendency was to keep the supply chain network short and simple, undertaking most operations "in-house". Third, and related to the above, public service bodies tended to be large in size, whether measured by numbers of employees or in financial terms. Fourth, the role of professionals within these organisations was of cardinal importance in determining culture, priorities and *modus operandi*.

Wrigley and McKeivitt (1994) considered the role of professionalism within the public sector, and suggested that it also implied a necessary inflexibility of organisation, arising from legal imperatives and the fact that professionalism operated in a context of institutions of social obligation.

Butcher (1994) sums up the traditional approach to the management of the welfare state as the "bureau-professional model", which has the following characteristics:

- "Centralized, top-down planning and decision making.
- Clear separation of policy-making from service administration and practice.
- Large-scale bureaucratic organization and control of service-delivery
- High levels of professional influence and power, even hegemony, in policy execution.
- The 'user' of services as an individual consumer.
- An emphasis upon standardized provision for reasons of fairness, economy and control" (Butcher 1994: 6).

Similarly, Leach et al (1994) label the traditional approach of local government as "traditional bureaucratic", dominated by the values of self-sufficiency, uniformity, direct provision, professionalism and departmentalism, adding that continuation in this mode was not an option.

Thus in the way the state has addressed market failure, one can begin to perceive the possibilities of a critique of such action, and these are the basis for the theory of *government failure* (e.g. see Roper and Snowden 1987). Both LeGrand (1991) and Walsh (1995-b: 23)

attribute this theory in its most developed form to Wolf (1988). Like the theory of market failure it focuses upon mismatches between demand and supply, suggesting that there is an inherent tendency to oversupply public services. The reasons flow from an expansion of demand, chiefly due to increased awareness of the consequences of market failure and pressures to provide arising from the political process, although other factors, such as the decoupling of the benefits of government intervention from the costs of it, are also important. Wolf sees problems in limiting or controlling the growth of supply. This because public services are supplied in monopoly conditions where costs and quality are not contestable through market mechanisms. He also points out the inherent difficulties in attributing outputs and outcomes to specific inputs, and to the problematic nature of performance measurement in services, and particularly to the types of services produced by much of the public sector.

In their discussion of the issue, Gratton and Taylor (1988: 42-44) point out that whereas the aim of government intervention may be to correct market failure, the consequences of political and bureaucratic control can lead to results very different from what was intended. Whilst the common assumption is that government action promotes fairness or equity in the distribution of merit goods, this is not supported by the research evidence. They quote Le Grand's extensive study of the impact of public expenditure:

"Public expenditure on health care, education, housing and transport systematically favour the better off, and thereby contributes to inequality in final income. It has not created equality of cost (or equality of 'access') and indeed in some cases has made cost differences worse; there persist substantial inequalities in outcomes. For several of the services there has not even been a reduction in the inequalities over time. Nor does there seem to be any prospect of retrieving the situation through any piecemeal reform" (Le Grand 1982, quoted in Gratton and Taylor (1988: 44).

It is important to understand how ideas of market and government failure have impacted on the political process, because they have given rise to differing prescriptions for public sector service quality. Benington and Taylor (1992) have proposed that the recent history of management in the public sector is better understood through exploring the implications of three ideologies, which may be characterised as New Right, New Left and New Managerialism, also referred to as the New Public Management. The key elements of these positions are discussed below; the implications for quality management will be discussed later in this chapter.

5.2.1 The New Right

The advent in 1979 of the first Government of Margaret Thatcher inaugurated a period of rapid change for public sector services in the United Kingdom. A central thesis of the Thatcher programme was that the state had become too large and inflexible and had to be

profoundly altered. The cost of the state, accounting for about 40% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Flynn 1990), was seen by a series of influential neo-liberal analyses such as those of Bacon and Eltis (1976), as holding back the growth of the private sector. Other writers such as Brittan (1973) had stressed the role of the state in undermining individual responsibility and preventing the development of an enterprise culture. Another element was the perception that the public sector was dominated by powerful trade unions or staffed by self-serving bureaucrats who were remote from the public and resistant to change (e.g. Chapman 1978). These concerns coalesced into a programme which had concepts of government failure at its core. As this approach developed throughout the 1980s its core values of economic positivism and philosophical individualism (Wilkinson et al 1998: 91) found expression in moves to reduce public expenditure, to remove certain functions from the public sphere altogether and to introduce market-like structures into what remained in the public sector.

Flynn (1990:17-23) recorded three phases of Government response to these ideas. The first was to contain growth in public expenditure through measures such as the Financial Management Initiative, which led to the introduction of cash-limited budgets and performance measures. At this time so-called "popular privatisations" occurred, with a number of nationalised industries, including some significant public utilities, being transferred into the private sector. The second phase of "weakening the opposition" involved various measures to weaken the influence of public sector professionals, trade unions and others who were in a position to resist change. A key element here has been the development of what authors such as Pollitt (1993) and Gyford (1993) refer to as "Managerialism" which sees better management as the solution for social and economic ills. Thus senior public service professionals were increasingly given a managerial ethos or role, or administrators were given a wider management brief which meant that they, and not the service professionals, were controlling the details of resource allocations. Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio (1995:17) suggest that services quality was an important component in the campaign for organisational change, with the predominant concept being quality as value for money (VfM) and efficiency.

For Pollitt (op. cit.) a key aspect of the "managerialist" programme for the public sector is a return to Taylorist principles, such as greater work definition and surveillance by management. The aim was to thwart the attempts of professionals (and service users) to define their own services and to protect them from reduced budgets. This "neo-Taylorism", combined with a bold introduction of market mechanisms (see below), provided the foundation and context for the emphasis on service quality which emerged under the Major administration. Whilst the notion of service end user satisfaction may involve some

contradiction with the general thrust of the New Right to minimize the public sector, overall the introduction of quality management to the public sector is seen as a way of getting service personnel to accept greater government control of their work situation (Reed 1995). However, primary research on how workers perceive quality management initiatives in the commercial sector shows that the situation is much more complex than this position would suggest (e.g. Godfrey et al 1997).

The third phase, which began in the late 80s, is what Flynn refers to as the "new right solution", involving the widespread introduction of market-like structures into the public sector:

"The policy conclusions are as follows: there should be collective decisions about consumption only where individual purchases are impossible; there should be free entry and (relatively) costless exit from markets by private suppliers wherever possible...The 'new right' preference is for supply-side structure to be competitive and privately owned and for the demand-side structure to consist of individual purchases. Where this combination is not possible, second-best alternatives on any dimension are acceptable..." (Flynn 1990:21)

The "second-best" alternative is represented by the reforms carried out in the National Health Service, where the previous unified (or monolithic) structure was broken up into an aggregate of smaller units. Health Authorities took on the role of *purchasers* of health care on behalf of the public; *provision* of health care was carried out through a variety of publicly-funded bodies, such as NHS Trust Hospitals. The intention here was to provide the purchaser with a choice of providers, through which the best value for money could be obtained. This puts the service providers into a "quasi-market" position (Le Grand 1991) where there is competition between service units for contracts from those who specify the service, and in some instances, for end-users or service consumers.

The introduction, in 1988, of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) for designated local authority services, was an initiative closer to the New Right ideal. This

"...required local authorities to submit to external competition a specified range of services which, whether awarded internally or externally, are then governed by the terms of a contract rather than by direct control. The local authority remains responsible for the service, but need not necessarily deliver the service" (Leach et al 1994: 35).

Thus the intention here is to introduce real markets into service delivery. If local authorities wished to continue to provide a service they must meet two basic criteria. First, they must pay heed to the separation of the purchasing and providing functions; that is, the client

function must be separate from the contracting function which is then carried through by a Direct Services Organisation (DSO) (Sayers 1991). Second, the DSO must show that they can do the work more efficiently than any commercial sector bidders (Sayers 1991). The provisions of the Act were extended to Sport and Leisure Management in 1990.

Thus for the New Right, competition is the best guarantee of service quality. Competition between contractors for government contracts will foster VfM; choice for service users, now referred to as customers, will drive up levels of service (Benington and Taylor 1992).

5.2.2 The New Left

A variety of political positions are included in the term "New Left" as applied to local government and public services. However, Benington and Taylor (1992) suggest that three strands connect these positions. First, there is an acknowledgement and analysis of the problems caused by centralised, "top-down" state action; this implies a critique of the organisational structures and cultures engendered by the post-Beveridge welfare state, and its development typified by the post-Bains local authorities. The lack of democratic control of services mean that they cannot be provided in an appropriate way and has weakened earlier public support for the post-war welfare state (Corrigan and Joyce 1997). For the New Left, this implies a move towards decentralised public services and towards greater citizen involvement, at the expense of "bureau-professional" control (e.g. Lowndes 1991; Burns et al 1994). The second strand is coupled with this, as it recognises that different individuals and communities have different wants and needs, and therefore that the delivery of completely standardised public services may be inappropriate. The third strand is a commitment to citizens expressing choice in a collective way through participation in the polity, rather than seeking choice as individual consumers in a market. There are some connections and cross-overs therefore between the New Left position and the community action model (Butcher 1994) of service provision. Thus for the New Left, public sector service quality is bound up with changes to the political process, letting in the public to achieve better specified and controlled services (e.g. Gaster 1996). Public sector professionalism needs to transform itself into a more facilitating model (Butcher 1994; Corrigan and Joyce 1997) accepting and enabling citizen involvement and control.

Whilst it is relatively straight-forward to discern a correlation between the policy of the Conservative Party administrations from 1979 to 1997 and the development of New Right ideas, the relationship of the post-1997 Labour administration to the New Left is more complex. Clearly the development of a New Left response to the reforms of the Conservatives has been associated with some Labour-led local authorities. On the issue of

the quality of public services, for example, the experience of the "New Left" London Borough of Islington (Thompson 1992) was quoted by the Labour Party in opposition (Labour Party 1996; Wilkinson et al 1998: 93). The New Left concern to reform the polity in a way which limits central bureaucratic control and promotes collective participation can be seen in the early actions of the Blair government to set up new democratic institutions for London, Scotland and Wales. The critique of the introduction of market mechanisms into the public sector has been expressed by action to weaken markets (e.g. the replacement of CCT by Best Value) or to dismantle them (e.g. in the Health Service) in some areas of public service. However, in some instances there has been a continuation, or intensification, of policies introduced by the Conservatives. Examples include the maintenance and development of performance measurement regimes in services such as health and education, along with the threat of central government intervention if a service performs poorly. Thus it may be the case that Labour have also been influenced by the third position identified by Benington and Taylor (op.cit.), the New Public Management, which is discussed below.

5.2.3 The New Public Management

This position, is in some ways less well defined than the other two, and is sometimes referred to as the New Managerialism (Benington and Taylor 1992, Wilkinson et al 1998). However, since managerialism has been one of the positions adopted by the New Right in their agenda for public services (Pollitt 1993), the name New Public Management (Hood 1991, 1995; Pollitt 1993; Greer 1994; Zifcak 1994) is used here. Pollitt (1993: 180) suggests that its main features are:

- bolder and larger use of quasi-markets;
- organisational and spatial decentralisation of services
- rhetorical emphasis on service quality
- insistence on greater attention to be given to the wishes of the individual service user or "customer".

It puts the major emphasis for the development of public sector services on improved management of them. Improved quality is one of the key aspects of this discourse. Benington and Taylor (1992: 170-171), outline the foci of this position which include means of making the views of the service end-user more visible, empowering managers (possibly at the expense of professionals) and establishing regimes based on performance indicators and published service standards. Thus New Public Management proclaims that it is lessening or removing some of the differences between private and commercial sector management (Hood 1995, Broadbent and Laughlin 1997) and its accounting focuses on relating inputs to results (Hood 1995).

The implication is that further moves towards market relationships (as opposed to quasi-market ones) as desired by the New Right purists, or in increasing citizen involvement in political processes, as proposed by the New Left, have only a minor part to play in improving quality. Thus setting service standards and monitoring them using performance measures occupy the prominent ground in this mind-set. Important too, are initiatives which demystify the service and give the customer easy access to it (such as telephone "hot-lines", signposting and staff name badges Wilkinson et al 1998: 93-94).

5.3 Differences between commercial sector and public sector management

The three approaches to public sector management all suggest, in their different ways, that there may be differences in the nature of management activity between commerce and the public sector. However, for a New Right purist these differences are not necessary ones since they could and should be abolished by making the public sector resemble the commercial one (Flynn 1990; Pollitt 1993; Walsh 1995). It is important to further examine this issue as it has a bearing upon the suitability for the public sector of approaches to quality pioneered in the commercial sector.

Since the post-war establishment of the welfare state, a succession of scholars (Blau and Scott 1963; Etzioni 1961, Hall et al 1966; Pugh and Hickson 1976) have suggested that in their clientele, social role, internal functioning and structure, public sector organisations have certain distinctive characteristics which mark them out from commercial sector ones. In the period since 1979, Ackroyd et al (1989: 606) propose that the literature falls into three categories, first, that dealing with managerial responses to financial cutbacks and stringency (e.g. Levine 1979, 1981; Jick and Murray 1982; Flynn 1988), secondly that dealing with control in public sector services (Cawson 1982; Cousins 1987; Johnston 1988) and finally, that attempting to theorise about structure in public service organisations (Offe 1984; Ham and Hill 1985).

Ackroyd et al (1989) are unusual in connecting the particular nature of services to a discussion of public sector management. Since the utility of services lies in the relationship between provider and consumer rather than simply in the object provided, they suggest that public sector management is shaped by distinctive relations of provision, in which the provider is frequently in the position of defining the consumer's need (e.g. educational, penal, health and social services):

"...public sector services, like fully professionalised services, substantially invert what are, historically speaking, the usual structural relations between service receiver (master) and service provider (servant). Open market

relations which tend, when 'perfect', to reduce power differences between buyers and sellers, are not the main structural determinants of the relationship between the public service worker and his or her client. With public sector services the receiver is not paying for the service directly, if at all. A client cannot always elect to have service - as one might do with service provided on the market - if, for example, the provider deems that it is not appropriate. Hence, it can be argued, public services are tailored to meet the needs of clients, as perceived and interpreted by service providers. As a result the balance of power is shifted decisively towards the service provider" (Ackroyd et al 1989: 608).

The authors go on to propose that these distinctive relations of production tend to lead to distinctive relations for production in that the professionals providing the service require considerable autonomy in order to identify and deal with need. They argue that the basic response of public sector managers and professionals has been to see themselves as the custodians of public service provision. This leads them to place an emphasis on conformity, reliability and a basic standard of service, in contrast with the endemic change which characterises market-based services.

Table 5.1: Stewart and Ranson's public domain model.

<u>Private sector model</u>	<u>Public sector model</u>
Individual choice in the market	Collective choice in the polity
Demand and price	Need for resources
Closure for private action	Openness for public action
The equity of the market	The equity of need ¹
The search for market satisfaction	The search for justice ²
Customer sovereignty	Citizenship
Competition as the instrument of the market	Collective action as the instrument of the polity
Exit as the stimulus ³	Voice as the condition ⁴

Notes:

1. Stewart and Ranson's position is that private sector models may be appropriate for public sector and economy and efficiency objectives, but not for effectiveness because the latter involves fairness (equity) which is not the case in the private sector.
2. Similarly, since individuals seek justice in the public domain, it is not enough for management to be efficient, it must also be just.
3. Customers can (usually) terminate their relationship with private sector organisations and such terminations are the stimulus for organisational improvement.
4. The public are not simply clients of public organisations, they are also part of those organisations as citizens, and those organisations have to give voice to citizens as part of building citizenship.

Source: After Stewart and Ranson (1988: 16)

Kouzes and Mico (1979) counselled against regarding public sector service organisations in an undifferentiated way. They distinguished three interlinked domains, which operated according to their own distinct principles and cultures. These were the policy domain where elected or appointed members formulate policy, the management domain where economy and efficiency had the highest profile, and the service domain where professionals operated

according to their own expert codes. These results have been broadly supported by the work of Kakabadse (1982), Brazzell (1987) and Willcocks and Mark (1988). Hales (1986), Brazzell (op. cit.) and Harrow and Willcocks (1990) have pointed out that personnel other than official managers may also play a management function in public services.

This work provides the context for a significant contribution made by Stewart and Ranson (1988). Their central thesis is provided by the following extract:

"There are dangers if, consciously or unconsciously, management in the public domain adopts models drawn from outside organisations. That is not to say that management in the public domain cannot learn from management in the private sector, or vice versa. Specific management ideas can be transferable. What is not transferable is the model of management - its purposes, conditions and tasks...Although a management approach developed for the private sector can have relevance for the public domain, that approach may have to be transformed in its application. There are also many aspects of management in the public domain that find no ready parallel in the private sector" (Stewart and Ranson 1988: 13-14).

The authors went on to discuss what they see as the central differences in purposes, conditions and tasks between the two sectors, which led them towards a distinguishing a separate model of management for the public sector. The main elements of these differences are shown in Table 5.1 above, and the notes below. Harrow and Willcocks (1990) put forward eleven points of difference between the public and private sectors and these are summarised in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2 Differences in public and private sector contexts	
<p>Private</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Board of directors (company planning frameworks) 2. Marketplace signals e.g. business lending rate 3 Relative secrecy, stress on business confidentiality 4 Primary focus on shareholders and management 5. Relatively restricted 6. Primary resources base from operational returns and borrowing 7. Accountability restricted 8. No real national/ local politician overlay, less artificial time constraints 9. Primary profit goals 10. Mainly quantitative financial measures 11. Relatively less ambiguous policy 	<p>Public</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Statutory and parliamentary regulation (codes of conduct) 2 Needs of national economic management 3 Relative openness of government and decision-making stress on representatives 4 Attentive public wide stakeholder base impact of subsidiary regulatory bodies 5 Multiple values and goals Service Public interest Equity Professionalism Consumer participation Complex trade-offs 6 Primary resource base from public taxes 7 Extensive accountability 8 Responsiveness to political masters and short political time horizons 9 Primary social goals e.g. safe streets health no user charge 10 Complex and debated performance indicators 11 More ill-defined policy directives complexity of policy implementation

Source: Redrawn from Harrow and Willcocks (1990: 287)

Whilst much of the literature reviewed has been based either upon desk research or upon case study interviews with the actors in public sector management, Mintzberg (1997) has recently applied his technique of structured observation (see Chapter 7.2.0) to a public sector service. He chose for this work a public sector leisure service, examining managerial work at different levels of the Canadian National Parks system. The management levels roughly correspond with the "domains" of the domain theorists. He concluded that a feature of public management in this service was the way that the organisational environment and operational imperatives imposed themselves on managers at different levels of the system, as set out in Figure 5.1. These are described as the political, stakeholder and operational "edges". Although many large commercial organisations need to interface with the political world (e.g. see Gummesson 1996 reviewed in Chapter 4.1.0) there is no parallel for the role of politics in public sector organisations. Similarly the way external stakeholders intercede in management seems peculiar to the public management situation; the role of operations is also different given the expectations of public sector organisations.



Source: Mintzberg 1997: 152 (redrawn)

Thus far in this section, the differences between commercial sector management and public sector management in general have been discussed. Focusing now specifically on local

authority services, Stewart (1986) has pointed out that such management must take account of an inheritance of three overarching conditions. First, committees of members largely define both the role of elected members and their relationship with the service department's senior officers. Working their way through an operationally-based agenda becomes the key aspect of the members' role, at the expense of a local representative function. Second, the thought processes of departments are dominated by the bureaucratic mode, and the principles of functionalism, uniformity and hierarchy which are encapsulated in departmental organisation. Third, a professional culture dominates, with several professions (probation officers, social workers) having been created specifically for the local government context. This can be seen as a major strength, bringing commitment, specialist skill and knowledge to services; yet it also limits the freedom of manoeuvre for local authorities.

In their analysis of the changing nature of local government, Leach et al (1994: 49-68) focus upon six aspects of organisation: strategy, structure, process, cultures, power and interests. In this discussion some fundamental differences between local authority and private sector management emerge. They suggest that strategic requirements on local authorities have altered dramatically in the 1980s and 1990s, with a long period of incremental change in the post-war period, represented by the gradual growth of bureaucratic hierarchies, having come to an end. On structure the key elements of their analysis are:

- the degree of differentiation;
- integration;
- the extent of centralisation
- the level of formalisation, and
- specialisation.

They suggest that the changing demands placed upon local authorities have created unique, and changing structural characteristics in each of these dimensions. Whereas up to and beyond the Bains Report (1972), the focus of reform had been on structure, more recently attention had been given to processes by which work was done. Not surprisingly, the authors suggest that local authorities are characterised by a bureaucratic culture remarking that:

"...public accountability and expectation requires that they (local authorities) be characterised by a degree of predictability, and that they treat similar cases in the same way. It can be assumed that rules will be followed, and that hierarchy will dominate" (Leach et al 1994: 58).

However, the consumer-based emphasis of the market-led reforms of the 1980s and early 90s has overlain pre-existing relationships with a server-customer focus. Relationships in the public sector both between service personnel and service end user, and between service personnel and other stakeholders came to be seen as server-customer ones. In their

influential, but prescriptive, work on the public service orientation, Stewart and Clarke (1986) sought to recover the concept of public service, by presenting it as service obligations towards several different sets of customers.

The research of Harrow and Shaw (1992) suggested that the impact of this change to customer frameworks was not uniform throughout all public services. The evolving manager-user relationship could be understood through categorising the service by managerial responsiveness to end-user as demonstrated in Figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2: Managerial response - public services consumer categories

<i>Managerial responsiveness</i>	<i>Consumer categorisation</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Managerial rationale</i>
Less responsive ↑ ↓ More responsive	Claimant/ dependent	Prisoner/ Long-term unemployed	Rule based Some discretion
	Client	Involuntary homeless Hospital patient	Entitled service With discretion opportunity
	Consumer	Library user Leisure service user	Market orientation

Source: Harrow and Shaw (1992: 116)

Much of the literature on quality in the public sector has been a response to the introduction of markets and customer relationships (e.g. Pollitt 1993; Walsh 1995-a, 1995-b; Thompson 1995). A fundamental critique of the societal and organisational "cult(ure) of the customer" has been offered by du Gay and Salaman (1992).

"That demand is now highly differentiated, with consumers being both knowledgeable, and *demanding* is not simply an important *fact* of modern economic life, it is, more significantly, an *idea* in modern economic life which plays a critical role in attempts to restructure organizations...Nevertheless, although there is evidence that this emphasis on customer sovereignty is exaggerated, there is no doubt that managerial representations of the customer as a means of restructuring organizations, and of influencing employees' behaviour and attitudes, are of real importance...the common element of these programmes is that they argue the need to impose the model of the customer-supplier relationship on internal organizational relations, so departments now behave as if they were actors in a market, workers treat each other as if they were customers, and customers are treated as if they were managers" (du Gay and Salaman 1992: 618-9).

These authors go on to argue that these ideas have been used to oppose the bureaucratic structures which developed because collective action could be co-ordinated most efficiently and cheaply through hierarchies rather than through the market place.

"Thus, in a curious inversion of what was for many years the received wisdom, that the inadequacies of the market should be ameliorated by the bureaucratic method of controlling transactions, market co-ordination is imposed on administrative co-ordination" (ibid.: 619).

Thus the New Right prescription for public services prompted the critique that it was based around "a generic model of management, that is to say one which minimized the difference between private-sector business management and the running of public services" (Pollitt 1993: 27). The 1990s public sector concern with quality built on this programme and inherited many features from it, such as the belief that public sector budgets should not be increased to pay for increased quality.

Reflecting back on the literature about the differences in management between the two sectors, we can identify the following major themes. First, public services are state funded and thereby their ultimate control is through the political process. Second, stakeholders intervene in public services to an extent and via methods unique to the sector. Third, professionals dominate many public services and the nature of this professionalism is largely peculiar to the sector. Fourth, attempts made to change the character of public management through market reforms and increased visualisation of the service client as customer have had differential effects according to the nature of the service. Last, there are powerful critiques of politically driven attempts to make management in the public sector resemble its commercial counterpart; although techniques may be borrowed, the management models remain different. From this perspective we now move on specifically to examine quality management in the public sector.

5.4 Quality management and the public sector

5.4.0 Government initiatives

It was with the Citizens Charter (The Prime Minister 1991) that some of the themes of the Conservative approach to quality in public services coalesced and found expression (e.g. Pollitt 1993; Kirkpatrick and Martinez-Lucio 1995; Walsh 1995-a). It has been presented as "a sustained programme for improving the quality of public services" (Prime Minister 1991: 4).

"The Charter's citizen is consumer, customer and taxpayer. The Charter's citizen has no interest in participating in the political process to create social realities; the citizen merely has an individual contract with the state. It is this individualism which leads to the emphasis on Customer Service Standards expressed in Service Charters. Because Service Charters impose duties on

providers (perhaps to reimburse consumers when the Standard has not been attained), providers will choose the contents with care, and there may well be differences between such contents and the actual concerns of citizens as they express them in the polity" (Lentell 1996: 274).

Within the Charter, there are four strands namely value, standards, quality and choice. Given that one of the key concerns of the 1980s was the cost of public sector services, it is unsurprising that the most prominent of the four themes within the Charter as identified is that "services must be able to give value for money within a tax bill the nation can afford" (Prime Minister 1991: 4). One of the declared purposes of the Charter is to make visible the relationship between costs and benefits. Picking up on the progress made on introducing performance measures into the public sector, the Charter asserts that "the citizen must be told what service standards are and be able to act where service is unacceptable" (Prime Minister 1991: 4). The Audit Commission was given the task of developing performance indicators for local authorities, and of collating returns of their actual performance against these measures. Thus the public announcement of service standards is linked to the further development of systems whereby individuals can seek redress. The third theme, quality, is also addressed through the performance indicator regime. Management attention can be directed at those services falling below standard either on across-the-board performance indicators, or through special quality-related indicators. The fourth theme, echoing the New Right market or quasi-market agenda, is choice, since "choice, wherever possible between competing providers, is the best spur to improvement" (Prime Minister 1991: 4).

The Audit Commission developed (Audit Commission 1993) a set of indicators for local authority leisure services, of which those listed in Table 5.3 below apply to sport and recreation services. However, it is extremely difficult to set up comparability between local authorities for services (such as sport and recreation) which are offered under permissive legislation (Henry 1993) and according to local rationales and objectives. Moreover, some of the outputs and outcomes are hard to measure without specific research programmes and the Commission wished to avoid imposing such financial burdens on local government (Bovaird 1992; Lentell 1996; Robinson 1997). The indicators are therefore small in number, bland and value for money based, or else are provision rather than performance indicators (Lentell 1996).

Arguably, the Charter Mark, introduced in the Charter legislation to encourage quality improvement in public services, has had greater impact on sports services than the indicators themselves. Generally, local authority services have tried hard to win these awards and have succeeded in so doing, for example winning nearly half of all Charter Marks awarded in 1994 (Wilkinson et al 1998: 92). Leisure and sports services have been

prominent in these attempts (Lentell and Morris 1995, Robinson 1998). The nine points of the Charter Mark award are shown in Table 5.4 below.

Table 5.3: Citizen's Charter PIs for local authority sport and recreation services
How many people visit swimming pools and sports halls? How much does this cost the Council?
1.a. The net expenditure per head of population on swimming pools and sports centres
b. The number of swims
c. The number of other visits
d. The net cost per swim/ visit.
How many sports pitches does the Council provide?
3. The number of sports pitches available to the public.

Source: Audit Commission 1993

Table 5.4: Chartermark Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1. Standards Published service standards, published performance against the standards. ● 2. Information and openness Readily available information about the services, their cost, their performance and who is in charge. ● 3. Consultation and choice Regular and systematic consultation with service users, their views taken into account. ● 4. Courtesy and helpfulness Courteous and helpful service from public servants who will normally wear name badges. Services equally available to all who are entitled to them and run to suit their convenience. ● 5. Putting things right Well published complaints procedures, means of redress. ● 6. Value for money Efficient and economical delivery of services within resources the nation can afford. ● 7. User satisfaction Means of demonstrating that users are satisfied with the service. ● 8. Measurable and demonstrable improvements to the quality of service Over a period of two or more years, various means of demonstrating quality improvement. ● 9. Innovative service enhancement at no extra cost to taxpayer or consumer Continuous improvement through new initiatives.

Source: based on Cabinet Office 1996

These criteria are examined below in the light of the EFQM European Quality Award (EQA), discussed in Chapter 3. Whereas ISO 9000 and IIP clearly have their own focus within the Quality Results factors, it is less straight-forward to identify the place of the Charter Mark. Much of the emphasis is the "Customer satisfaction" quality results area (points 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 in Table 5.4 above), although the "Business results" factor is also represented (by point 6 and possibly by point 9 in Table 5.4 above). Point 3 (Table 5.4 above) could be said to belong in the "Impact on society" area. Some of the points clearly have implications for the Quality Enablers although these are not identified as such, and Award applicants have a great deal of choice about how to achieve the performance necessary to secure a Charter Mark. There is no direct reference to the "Leadership" and "Policy and strategy" factors, although making the advances in service delivery which the Award requires, will clearly have

implications for these areas. What is noticeable is the lack of reference to anything which would fall within the "People satisfaction" or "People management" factors.

Thus considered in the light of the EQA, the Charter Mark criteria could be said to be highly operationally based with an emphasis on the service end-user and value for the tax-payer. Leadership, and Policy and strategy are not directly assessed, though clearly these will be important in achieving the Charter Mark. The award provides useful, though partial even eclectic, coverage of the quality factors. The emphasis is upon operational changes which produce better service for the individual service user, or at least redress when things go wrong. It is also upon achieving better economy and efficiency in service delivery.

The Labour Party's election manifesto (Labour Party 1997) committed it in government to introduce a duty on local authorities to seek to achieve the best value for service recipients and the public. Filkin (1997: 10) defines "Best Value" as:

"the continuous search by a council to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of all its activities for the public."

In the months following the 1997, Labour election victory, the outline of the new administration's approach to local government has become clearer. There are five themes driving this new approach. The first theme is efficiency, in that "Ministers are required to save before they spend. We will ask about public spending: can resources be used more effectively to meet our priorities?" (Labour Party 1997). Second, is a belief that "effective competition can bring value and quality to customers" (ibid.). Third, there is a desire to expand public-private sector partnerships (Filkin 1997). The fourth theme is the improvement of public service quality "we want to see all Councils bringing the performance of their services up to the standard of the best" (Labour Party 1996). Lastly, the government wishes Councils to put the public first in all considerations as "the government is antagonistic to institutions that are self-serving and which put their own interests ahead of the public's" (Filkin 1997: 8).

In contrast to the strongly ideological basis which has driven successive new right administrations in their approach to local services, there is a pragmatic strand in the "Best Value" approach. The Government have made clear that previous concerns about economy and efficiency continue, but that best value is also about effectiveness and the quality of local services (quoted in Filkin 1997: 10). All authorities are expected to improve, but how this is done will be the subject of local decision:

"We reject the dogmatic view that services must be privatised to be of high quality, but equally we see no reason why a service should be delivered directly if other more efficient means are available" (Labour Party 1997).

Councils will be required to make periodic reviews, every five years, of all their activities in order to ascertain that they are performing according to the best value themes, and will be expected to take remedial action where they are not. These reviews include the political process, the policies of the council and organisation of service delivery. Two further points should be made. First, a major requirement is public consultation, taking various forms, including traditional means and newer forms such as citizens' juries. Second, there is a belief that councils need to make comparisons in order to see how their activities are performing; although this may be a testing in the market-place through competition, it is more likely to be through use of performance indicator data (using a more sophisticated indicator set than used for the Citizen's Charter, to be developed by the Audit Commission), through market intelligence, external benchmarking and internal longitudinal comparisons (Filkin 1997: 20).

This brief summary of the flagship for a new set of central-local government relationships, is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of what is still a developing programme. However, several points relevant to this thesis are evident. First, service quality is a central concern of the new programme, understood both as VfM and as level of service. Second, the level of service is not simply, perhaps not even mainly, judged by service end-users as individuals. The public in some collective sense must also be involved. Third, there is a move away from the belief that quality management in the public sector is best accomplished through markets; although markets may be used, they represent one of several possible choices which need to be examined in the context of local circumstances. Fourth, and perhaps paradoxically, although the vision is of a local authority public management with its own specific characteristics, the language is one which resembles that found in the modern quality "movement" (e.g. performance indicators, benchmarking, market intelligence).

Thus the Citizens' Charter, Charter Mark and Best Value have served to reinforce moves to introduce quality management practices to local government. The progress of the quality "movement" in the commercial sector has provided a source of concepts for application or adaptation in the public sector. The role of services management paradigms has been less significant.

We now consider the difficulties that arise when ideas originated in the private, manufacturing sector are transplanted to the public sector. In their discussion of TQM in the

public sector Morgan and Murgatroyd (1994: 43) identify five categories of obstacles or objections to the use of total quality methods in the public sector. As the conception of TQM held by these authors is a very broad one, these categories are used in what follows as headings to structure discussion of the problems of transfer of general quality management methods from the quality "movement" to the public sector.

5.4.1 Problems inherent in the nature of quality management

"This view equates TQM as a body of ideas and practices for the creating of success for physical products in a marketplace. The public sector provisions do not have these features; they are not centrally concerned with products but with the delivery of public services in a context where the whole notion of the market does not apply, or at least has not been applied until recently" (Morgan and Murgatroyd 1994: 43).

This approach has led these authors to discuss two issues. First, the emphasis on the elimination of variation in order to standardise products, does not often apply well to services, whether in the commercial or public sectors. "It must be acknowledged that for service provisions there is overall a major concern among management with increasing variability rather than eliminating it" (ibid.: 44), the emphasis in services needs to be the "the correct differentiated response every time" (ibid.: 44) (also see Morris and Johnston 1987). However, the emphasis of quality management is reduction of product variation through process control, and the authors argue that with modification for the transfer to services this emphasis on process control is possible and helpful. Second, the authors refer to the market assumptions of TQM which assume that there is an external customer with a choice in the market, and that customer-supplier relationships apply throughout the operations network. Morgan and Murgatroyd suggest that even where market conditions do not apply, there is no reason why providers should not use quality management techniques to increase efficiency, or to improve the measured quality of the service. Moreover, they point out that the 1980s saw an increasing emphasis on choice for end-users of public services, and the advent of internal market relationships within key public services.

Whilst admitting the crucial nature of the points raised by these authors, it is very difficult to accept their view of them without reservation. First, TQM and quality "movement" concepts are not the only quality prescriptions available from the commercial sector. The services management literature, reviewed in Chapter Four of this thesis, addresses issues of service standardisation and customisation much more directly. Moreover, the service quality literature addresses the issue that in services, customers experience both "process" and "product" (e.g. Grönroos 1990), in a way that the quality "movement" literature does not. Some services scholars have attempted to adapt these concepts to the public sector

(Edvardsson et al 1994, Speller and Ghobadian 1993). Second, as LeGrand (1991) has pointed out, the operation of real or quasi-markets in the public sector is not a simple analogue of those of commerce. Quality arrangements need to take account of this. Third, as discussed above the role of these markets in the public sector has been controversial, and does not seem likely to increase in extent. Quality measures which rely on market-like relations will therefore have a limited application, and the words of Curry and Monaghan are likely to retain their force:

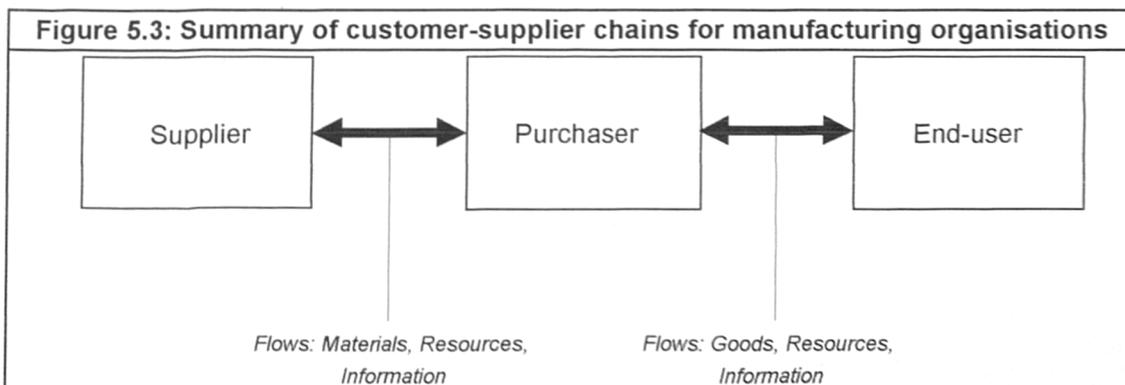
"Customers do not pay directly, and at source, for local government services and therefore when dissatisfied, cannot simply switch to an alternative provider for future consumption" (Curry and Monaghan 1994).

Lentell and Morris (1996) suggest that the advent of real or quasi markets in public sector services produces operations networks which are significantly different from those pertaining in manufacture, and therefore to those addressed by TQM. There are two aspects of these networks which dethrone the end-user and make him or her a "dependent customer". The first aspect is that:

"in public sector services the traditional role of customer is shared; the end-user of the service experiences it and its benefits, but the service itself is purchased on behalf of the end-user by a purchasing authority. The "quality gap" model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (Parasuraman et al 1988, Zeithaml et al 1988,) demonstrates how discrepancy between customer expectations and management perceptions of those expectations can influence perceived quality. The potential discrepancy in public sector services is considerably greater, given both a specification by someone other than the end-user, and apparently little accountability of purchasers to end-users" (Lentell and Morris 1996).

The second aspect is that in manufacturing operations:

"TQM involves the purchaser managing its supplier chains, whilst retaining contact with the end-users for its own products (summarised in Figure 5. 3).

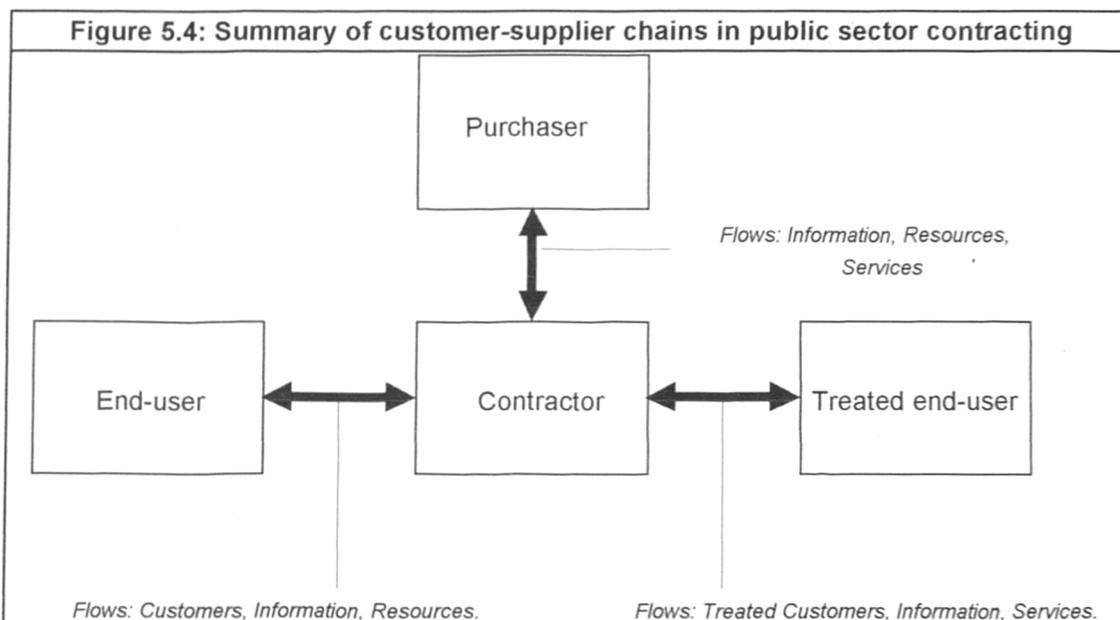


Source: Lentell and Morris (1996: 10)

However, public sector contracting brings about a quite different set of relationships (summarised in Figure 5.4) in which the purchaser no longer

has direct end-user contact. Although this is exceptional in manufacturing, it is by no means unique in services (e.g. factoring, franchising). These differences have important consequences, yet are apparently not recognised in either the public sector literature or the broader services literature. We therefore highlight the dangers of directly importing into the public sector manufacturing based quality models, without reference to services management.

The above point suggests first that the specification of services to be provided is all important, since the purchaser is in effect buying the service for the end-user. If service quality is to be improved through the contracting process the specification must be based on research into end-user needs and wants. In services where such research could supply at best an incomplete picture of requirements (e.g. medical or social services) the specification would need to be based more upon a consideration of policy rationales and priorities in the context of a discussion within the polity. The outcomes of such discussions would need to be represented within the specification in terms of work type, quality and quantity" (Lentell and Morris 1996)".



Source: Lentell and Morris (1996: 11)

5.4.2 Problems inherent in the nature of the public sector

Under this heading, four factors are considered by Morgan and Murgatroyd (op. cit.) namely the resistance to change encountered in the public sector, the disconnection of public sector provision from its performance, the lack of systems for rewarding public sector managers for performance and the constraints upon management action in the public sector.

Stewart's (1992) research indicates that managers in the public sector are more resistant to change than their commercial sector counterparts, largely because of the need for them to be committed to procedure and regulation. Cultural factors, such as those generated by the

divisions of labour created by the occupational structure and by the need to play safe with politicians are also cited. Whilst recognising the force of these factors, Morgan and Murgatroyd (op. cit.: 47) suggest that they can be overcome.

More difficult issues arise from the fact that public sector services receive their funds through a budgetary process controlled by politicians. There is no necessary reward to the operation for increases in service quality levels to end-users, and savings made through better efficiency will not always be returned to the service.

"Why indeed would public sector workers be prepared to make a massive investment in process control enhancement and in the meeting of customer expectations if the results achieved in quality performance did not bring them any benefits in the ways that parallel TQM gains have in the commercial sector?..We would see this whole aspect of resourcing as a substantial inhibitor to the application of TQM in the public sector were it not for the fact that there are now clear moves to make resourcing related to performance...To provide a workable context for TQM, not only must budgets follow performance, but a link between the achievement of demonstrated savings and a right to keep them must be established (Morgan and Murgatroyd 1994: 48)".

The problem with this line of argument is twofold. First, control of public sector finance by the polity means that in the final instance, funding will be directed to the objects of policy rather than locked into a performance formula. Where the service is supplied to the end-user via a contract it may well be possible for contractors to hold onto their efficiency gains over the contract period. For example, in their study of local authority funding of leisure services, Taylor and Page (1994) found that those services managed under CCT provisions appeared to be at least partially protected from financial cut-backs prompted by the budgetary crisis of local government. However, in the longer term it is not clear that this effect would continue, for example as contract periods expired and re-tendering took place. Nor is it clear that such an effect works in cases of quasi-contract, such as internal service level agreements.

Second, as discussed in section 4.1.0 it is hard to devise cost-effective means of measuring the output of some services, such as leisure and sport. In order to assess service quality, it is important to measure work output and the effect of that work on the issues which it is supposed to address. In leisure services is hard to relate service *output* to changes in indicators which might estimate the *outcome* which was the policy objective in funding the service (e.g. Lentell 1996). Thus it is hard to specify measures against which service quality improvement can be judged. Moreover, Morgan and Murgatroyd neglect to examine the possibility that there might be a quality trade-off between the freedom of the political process and that of service managers. The argument of the New Left contributors (e.g. Gaster 1995, 1996; Corrigan and Joyce 1997) is that service quality depends on the ability of the polity to

reflect service consumer and wider societal concerns; restrictions on this ability would therefore be undesirable. Except on a "micro" scale there seems only a remote likelihood of arriving at a situation where quality improvements are *driven by the returns to the service they produce*.

Similar arguments surround the issue of performance related pay for public sector managers. Morgan and Murgatroyd (*ibid.*: 50) suggest that improved quality leading to improved performance should be rewarded by performance related rewards for the managers responsible. They recognise that public sector pay has traditionally reflected seniority rather than performance, and look to the former Conservative administration's successive attempts to link public sector managers' pay to performance as helping to overcoming an obstacle to the progress of TQM. These arguments are strange. As discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.3.1) it is by no means clear that individual evaluation and reward of performance is part of TQM. Morgan and Murgatroyd themselves do not mention it in their own review of the elements of TQM (Morgan and Murgatroyd 1994: 3-34). Wilkinson et al (1998) point out that whereas the US quality gurus have been strongly against performance appraisal and financial incentives, in the UK the views have been more mixed. In both countries, the view seems strongly against the traditional mechanism of payment by results (PBR). Moreover, the work of Carter (1991) suggests that in situations where the output is complex, reliance on performance measures can lead managers into "gaming" with their output so as to win recognition and reward. Other studies suggest that in situations where it is unclear who has created the output, performance related pay can lead to demotivation (Cannell and Wood 1992). Both of these are presumably quality-negative effects. When one also factors in the managerial role of many public sector services personnel other than designated managers (Hales 1986; Brazzell 1987; Harrow and Willcocks 1990) and the particular problems in measuring output that some services face (see above), the merit of performance-related pay seems open to question.

Van der Hart (1991) has pointed to the limitations of management freedom in the public sector, essentially suggesting that stakeholder involvement in public services leads government to intervene should quality measures lead to the alienation of powerful voices. Thus managerial power is considerably limited. This line of thinking also leads to the suggestion that there should be a clearer demarcation between the policy and management spheres.

5.4.3 Problems inherent in the work cultures of public sector professionals

Morgan and Murgatroyd (op. cit.) suggest that there are three aspects which should be considered, namely the multiplicity of professional specialisms, the primacy of the individual professional transaction and the authority/ autocracy of seniority and status hierarchies. The points here follow on from those made in the previous section about the role of public sector professionals within a bureau-professional system. The professional structures create vertical silos which cut across the sharing and team work required for good quality management. However, the authors believe this to be something which should be, and can be, overcome in favour of more collaborative working between the professions. Within the bureau-professional system, status and seniority define many work relationships. Deference within autocratic professional or management hierarchies inhibits feedback and sharing of perceptions. As the authors point out, versions of this problem have existed in private sector companies working to traditional management styles, and they have to be overcome in order for TQM to flourish.

The professions have tended to place the interaction between professional and individual client at the heart of their conception of quality. In this sense quality is bound up with the particular skills and perceptions of the individual professional practitioner. The quality "movement" conception of quality is rather more holistic than this, stressing common standards and collective improvement, and this challenges traditional professionalism. In section 5.3 above it was noted that server-customer relationships have increasingly been presented as an alternative to professional-client ones. This is much closer to the relationships understood by the quality "movement" which imply that the customer has voice and choice:

"In the traditional encounter, the client is expected to be passive and sometimes even deferential regarding the defining of the content and format of the whole transaction, but the assumptions regarding the client's or customer's role in the determination of quality which TQM makes requires modification here" (Morgan and Murgatroyd 1994: 53).

As these authors point out, there is very little evidence about the role and impact of TQM in these situations.

In the case of public sector leisure management, this last issue is probably of less importance because of the ways in which these professionals have defined themselves (see section 5.7 below). A large part of their professionalism is bound up with the care of amenities rather than in a one-to-one relationship with clients, and clients have increasingly been seen as customers who have a choice in the market for leisure (Henry 1993).

5.4.4 Problems in applying the customer concept to the public sector

In TQM the external customer is the source point for all organisational processes. In section 3.3.0 of this thesis it was suggested that the customer concept is not an unproblematic way of connecting the organisation with the external environment. There are further difficulties for public sector services.

Public sector services are generally paid for through taxation. Those paying local or national taxes are not able to choose whether to purchase the various government or public sector activities for which they pay; contribution is compulsory. Depending upon which public sector activity is considered, there is frequently a lack of congruence between those who pay for the service and those who receive it. In the local authority services under study in this thesis, the users of the service make a contribution to the cost of providing it through membership and entrance charges to the recreation facilities they patronise. However, these charges are supplemented by very considerable subsidies from the local government purse, as detailed in Chapter 2. Thus instead of one customer (service users) there are several (taxpayers, politicians etc.) who have legitimate interests in service quality

"Because government agencies must serve a wide variety of customers who have widely divergent and even contradictory demands, and because the general public remains a 'hidden customer' with yet additional, often incompatible demands, government agencies often have to deliver a service or product that reflects an uneasy compromise. In such cases the [TQM] principle of delighting the customer begs too many questions to be a clear and useful goal" (Swiss 1992, cited in Morgan and Murgatroyd 1994:54).

The consequence both of limited consumer choice, and provision towards need rather than demand, is that the service quality judgements of politicians, service managers and service professionals are of great significance. These people are involved not only in specifying the types and levels of services to be provided, but also in making evaluations about the quality of service actually being provided to service users. Thus they are frequently in the position of being proxy for service customers, and of balancing their needs and demands against others (the taxpayers, good of society etc.). Thus evaluation of service quality is intricately bound up with political values, objectives and processes (e.g. Gaster 1991, 1995, 1996).

"Public services must be distinguished from those produced in the private sector. The public character of the various services produced by government means that they are discussed in terms of contrasting and conflicting political values...Political values will be involved, both in the determination of what services the public sector should produce, and in determining the principles on which they should be distributed. The methods of public service production will also be a matter for political debate...Debate over the quality of public services involves normative as well as positive questions (Walsh 1991). It is perfectly possible for the same service to be seen as being of high quality from one perspective, and low

from another. The definition of public service quality is politically contestable...There are, similarly, debates about the quality implications of service delivery mechanisms from a political perspective - for example, whether centralized or decentralized approaches are most appropriate, or whether contracting out is politically acceptable. The measurement of quality is also a matter for political contention...The debate over public service quality is a debate about the values of the public sector" (Walsh 1995: 87-88).

Robinson (1997) has pointed out that the literature is not agreed about the relationship between service providers and those stakeholders who are not directly involved in the service and its delivery. Clarke and Stewart (1987, also Stewart and Clarke 1987) develop the idea that the residents living within the local authority boundaries should be viewed in three ways, as clients with little or no choice in their receipt of service, or as customers who choose to make use of services, or as citizens who express choices collectively through political processes. Kerley (1990) suggests that recipients of local authority services should not be understood as customers in the same sense as recipients of commercial sector services; he suggests use of the word "consumers". However, others concerned to apply TQM concepts to local authority services have

Table 5.5: Customer groups for local authority leisure services

- | |
|--|
| (1) The direct user of the facility: e.g. a borrower at a library;
(2) the person who benefits from the service without directly using the service e.g. a parent whose child is attending holiday activity programmes;
(3) the internal customer including other local authority departments and committee members;
(4) council tax payers. |
|--|

Source: Robinson 1997: 20

suggested that various stakeholders can be seen as service customers. Drawing on the work of Skelcher (1992), and Sheppard and Studd (1994), Robinson suggests that for leisure services

four customer groups can be identified, as shown in Table 5.5 above.

Leach et al (1994: 4) suggest that the customer concept has strengths and weaknesses for local authorities:

"In local government there is an increased emphasis on the need for local authorities to be responsive to the needs of their customers. Such an emphasis has played an important part in making local authorities open to their public, but it can lead a local authority into serious difficulties if the 'customer' is seen in the same terms as the private sector... Neglect of the political processes and the inadequacy of the word 'customer' are examples of the danger of applying to local government approaches to organisation and management derived from organisations with different purposes, conditions and tasks."

The customer focus of quality management is helpful to local authority services in proposing that the different interest groups be identified, that their needs and demands of the service be specified, and in suggesting that such specification should be accomplished with a degree of input from those interest groups. What it does not do is to suggest how such input is best made, or ways of prioritising between these needs and demands, or of resolving conflicting or contradictory directions for the service that these interests suggest. Moreover, the notion that the service has a similar relationship with these groups, understandable as service supplier and internal or external customer, seems to ignore their very different powers over the service, and the different modes of intervention available to them.

5.4.5 Problems flowing from the complexity of public sector provisions

One of the basic tenets of the quality "movement" is that quality improvements pay for themselves through reducing waste and other, often hidden, quality costs (for example as expressed in the title of Crosby's [1979] book, "Quality is Free"). The argument put forward by Milakovitch (1991) is that increasing quality without adding to public budgets is difficult or impossible because the control, measurement and monitoring of public sector services is so complex. He cites some of the factors mentioned in sections 5.4.1 to 5.4.4 above as frustrating the attempts to improve quality within the applied budget provision. In rejecting this position, Morgan and Murgatroyd (*ibid.*: 55) rely on the success of the New Right in transforming traditional public sector structures and processes towards real or quasi-market ones.

It should be said here that the complexity of *operations* should be no barrier in itself to quality "movement" methods, and in some ways complexity could be seen as an argument in favour of the application of the holistic view of TQM. It is a moot point as to whether public sector operations are more complex than those conducted by commerce. Although some services, such as medical services might be seen as highly complex, others such as road sweeping are straight-forward. The special situation of public services arises from the interaction of professionals, from the nature of control by the political process and from the intervention by stakeholders, not from operational processes *per se*.

It is because of this that objectives for leisure, recreation and sport services can be hard to specify, as discussed in section 5.4 above. It can be difficult to identify service rationales and then to translate these into objectives. As Lentell (1996) has pointed out the nature of these rationales (personal and community development, economic development, health and fitness) implies that progress towards objectives can only be determined in the long term, and even then it is often difficult to devise a meaningful measurement regime. Partly

because of the difficulty in devising performance measures for social objectives, authorities have tended to neglect setting objectives and standards in this area in favour of simpler financial economy and efficiency measures (Coalter 1995; Lentell 1996; Robinson 1997).

5.4.6 Reflection: quality management and the public sector.

Several points arise from this review of the relationship between quality management concepts drawn from the quality "movement" and the quality of public sector services. First, quality initiatives are politically driven, rather than driven by competitive considerations as they are in the commercial sector. Second, these political concerns have been about the cost, performance and anachronistic values of public services. Third, these concerns have translated into views of quality as VfM and level of service for the service end user, for the individual citizen and the public collectively. Fourth, the analysis of the introduction of quality management methods into the public sector has been bound up with the effects of markets and quasi-markets within the sector. Fifth, the differences between the models of management in the public and private sectors, discussed in section 5.3, imply that it is not possible to import the philosophies and models of the quality movement into the public sector. However some quality management techniques are suitable for use with appropriate adaptation.

5.5 ISO 9000 and liP in the public sector

5.5.1 ISO 9000

Although there has been considerable interest in the professional and trade press about the utilisation of ISO 9000 by public services, serious evaluations of it appear to be scarce. An important study was conducted by Curry and Monaghan (1994) and their work is reviewed below.

Analysing their local government case studies, these authors suggest four advantages of BS 5750/ ISO 9002 in the public sector. First, it provides a recognisable standard at a time when "government departments are increasingly demanding third party certification from their suppliers" (ibid.: 46). Second, it assists cost control and making the best use of resources. Third, it can contribute to a total quality culture by providing a clear and consistent system around which staff, if properly motivated, can adapt and build the service. Fourth, the quality audit aspect of the Standard "helps to defuse what can potentially become a series of threatening situations" (ibid.: 47).

Against these advantages must be set the following drawbacks. First, the language of the Standard is off-putting and some consultants approaches have been "unhelpful and costly"(ibid 47).

Second, the way the Standard has been introduced has sometimes been a problem. Staff have had the Standard imposed on them, and feel no sense of ownership of it; this can be more serious in an environment where employees feel threatened by a "multiplicity of changes, restructuring and reprioritisation that has taken place (ibid.: 47)". Third, the authors point to the bad publicity that the Standard has received in terms of its applicability outside large manufacturing organisations, which has aroused suspicion amongst those not familiar with quality systems.

Although these authors do not report the case in any detail they do suggest that a study of Clydesdale District Council's Leisure and Recreation Department leads to the following prescription:

- "it takes time and persistence to gain some positive results;
- elected members must be involved in the process of implementing BS 5750/ ISO 9000, but not be dormant;
- staff must not be afraid of making mistakes and trying something new;
- start writing up the more obvious procedures, followed by the more specific;
- amendments to procedures must be seen in action;
- using a database to process customer feedback aids the processes of review and corrective action;
- recruit carefully to minimise lack of commitment;
- devolved management makes things happen more quickly and easily;
- the BS 5750/ ISO 9000 discipline is necessary to provide an established system;
- without it the framework is difficult to evolve; and
- a total quality culture needs to be developed alongside BS5750/ ISO 9000 certification" (ibid. 49-50).

Whilst the authors feel that there is an undoubted role for the Standard in public services, they are also aware of its limitations, so it is important that a local authority:

"does not embark on introducing such a quality system under the delusion that it will solve all organisational problems, or even all those relating to quality" (ibid.: 50).

5.5.2 IiP

Several surveys (Lentell and Morris 1995; Davison and Grieves 1996; Robinson 1998) have established that Investors in People has become an important standard in the local authority context, for leisure, recreation and sport services, as well as other services. However, no academic studies of its use in this, or the wider public sector context came to light in the

course of this review of literature. Thus issues that arise during its deployment and its efficacy for these services remain largely unknown.

5.6 Services management and public sector management

Thus far in this review of the literature on public sector service quality, the focus has been upon the relationship between the quality "movement" and public policy, or upon the applicability of techniques derived from the quality "movement" to public services. We now move on to consider the literature which studies the implications of services management and its quality paradigms for public services. This appears to be a rather smaller body of work, as services management is usually absent from the work of mainstream writers of public sector quality (e.g. Pollitt 1993; Morgan and Murgatroyd 1994; Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio 1995; Walsh 1995-a). Apart from some case studies contributed by practitioners, the literature appears to fall into two categories. First, are those works which attempt to use generic or modified service quality instrumentation to measure expectations and/ or perceptions of public service quality (e.g. Scott and Shieff 1993; Donnelly et al 1995; Cuthbert 1996; Howat et al 1996; Wisniewski and Donnelly 1996; Lam 1997). Second, are those works which apply generic or modified service management models to public services (e.g. Edvardsson et al 1994; Ghobadian and Speller 1993-b).

Applications of SERVQUAL to leisure and sport services, including those in the public sector were considered in the previous chapter (4.4), but it is worth noting that the scale has been used to evaluate service quality in a variety of other public services. For example, Lam (1997) used it to gain feedback from hospital patients, Cuthbert (1996) from students in higher education, Dalrymple et al (1995) and Wisniewski and Donnelly (1996) from clients of local authority services (libraries and food safety). These researches have shown the considerable potential of the method, although with the exception of Lam (1997) researchers have had to adapt the instrument to suit their particular service environment. Dalrymple et al (1995) found that the results yielded by the public library service fitted the dimensional structure of the SERVQUAL model quite well, but those of the food safety service did not. Similarly Cuthbert (1996) concluded that the dimensional structure of the scale may not be appropriate for the higher education context. Dalrymple et al (1995: 73) suggested that their results indicated that:

"the degree and nature of payment and receipt for different types of service provision may critically affect the assessment criteria used by 'customers'".

The work of Edvardsson et al (1994) has already been reviewed in Chapter Four (4.3.0), whereby both public and private sector services were used to develop the concept of "total quality service".

Speller and Ghobadian (1993-b) used a modified Gap Model (Parasuraman et al 1985) as a means of framing an analysis of local authority case studies, focusing on the relationship between users of the services, service personnel and service management. They found that there was considerable awareness of quality management, with work on quality procedures and customer care programmes. Attempts were made to set service standards and to communicate these to customers. However, there was often a failure actually to listen to the service end-user when specifying the service, to tackle the inertia of managers and professionals and a failure to "adopt appropriate participation styles of management, combining clear 'top-down' strategic vision and leadership and 'bottom up' feedback and involvement in the design and specification of services" (ibid.: 29).

These researchers concluded that:

"Many approaches to quality...have smacked of 'flavour-of-the-month', and have shown themselves not to be sustainable in the face of 'short-termist' political or financial pressures. At the root of this lies an emphasis in processes and procedures and with performance measurement of these 'inputs', rather than on the people who matter most: the external customers, and the people who deliver services - the frontline staff" (Speller and Ghobadian 1993-b: 34).

5.7 Public sector sports services

5.7.0 The development of public sector sports and leisure services

Having examined the issues relating to the rationale, management and quality management of public sector services in general, we now move on to consider the development and management of public sector sports and leisure services.

Generally, one finds that the literature (e.g. Coalter et al 1988; Henry 1993) draws many parallels between the development of sport as a public service and the overall development of the welfare state. However, substantial state involvement in sport is seen as a recent phenomenon (Henry 1993) since the strength of the amateur and voluntaristic sports ethic in the United Kingdom meant that active state involvement was delayed and attenuated. Nevertheless, by the 1960s and 1970s sport was being recognised as a legitimate object for government policy, as evidenced by the setting up (in 1965) and reformation (in 1971) of the Sports Council with the triple aim of furthering sporting excellence, increasing participation and improving the provision of sports facilities. In 1975 a White Paper, *Sport and Recreation* (Department of the Environment 1975), was issued which had considerable impact upon the development of local sports facilities. Government in the UK has been increasingly concerned to boost international performance by UK sportsmen and women and this is

reflected, for example, in the *Raising the Game* statement (Department of National Heritage 1995). Sport is also one of the initial five (now six) areas of national life to benefit from the distribution of the proceeds from the National Lottery.

In terms of organisations examined in this thesis, the thinking behind the 1975 White Paper is perhaps of most significance as it expressed what Henry (1993: 19) calls a welfare-reformist rationale which provided the context for renewed interest in provision of sports and physical recreation facilities by local authorities. The involvement of local authorities in sport and recreation provision had grown slowly from the mid-nineteenth century following the 1846 Baths and Washhouses Act and the 1852 Recreation Grounds Act, which were used as a permission to provide swimming pools (Clarke 1993) and playing fields (Adams 1994). Even today, local government is the major provider of these types of facilities for public use. The "Sport for All" motto of the Sports Council was the backdrop for sport and recreation being seen as "one of the community's everyday needs", which should be provided "as part of the general fabric of social services" (DOE 1975). Thus local government was stimulated to invest in the construction of (mainly indoor) sports and recreation facilities which would provide sporting activities to the public on a subsidised basis. The boom in local authority provision continued throughout the 1970s and well into the 1980s, and has left them with a significant sporting infrastructure and a role as important providers of sports services. Adams (1990: 136) records that there were 20 indoor leisure centres in the UK in 1970, but by 1990 there were 1700. In England and Wales alone, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (Cipfa 1997-a) records 1779 indoor swimming pools, sports halls and leisure centres, 2182 community centres and public halls (many of which will feature sport and recreation among their activities) and 215 municipal golf courses. As sport has expanded and diversified as outlined in Chapter Two (2.2), local government has often been stimulated to respond through provision of facilities such as ice rinks or ski runs (Adams op.cit.). The boom in interest in health and fitness suites has also led to the inclusion of fitness suites and gymnasia in many local authority sports and recreation centres. The contemporary economic significance of public sector sports services in the UK was considered in section 2.3.

A trend which is evident is that the welfare ethos initiated by the 1975 White Paper (op.cit) for facility investment by the state, is increasingly overlaid with economic regeneration criteria. The various bids to the National Lottery Sports Fund, the World Student Games in Sheffield and Britain's two recent Olympic Bids, demonstrate that major sports facility development is now seen as a way of leading local or regional economic development.

5.7.1 The organisation of public sector leisure and sports services

The major additions to the local authority role since the 1970s, described above, prompted many Councils to review the portfolio of amenities they had built up since Victorian times, and to see their work in sport as part of a wider welfare role in *leisure*. Many sports and physical recreation facilities are indeed known as leisure centres. These developments prompted a local authority reorganisation:

"occupational groups which had previously dealt with parks, swimming pools, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and countryside recreation were drawn together for the most part into shared departments in local government" (Henry 1990: 111).

These occupational groups have laid claim to the status of a public sector profession, with four pre-existing bodies forming the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management in 1979. One body, the Institute of Baths and Recreation Management (now the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management) chose to stay outside this merger. Coalter (1986, 1990-a) has remarked on the inclusion of "management" in the self-definition of these public sector professionals. Whilst it can be taken to indicate an acceptance of a "managerialist" agenda which was the context for local authorities in the 1980s (see sections 5.2 and 5.3 above), it does conflate the role of the leisure professional with that of managing public services, rather than focus upon the wider needs and wishes of communities for leisure opportunities. Arguably this has served to cut off these professionals from non-managerialist agendas in local government.

Thus local authority sports and leisure services became managed, and to some extent the professionals consciously strove to make them so, like other services delivered by the post-Bains local authorities, taking on the traditional bureau-professional characteristics described in section 5.2 above. However, as Coalter (1990-b: 29) has noted, leisure services:

"...have occupied an ambiguous position between the ideologies of welfare ('need') and ideologies of the market ('demand' or 'profit'). This ambiguity is due in part to an ideology of leisure as being a private sphere in which individual choice and responsibility is paramount and in which the notion of 'need' (the basis of welfare provision) is difficult to define. This may mean that the welfare elements of leisure services may become more difficult to defend. Increased emphasis on a 'managerialist' approach and a concern with 'efficiency' (income maximisation, financially optimal use of resources) may undermine the 'equity' objectives of social policy" (Gratton and Taylor 1985).

Indeed, the late 1980s and 1990s saw leisure welfarism increasingly obscured by other imperatives. As Henry (1993: 110) has remarked:

"It is ironic that at the moment of the state's addition of leisure to the welfare portfolio, the whole concept of the welfare state should be called into question."

The reforms introduced by successive Conservative administrations, following the 1979 election, particularly the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering in the 1988 Local Government Act, have profoundly altered the way in which these services are delivered. Some commentators (e.g. Ravenscroft and Tolley 1993) have seen this as the substitution of welfare by market-led or financial objectives. However, as Coalter (1995) suggests, there must be real doubts about how successful leisure welfarism was in translating an ethos (e.g. as expressed by 'Sport for All') into concrete action to confront recreational disadvantage. Work by the Audit Commission (1989) pointed out that the participation profile at local authority leisure centres was still skewed away from the poorer and disadvantaged social groups, who were never-the-less paying through taxation to subsidise this provision. Benington and White (1988) suggested that CCT might represent an opportunity for councillors and senior officers to work together to plan leisure services in a manner appropriate to their political objectives and community needs. Coalter's research (op.cit) leads him to the conclusion that the situation of social objectives after the first round of CCT was similar to that beforehand. The primary cause was a failure to grasp the opportunities CCT presented to *operationalise* the welfare ethos, rather than the eclipsing of that ethos by central government *dictat*. Nicholls' research (Nicholls 1995, 1996) implies that the situation may change in future as the role of the new local authority client officers (created by the purchaser-supplier split engendered by CCT) develops and they assume a greater role in the strategic planning of services.

The first round of CCT produced considerable successes for local authority Direct Service Organisations, which won 84% of the contracts (or 83% by value) (Local Government Management Board 1993). Coalter (1995) pointed out that this suggests that efforts to create a market in sports and leisure management contracting have been only very partially successful, particularly as many authorities received no external bids. However, the impact of CCT has still been highly significant in terms of cost reduction (Bailey and Reid 1994), organisational structure (Nicholls 1995, 1996) and in underscoring moves towards financial economy and efficiency rationales (Ravenscroft and Tolley 1993; Coalter 1995). Bailey and Reid (op. cit.) suggest that commercial sector involvement will grow in subsequent CCT rounds. Even with the replacement of CCT by Best Value, this trend seems likely, given the emphasis within the latter upon public-private partnerships and upon the use of the private sector to generate capital investment (Filkin 1997).

Reflecting on the place of sports services within public sector services, it could be said that they are a clear example of the "more responsive" category put forward by Harrow and Shaw in which service management must respond to end-user needs and wants (Figure 5.2

above). Although these services enjoy subsidy from local authority funds, the end-user also contributes through "pay-as-you-play" fees and frequently through annual membership fees. Thus, to the service user, there is frequently little to distinguish these local authority services from sports services available in the private sector, apart from fee structure and levels. In the service domain, to use the terminology of Kouzes and Mico, discussed in section 5.2.3 above, there are also many similarities between the activities of the leisure management professionals and their private sector counterparts, similarities encouraged by the professional bodies' emphasis on marketing and customer orientation. However, the Mintzberg model (Figure 5.1 above) is also relevant in that both stakeholders and politicians can and do intervene in the orientation and delivery of services.

5.7.2 The development of "leisure management"

Having reviewed the quality-related literature from the quality "movement", services management and public sector management, there now follows a review of that literature which is likely to have been the most influential on the managers of the services under study. In the United Kingdom the category of "leisure and recreation management" is a recent construct, receiving official sanction in 1984 with the publication of the Yates Committee report (Department of the Environment 1984). In 1983 the first UK textbook was published (Torkildsen 1983) and in the intervening years academic publishers have regularly supplied new titles. An active professional and trade press has grown up including titles such as *The Leisure Manager*, *Leisure Management* and *Leisure Opportunities*. In 1995 an academic journal, *Managing Leisure: An International Journal*, began publication. Numerous leisure management courses in further and higher education have been developed to offer in-service training for professionals or pre-service qualifications to aspirants. The treatment of quality issues in this literature is discussed below.

The literature about the emergence of a profession of leisure management is agreed that it is associated with public sector investment in indoor leisure facilities in the period following 1970 (e.g. Coalter et al 1985; Whitson and Slack 1989; Henry 1993). In North America early pioneers of the Young Mens'/ Womens' Christian Associations, the playground movement and settlement house movement, developed a public service rationale which linked with the movement for city, state, and national public parks to provide the framework for a not-for-profit leisure profession (Whitson and Slack 1989). Thus the conceptual content of these discourses owed much to the shifting necessities involved in carving out and maintaining a place within the power structure of public organisations (Whitson and Slack op.cit.).

The objective of traditional leisure management professionalism could thus be described as pursuing social goals through recreational welfare; the means was to follow other professionals in creating a powerful professional body which could define specialist knowledge. The professional body also acts as gatekeeper to ensure that only holders of appropriate knowledge could enter and progress within the profession (Henry 1993: 110-137). However, as the welfare rationale came under increasing attack in the 1980s and 90s, the focus of the leisure management discourse shifted towards more commercial concerns such as marketing and financial management (Whitson and Slack 1989; Henry 1993).

Another more recent development has been a move towards greater specialisation. Sports management associations have been set up in North America (in 1986), Europe (in 1992) and other countries, with the active participation of physical education specialists, leisure managers and sport administrators (Slack 1996). Two academic journals have been launched (the *Journal of Sport Management* (US) and the *European Journal for Sport Management*).

5.8 Chapter Five: Concluding remarks

The quality "movement" (e.g. Deming 1986; Garvin 1988; Oakland 1995) and services management research on quality (e.g. Parasuraman et al 1985, 1988) have been based in the commercial sector. However, in recent years there has been growing interest in the quality of public sector services, an interest which has led to quality initiatives specifically designed for that sector (Citizens Charter, Charter Mark, Best Value) or to the utilisation by the public sector of more generic initiatives (EFQM EQA, IIP, ISO 9000). Unlike the commercial sector, where quality has mainly been driven by competition, in the public sector quality has been driven by political concerns about the cost, value for money, appropriateness and level of service delivered by public services (e.g. Prime Minister 1991; Pollitt 1993; Walsh 1995-a). The previous Conservative administration in the UK linked public sector quality to the introduction of markets or quasi-markets (Le Grand 1991) into the public services (e.g. Pollitt 1993; Walsh 1995-b). Other approaches have tended to focus more upon reform of the political process (e.g. Labour Party 1996; Corrigan and Joyce 1997).

In spite of the many changes to the traditional public sector model, there are still many differences between public and private sector services. Public services remain dependent on funding through taxation, rather than through market-generated income. These particular relations for production imply particular relations of production (Ackroyd et al 1989) in which politicians and service stakeholders intervene in services through the political process (e.g.

Stewart and Ranson 1988; Harrow and Willcocks 1990; Mintzberg 1997). Moreover, the role of professionals and their relationship with clients is significantly different from those pertaining in the private sector. Models of quality from the commercial sector may be helpful in so far as they require public service managers to define stakeholders and their demands on the service. The definition of stakeholders as "customers" is less likely to be helpful since it does not provide a way of prioritising demands or of coming to terms with the differential powers of stakeholders over the service.

Much of the literature on public sector quality either reflects or is a critique of the market reforms of Conservative administrations (e.g. Pollitt 1993; Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio 1995; Walsh 1995-a, 1995-b). Most of the studies examine the appropriateness of quality "movement" models and techniques (e.g. Morgan and Murgatroyd 1994); however, little primary research has been reported on the efficacy of techniques such as ISO 9000 and LiP in the public sector. Generally little use has been made of services management models although applications of SERVQUAL have been developed (e.g. Dalrymple et al 1995; Cuthbert 1996, Howat et al 1996).

Sport and recreation services provided by local authorities have been considerably affected by the market reforms of local government, with CCT having altered the structure, if not the ethos of services (Coalter 1995). Service quality has become a significant issue for public sector leisure management professionals (Lentell and Morris 1995; Wood 1997; Robinson 1998), but the professional discourse of such professionals has not included holistic approaches to service quality.

Chapter Six

Quality in sport and recreation services: An overview

Summary

This chapter examines work specifically on quality in sport, recreation and leisure services. It also takes a brief overview of the literature review, using it to assist the identification of key issues which effect the primary research.

For sport, recreation and leisure services:

- Development of the SERVQUAL instrument and of the technique which led to its development has been made in services similar to those under study, but not in the UK. This research has elucidated some features common to these services; however, general agreement about a perceived quality measurement regime for these services has yet to be achieved.
- The literature on the management of service quality in these services is small and conceptually weak.
- Service quality has become an important issue for these professionals, but their professional discourse has not prepared them to take a holistic view of quality.
- Little was known about quality management methods practised in these services, or their frequency of use.

The evaluation made of the literature overall is that:

- Generally the quality movement studies do not take account of services management and public sector studies; public sector studies take account of the quality movement, but not of services management; service management studies have taken account of the quality movement, but not generally of public sector studies.
- In all three parts of the literature there is evidence of a move from customer-based to stakeholder-based conceptions of quality.
- Despite the implementation of various methods for assessing quality, there is not at present an accepted means of evaluating the effectiveness of quality management approaches or standards.

The consequences for primary research were:

- Basic research was required into what quality management practice was employed in the services under study.
- Investigation of the utility of different quality management methods needed to consider both "internal" (those involved in delivering the service) and "external" (service end-users or customers) perspectives.
- Investigation of "external" perspectives needed to take account not only of research on customer perceived quality in services generally, but also of research on the quality perceptions of customers of sport, recreation and leisure services.

6.0 Preamble

The previous three chapters of literature review have examined the general quality management literature. They have aimed to provide a context for consideration of the services under study; although occasional references have been made to work specifically on sport, recreation and leisure services, such research has not been the focus of the review up to this point. This chapter reviews of the literature specifically on service quality in sport, leisure and recreation services. It then attempts to reflect on the literature as a whole and to use these broad conclusions to situate research on quality in sport and recreation services so as to identify key issues which further research must take account of. First, research on perceived service quality in sports, recreation and leisure services is reviewed. Second,

research on the management of service quality in these services is considered. Third, the findings of the review of the quality literature as a whole are considered. This is done in terms of the articulation between the three major bodies of the literature, the common themes which seem to emerge and the methodological questions which are evident. Last, concluding remarks outline the state of knowledge about service quality in the services under study and the consequences for primary research.

6.1 Measuring perceived service quality in sport, recreation and leisure services

Scholars interested in leisure and recreation services were quick to realise the significance of the perceived service quality paradigm. In 1998 Williams reported research which had applied the unmodified SERVQUAL scale (4.3.1) to six leisure service organisations, some of which were making use of quality management methods, including ISO 9002, liP and the Charter Mark. She found that customer's SERVQUAL scores tended to be negative, even where quality management standards were being utilised. The public sector leisure centre, and public sector golf course, both using ISO 9002 showed strongly negative scores across all five SERVQUAL dimensions. The art gallery, museum (both public sector) and amusement park (commercial sector) which were liP registered also showed negative customer SERVQUAL scores, although these were not so strongly negative except in the case of the amusement park. Manager's SERVQUAL scores showed that they could not accurately predict customers' expectations and perceptions.

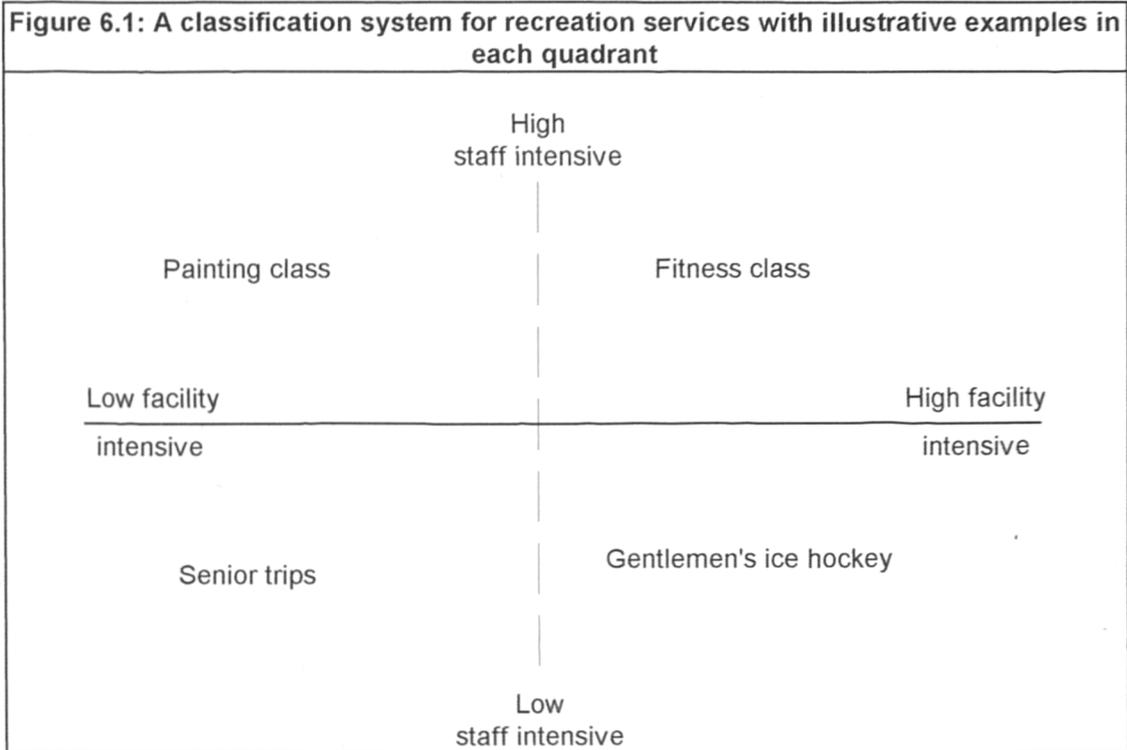
Williams made several criticisms of the SERVQUAL instrument, which can be summarised as follows.

- First, respondents find the "double" nature of the instrument (i.e. expectations and perceptions) tedious.
- Second, not all respondents will have participated in all aspects of the service, either because of the diverse service bundle offered, or because they have not experienced a service problem which might require staff to empathise or respond. She suggests that many respondents are thus partial non-participants in the service.

"If a respondent strongly agrees with a statement in part 1 of the SERVQUAL expectations questionnaire they will mark the value seven: in the third part, if they had not needed to test the organization they will mark the neutral point, numeric four. This has the effect of creating a three-point SERVQUAL scale" (Williams 1998: 246).

- Fourth, respondents did not expect to receive first quality service from public sector organisations;
- Last, the five dimensional structure did not seem to apply to all cases investigated.

A paper by MacKay and Crompton (1988) reviewed the services research and made suggestions for applications to leisure. This paper is notable for its use of Zeithaml's (1981) work to differentiate between recreation services on the basis of their search, experience and credence properties, thus leading to differences in the ease of quality evaluation by consumers. The paper discusses differences between the public and commercial sectors and modifies Parasuraman et al's (1985) model for public sector services, essentially by adding the concept of equity as a determinant of expectations.



Source: MacKay and Crompton (1990)

These researchers went on to apply their ideas to participants in public recreation programmes in Nova Scotia (MacKay and Crompton 1990, Crompton et al 1991). Cognisant of the disparate nature of the services offered by these programmes, they developed a sampling framework which directed sampling of customers into each of four quadrants (see Figure 6.1 above). Their research method drew heavily on the work of Parasuraman et al's (1988) SERVQUAL work, for example in asking about the attributes that these services should have and about perceptions of a particular service. However, it also departs from the SERVQUAL approach in significant respects. These departures relate to the generation of the item pool and the use of skewed Likert scales. The item pool was generated through the use of two consecutive panels of experts ("recreation graduate students and faculty", Crompton et al 1991: 19) who were asked to generate and select statements for recreation programmes on each of the five SERVQUAL dimensions. This led to an instrument, denoted as RECQUAL, with 25 items (five for each dimension), 12 of which corresponded to those on the original SERVQUAL instrument. The authors describe their scale as follows:

"...the scale used in this study was asymmetrical, utilizing five positive choices, one neutral, and one negative (disagree, neither agree nor disagree, slightly agree, agree, strongly agree, very strongly agree, extremely strongly agree). The rationale supporting this unconventional approach was the supposition that respondents will rarely disagree with positive features described by the scale items in the "desires" section. Instead it is likely to be a matter of extent to which the participants agree that such features should be provided to render a quality service" (MacKay and Crompton 1990: 51).

Although correlation and t-test analysis on customer responses showed internal validity for this instrument, the methodology must be considered suspect. First, experts rather than customers were used in the qualitative phase of instrument development. The services management literature reviewed earlier in this chapter suggests that customer perceptions may be significantly different from those of personnel, including experts, who are in a sense internal to the service system. Second, the method is predicated on the reality and universality of the five SERVQUAL dimensions; work in the 1990s has thrown doubt on this supposition, as discussed earlier in this chapter. When the researchers performed factor analysis on their results (Crompton et al 1991), the "empathy" dimension redistributed, leaving a four dimension structure; ideally this would have led them to a refined instrument. As the research stands, the instrument therefore seems to be an "interim" one. Third, the use of unbalanced Likert scales is unproven; it seems likely to result in further psychometric difficulties first, by indicating that negative responses are unwelcome, and second, through creating difficulties in customer discrimination between positives, which now are scored on a scale of five, rather than three.

This methodology was improved upon by Wright et al (1992) who used SERVQUAL and RECQUAL items as input to six different customer focus groups to generate an item pool of 70 statements which were suitable for the recreation centres under study. The items were reduced to 30 by a panel of administrators, managers and researchers. The resultant questionnaire followed the refined SERVQUAL format (Parasuraman et al 1991) in framing expectations in terms of "essential for excellence", and in their use of balanced Likert scales. Factor analysis on the responses was not reported, but the researchers drew the following methodological and managerial conclusions:

1. Expect to make some adaptations of the SERVQUAL item pool to get the most useful information for providing your particular service...
2. Include overall measures and open ended questions along with the more specific expectation and performance items...
3. Establish evaluative mechanisms within the program design to facilitate future assessment of service quality" (Wright et al 1992: 44-45).

Taylor et al (1993) suggested that the five dimensional structure of SERVQUAL "has yet to be empirically validated in a leisure services setting" (ibid.: 74). They also wished to investigate the reliability of importance-weighted SERVQUAL scores in predicting perceived service quality. They therefore administered the SERVQUAL instrument in five leisure services: health clubs, golf course, movie theatre, and dog tracks in a US city. The conclusions of this study were:

"...the SERVQUAL scale appears suspect as an adequate scale for measuring service quality in the leisure activities setting. First, neither SERVQUAL nor importance-weighted SERVQUAL's hypothesized five-factor structures are confirmed by confirmatory factor analysis in the research settings. Further, evidence is presented suggesting that the reliability of the alternative scales is not significantly different. That is, the addition of importance does not appear to enhance the reliability of the scale. Second, the summed-and-averaged scales appear adequate measures of service quality in both the original and importance-weighted SERVQUAL scales. Finally, service quality evaluations appear to affect positively consumer perceptions of satisfaction across recreational settings when importance weights are captured and considered" (Taylor et al 1993: 80).

Kim and Kim (1995) accordingly used an importance-weighted format to measure customer perceptions of service quality offered by sports centres in Korea. They asked a single focus group of sports centre customers to elaborate criteria upon which they assessed the quality of the centres. The resultant 45 scale items were incorporated in a questionnaire (QUESC) which separately asked respondents to indicate the importance of the item, and the performance of a particular sports centre against them. 271 respondents returned questionnaires about several sports centres in both the public and private sectors. The researchers concluded upon factor analysis of the items that there were twelve potential dimensions of service upon which service quality was being assessed. These are shown in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1: Sports Centre's Service Dimension's yielded by QUESC	
Ambience	Personal consideration
Employee attitude	Privileges
Reliability	Price
Social opportunity	Ease of Mind
Information	Stimulation
Programming	Convenience

Source: Kim and Kim 1995

It seems clear from the above research that it is not satisfactory, in a leisure and recreation setting, either to use the SERVQUAL item pool unmodified, or to use its dimensional structure as the basis for item pool generation. Accordingly, Howat et al (1996), working in Australia, developed an instrument (the CERM CSQ) through initiating four focus groups of

public leisure centre customers and two with leisure centre managers. The customer focus groups "were stratified to represent the range of customers for different programmes and facilities within wet and dry programmes and facilities within wet and dry leisure centres" (ibid.: 81). This process generated 60 attributes which a panel of managers and researchers refined and reduced to 15 core attributes, these were checked through an item importance ranking rating scale completed by focus group participants. Some of the resulting items were similar to SERVQUAL or RECQUAL ones; others were specific to the setting.

The resulting instrument is not in the public domain. However, from the details reported it is apparent that it has fifteen statements of a generic nature, often in a binary form (e.g. "the facilities are always clean and well maintained") the intention being to reduce respondent fatigue through keeping the statement number small. It follows the refined SERVQUAL format in asking about expectations and performance, but uses an unbalanced scale in the manner of MacKay and Crompton (1990). The final instrument was applied to customers of 15 public leisure centres, 2575 in all, producing much the largest reported data set that has been found in this review of literature.

Factor analysis of responses to the CERM CSQ yielded a four-dimensional structure, two dimensions drawing upon items which apparently correspond to three SERVQUAL dimensions. Howat and co-researchers propose a relationship between the CERM CSQ dimensions and the SERVQUAL ones is shown in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: Dimensional structure of responses to the CERM CSQ		
CSQ Dimension	Attributes	SERVQUAL Dimension
Core services	Programme information	Reliability
	Start/ finish on time	Reliability
	Activity range	Tangibles
	Organisation	Assurance
	Facility Comfort	Tangibles
	Value for money	Reliability
	Quality equipment	Tangibles
Staff quality	Staff responsiveness	Empathy & responsiveness
	Staff presentation	Tangibles
	Staff knowledge	Assurance
	Officials	Assurance
General facility	Safe parking	Tangibles
	Facility cleanliness	Tangibles
Secondary services	Food and drink	Reliability
	Childminding	Reliability

Source: Howat et al 1996: 83

From this review of the perceived service quality literature as applied to sport, recreation and leisure services, a number of points are apparent. First, the number of research contributions in this area is quite small. Second, as in the services literature generally, the focus is upon measurement of perceived service quality rather than upon management of it. Third, the items against which customers make quality judgements are not identical with those ascertained by Parasuraman et al (1985, 1988) in the development of SERVQUAL, although some of these items are similar to SERVQUAL attributes. Fifth, the dimensions underlying the perceived service quality attributes do not appear to conform to the five dimensional structure of SERVQUAL, or for that matter, to other dimensional structures posited for services.

6.2 Managing service quality in sport, recreation and leisure services

6.2.0 Leisure management and the conceptual framework for service quality

In Chapter Five (5.7) the context in which leisure management has developed was sketched out, we now turn to examine the place of service quality within it. For aspiring or practising leisure management professionals to understand aspects of service quality, some of the issues discussed in Chapter Three (operations management), Chapter Four (services marketing and management) or Chapter Five (public sector management) would need to be addressed. Below the degree to which this literature is accessed in the leisure management discourse is discussed.

Lentell (1995) reported a study of UK and North American textbooks directed at leisure management professionals and their learning programmes in higher education.

"...eighteen UK and seventeen North American leisure management textbooks intended for use in higher education or by management professionals were scanned for service operations management and marketing content. Those texts which deal purely with aspects such as leisure studies or policy were not selected for analysis. Of the texts selected, several deal with leisure management on a sector-wide basis, whilst others deal with a leisure specialism of some kind" (Lentell 1995: 277).

One of the striking features of this study was the scant attention these texts paid to operations management, although some other disciplines within management studies (such as financial management, human resource management, and organisational analysis) were well covered. In Chapter Three it was pointed out that the transformation model drawn from systems approaches is essential to operations management. However, only one of the UK texts reviewed (Buswell 1993) sketches in some operations concepts. Unfortunately, the application of the transformation model to leisure services made therein is suspect as it concentrates upon the flow of physical resources within the service system and therefore loses focus on the customer experience. One US text (Kraus and Curtis 1990) covered the

basic principles of operations management, but did not relate them to issues such as customer service, capacity management or quality management.

"Even where the focus is on "operations" (e.g. Badmin et al 1992 or Badmin 1993) or an operations-based topic such as service quality (e.g. Mills op. cit.) the work is open to the criticism that it lacks a credible theoretical framework" (Lentell 1995: 279).

Thus those contributions on the subject of quality systems (e.g. Mills 1992-a) or Mills' (1992-b) work on TQM (which is mainly an exposition of BS 5750) lack a convincing framework which would assist a translation of quality movement concepts to a public leisure service.

The position of marketing within the leisure management textbook stock is somewhat stronger than that of operations management. Americans such as Meyer and Brightbill (1956), and Rodney (1964) pioneered a literature aimed at the substantial public parks and recreation sector, and little attention to marketing was deemed appropriate. In more recent times the importance of marketing for these services has been recognised, with, for example, the fifth (1990) edition of Kraus and Curtis including a marketing section for the first time. In the UK, marketing was included in Torkildsen's (1983) volume. Other textbooks have followed his lead in including it, and some specialist works have been published (e.g. Craig 1992; Crump and Clowes 1992; Leadley 1992; Stone 1990). However Lentell (1995) concluded that, with one or two exceptions, these textbooks offered a highly traditional account of marketing which did not cover the services literature discussed in Chapter Four.

"Current thinking appears to equate leisure operations management with the technical or day-to-day, and marketing with promotion and selling. The strategic dimension is obscured. This may be connected with the findings of Dibb and Simpkin's (1993) study of leisure services marketing, that leisure service organisations lacked a strategic view of marketing....It is difficult to understand why this neglect of services operations management and marketing should have come about, particularly when one recognises the frequent use of leisure industry examples and cases by the authors of textbooks on operations and marketing (e.g. in Voss et al. [1985], in Johnston et al [1993] and Palmer [1994])" (Lentell 1995: 279).

However, since Lentell's 1995 study, the position has improved somewhat. Morgan's (1996) text is much more aware of the services literature than any previous leisure marketing textbook; it also attempts to show the relevance of the quality movement to leisure. Swarbrooke (1995) also discusses the distinctions between manufacturing and service, and includes a section on operations management. As the works of researchers such as Chelladurai (1992), Taylor et al (1993) and Howat et al (1996) which were discussed in Chapters Four and Six of this thesis, become better known, services management concepts seem set to enter more strongly into leisure management.

Having taken an overview of the position of the leisure management literature as regards operations management and marketing, we now consider how it deals with the issues raised earlier in this Chapter. Here we find a coverage of some of the salient issues. As much of the leisure management textbook stock has been developed with public services in mind, we find that some management texts deal with methods of community involvement, development and control (e.g. Edginton et al 1980, Torkildsen 1983). The kind of fundamental issues about similarities and differences of managing in the private and public sectors, which were discussed in this Chapter, tend to be discussed more in the policy texts (e.g. Henry 1993, Haywood 1994). However, leisure journals have given considerable prominence to the management consequences of Compulsory Competitive Tendering for local authority sport and leisure management, and some of the quality concerns have therefore been discussed (e.g. Coalter 1995; Robinson 1997). Never-the-less it appears that overall, the literature directed at managers of recreation facilities gives little attention to the issues that arise from viewing public sector service quality as an outcome of the relationship between the citizen and state.

It is not surprising in view of the above that the leisure management literature, in so far as it discusses quality at all, concentrates upon management technique, in particular upon applications of techniques from the quality movement. BS 5750/ ISO 9000 has received particular coverage (e.g. British Quality Association/ Sports Council 1991; Mills 1992-a; Mills 1992-b; Sheppard and Studd 1994), as has customer care (e.g. Cattle-Jones 1991). The more holistic approaches of the EFQM, or of services management appear to have had a limited impact on the literature. From the literature most accessible to leisure managers, it could be postulated that their general understanding of service quality management will be low. Indeed, Henderson (1996) concluded from his study of leisure centres in Sussex that managers were much influenced by a heritage of traditional public sector management and had not fully grasped the significance of quality and quality standards.

"Although there has been a considerable learning curve in gaining awareness of quality standards and increasing ruthlessness in gaining a competitive edge over the commercial sector, the results of the surveys show that a consistent and profound understanding is still lacking, or at least in its formative stages" (Henderson 1996: 41).

6.2.1 Quest

In 1996 a Sports Council-led group published a quality model, Quest, designed for "all sport and leisure facilities, including public leisure facilities owned by local authorities, but managed by other organisations" (Sports Council 1996). The model covers twenty-four management issues which fall into the four categories set out in Table 6.3 below:

Table 6.3: The Quest model
<p><i>Facilities Operation and Planning (FOP):</i> The principles involved in creating, controlling and developing processes which ensure the facilities meet customer expectations.</p> <p><i>Customer Relations (CR):</i> The principles involved in creating, controlling and developing processes which ensure staff/end-customer contact is effective.</p> <p><i>Staffing (STAF):</i> The principles involved in organising and developing the human resources to allow the required results to be achieved.</p> <p><i>Service Development and Review (SDR):</i> The principles involved in creating a policy, strategy and review framework for the organization.</p>

Source: Wood 1997

Organisations subscribing to the model carry out self-assessment against the twenty-four points to assist their development of policies, practices and performance in each category. Registration under the scheme is accomplished via independent mystery customer visits and through on-site inspection (Sports Council 1996) leading to a detailed assessment report which gives a percentage score to the facility. The registration outcome of the various score bandings is detailed in Table 6.4 below.

Table 6.4: Quest assessment score bandings	
Below 46%	Full reassessment required
46-52%	Registration after partial reassessment
53-59%	Registration after submission of evidence of improvement
60-75%	Registration
76-84%	Registration and highly commended
Over 84%	Registration and excellent

Source: Wood 1997

The scheme provides for reassessment within a two-year registration cycle.

Quest is an attempt to provide a quality framework, which takes account both of specific standards such as IIP and ISO 9000 and more holistic approaches such as the EFQM EQA (Wood 1997) in a sector which is heterogeneous in terms of its facilities and modus operandi. Because it is a newcomer on the quality stage, there is currently no evaluation material available, nor was it possible to include it in the researches undertaken for this thesis, as the number of registrations gained was very low when the case study research was undertaken.

6.3 An overview of the quality literature

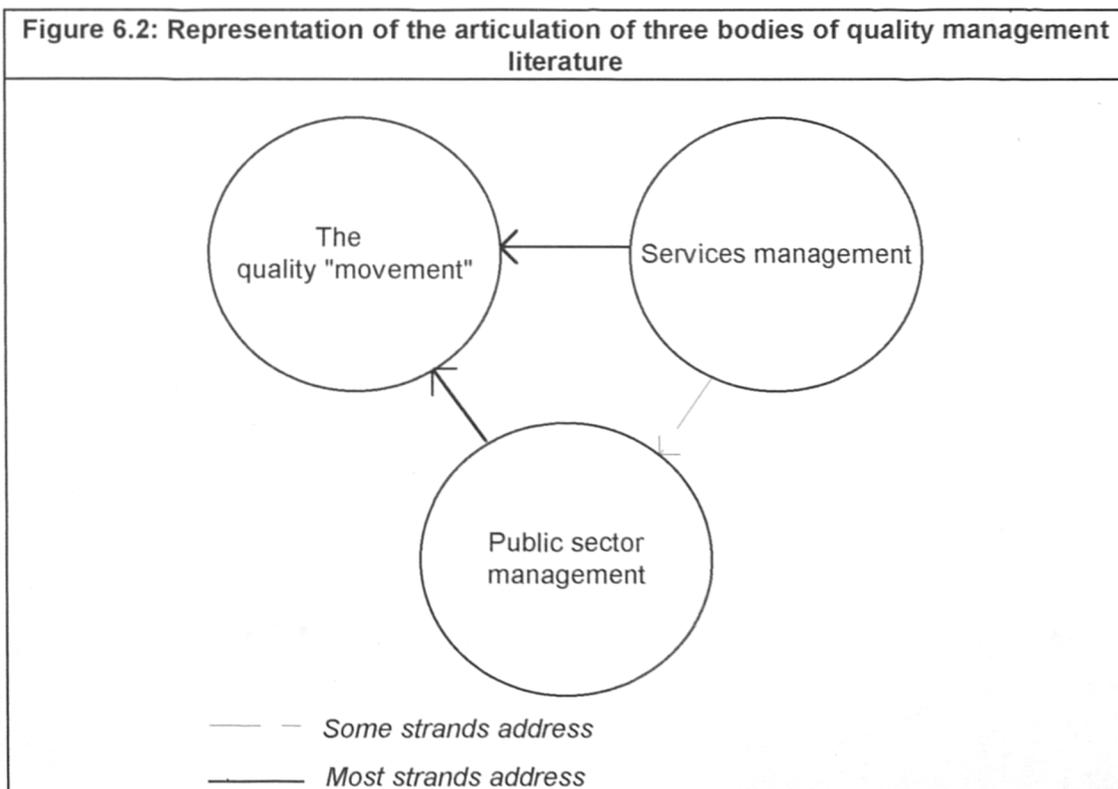
6.3.0 Introduction

The previous sections of this chapter have reviewed the literature on the measurement and management of service quality in sport, recreation and leisure services. In what follows, the characteristics of the literature as a whole are considered, as these have important implications for any research programme in service quality management.

6.3.1 Articulation

The previous three chapters have reviewed three bodies of literature which have rather different foci and which in general do not articulate well together. They could be summarised as follows. First, the quality movement and related literature which flows from manufacturing-based operations management, which takes as its starting point the operation's own view of quality (Slack et al 1995: 684). The second body of literature is work based on the "customer perceived service quality" paradigm originating from the consideration of services marketing, but now also a key aspect of the multifunctional subject of services management. The starting point here is the customer's view of quality. The third strand is the public sector management literature, which has discussed service quality issues, particularly since the 1980s when the quality of public sector services rose up the political agenda. This literature is predominately concerned with the implications of the quality movement for the relationship between the citizen and the state.

It was noted in Chapter One (1.2) that each part of the literature tends to be self-referential, but the degree to which each part takes account of the other two is not identical in each case. It is useful to discuss this in very broad terms, accepting the risk that the richness and variety of contributions is diminished in such an analysis.



The quality movement literature is strongly grounded in its own history, and in the impact it has had on industrial development. Although it sometimes makes reference to services, of

the commercial or public sectors, the mainstream work tends not to acknowledge the research devoted to quality in these sectors, or to engage in dialogue with it (e.g. Crosby 1979; Deming 1982, 1986; Garvin 1988; Oakland 1993, 1995). On the other hand, scholars of public sector services have had to address quality movement studies because of attempts by government to import quality models and methods into the public sector (e.g. Walsh 1991; Pollitt 1993; Morgan and Murgatroyd 1994). However, apart from the interest of some researchers in utilising a "SERVQUAL" type approach for measurement of the quality perceptions of service users, little interest has been shown in services management paradigms (see section 5.6). Services management scholars have had to justify establishing their own cross-functional discipline and this has involved them in a critique of mainstream marketing and operations management, including aspects of quality management (e.g. Grönroos 1994-b; Gummesson et al 1997). Although services management is strongly focused on commercial sector services, important work has been undertaken in professional public services, health services and "human" services (e.g. Hasenfeld 1983; Edvardsson et al 1994; Dickens 1994, 1996). The above analysis is represented diagrammatically in Figure 6.2 above.

6.3.2 Emergent common themes

It is argued here that in spite of the very different intellectual provenance and direction of these bodies of research, some common themes are emerging. It has been shown (Chapter 3.2-3.3) that quality management in manufacturing industry has moved from the "internal" focus evident in inspection, quality control and quality assurance towards an external focus in the contemporary "strategic quality management era" (Garvin 1988). The orientation has been, first and predominately towards customers in TQM, and second towards stakeholders for example as evident in the EFQM EQA (EFQM 1994: BQF 1994-1). However, it could be argued that in this move has involved a certain loss of clarity. Whereas definitions of quality assurance, for example, are widely accepted and a set of Standards define it in various organisational circumstances, it is much more difficult to specify exactly what is included in TQM (see 3.3 and 5.4). It is thus possible to discern from an external viewpoint that organisations managing to one of the quality standards are conforming to certain quality practices; it is much more difficult to discern what quality practices are followed by organisations declaring themselves to be following TQM.

There is a sense in which quality paradigms in the public sector have followed a similar evolution. The initial focus was an internal one centred on professional judgement of the professional-client interaction; this was then overlaid by Value for Money concerns, again through largely internally made evaluations, but frequently involving public sector managers (Flynn 1990; Pollitt 1993). Seen in these terms, the interest of the public sector in quality

assurance methods such as ISO 9000 series is not so strange, as they have evolved from "internal" concepts of quality. With the introduction of markets and quasi-markets in the UK, and the introduction of quality management concepts from commerce, professional-client interactions became seen more in terms of server-customer ones (e.g. Harrow and Willcocks 1990). However, the introduction of the "Best value" concept can be seen as supplementing end-user quality perceptions with those of other interest groups and the public at large (Filkin 1997).

Services management has always adopted a customer-orientated view of quality, and has constructed critiques of extrapolation of quality movement approaches to services. The studies by North American scholars remain centred on the customer-perceived quality paradigm (e.g. Parasuraman et al 1985, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1994). However, some of the Nordic School researchers have suggested a more holistic approach, based on the conception that quality must be seen in the context of the relationships in which the organisation is involved (e.g. Edvardsson et al 1994; Gummesson 1990, 1994, 1996). Once again therefore, this can be seen as supplementing customer orientations with a stakeholder one.

However, there are considerable differences in how widely the term "stakeholder" is interpreted, particularly on the weights given to "internal" stakeholders such as professional, managers and operatives and on how widely the "external" stakeholder is conceived. The most holistic approach is that of the EFQM EQA, but it is likely to require some interpretation for public sector service organisations.

6.3.3 Methodological issues

The quality movement has consistently stressed the importance of measurement of product conformance as a means of providing feedback for process control; the statistical techniques required to interpret this data form a significant component of the quality movement heritage (e.g. Shewhart 1931; Deming 1986). There is also a heritage of measurement of financial performance of organisations undertaking quality management as a means of checking on its progress (e.g. on a "micro" scale Fiegenbaum 1991, Juran 1974, 1992 or on a "macro" scale Buzzell and Gale 1987). Surveys of managers and case study interviews have also been used to gauge the efficacy of quality management methods (Redman and Snape 1995).

However, measurement of product quality has little relevance to the services under study, and public sector quality costing appears to be still in infancy. Services management has developed quantitative methodology for assessing customer perceptions of quality (e.g.

Parasuraman et al 1985, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1994) and some work has been done on capturing "internal" evaluations of quality (e.g. Bitner et al 1990). Little appears to have been done to investigate the effectiveness of quality management interventions, nor is there any indication of the relative popularity of different techniques and methods.

Within public sector services, efforts have been made to utilise the SERVQUAL approach in order to measure service users' evaluations of quality and to develop instruments specifically for leisure, recreation and sport services (e.g. Wright et al 1992; Kim and Kim 1995; Howat et al 1996, described in section 6.1 above). However, the dominant approach to quality measurement has been that of relating some outputs to inputs through performance indicator regimes (Audit Commission 1989, 1993). Although this has been relevant to the economy and efficiency objectives (the taxpayer stakeholder), it has not been very helpful in defining levels of service in the services studied in this research (Bovaird 1992; Coalter 1995; Lentell 1996). Apart from case studies, little appears in the academic literature on methodologies available to evaluate quality management practices.

From the above it appears that the minimum necessary for evaluating a quality management method is first, a measure of the perceptions of external service users and second, an internal measure of the success of the method in addressing the issues of interest to stakeholders in the service. The most established means of so-doing is the EFQM EQA model.

6.4 Concluding remarks: Quality in sport and recreation services

The purpose of the foregoing review of literature was threefold. First, to assist the adoption of a conceptual framework appropriate to the organisations studied in this thesis. Second, by delineating what is known, to suggest areas for research. Third, to assess the development of research methods described in the literature, so as to inform methodological discussion in Chapter Seven of the thesis.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Three traced the development of quality management thought through quality control, quality assurance and TQM, towards the type of paradigm represented by the EFQM EQA. Chapter Five (5.4) traced the development of quality paradigms in or for the public sector, and investigated public sector quality initiatives. In this chapter, initiatives specifically directed at sport and recreation services have been considered (6.2.1).

Turning now to the issues which emerge from the review of the leisure management literature, it is apparent that the literature itself is largely a consequence of the

professionalisation of leisure work which followed the development of the state's role in leisure (see 5.7). Thus public sector managers are the "norm" in the literature, including the quite small literature on service quality. In fact, as far as service quality management is concerned, this is largely a literature of absence. Because discussion of operations management and services management is so recent (6.2) there is no tradition of concepts within which a quality discourse can be framed. Whereas the leisure *policy* literature reviewed in Chapter Five addresses some of questions about the relationship between the citizen and the state which have been the focus of research in public sector management, this does not appear to have had much impact on the leisure *management* literature.

The small academic literature on quality in these services is orientated towards problems of measurement (6.1), using variants of the SERVQUAL scale, rather than investigating management practice (see 6.3 above). The literature primarily directed at practitioners tends not to provide a sufficient conceptual grounding for meaningful consideration of quality management, or has a strongly prescriptive bias. The "Quest" initiative is too recent to have generated its own evaluation literature. Where quality management is discussed, it generally takes the form of adaptations to leisure of techniques from the quality movement, particularly ISO 9000. Services management issues have begun to gain acceptance, particularly within the new "sport management" field (e.g. Chelladurai et al 1987). The emphasis of services management upon customer-perceived quality measurement is not yet fully reflected in the literature. It seems unlikely that the training and education of leisure managers will have enabled them to take a holistic view of quality.

However, it was clearly apparent that there was a lack of empirical information about quality management practices in sport and recreation services, including those within public sector sport and recreation. Thus there was no definite picture of what the industry was doing about quality management or about the frequency of use of various quality management methods. Nor was it understood how these practices could be interpreted in terms of the paradigms explored in the general quality literature, or about benefits or problems that arise when organisations attempt to manage quality. Some basic research appeared to be needed in order to establish what quality management methods were used and the frequency of use of these different methods.

Research into the utility of different quality management methods in these services would need to take account of the "stakeholder" conception of quality (6.3.2). Ideally this would involve investigating the quality perceptions of all the major stakeholders, which is a particular issue for public sector services. As a minimum, it seemed necessary to examine the "internal" perspectives (of those involved in delivering the service) and "external" ones

(of customers or end-users of the service). Investigation of customer-perceived service quality must take account not only of the "mainstream" services research (e.g. SERVQUAL), but also the various adaptations and refinements made by researchers in sport, recreation and leisure services.

Chapter Seven

Method

Summary

In this chapter, the major philosophies of research, and the methodologies they validate, are briefly discussed. The strengths and weaknesses of each methodology is assessed according to its internal validity, external validity and reliability. Examples of the utility of each to service quality studies are briefly reviewed. The applicability of these methods to the design of this study are reviewed and justification given for the methodology adopted.

The chapter then goes on to outline the design of the research described in this thesis, discussing the reasons for each method and the limitations of the study. There were four steps to the research:

- The first step was the literature review which continued throughout the study.
- The second step, the first stage of primary research, sought to identify what quality management methods were in use. This was undertaken via a mail survey of managers of sports and recreation services.
- The third step was the focusing of the research in the light of the review of literature and the findings of the first stage of primary research.
- The fourth step, the second stage of primary research, compared the implications of local authority sport services managing quality through Investors in People and ISO 9002, was accomplished by case studies. The methods used to investigate the cases were interviews with management team members and surveys of customer perceptions of the case study organisations.

The guiding hypotheses developed to guide the primary research may be summarised as follows:

- Guiding hypothesis A: Organisations working to ISO 9002 have better processes and management of tangibles than similar organisations not working to ISO 9002.
- Guiding hypothesis B: Organisations working to the Investors in People standard have better employee management than similar organisations not working to IIP.

7.0 Preamble

The previous chapter suggested that basic research to identify the type and usage frequency of the quality management methods used in sport and recreation services was required before meaningful study of utility of the different management methods could be undertaken. Thus a two stage approach to the primary research was suggested. The research approaches used in both research stages, together with the rationale which lay behind them, are reported in this chapter.

It is necessary to point out that in relating the methodology adopted, one chooses to do so either *logically* or *chronologically*. With the former ordering of chapters the reader is presented with the conceptual framework derived from the literature review prior to the description of the primary research undertaken for the thesis. However, this was not the chronological sequence of the research, since some of the literature review and first stage of primary research were carried out simultaneously (see 7.2), both being required before guiding hypotheses for the second stage of primary research could be formulated. The choice made here to use a "logical" format for the order of chapters means that the reader is

given a full view of pre-existing research before the research for this thesis is described. This is intended to enable the reader to situate the thesis within its conceptual context.

The following structure has been adopted for this chapter. First, research philosophies are discussed. Second, the design of this research study is considered in the light of these research philosophies, and each step of the research is outlined. Third, the methods used for the first stage of the primary research are discussed. This stage was an exploratory study of quality management practices. As a postal survey was used in this step of the research, the literature on surveys is considered here. A survey also formed an important part of the second stage of primary research which is reported in the fifth part of this chapter. Fourth, the focusing of the research on use of ISO 9002 and liP by local authority sports services is reported, and guiding hypotheses to frame the second stage of primary research are developed. Fifth, the methods used to carry out this second stage of primary research are considered. The second stage was analytical research into the operation of ISO 9002 and liP in case studies. This involves reporting on case selection, how interview and customer survey instruments were developed and administered, and how the results they generated were analysed. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of the research process.

7.1 Research philosophies

7.1.0 Introduction

" Research involves *finding out and explaining*" (Veal 1992: 19). Explanation itself can be the source of a deeper appreciation of the relationship between the elements studied, that is of understanding or *verstehen* (Giddens 1976: 52). The initial impetus of this research has been to discover what quality management methods are in use in sports and recreation services and then to research how certain methods are used and how effective they are. Using Williamson et al's (1982: 7) terminology, this has involved a cycle of movement from initial observation and description to analysis and the generation of hypotheses. The hypotheses themselves have stimulated further observation and analysis. Prior to a discussion of the selection of research methods to suit these tasks it is necessary to address the philosophical basis of research methodology in organisation studies.

In their discussion of the paradigms which inform organisational analysis, Burrell and Morgan (1979) make two essential points. First, that the different modes of organisational analysis flow from different "meta-theoretical" positions within the social sciences. These frame both the key problems which the various organisational analyses seek to address and the research philosophies which underpin the *methods* used to address these problems. Second, that these meta-theoretical positions can be understood through reference to two axes, subjective (idealist) vs. objective (materialist), and sociology of regulation vs. sociology of

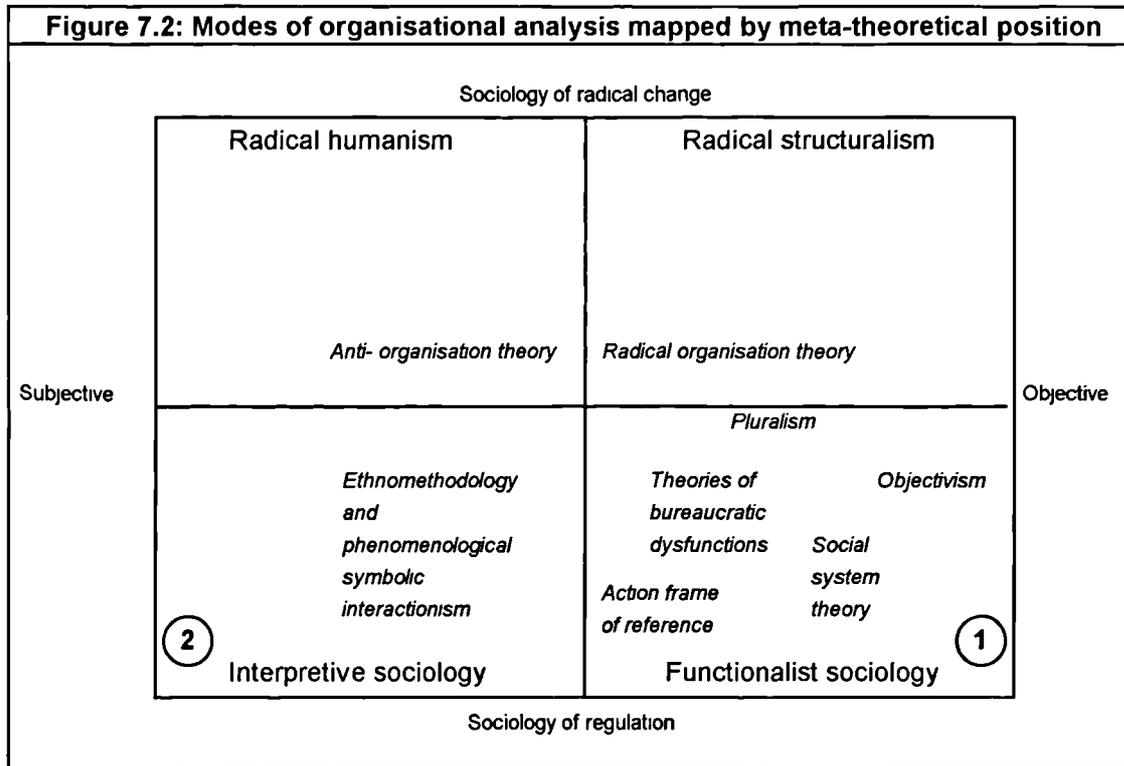
radical change. However, it is important to note that the subjective-objective axis is itself a synthesis of four strands which are represented in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1: Composition of the subjective-objective axis		
Subjective		Objective
Nominalism	<i>Ontology</i>	Realism
Anti-positivism	<i>Epistemology</i>	Positivism
Voluntarism	<i>Concepts of human nature</i>	Determinism
Ideographic	<i>Methodology</i>	Nomothetic

Source: based on Burrell and Morgan (1979)

The ontological strand concerns the view taken on the nature of man's being in the social world. A purely subjectivist position is that the social world is simply that which is perceived and named by social actors, and cannot be said to have a real existence as maintained by adherents of the objectivist position. The epistemological strand concerns the ways in which the social world can be known. Postivists (see section 7.1.1 below) suggest that the approach of the natural sciences can be adapted for the social sciences. However, the anti-positivists suggest that either the scientific method is not in fact that which is represented by positivism, or that such an approach to knowledge cannot be applied in the special conditions of the social sciences. The strand labelled "concepts of human nature" is essentially about the place accorded to free will in the explanation of individual action. Voluntarists assert that individuals basically choose their own actions, whilst determinists suggest that these actions are determined by social structures and conditions. Lastly, the methodological strand has "ideographic" at the subjective pole and "nomothetic" at the objective one. The former set of methods is concerned to build up a detailed explanation of the motivations and interior world of social actors, perhaps by ethnographic techniques; nomothetic methods are routinised, usually quantitatively-based, being based, for example, on surveys. Each position within sociology brings these strands into a different relation with one another; in this sense classifying them according to idealist-materialist criteria must be done with care so as not to over-simplify. Sections 7.1 and 7.2 below pay most attention to epistemological issues as these are key to setting up a framework for discussion of methodology.

The various approaches to organisational analysis can therefore be mapped out in quadrants which delimit the major schools of sociological thought as in Figure 7.2 below.



Source: (Burrell and Morgan 1979: 21-37)

In what follows attention is paid to the research philosophies flowing from the meta-theories in the lower two quadrants (labelled 1 and 2 in the above figure) as they have exerted a particular influence on research in services. The functionalist paradigm (1), often influenced by positivistic thought, has framed most of the research in this area, although interpretive approaches (2) have also had a certain influence.

7.1.1 Functionalism

The philosophical background of the social sciences, including both the functionalist and radical structuralist positions, has been greatly influenced by materialist positivism and this has in turn affected the management sciences. The founder of this approach is widely regarded as August Comte.

"...since Comte believed that scientific methods could be applied to the study of social phenomena, this implies that: first, natural laws can be developed in social sciences; second, these natural laws provide the basis for foresight - i.e. the basis for predictions; and third the realization of these predictions can be modified by manipulating causal variables, to change the nature of society" (Johnson 1983: 11).

These ideas were further developed in the inter-war years by the Vienna school of logical positivism. Whilst accepting the framework devised by Comte, they were primarily concerned with verification and meaning.

"the verification of an ordinary statement was to consist of two stages, corresponding to the words 'Logical Empiricism'. The statement would be analysed by a logical process into elementary statements, and then would

come the crucial contact with experience, as required by empiricism" (Hanfling 1981:77).

The work of Karl Popper represents an important development in positivist thinking. He is concerned that it is not possible to test a hypothesis in all conceivable circumstances, since this would require an infinite number of tests, and thus no "law" can claim to be completely verified. He points out that it is possible to show that a hypothesis is false and suggests that sciences should proceed by trying to falsify propositions:

"If somebody proposed a scientific theory he should answer, as Einstein did, the question: 'Under what conditions would I admit that my theory is untenable?' In other words, what conceivable facts would I accept as refutations, or falsifications, of my theory?" (Popper 1976: 46).

When translated into the social sciences the central thesis of the logical positivist approach can be summed up as follows:

"...human behaviour is subject to the operation of laws of cause and effect, and the nature of these laws can be identified by the process of hypothesis-testing against empirical evidence" (Johnson 1983: 27).

The extreme variability of human behaviour, and the great difficulty in identifying and isolating both the independent and dependent variables which may be causing it, imply that in the social sciences a great number of tests might be required of each hypothesis. Whether taking a verification or falsification framework, positivist social science tends to be highly quantitative, using statistical techniques to maximise the confidence that sample tests are representative of the population as a whole.

Burrell and Morgan (1979: 118-220) suggest that the main schools of management studies draw heavily upon those sociologists working within the functionalist paradigm. In fact, very few authors in the history of the discipline are seen as working outside the functionalist quadrant shown in Figure 7.2 above. Although Burrell and Morgan do not specifically cover operations management and services management, it seems clear that they also fall within this quadrant. Operations management has powerful heritage from "scientific management" and systems theory which are strongly functionalist in character. Although services management is more concerned with perception (the customer's view of the service) and may thus be positioned nearer to the subjective on the anti-positivism versus positivism epistemological strand shown in Figure 7.1 above, in other respects it is very clearly within the functionalist quadrant.

In the second part of this century, the positivist approach to science which underlies the functionalist approach, has come under increasing attack. Only the main strands of this critique are identified here. First, sociologists of science have drawn attention to the gap

between this "philosophical" notion of scientific method and how the practice of science is actually carried out (e.g. Hagstrom 1965; Merton 1967). Second, it has become apparent (Foucault 1970, 1973; Kuhn 1962) that in the selection of problems for scientific attention, in the concepts used as the substance of hypotheses and theories, and in the very language used to form them, there is an intimate connection between social and scientific development. The third point is related to the first two: positivism suggests a "value-free" science, but if the critique is accepted, this cannot be the case.

Much of the above critique has been aimed at dethroning the natural sciences, rather than the social sciences, where controversy about the basic concepts and methods preceded the critique of Positivism. Foucault's work is having considerable impact in linking these arguments to the human sciences. It is worth noting that both Goffman (1968) and Foucault (1973) chose medicine as the locus of their critique; like management this is a practice concerned with a human subject, and which tends to lay claim to reason, logic and science as the source of its authority.

7.1.2 Interpretive approaches

Burrell and Morgan (1979: 227) suggest that much of the work of interpretistic sociologists and organisation theorists stems from the idealist philosophy of Kant. Researchers have returned to idealist perspectives in various forms partly because of the weaknesses evident in the more mainstream programme of functionalism. As these authors point out, some organisation theorists (e.g. Bittner 1965; Zimmerman and Weider 1970; Silverman 1970) have attempted to build organisational analysis upon the sociological insights of idealist social researchers of the first part of C20th (e.g. Weber 1947, Dilthey 1976; Merleau-Ponty 1964). Although there is a considerable difference between the approaches of these authors, they share a focus upon the individual's perception of the social world and the connection that perception has with action. These approaches can be summarised as falling into the ethnomethodological and phenomenological schools.

Theorists such as Bittner (1965) and other ethnomethodologists criticise functionalists for accepting the notion of "organisation" *a priori* as a real-world structure, believing the essential problematic to be one of unravelling the internal world of actors within organisations. However, Burrell and Morgan (op.cit) suggest that the case study analyses made by these authors do acknowledge the reality of organisational structures, suggesting that in practice this position is untenable.

The phenomenological school of organisational analysis draws upon critiques of logical positivism such as that offered by Merleau-Ponty (1964) . For him, the problems of positivist

science arise from the separation of the concepts of "mind" and "body" introduced into Western thought by Descartes. Merleau-Ponty's work is an attempt to develop the case for an end to object-subject division upon which Positivism is built. Human perception is not the property of an abstract entity "mind", but a consequence of the bodily presence of humans in the world (*lebenswelt*). It follows that subject and object are connected by the act of perception itself and cannot be understood outside their relationship to each other.

"The thing is *inseparable* from a person perceiving it, and can never be actually *in itself*, because its articulations are those of our very existence, and because it stands at the other end of our gaze, or at the terminus of a sensory exploration which invest it with humanity. To this extent, every perception is a communication or communion,...or, on the other hand, the complete expression outside ourselves of our perceptual powers..." (Merleau-Ponty 1964: preface).

For social research, phenomenology thus suggests a programme which recognises and builds upon the relationship between researcher and researched.

"I am the mirror of others. What I see mirrors who I am as a see-er; the Other reflects back to me the face of my vision. Both are co-emergents, they arise together, simultaneously and in interdependence. The other one reflects back to me the character of my being, as I do for him" (Küpers 1995: 9).

This argument suggests a research programme founded on an interpretative approach, along the lines of the ethnographic methodology pioneered in anthropology.

Küpers (1996) has used this perspective to develop a critique of the service quality literature, based as it is on a highly positivist schema which it has absorbed from economics and other management sciences.

"The orientation towards explanation instead of understanding, the objectivistic nature of reality and social beings, the role of linear causality and dualistic research relationships, have straitjacketed researchers and stymied them for interpretistic alternatives...For services the picture of the self as a disengaged and disembodied, punctual and atomistic agent, striving for instrumental control becomes untenable. We are first and foremost embodied agents living in a natural and social world...The services world is not what people think about it, but what they live through" (Küpers 1996: 2-4).

He goes on to suggest that approaches such as those based on SERVQUAL, fail to capture the essential feelings and emotional processes which permeate the services world, and which are essential to an understanding of service quality. A more holistic approach which interactively seeks to elucidate feelings generates a broader understanding of quality.

7.1.3 Evaluating the different approaches to research methodology

7.1.3.0 Introduction

The dispute on method within services quality research is part of a wider tension between functionalist and interpretive approaches within management studies. Gill and Johnson (1991: 121-122) review these philosophies and their associated methodological approaches in the management sciences by setting up three evaluation criteria, which they use to make assessments about management research methodologies:

- Internal validity: do the 'causes' or stimuli actually produce what have been interpreted as the 'effects' or 'responses'?
- External validity: the extent to which research findings can be generalised or extrapolated beyond the immediate research sample or setting. This can be further subdivided as
 - Population validity or the ability to generalise the research from the sample to a wider population; and
 - Ecological validity or the ability to generalise from the social context of research to wider social contexts.
- Reliability: the extent to which another researcher can replicate the original using the same subjects, the same research design and under the same context.

7.1.3.1 Ideal or laboratory experiments

The essential element of experiments is their highly structured nature. Structure follows from identification of independent and dependent variables of interest, allowing their manipulation and examining the results through assigning subjects to experimental or control groups.

This methodology is useful for establishing causal relationships (internal validity) and because of the high degree of structure, the results can be replicated by others (reliability). However, problems can arise in the area of external validity. First, a weakness of some research is the small numbers of subjects involved, which may limit the degree of population validity. Random sampling techniques can be used to strengthen the study, but it is difficult to fully escape this limitation. Second, and perhaps more fundamentally:

"...the ideal experiment, in gaining these strengths through its high degree of structure, loses or "trades off" naturalism: experiments are low in ecological validity because of the artificial nature of the research process and the context created by their very structure. Such weaknesses raise the issue of the extent to which any conclusions from ideal experiments are mere artefacts of the research process and context and thus inapplicable to social contexts outside those in which the data has been collected" (Gill and Johnson 1991: 122).

Within management and organisation studies some laboratory experiments have been highly influential (e.g. Asch 1951, Milgram 1974). This review has not found examples of the technique used in services management per se, although it is used to research into consumer behaviour (e.g. see Engel et al 1993).

7.1.3.2 Quasi-experiments and action research

With these types of research an attempt is made to overcome the context-specific nature of laboratory experiments by conducting them in the field. By increasing the naturalism of the experiment greater ecological validity can be obtained. However, as Gill and Johnson note:

"...here we confront the paradoxical relationship which exists between control and naturalism in research design. Through venturing into the field naturalism may be gained, but only at the expense of losing the ability to manipulate the incidence of independent variables and control the incidence of extraneous variables. Except on rare occasions, in action research it is usually much more difficult to manipulate the independent variable and assign subjects to matched and experimental groups" (Gill and Johnson 1991: 123).

Thus the trade-off for the increase in naturalism (ecological validity) is a tendency for internal validity, population validity and reliability to be less than in ideal or laboratory experiments.

Within management studies quasi-experiments seem to have been influential; for example the Hawthorne Studies (Mayo 1933), are usually seen as giving rise to the human relations school of management. In sport and recreation, the action research method has been extensively used to gauge the effectiveness of participation strategies (e.g. Rigg 1986). The review found no clear examples of these research methods in the service quality field, although related modes of enquiry were found in the contributions of management consultants, or from academics relaying the experience of consultancy projects (e.g. Wyckoff 1984; Peters and Austin 1985).

The focus group is a related form of enquiry, being a semi-structured, open-ended technique which allows the researcher to observe both the content and interaction processes in a group interview (Jankowicz 1991: 197). It has had great utility in marketing research (e.g. Dibb and Simpkin 1994: 178-9), and in service quality research has been important as a development stage for surveys (see 4.3.1 and 6.1).

7.1.3.3 Surveys

The great strengths of the survey as a research method lie in its population validity and reliability. Assuming that proper precautions are taken in sampling, it should be possible to generalise the result to the population with a reasonable, and known, level of confidence. If a structured survey is used, the results will be quantifiable and are regarded as replicable

(reliability). However, the more structured the survey instrument, the less naturalistic it is. There is more chance therefore that answers provided through the survey will depart from the actual feelings, beliefs or sensations of respondents as they experience them in the field.

"...respondents might often be constrained to or impelled by the prompts of the interviewer or the rubric of a self-completion questionnaire. This may lead them to make statements which, although fitting into the conceptual and theoretical proforma of the research, give little opportunity for the respondent to articulate the ways in which he or she personally conceptualizes and understands the matters of interest" (Gill and Johnson 1991: 123).

In effect, it is easy for survey research, particularly, where only one survey technique is used, to give rise to bias which can be difficult to detect. In customer service satisfaction research, the approach of Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) was to aim to produce a self-completion questionnaire which was congruent with the conceptual frameworks of customers by building it from a more naturalistic technique (the focus group). Use of multivariate analysis in pilots and pre-tests of the questionnaire allowed development of a reliable instrument within the context in which it was used. However, this technique is open to the criticism that it must produce results which reflect the research premise (the expectations disconfirmation paradigm of service quality). The literature reviewed in Chapter Four suggests that this view is not unproblematic and is not universally accepted (4.3.1).

Thus the population validity and reliability of surveys must be set against difficulties in establishing internal validity. This is particularly the case where multivariate analysis such as factor analysis is used to identify extraneous variables, because it may weaken conclusions as to causation. In any case, correlation does not indicate causation. Even the direction of causation can be hard to establish unless there is a difference in timing between the surveys.

Surveys are likely to have rather weak ecological validity. Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (see 4.3.1) carried out their research in the context of four service businesses but claimed wide application to services of their research findings. As outlined in 4.3.1, 4.3.2 and 6.1 other researchers have not been able to replicate their results in other services. Howat et al. (1996) have used the development process devised by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry to develop a set of attributes of public leisure centres which is significantly different from the attributes explored by the original SERVQUAL instrument (see 6.1).

Within management studies, surveys have been an extremely important methodology, for example in developing motivation theory (e.g. Herzberg et al 1959). Surveys have also played the major part in developing knowledge of service quality, either in the heavily

structured form of questionnaires, or in formats more able to access the reflective perceptions of subjects, such as the Critical Incident Technique.

7.1.3.4 Ethnography

Ethnography makes liberal use of induction and of unstructured methods of data collection. Thus a criticism often made of it is that findings are heavily dependent upon the personality of the researcher and the particular interactions with the research subjects which take place. In Gill and Johnson's terminology, this must weaken the reliability of the work since it would be difficult to replicate. Moreover, because of the intensive nature of ethnographic work, it is likely that only a relatively small sample can be investigated, leading to weak population validity.

Against these deficiencies must be set the very great strengths of the ethnographic method. Because the research is conducted in the field, using inductive methods, the ecological validity is likely to be substantial.

"...ethnographic research (unlike other research strategies) takes place in the natural setting of the everyday activities of research subjects under investigation. This, and the research procedures used, reduce contamination of the subject's behaviour by the researchers themselves and the methods they use for collecting data" (Gill and Johnson 1991: 124).

Since the methodology relies upon the collection by the researcher of a large amount of qualitative data which is used in the process of framing a theoretical analysis, it is more likely that most relevant variables will be elucidated. In other forms of research, deductive approaches imply that theoretical elaboration is taking place prior to data collection, which means that some variables are excluded from consideration before data gathering takes place. If the ethnographer can ensure the collection of data relating to a wide variety of variables, and can reflect upon them in an appropriate manner, it is more likely that more of the relevant variables will feature in the resulting theory than would be possible for a deductive approach. In this sense ethnography can have a high level of internal validity.

Although ethnography has been influential in management studies (e.g. Mintzberg 1973), it has not been popular with service quality researchers. An exception is Küpers (1995) who has used this technique to explore service quality at a tourist resort.

7.1.4 Methodological Pluralism

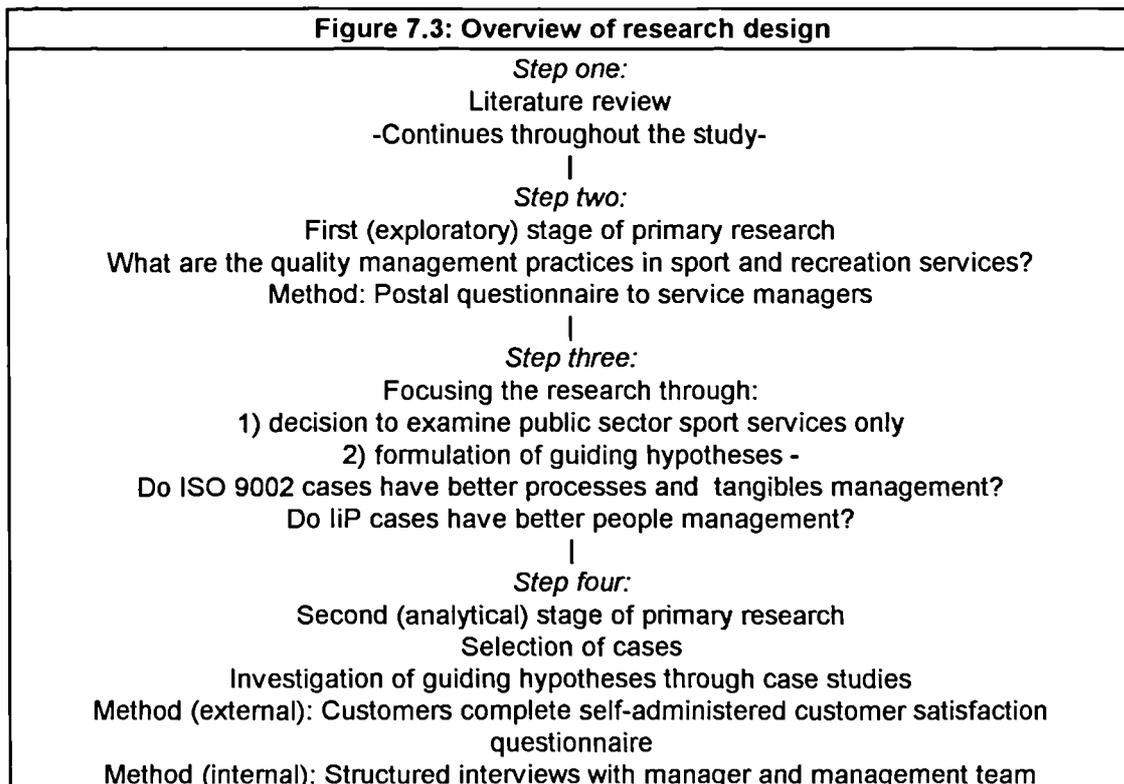
From the above methodological review it is apparent that each approach has its own strengths, but also possesses weaknesses. Some researchers (e.g. Trow 1957) therefore suggest that a contingency approach is required with the nature of the problem dictating the methodology so that:

"different kinds of information about man and society are gathered most fully and economically in different ways, and the problem under investigation properly dictates the methods of investigation...this view seems to be applied in the commonly used metaphor of the social scientist's 'kit of tools' to which he turns to find the methods and techniques most useful to the problems at hand" (Trow 1957: 33, quoted in Gill and Johnson [op.cit]).

However, the danger in such an approach is that it becomes a pragmatic one avoiding some of the difficult philosophical issues which have been touched upon in this chapter. This pitfall is more likely to be avoided if multiple-methods are used and numerous researchers have suggested their use (e.g. Denzin 1970: 296; Brewer and Hunter 1987: 11; Gill and Johnson 1991: 152). Gill and Johnson cite Jick's (1979) work as an example of the "triangulation" form of multiple methods, but point out that use of more than one method is unusual. They cite resources and time, as well as the conservatism of academic journals as possible reasons.

7.2 A discussion of the design of the research for this study

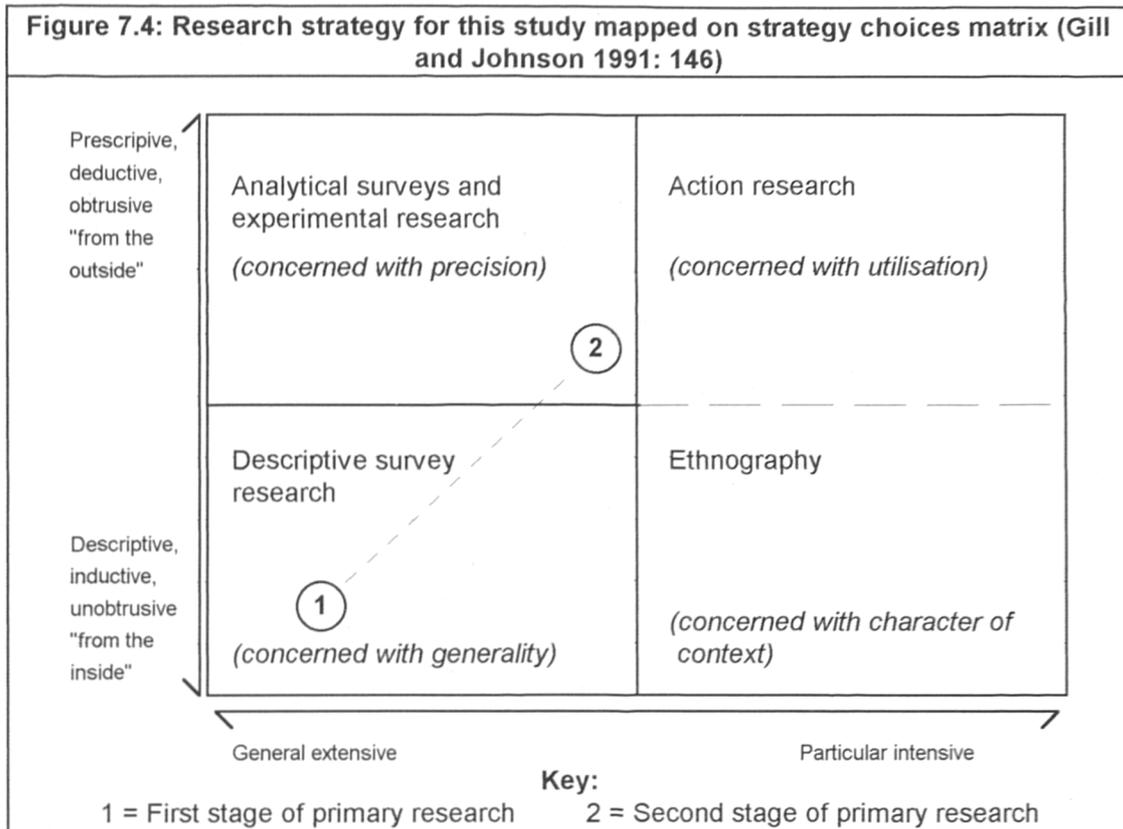
In Chapter Six (6.4) it was suggested that the review of literature had shown that basic empirical information on quality management practice in sport and recreation services was lacking. This was apparent at an early stage of the review and it was concluded that a staged approach to the primary research would be required. A first, exploratory, primary research stage was therefore initiated to run in parallel with the remainder of the literature



review, with the aim of supplying the basic information which the review had not yielded. The results of this exploratory primary research stage were then integrated with findings of the literature review to generate research questions for investigation in the second, analytical, stage of the primary research. These four steps of research (literature review, exploratory primary research, integration or focusing of research, and analytical primary research) are shown in Figure 7.3 above.

Referring to the debates summarised in section 7.1 of this chapter, the research approach has been influenced more by functionalist than by interpretistic approaches. However, in the sense that the objective was to uncover the perceptions of the organisational actors, (i.e. the customers and the managers) the epistemology has a certain bias towards anti-positivism. But, in common with much of the research in services, strongly nomothetic methods were utilised in so doing. Figure 7.3 shows that the research described in this thesis has been methodologically conservative in the sense that it is survey based. However, wherever possible other methods have been utilised, particularly during the study of the cases. Although the substantial longitudinal presence required by ethnographic or action research approaches was not possible, these methods did influence the researcher who observed and interacted with both staff and customers. The data thus gathered, outside the survey instruments and procedure, has assisted the interpretation of the findings.

Gill and Johnson (op.cit.) mapped out the strategies available to management researchers according to matrix based on a Y axis derived from Runkel and McGrath (1972) and Evered and Lewis (1981) and an X axis based on Sayer's (1984) work. They note that both surveys and action research "fit uncomfortably into their respective quadrants". Such awkwardness is creative for this researcher since it highlights the differences between the survey techniques used in the first (exploratory) primary research stage and the more analytical approach adopted in the second stage of primary research. The move from a UK-wide mail survey in the first, exploratory, stage to case studies in the second, analytical, stage of primary research represents a move from a concern with general, broad-based issues towards a particular and intensive form of study (see Figure. 7.4 below).



As Morgan (1983) has suggested, the literature adopts a wide range of positions with regard to *justifying* a research strategy. These range from attempting to delineate a particular procedure or test which can be applied against possible strategies to determine which should be used (Churchman 1971) to the relativism of Feyerabend (1975) who suggests that every strategy is of value. Gill and Johnson (1991: 147-150) cite Mintzberg's (1973: 222ff) discussion of methodological choices as a good example of justification in practice. His approach has influenced the discussion below as it enables the pragmatic considerations which played a large role in methodological strategic choice to be given due weight.

Secondary sources (e.g. Parasuraman 1995) represent a convenient means of investigation through drawing upon the analyses of others. However, the comparative youth of the subject means that there is only an small literature on service quality in sport and recreation, and this rules it out as a major research approach (see 6.1).

The Critical Incident Technique has been used to investigate managerial perceptions (Marple 1967) but has found particular application as a means of elucidating customer perceptions of service (e.g. Bitner et al 1985; Johnston 1993). The Sequential Incident Technique has also been used in this manner and has been applied to an investigation of service quality in sport management (Zieschang and Bezold 1996). In this technique each respondent is asked about incidents at every stage of the customer process. Incidents that

they describe may be sub-critical but which, "though less significance is attached to them, never-the-less substantially influence the overall quality assessment" (Zieschang and Bezold 1996: 431). It has the considerable advantage of allowing in-depth investigation, whilst facilitating the subjects to generate the terms in which their own perceptions are described. However, some of these advantages are lost when a comparative study is required since the subjects' responses must be re-interpreted into a common framework or classification by the researcher. It is also the case that the essential discontinuity of these techniques means that certain aspects will not receive comments from the subject adding to the difficulties of comparison, and rendering them unsuitable for this study.

The possibilities of an ethnographic approach have been discussed above. It was rejected for this study because of its place on the X-axis of Figure. 7.4 above. The intensity of presence required by this technique made it very difficult for a sufficient number of cases to be investigated for comparative purposes. The continuous intra-organisational longitudinal presence, which is required of the researcher, was not available for this study.

Mintzberg (op.cit) refers to "structured observation" by which he means a way of sampling aspects of the topic of study. These are then the subject of detailed observation by the researcher. This technique follows some of the contextual and naturalistic format of ethnography, whilst being relatively more efficient for the researcher through directing his/her attention towards aspects of the topic which have been decided *a priori*. There does not appear to be history of using this technique in a Mintzbergian way within service quality research. However, related techniques could be said to have a long tradition in this area. The use of inspectors is well established in the service quality control field, either as part of internal management processes (Armistead 1985: 144-146, Zeithaml and Bitner 1996: 151) or as part of external validation under the auspices of the British Standards Institute for ISO 9002, or other validating bodies for other quality standards. Inspection also features in the Quest scheme (see 5.7.3). Craig (1993) carried out a study of the effects of Compulsory Competitive Tendering upon the service quality of local authority leisure centres, using visiting inspectors, posing as customers, who observed the service according to a checklist of features. However, for the purposes of this study, inspection implies too much *a priori* structure, whilst not allowing for the capture of customer and management team perceptions of the service.

Means of using partly structured observation to gain insight into the actual perception of customers are provided by the use of mystery guests, focus groups or ongoing customer panels. Here, the primary observation is carried out by customers who are then debriefed according to a process devised and controlled by the researcher. These may be regarded as

a form of action research, carrying a high ecological validity. These techniques have considerable utility both in quality management (Slack et al 1995: 782) and for researchers (e.g. Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry 1990). Their use as primary data sources for the main study was rejected for two reasons. First, investigating the key questions suggested by the guiding hypotheses (see 7.4.1 below) implied examination of the workings of ISO 9002 and *liP in practice* which could be done only through case studies. Since this particularised the research (Figure 7.4 above), it was thought best to use a generalised method (surveys) as the main means of investigating the cases themselves. Second, it was thought that it might prove difficult to impose a common structure on customers' observations, making comparative evaluation difficult. It was noted that the utility of these methods appears to be either longitudinal (Zeithaml and Bitner 1996: 141,151) or as a means of developing a survey instrument (e.g. Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry 1990, Howat et al 1996).

Interview approaches offer the prospect of gaining insights into the perceptions of managers, staff or customers, because the questioning can be much more complex and can be altered according to the previous responses of the interviewee. There are two associated disadvantages, the time-consuming nature of data collection, and the possibility of the interviewer differentially influencing respondents which may make the data less reliable (Bourque and Fielder 1995). Although interviewer based methods are not as well established as questionnaire surveys in the academic literature on service quality, they are used extensively in service quality management¹. This technique was suitable for use in the second stage of primary research, with case managers and with a small number of subordinates, and was adopted for use in that manner, providing an intensive and particular complement to the self-completion questionnaire surveys.

The advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire survey technique have already received attention above (7.1.3.3). In the context of investigating customer perceptions, surveys offer the prospect of extensive customer input for a relatively small resource in terms of time and effort from the researcher. Analytical survey technique is well established, most famously through the work of Parasuraman et al (1988; 1991; 1993; 1994) and Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) in establishing the SERVQUAL instrument. Thus it is possible to adapt instruments from the design of others for the analytical investigation stage. Once a standard set of instruments was devised, comparison could easily be made between the results of different surveys made during the study. It has been noted above that the guiding hypotheses required the use of case studies, which is a particularising

¹ For example see Armistead (1985). Another illustration is that two of the case study sites, on an annual basis commissioned external researchers to interview customers, as part of their quality management arrangements.

methodology. Survey methodology therefore had a particular attraction for the second, analytical, stage of primary research. It generalised, allowing a broad, though necessarily shallow, insight into customer perceptions. The method was also attractive because the researcher was in a position to delegate the administration of the surveys to the managers of the case study sites, thus allowing an efficient use of research resources.

Against these strengths must be set the weaknesses of surveys. In order to avoid bias it is important to go through an extended developmental process (Bourque and Fielder 1995). This requires a substantial investment of time and other research resources. In the case of the analytical surveys it was possible to build upon the work of others and so minimise the developmental work required. It has also been noted above that the internal and ecological validity of surveys can be problematic. This is why it was decided to supplement surveys with structured interviews which enabled subjects to articulate their own concerns and perceptions using their own terms.

7.3 Steps one and two: Literature review and first (exploratory) stage of primary research

7.3.0 Introductory remarks

The first aim of the research was achieved through the literature review. This section concentrates on the second aim set for the research (section 1.0) which is to ascertain the quality management methods in use in sport and recreation services. This is an essentially descriptive exercise:

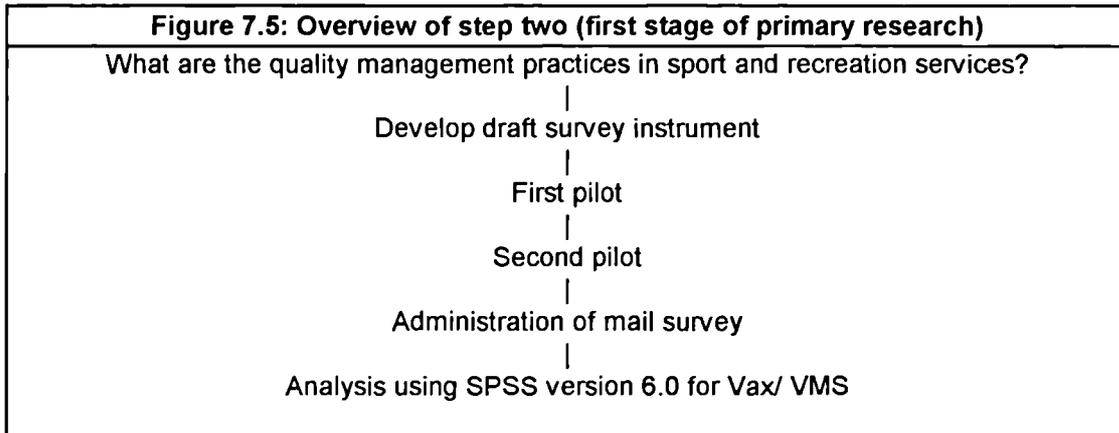
"In descriptive research, while concepts must be clear, they may not have any explicit relationships. The research task is to identify concepts clearly and measure them accurately" (Veal 1992: 32).

The objectives set were as follows:

- to identify quality management methods in use;
- to identify customer satisfaction monitoring methods in use;
- to gather outline organisational data relating to the size of the business and the customer base;
- to ascertain how satisfactory respondents believed their quality management arrangements to be;
- to investigate relationships between quality management arrangements and respondents' level of satisfaction with these arrangements;
- to identify cases for investigation in the second stage of primary research.

This was done by means of a postal survey questionnaire to sports and recreation facility managers. It was considered that these people, rather than Directors or Chief Executives,

would be in the best position to give information about current quality management arrangements. The names and addresses for the survey were obtained from a company which specialises in providing databases for those who wish to market goods or services to the leisure sector. The results are reported in Chapter Eight. The questionnaire itself is provided as Appendix 2.



Although the main objective of this stage of the research was exploratory and descriptive, and could be answered simply through a count of responses, the inclusion of a question about how satisfactory managers perceived their quality management arrangements to be permitted some limited analytical investigation, the results of which are also reported in Chapter Eight.

7.3.1 Reasons for adoption of postal survey method

Bourque and Fielder (1995) use the following definition of a self-administered survey:

"A self-administered questionnaire is an instrument used to collect information from people who complete the instrument themselves. The stimulus is exclusively visual" (Bourque and Fielder 1995: 2).

The general advantages of self-administered questionnaires include their relatively low cost:

"Given the same-length questionnaire and same objective, a completed questionnaire administered by mail costs approximately 50% less than one administered by telephone and 75% less than one administered by personal interview" (Bourque and Fielder 1995: 9).

Not only was a self-administered survey less expensive than alternatives, allowing scarce resources to buy a larger sample, but also it enabled a more even spread of locations than might be possible from alternative methods. Other advantages of the technique included phasing, with questionnaires sent out over a three-week period, which allowed for responses

to be processed continually as they came in, whilst the stimulus to respondents occurred over a short and controlled time-span.

Bourque and Fielder list three types of administration of such questionnaires, one-to-one, group, semi-supervised, and unsupervised. They point out that there is a relationship between the complexity of the instrument and the means of administering it. They suggest that mail or self-administered questionnaires are appropriate if respondents have the motivation to complete, and if the topic is amenable to study using questionnaires (Bourque and Fielder 1995: 24-25). These applied in this case.

Self-administered questionnaires require a simple structure (Oppenheim 1966: 32), and this restricts the quantity and complexity of the information which can be gathered. However, the particular population for this research can be expected to be better-educated than the general population and are more likely to have experience of completing survey forms. They also had an interest, through a small incentive (see below) in the results of the survey. This permitted the survey questions to be a little more complex than would have otherwise been the case, data being gathered in categorical, ordinal and numerical response categories. In the case of this first stage of primary research a decision was taken to limit the length of the questionnaire to two sides of A4 paper in order to reduce respondent fatigue. Although this restricted the depth of information which could be gained, it enabled processing to be done with little complication.

The advantages of unsupervised completion are that a consistent stimulus is given to all respondents and that the resource implications mean that more responses can be gained with the possibility of a more representative sample. The disadvantages of this method include the lack of control over who responds, and that no direct information on answerability of questions is returned to the researcher; there is also no opportunity to supply additional information/guidance if a respondent requires it - the questionnaire must stand alone (Bourque and Fielder 1995: 9).

We have already established that the survey technique has the advantages of population validity and reliability. Weaknesses in internal validity were not an issue as the exercise was mainly a descriptive one. However, weaknesses in ecological validity, which are a particular consequence of the survey procedure adopted, were of concern. Maximising these strengths and controlling the weaknesses within the resources available were the key factors in the design of the instrument and procedure.

One practical problem with this approach is that it was not possible *a priori* to identify which organisations were running services for the local authority sector and to target them only; it was therefore necessary to ask respondents to identify what type of organisation they were. In what follows, the methodology utilised to develop and administer the survey and to analyse the results are considered in the light of the literature.

7.3.2 Survey design issues

7.3.2.0 Introduction

The consensus of the survey research literature (e.g. Oppenheim 1966; Moser and Kalton 1971; Fink and Kosecoff 1985; Bourque and Fielder 1995; Folz 1996) seems to be that the following issues should be included for consideration when designing surveys.

- Sample-related
- Questionnaire construction
- Order effects
- Administration
- Instructions
- Content

7.3.2.1 Sample-related

The relationship between the size of a sample and the degree of confidence in the results is amply covered by most texts on statistics.

"...as long as the population is relatively large, the proportion of the population sampled (the sampling fraction) does not have a big impact on precision, because it is *absolute size of the sample* rather than the size of the sample fraction, that determines precision" (Folz 1996: 49).

However, the database from which the addressees were drawn, cannot be regarded as the population of sports and recreation facilities because the company from which it had been obtained made no claim either to its being a complete or a representative list of such facilities as a whole.

"Although self-administered questionnaires are administered to admittedly nonrepresentative convenience samples, many surveyors want to use self-administered questionnaires and particularly mail questionnaires to collect data from samples that can be considered representative of the population from which they were drawn. The ability to do this - particularly when questionnaires are sent through the mail - is dependent on having a complete and accurate list of the population. To the extent that these lists are unavailable, incomplete, or inaccurate, the data obtained cannot be assumed to represent the population the surveyor wishes to generalize" (Bourque and Fielder 1995: 14).

Thus the validity of this survey in terms of all sports and recreation facilities (population validity) may be suspect. It is also possible that those already active on service quality had a

higher response rate, biasing the sample. This was not a considered a fatal flaw in the methodology because the objective of this stage of the research was mainly to indicate methods of quality management in use, rather than to make a detailed quantitative analysis.

In fact, not all facility managers listed were sent the survey², and thus those surveyed represent a sample of a nonrepresentative convenience sample.

The other main issue of concern in this circumstance was the possibility of a low response rate. The literature records very different responses to mail surveys: Moser and Kalton (1971: 262) suggest a range from 10 to 90%, Oppenheim (1966: 34) suggests 40 to 60% as typical, whereas Bourque and Fielder (1995: 8) say that without incentives a survey of the general community is likely to yield about a 20% response rate. The only incentive used in this case was the promise to mail respondents with a summary of the survey results. As a trial, follow up letters and a further copy of the survey instrument were sent to a tranche of addresses who had not responded after 21 days; however, the 4% increase in returns this generated did not justify the extra cost of extending the procedure to the whole survey. In the event the response rate of 23%, or 388 respondents, was considered acceptable for the purpose of the survey.

7.3.2.2 Questionnaire construction

The literature gives a strong indication that self-administered questionnaires work best when the research objective is relatively simple (e.g. Moser and Kalton 1971: 256-269; Bourque and Fielder 1995: 16). This implies first, that the questionnaire had to be short, and only a small number of questions could be asked. Only a small range of data could be gathered, restricted to quality management methods used, customer satisfaction monitoring techniques employed, and basic organisational characteristics (sector, turnover, number of employees etc.). Second, most questions had to be closed-ended ones because of the trade-off between completion rates and the number of open-ended questions, which are more time consuming for the respondent to complete. Third, the questionnaire instrument needed to stand alone. As there was no interviewer to provide clarification or to give additional information, it was important that completion instructions in the covering letter and in the instrument itself, were as clear as possible. It meant that the:

"number of possible responses to a question must be limited to a number that can be readily assimilated by respondents and from which they can reasonably select those that apply to them...Nor is it reasonable to expect

² There were 5000 names listed on the database; when multiple entries were removed these reduced to about 2800. Of these 1700 were selected at random to receive the survey, as it was considered that this figure represented an adequate sample size given the likely response rate and the budget available.

respondents to rank order large numbers of alternatives. Not only are such lists burdensome for respondents to read, assimilate and select from, but the issue of the *primacy effect* becomes relevant. By primacy effect we mean respondent's tendency to select the first response they come to that reflects how they feel or behave even if it is not the best or most representative response available. Once a response is selected, the respondent ignores the rest of the list and goes to the next question" (Bourque and Fielder 1995: 17-18).

The primacy effect governed the questions that asked which quality techniques were in use. Respondents were not asked to rank which methods they had found most useful or satisfactory, merely to indicate which methods had been used in the past twelve months. They were, however, asked to indicate how satisfactory overall they felt their quality arrangements were.

Finally, as part of the objective of simplifying the questionnaire the surveyor needs to create an instrument without branches or skips.(Bourque and Fielder 1995: 18)

7.3.2.3 Order effects

In self-completion surveys of the sort employed here, there can be no control over the order in questions are completed or upon the time span over which completion takes place. As Moser and Kalton (1971: 261) point out, neither is it practicable to build in validity checks since respondents have the opportunity to change previous answers. Effectively, validity checks had to rely on a selected follow-up post-analysis, and were thus limited. However, given the aim and context of this survey this was not considered an important limitation.

7.3.2.4 Administration

There are several issues concerned with the mechanics of a postal survey. Although this survey was sent to named managers of sports and recreation services, there can be no guarantee that it was these individuals who actually completed the survey form. They may have left their position, or have delegated completion to a member of staff:

"The surveyor cannot be sure that the right person completes the questionnaire" (Moser and Kalton: 261).

Once again this was not considered a significant limitation in this case, but space to alter the name of the respondent was included on the form, and a small number of respondents made use of this facility.

Consideration was given to the possibility of conducting telephone interviews rather than a mail survey. The issues involved in the decision were the labour-intensity of telephone interviews, ease of administration and immediacy of the result. As the latter was not of especial importance, the mail survey was the most appropriate.

7.3.2.5 Instructions

Bourque and Fielder (1995: 70-74) suggest that three types of instructions should be considered. The first are general instructions, which set out what the survey is about and explain why it should be completed. They also set out the time it might take to complete and say what the respondent should do with it once it is completed. These were dealt with in the covering letter. The second type of instructions are transitional ones, moving the respondent between questionnaire sections. There was no need for these in this instrument. However, there was a need for the third type of instructions, those relating to specific questions. Each questionnaire section, containing a group of related items, was preceded by additional completion information or instructions (e.g. "Answer one only" or "Answer all that apply"). This information was printed in italics in order to distinguish it from the questions (see Appendix 2).

7.3.2.6 Content

Five issues may be highlighted in relation to designing the content of the survey. First, the topic must be "contained" or covered in a short and focused questionnaire. The limited nature of the objectives for this part of the research ensured that this was possible.

Second, "self administered questionnaires generally work best when the focus is in the present" (Bourque and Fielder 1995: 26). The focus of the questionnaire was in the present or the relatively recent past. Questions asked about quality management and customer satisfaction methods used in the past twelve months. Since the employment of each method involves considerable management input and usually has consequences for managers, this period was thought represent a suitable trade-off point between the requirements of data capture and the vagaries of memory.

The third point here relates content to questionnaire structure:

"Ideally the surveyor structures the questionnaire so that everyone answers every question. This can be done in one of two ways. The better of the two (is) that the topic studied allows the creation of closed-ended response lists for very question, thus enabling all members of the sample to describe themselves...Alternatively "skips" or "branching" can be used to facilitate the questionnaire's applicability to all potential respondents, but their use must be minimized" (Bourque and Fielder 1995: 27).

The first method produces a simpler questionnaire, but it may also involve a substantial number of "not applicable" responses. In the survey a number of closed-ended questions dealt with the majority responses; but they also contained a response category of "other - please write in", which were used by a minority of respondents.

The survey literature makes the point that self-administered questionnaires should not be used to substitute for desk research qualitative studies in the developmental stage of research project, since research objectives should have already been formulated.

Another point relates to the degree to which the questions themselves are understood by the respondents as intended by the researcher. The uniqueness of the survey required that questions were completely developed by the researcher. This meant that the pilot versions of the questionnaire were important in the development process.

The literature indicates that pilot work is essential in developing survey instruments (e.g. Oppenheim 1966: 25-30; Moser and Kalton 1971: 47-52; Bourque and Fielder 1995: 89). One of the functions of pilots and pretests is to make surveyors more aware of their own biases, another to ensure that questions and instructions have been understood. The pilot survey was administered to sixteen practising sports and recreation managers who were studying for the Diploma in Management Studies (Leisure)³. This method had the convenience of easy access for the researcher, and permitted informal and qualitative feedback from respondents about questionnaire content and construction. This helped to improve the design of the questionnaire which was re-piloted by mailing to twenty-two recent graduates of the course, fourteen replying. However, the qualitative feedback gained through written comments on these responses was less substantial than had been gathered from the first pilot. Thus verification of the second instrument rested more upon the ability of respondents to complete it in a coherent manner. The use of students or ex-students, although providing a convenient method of obtaining feedback from professional managers, had the disadvantage that the pilot instrument population might not be congruent with that of the main instrument. The former population might be better informed through self and institutional selection prior to their studies, or have gained knowledge relevant to the survey as a result of their studies.

7.3.3 Presentation and analysis of responses

The survey instrument was designed to permit computer coding. A count of the responses to the questions asked in the survey is provided in Appendix 3. These results were generated by SPSS version 6.1 for VAX/ VMS and are generally presented in Chapter Eight in graphic format, with the graphics generated by Microsoft Works for Windows version 3.0. Where the variables reported are numerical ones, or where such variables have been recoded to interval ones, mean and standard deviations are also provided in order to aid interpretation.

³ Most of these students were in "assistant manager" or "manager" posts within leisure facilities and in occupational terms were similar to the intended recipients of the survey.

SPSS was also used to undertake limited analysis of these results. To investigate relationships between quality management practices and managers' level of satisfaction with their quality management arrangements, a standard contingency table was constructed using the SPSS crosstabs command. The chi-square test was used to investigate the significance of the relationships uncovered.

7.4 Step three: Focusing the research

7.4.0 Introduction

The results of the postal survey and those of the review of literature suggested that the second primary research stage could be focused in two ways. First, a concentration upon local authority facilities was decided upon because the literature indicated that special issues arose in public sector quality management (see Chapter Five). The majority of respondents to the postal survey also managed local authority sport and leisure amenities, enabling a close study to be made of responses from that sector.

Second, the first stage of primary research showed (Chapter Eight) that considerable numbers of local authority respondents to managed quality by ISO 9002 and liP. The literature review indicated that it would be much simpler to investigate quality standards rather than a management philosophy such as TQM, because the standards exactly specify practice, and have mechanisms for ensuring that required procedures are operated in fact. The literature review suggested key issues for investigation when these standards were employed in this public sector context. Thus guiding hypotheses to be investigated in the subsequent steps of research were developed, as reported below (7.4.1).

7.4.1 Guiding hypotheses

7.4.1.0 General points

Both the EFQM EQA model and the services management literature suggest that two essential elements in managing service quality are managing the service processes and managing the employees who are responsible for creating it with the customer. A commonly used method of managing the former is through the standard now known as ISO 9002, whilst the latter, at least in the UK and some English speaking countries, are frequently managed to the Investors in People (liP) standard.

The preliminary descriptive research, described in Chapter Eight of this thesis, has shown that these management methods are also utilised in local authority sport and recreation services. However, little is known of their efficacy in this sphere.

7.4.1.1 Guiding hypothesis A: Organisations working to ISO 9002 have better processes and management of tangibles than similar organisations not working to ISO 9002.

Chapters Three (3.4) and Five (5.5) have discussed the circumstances which have led to a Standard developed for manufacturing organisations to be applied to public sector services. The antecedents of the standard are demonstrated by its focus upon tangible and organisational factors. Thus if hypothesis A were true we should look for evidence in support of the following hypotheses:

Guiding hypothesis A1: When the perceptions of customers of organisations working to ISO 9002 are compared with perceptions of customers of similar organisations not working to ISO 9002, they show the former to be more satisfied with processes.

Guiding hypothesis A2: When the perceptions of customers of organisations working to ISO 9002 are compared with perceptions of customers of similar organisations not working to ISO 9002, they show the former to be more satisfied with tangibles.

Guiding hypothesis A3: When managers are asked to score their organisation upon criteria used by the EFQM for the EQA, organisations working to ISO 9002 score more highly on the "Processes" and "Resource management" elements than do similar organisations not working to ISO 9002.

7.4.1.2 Guiding hypothesis B: Organisations working to the Investors in People standard have better employee management than similar organisations not working to liP.

It has been shown in Chapter Three (3.5) of this thesis that the philosophy behind the Standard is that adherence to it will produce better business results for the organisation through aligning its people policies with corporate goals, whilst ensuring that the workforce is willing and able to achieve these goals. Thus better employee management should produce results not only in the area of employee satisfaction, but also in customer perceptions of staff quality. Therefore the following hypotheses follow from guiding hypothesis B:

Guiding hypothesis B1: When the perceptions of customers of organisations working to liP are compared with perceptions of customers of similar organisations not working to liP, they show the former to be more satisfied with staff.

Guiding hypothesis B2: When managers are asked to score their organisation upon criteria used by the EFQM for the EQA, organisations working to liP score more highly on the "Employee management" and "Employee satisfaction" elements than do similar organisations not working to liP.

7.5 Step four: The second (analytical) stage of primary research

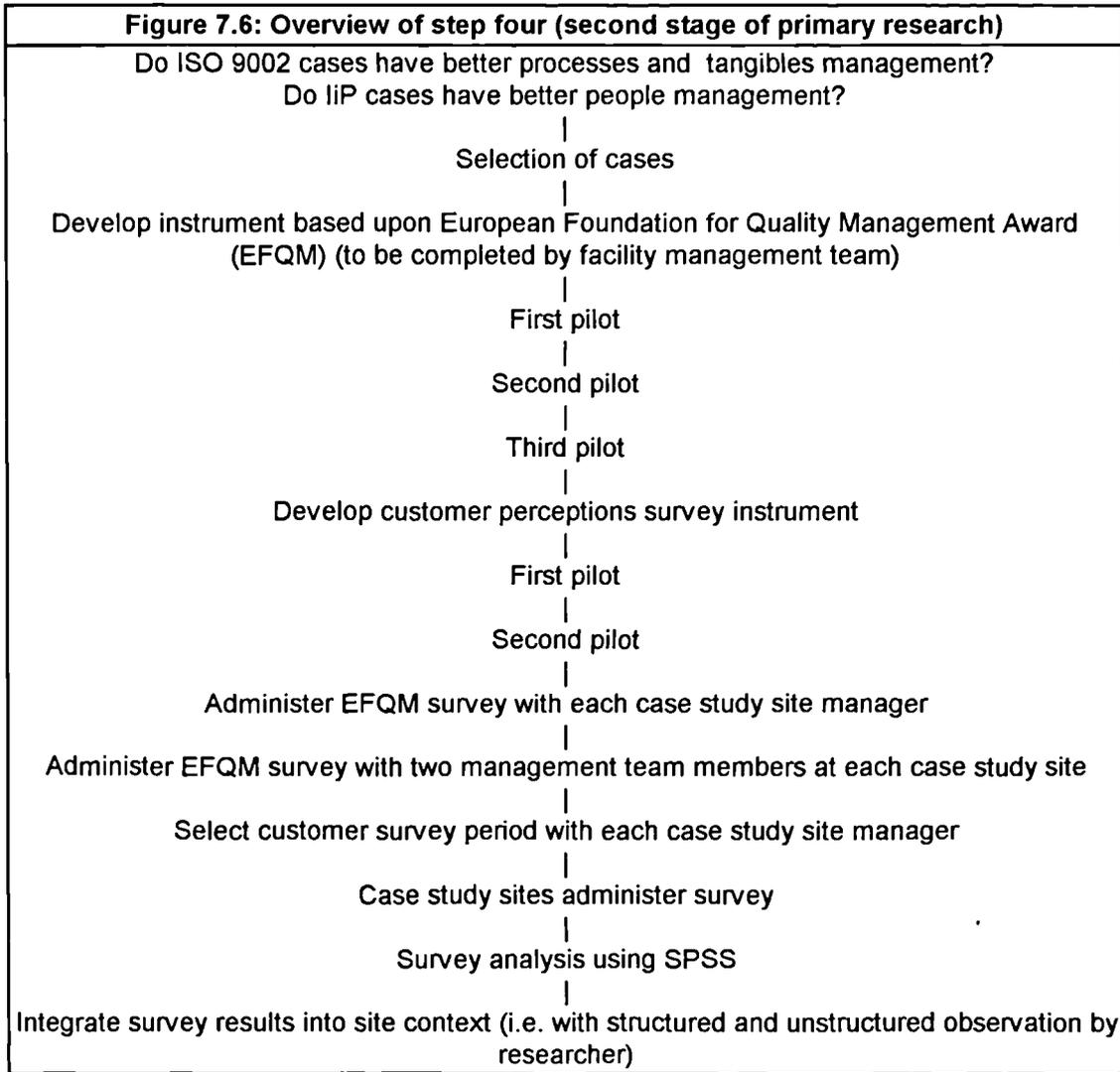
7.5.0 Introduction

In section 7.3 above, the method and methodology involved in carrying out the first, exploratory, stage of primary investigation into service quality management in this sector was discussed; section 7.4 dealt with how the results generated by that research stage were integrated with the findings of the literature in order to provide a focus for the second (analytical) stage of primary research. As part of this process guiding hypotheses were formulated for this research stage.

This chapter now moves on to detail the second primary research stage in which the guiding hypotheses were investigated through case studies. After reporting the means used to select eight cases, this section reports on the development/ validation of interview and customer survey instruments used to investigate them. Figure 7.6 provides an overview of this research stage.

Investigation of the guiding hypotheses necessitated in-depth study of sport and recreation services using either ISO 9002 or IIP as quality management methods. The literature reviewed in Chapters Three, Four and Five offered no model through which the efficacy of service quality management regimes could be evaluated, either in services generally, or in sports and recreation services in particular. However, it was apparent that "internal" perceptions (of professional managers involved in the provision of the service) and "external" perceptions (of customers) were relevant.

In section 7.5.2 and 7.5.5 below, the procedures developed to capture both internal and external perceptions of the service offered by the cases are reported. The perceptions of the cases' management teams were accessed through interviews, based around an interview questionnaire derived from an instrument developed by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). The perceptions of customers were captured through development of a special customer survey instrument.



7.5.1 Selection of cases

The sixth objective of the survey was to provide possible case studies for further investigation. The covering letter sent out with the survey questionnaire described the intended second, case study based, stage of the research and a question was included on the questionnaire asking if respondents would be interested in taking part in that further stage. Nearly half of respondents (49%) gave a positive answer to this question, and some follow up activity, by letter and telephone was undertaken. However, practical reasons meant that the case studies described in Chapter Nine were identified through separate procedures. These practical reasons can be categorised as follows:

- Location reasons - many respondents were located too far away from the researcher's base to be practicable as subjects for case study.
- Access reasons - once respondents became fully aware of what being a case study would involve, some were reluctant to grant access.

- Timescale reasons - because of the need to complete analysis of the survey, and to develop research instruments for the case study stage, commencement of the case studies was delayed longer than originally anticipated. This made it less appropriate to contact respondents again.

Cases were identified and contacted largely through a networking process; the researcher's contacts from nearly twenty years working in leisure management and leisure management education in the London area were utilised in order to gain organisational entry and co-operation. The criteria for selection were as follows. First, cases had to offer a sport and recreation service from a local authority-owned leisure facility. Second, they had to be registered under one of the two standards (ISO 9002 and IIP) under investigation. Third they had to offer the researcher suitable access, permitting extensive interviews with the management team and assisting in the administration of a customer survey. Finally, it was thought desirable that all cases be very broadly similar in terms of catchment populations. It was intended that all case study sites should be located in inner London. Seven of the cases met these criteria; however, following one case leaving the study unexpectedly, it was necessary to take on a case (Hartham Pool) which was located outside London, in a more prosperous catchment area.

The initial research design allowed for three cases for each of the two management standards and three using no quality management method to serve as a base line. This figure was thought to be a reasonable trade-off between resources and the need to acquire an overview of the issues that arose through deployment of each standard. In the event, only one "no quality management" case was fully studied (St. George's Pool). Another case (Arches Leisure Centre) although not registered to either standard proved to be "quality active" and preparing for registration under ISO 9002; insufficient customer survey forms were completed for analysis and for this case only the interview results are reported here. Owing to the difficulty of finding more "no quality management cases" it was decided to concentrate on comparing the two standards with each other, rather than against a base line of "no quality management".

7.5.2 Development of an interview instrument for the management team members

The purpose of developing the interview instrument was to enable the researcher to investigate the following guiding hypotheses put forward in the preceding chapter:

- Guiding hypothesis A3: When managers are asked to score their organisation upon criteria used by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) for its award, organisations working to ISO 9002 score more highly on the "Processes" element than do other organisations.

- Guiding hypothesis B2: When managers are asked to score their organisation upon criteria used by the EFQM for its award, organisations working to LiP score more highly on the "Employee management" and "Employee satisfaction" elements than do other organisations.

These guiding hypotheses for this stage of the research implied questioning about organisational processes, management of tangibles and of people. Rather than focus on these elements alone, it was decided to adopt an approach which would assist development of an understanding of the place of these elements within the organisation and its quality management methods. In other words, it was decided that concentrating on these elements alone would risk losing much of the ecological validity which is a particular strength of a well-conducted case study (see 7.2.0 above). Thus for the internal measurements made through interviews with management teams, an instrument was required which would enable the interviewer to adopt a holistic approach whilst asking in detail about the elements of particular interest.

The EFQM have developed a self-completion instrument for organisations which is:

"...designed to help an organization locate its position on a scale of business excellence. It is based on a tried and tested framework of assessing organizations on a variety of aspects that will define the capability and achievement of the organization in terms of quality" (EFQM 1994).

This instrument asked detailed and quite complex questions about aspects of each of the dimensions included in the EFQM EQA, described in Chapter Three (3.3.1) of this thesis. Senior managers were asked to evaluate their organisation's progress on each of these aspects, scoring their organisation on a four point scale from "not started" to "completely achieved". Scores were then converted into a numerical format and organisational profiles against each of the dimensions were calculated and graphically displayed. Total scores gave an indication of the overall excellence of the organisation, "providing the questions have been realistically scored" (EFQM 1994: 29).

This instrument was used as the base for development of a questionnaire instrument, originally intended for self-completion by managers. As the development work proceeded, however, it was decided that it would be better to use the instrument as the basis of a researcher conducted interview. The survey literature (e.g Oppenheim 1966: 30-37) suggests that the advantages of this one-to-one approach are that the researcher can ensure that respondents understand the questions, reflecting properly upon their implications whilst allowing the researcher to gauge if the questions had indeed been understood. They also maximise the confidentiality of the research process. In this instance the procedure also

enabled responses outside the terms of the instrument, often providing the researcher with rich additional sources of information. However, these opportunities involved consumption of time with interviews lasting up to three hours. This meant that only three interviews could be conducted per case investigated, the manager and two members of the management team being identified as suitable interviewees. The method also involved unequal stimulus to respondents from the researcher, carrying the risk that responses reflect the researcher's preconceptions. This was considered acceptable since the cases were also investigated by other means which did not carry this risk (see below), allowing for a simple form of triangulation (7.1.4).

The development was made through three pilot tests, the first two using professional and post-graduate students on leisure management/ leisure studies programmes, and the final pilot with two practising recreation facility managers who were not undertaking such a programme. Several adaptations to the EFQM original were entailed and these may be grouped under the following headings:

- removal of quality jargon;
- disaggregation of each complex question into several simpler ones;
- orientation towards obtaining perceptions of middle managers and operational staff;
- orientation towards sports/ recreation facilities;
- interpretation of questions for the public sector;
- insertion of questionnaire branching and some qualitative questions;
- customisation of the response categories to the research problem.

The final instrument is attached as Appendix Four.

7.5.3 Use and analysis of results of EFQM-derived instrument

Interviews with members of the management team typically lasted for about 90 minutes; those with centre managers lasted longer, mostly considerably over two hours. The researcher recorded the results in two ways. First, response categories for each question were scored. These were then transposed onto a spreadsheet using Microsoft Works for Windows version 3.0. Second, extensive use of margin notes was made to record responses qualitatively.

7.5.4 Rationale for the development of the customer survey instrument

The purpose of the customer survey was to enable the researcher to investigate the following guiding hypotheses put forward in the preceding chapter:

- Guiding hypothesis A1: When the perceptions of customers of organisations working to ISO 9002 are compared with perceptions of customers of similar organisations not working to ISO 9002, they show the former to be more satisfied with processes.
- Guiding hypothesis A2: When the perceptions of customers of organisations working to ISO 9002 are compared with perceptions of customers of similar organisations not working to ISO 9002, they show the former to be more satisfied with tangibles.
- Guiding hypothesis B1: When the perceptions of customers of organisations working to liP are compared with perceptions of customers of similar organisations not working to liP, they show the former to be more satisfied with staff.

Development of a customer survey instrument was influenced by the following imperatives. First, the need to take account of other researchers' experiences, including work specific to sport/ recreation and to services generally. Second, the need for an instrument which would enable judgements to be made about the service elements relevant to the guiding hypotheses (that is processes, tangibles and people management). Third, for reasons discussed in section 7.5.2 above, for these elements to be situated in a framework which addressed, as far as practicable, overall perceptions of customers about the service. Last, instrument development had to take account of the resource constraints, particularly financial constraints under which the research was being conducted.

From the review of the service quality literature conducted in Chapter 4 (4.3), the most obvious instrument to consider was SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al 1988, 1991, 1993) in either its original or amended forms. However, section 6.1 of this thesis showed that, for sport and leisure services, qualitative research and quantitative scale purification techniques lead to scale items different from that proposed by Parasuraman and his colleagues for services generally (e.g. Crompton et al 1991; Wright et al 1992; Kim and Kim 1995; Howat et al 1996). Ideally, a full developmental process, similar to that undertaken by Howat et al (op. cit.) would have been performed for this research. However, the time and financial resources to carry out focus groups, panel meetings and pilot surveys on a scale sufficient for factor analysis were not available to the researcher. The following three options therefore presented themselves in constructing a customer perception survey for this research.

The first option considered was to customise the original or amended SERVQUAL instrument. The instrument yields dimensions which could be interpreted as appropriate to the hypotheses with three staff related dimensions (responsiveness, assurance and empathy); one tangibles dimension and the reliability dimension which overlaps with the "processes" category.

However, use of SERVQUAL involves several problems. First, the researcher was cognisant of the various general critiques of the instrument discussed in Chapter Four (see 4.3). These did not *per se* determine against use of SERVQUAL, either because they had been addressed through redesign of the original instrument, or because they would apply to any instrument based upon a difference score. The second concern was that the context of use of SERVQUAL was very different from that proposed here. It appears that the instrument was developed in a context where respondents were not under of pressure of time to complete it. In this research, customers hurrying from their activities at a leisure centre would be asked to stop and complete the questionnaire. In this context, the three-part structure of SERVQUAL gave cause for concern, particularly the third part about importance which could not be answered by use of Likert scales and needed some pause for thought by the customer. Third, as pointed out above, the scale items and dimensional structure of the instrument could not be replicated by those researching sport and leisure services. This was considered to be an insurmountable obstacle to the use of SERVQUAL, even in a customised form.

The second option considered was to use one of the instruments developed for sport and leisure services, either in pure or customised form. Thus RECQUAL (Crompton et al 1991); the instrument developed by Wright et al (1992); QUESC (Kim and Kim 1995) and the CERM CSQ (Howat et al 1996) were all investigated by the researcher. Of these, the latter was very clearly the most pertinent to this research. It had the advantage of being the product of an extensive development process involving customers. The service it had been developed for, namely public sector leisure centres in Australia and New Zealand, was a fairly good match with the intended target for this research. Within the dimensional structure of the instrument there were very adequate opportunities to explore the hypotheses. The "staff quality" dimension related to people management, whilst both the "core services" and "general facility" contained within them aspects of tangibles and process.

Against these strengths of the CERM CSQ, must be set a number of potential drawbacks to its use. First, the instrument itself was not in the public domain, and an attempt to obtain a copy of it from the originators was unsuccessful. Thus the attributes of the questionnaire would need to be reconstructed from the published research. Second, the instrument itself made use of the "skewed" Likert scales, which this researcher thought was unsound (see 6.1).

A third option was to build a hybrid instrument, taking scale items and format from different parts of the literature, and pilot-testing the result on an appropriate set of UK leisure centre customers. It was this option which was adopted. Ideally such an instrument would have

followed SERVQUAL in asking about expectations, perceptions and importance, with the importance questions asked of each variable to aid evaluation of the questionnaire. However, a concern was the number of items covered by each of the sport and leisure services questionnaires (25 for RECQUAL, 30 generated by Wright et al 1991, 45 for QUESC, at least 15 for the CERM CSQ). Using any one of these item pools would have generated a long survey instrument, with three questions (expectations, perceptions, importance) addressed to each item in the pool. Given the context in which the survey was made it was believed that respondents would either refuse to start questionnaire completion, or would tire, leading to incomplete responses.

In order to resolve this problem, it was decided that the instrument could have two sections only, effectively leading to a choice between the inclusion of either expectations or importance. The choice made was to include importance rather than expectations and the rationale for this is reported below.

First, as discussed in Chapter Four, Cronin and Taylor (1992) have shown that perceptions alone perform as well as a difference score in predicting customers' overall evaluations of service quality (4.3). Second, inclusion of importance with perceptions has shown itself to be of use to both Kim and Kim (1995) and Haywood-Farmer and Stuart (1990). In particular the work of the latter pair of researchers was relevant to the format of the proposed instrument.

Haywood-Farmer and Stuart (1990) have developed an instrument to measure patients' perceptions of medical practitioners according to four major constructs which had been postulated in the literature. This instrument, which was available to this researcher, asked respondents about the importance of each attribute, and then asked them to score their own position on each attribute. Questions were asked in the form of attributes against which respondents answered by circling a number on a balanced seven-point Likert scale to indicate the degree of importance and degree of agreement.

Lastly, it was felt that, bearing in mind that resources did not permit the extensive iterative development process which some other researchers (e.g. Parasuraman et al 1988; Howat et al 1996) had undertaken in order to produce an instrument, measuring importance scores for each variable would assist evaluation of the instrument. In the limited pilots which could be carried out, questionnaire development would be assisted by assessing if any questions were thought to be unimportant by customers. Moreover, it was considered that assessment of the responses from use of the final survey would be greatly assisted through knowledge of the importance customers attached to that item. The intellectual provenance of the instrument is summarised in Figure 7.7.

comments would add a qualitative element to an essentially quantitative instrument, which would assist the researcher (and case study site managers) to interpret the results.

"Open-ended questions can offer insight into why people believe the things they do, but interpreting them can be extremely difficult unless they are accompanied by an elaborate coding system and people are trained to classify the data they get within the system" (Fink 1985: 26).

Provision was made in setting up the computer codes for the instrument to allow 99 analysis categories for each of the write-in questions.

As discussions proceeded with prospective case study managers, it was agreed with them to add a small number of additional questions, which might assist them in understanding their customers. Thus at the end of the perceptions section, two questions were added, one of which asked respondents to indicate how often they had visited the leisure facility and one of which asked respondents to write in which activity they had come for on the day they completed the questionnaire.

Having established the outline format of the instrument, it was necessary to develop the set of statements for it. Although Howat et al (1996) reported the final attributes of their instrument, they did not set out the questions themselves. Moreover, the attributes were

Table 7.1: CERM CSQ attributes (summarised format only)
1. Parking area very safe and secure
2. Facilities always clean and well maintained
3. Up-to-date information available on activities, results, events etc.
4. Programmes always start and finish on time
5. Offer a broad range of activities
6. Centre well organized and well run
7. Centre physically comfortable and pleasant
8. Programmes and facilities provide value for money
9. Equipment of a high quality and well-maintained
10. A good canteen or kiosk
11. Adequate child minding
12. Staff friendly and responsive
13. Staff presentable and easily identified
14. Staff experienced and knowledgeable
15. Officials (umpires, judges, etc.) qualified, experienced and consistent

Source: Howat et al 1996: 82

frequently presented in a binary form (e.g. see 1-3, 6-9, 12-15 on Table 7.1. above), each of which, for clarity of response interpretation needed to be separated into two distinct questions.

In order to minimise the total number of questions it was decided to leave some questions in a multiple/ binary form, effectively trading off specificity with response rate:

39. Officials (umpires, judges etc.) at Centre x are qualified, experienced and consistent
42. Activities at Centre x always start and finish on time
43. Centre x has up-to-date information available on activities, events and results
45. Good food and drink are available at Centre x

Discussions with the case study site managers revealed that many customers did not use a car to visit the centres, and that in some cases, travel by public transport was a significant means of travel. It is possible that the centres studied by Howat et al (1996) were generally more reliant on car use by customers than the sites in this study. It was therefore decided that the London location might justify the inclusion of a question on accessibility by public transport.

In drafting the questions themselves, attention was paid to some of the issues explored above in relation to the postal survey used for the first, exploratory stage of primary research (section 7.3.2). Every attempt was made to ensure that the questionnaire would be comprehensible to the customers of the case study sites, and relatively easy to complete. Self completed questionnaires need to be user-friendly in order to minimise mis-scoring through lack of understanding of the question and in order to maximise completion rates.

Drawing upon the survey literature (e.g. Moser and Kalton 1971: 310-346; Bourque and Fielder 1995: 41-60), several points may be highlighted here about the questions themselves. First it is important to avoid or minimise the use of vague qualifiers e.g. adverbs such as "usually". Second, it is important to avoid abstract terms and jargon. Third completion rates are improved through a progression from easy to difficult to answer questions. Fourth, questions should be asked in a logical order. Lastly there is an issue about the placement of demographic or more personal questions. In one view, they should be placed early because they are easy to answer, on the other hand this would interrupt the principle of making the objective of the instrument clear at the outset. The customer satisfaction instrument asks no questions designed to generate demographic data, but it was decided to place the more personalised questions at the end of the questionnaire.

The final part of preparation of an instrument for pilot was drafting of clear and sufficient instructions for each instruction type described in 7.3.2.5. A set of general instructions was developed to head the instrument, with particular attention being paid to instructions about what to do with completed questionnaires. Transitional instructions were important in the customer survey because they had to get the respondent to focus first upon "importance" and then move them towards "perception". A study was made of the SERVQUAL instructions (Zeithaml et al 1990), but customising them to achieve a concise form of words proved to be extremely difficult. There was generally little need for instructions about specific questions in

the customer survey, because of the extensive use of Likert scales, but brief notes were needed for questions 24 and 51 (i.e. "please write in below") and question 48 (i.e. "please tick box").

7.5.5.1 Piloting the instrument

The above section of this chapter related the conceptual framework within which the pilot customer survey instrument was drafted. We now continue by outlining the further development of the instrument through piloting. The pilot-testing steps were intended to accomplish the following:

- ascertain that the instrument would be completed by customers in circumstances similar to those in which it was due to be used;
- check that questions were understood by respondents;
- ascertain the clarity of instructions for completion;
- ensure that the layout and respondent progression through the questionnaire were as user-friendly as possible;
- to test the computer coding of the instrument and the practicality of keying in data from it;
- check that no items were thought unimportant by respondents.

With the exception of the final two objectives, the above points implied that there should be a qualitative element in the piloting process, which would enable the researcher to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the instrument in use. Thus supervised completion was necessary since the researcher needed to observe the interaction between the pilot instrument and customers, and if possible, to question customers about aspects of their response. The final objective could be assessed simply by tabulating the importance scores for each item; the inclusion of items which received low scores could therefore be reconsidered.

Accordingly, arrangements were made for the researcher to spend two afternoons at the Cathall Leisure Centre in Leyton, an inner-city local authority "wet and dry" centre which shared many of the characteristics of the case study sites. A desk was set up in the foyer, and the researcher asked customers to complete the pilot questionnaire as they were about to leave the building. Twenty-nine questionnaires were completed in this manner and the conclusions drawn from the exercise were clear.

First, most respondents did not pause to read the instructions on the questionnaire, which they perceived as too lengthy to "take in". Second, and related to the first point, some respondents did not appreciate that the first section was about importance, and answered it

as if it was about their perceptions of Cathall Leisure Centre, either discontinuing when they came to the perceptions section, or repeating their previous answers. Third, some customers raised a significant issue about importance which had not previously occurred to the researcher. They believed that it was important that a public leisure service had certain characteristics (for example providing a creche) even if it was not important to them personally. Fourth, given the above reservations, customers seemed willing and able to complete a questionnaire of this type. Fifth, no insurmountable obstacles were encountered in the data entry process. Sixth, all items received mean importance scores of more than 3.5.

Thus several significant changes were made to the instrument as a result of this pilot. First, instructions, particularly transitional instructions, were altered to make them more concise. Second, the appearance of the questionnaire was changed towards a clearer format, with text blocks kept to a minimum. Third, each question in the importance section of the instrument was altered to begin "it is important to me that...". Fourth the labelling of the Likert scales was changed to the same format as that used for perceptions (see Figure 7.8 above). No changes were made to the items asked about.

Once it was judged that the lessons of the pilot test had been fully reflected in a redrafted instrument, the new draft was tested again at one of the sites chosen as a case study (St. George's Pools in Shadwell). The objectives of this test were similar to those of the first pilot at Cathall Leisure Centre, and a similar approach was used for the pilot. Piloting at a case study site was considered desirable to achieve fuller congruence between the pilot respondents and the respondents to the final survey instrument. More particularly, involvement of a case study manager in the fine-tuning of the instrument was considered to be helpful. Twenty-four questionnaires were obtained from this second pilot.

Only very minor changes were made to the instrument as a result of this second test. These were centred around further adjustment to the instructions and to the presentation of the questionnaire. The re-drafted questionnaire was then administered at St George's Pools, in the manner described in the following section. The use of the questionnaire was both a way of surveying those customers, and as a means of completing the development phase of the instrument. On discussion of the survey results of this first case, it was decided that the survey would be improved, and the investigation of validity of the instrument made easier, if a question asking about customers' overall perceptions of the service were to be included. It was decided to ask customers how satisfied they were with services at the centre, rather than ask them about overall service quality, because the survey instrument (following Howat et al

1996) included a question on value for money, which is effectively a component of satisfaction (see 4.3.1).

The final customer survey instrument is attached as Appendix 5.

7.5.6 Administration of the customer survey

The way in which the customer survey instrument was developed has been described in the previous section. Below, the administration process of the survey is described.

It was reported in Chapter Six (6.1) that MacKay and Crompton (1990) noted that it was important for service quality researchers to sample a cross-section of the activities provided by a leisure service. They developed a classification scheme (Figure 6.1) which would enable them to survey customers of the main types of leisure service provided by each leisure organisation. Given that each of the case study sites provides a variety of leisure services, and that for operational or practical reasons in most cases it would not be possible to survey all of them, this classification was used in planning the surveys at each site. In particular, efforts were made to ensure that activities with and without tuition were surveyed, for reasons set out in Chapter 4 (4.2.2).

Accordingly, a survey schedule was developed with the manager of each case study site, identifying those activity sessions on the leisure centre programme which it would be desirable to survey for the study, and operationally feasible from the point of view of the centre. A survey plan was therefore drawn up for each case, to be implemented over a period of ten days or two weeks. Ideally, the researcher himself would have conducted all the customer surveys. However, the time involved was prohibitive, and distribution of the survey instrument was delegated to leisure centre staff; each case study site provided a central point for customers to deposit the completed questionnaire. Briefing materials were provided to staff to let them know the purpose of the research and to explain how to answer basic questions which might be asked of them (Appendix Six).

The researcher collected the completed questionnaires, undertook the data entry and conducted a preliminary analysis using frequency counts via SPSS version 6.0 for Vax/VMS. These were incorporated into a site report provided to the manager of each centre.

Customer surveys of the cases were completed over a seven-month period from December 1996 to June 1997.

7.5.7 Analysis of customer survey results

7.5.7.0 Introduction

The previous sections of this chapter have described how the customer survey instrument was conceived, developed and administered. The instrument generated responses from customers which were analysed in order to ascertain whether the results supported the hypotheses. Below the procedure used to investigate these responses is summarised.

- First, the reliability and validity of the instrument were investigated. Both unweighted and importance-weighted scores for responses to the survey questions Q25 to Q47 were tested for their ability to generate a strong factor structure in with factors interpretable in terms of the categories of the guiding hypotheses (tangibles, processes and staff). These scores were also tested for their ability to predict the value of responses to Q50 (overall satisfaction). The latter was accomplished through regression of the factor scores for each variable. These tests enabled the researcher to evaluate the internal consistency reliability, construct validity and criterion (predictive) validity.
- Second, hypotheses, A1, A2, and B1 were investigated through analysis of the differences in the pattern of responses between individual cases and between cases grouped by quality management method. A null hypothesis was postulated that there was no significant difference in customer responses between the IIP and ISO 9002 cases. The Kruskal-Wallis test was used to investigate this hypothesis with regard to Q1 to Q23, Q25 to Q47 and Q50. The write-in responses to questions 24 and 50 were also analysed: the researcher categorised responses into ten categories, the pattern of responses between cases and between cases grouped by quality management method being investigated by means of a contingency table.

Below, each of these methods is discussed in more depth.

7.5.7.1 Testing the reliability and validity of the survey instrument

Litwin (1995: 5-6) suggests that error in surveys can arise in two ways. Random error arises through sampling considerations and can be reduced through a research design which secures a larger and more representative sample. These issues have already been dealt with in this chapter. Measurement error refers to how well a particular instrument performs in relation to a particular population, and is thus a function of the reliability of the survey instrument. Reliability can therefore be understood as:

"a statistical measure of how reproducible the survey instrument's data are"
(Litwin 1995: 6).

There are normally considered to be three forms of reliability (Fink 1985; Litwin 1995): test-retest, alternate-form and internal consistency and these are discussed below.

Test-retest reliability involves examining the stability of the instrument over time, by administering it again, after a suitable interval, to the same respondents. This was not undertaken because the respondents were not a captive group which could be subject to retest. The research design depended upon achieving a cross-section of sports centre customers, including those who did not belong to any membership scheme (where they existed) and including occasional as well as frequent customers.

Alternate-form reliability "involves using differently worded items to measure the same attribute" (Litwin 1995: 13). This approach could not be utilised in the design of the research instrument because it was a multivariate scale, of some length, intended for completion by customers as they left the sports centre. Respondent fatigue would have prohibited a longer instrument.

However measures were taken to investigate internal consistency. The research instrument is a multivariate scale where several questions address different aspects of particular phenomena such as tangibles and staffing. An internally consistent scale would be one where there is a high degree of association between responses to each of the questions which asked about these different aspects. Thus internal consistency can be seen as "an indicator of how well the different items measure the same issue" (Litwin 1995: 21). The classical way of assessing it is through split-half reliability, in particular through use of Cronbach's alpha. However, the research design hypothesises that groups of variables act in different ways according to the quality management method. Factor analysis was therefore considered to be a better way of investigating association between variables, as well as assisting in validating the survey instrument (see below). SPSS Release 6.0 for MS Windows was used for this investigation.

7.5.7.2 Factor analysis

"...the aim of most factor analyses is to simplify a matrix of correlations such that they can be explained in terms of a few underlying factors" (Kline 1994: 28).

If the variables in a matrix are highly correlated they will yield a small number of factors which explain a large amount of the variance within it. Conversely, a low level of correlation is likely to yield a larger number of factors which do not explain much of the variance within the matrix. Thus factor analysis can be used both to identify the constructs which underlie individual variables within the matrix, and as a means of examining the data for the consistency of the relationship between variables.

Since the work of Parasuraman et al (1988) the use of factor analysis to investigate relationships in data produced by Likert scales has become the orthodox method in perceived service quality research. However, it is appropriate to review the essentials of the technique, and this is attempted below.

"Factor analysis is a statistical technique used to identify a relatively small number of factors that can be used to represent relationships among sets of many interrelated variables" (Norusis 1990: 321).

According to Harman (1976: 3-10), factor analysis owes its origins to Spearman (1904) and other psychologists researching personality and intelligence in the early years of the current century. Spearman's proposition for a single general factor was that for a multivariate matrix each variable score took the form:

$$X_i = a_i F + e_i$$

where X_i is the standardised score (that is with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one) of the i th variable and a_i is a constant; e_i is that part of X_i which is specific to variable i and F is a Factor value having a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one for each individual across the whole range of variables. A matrix with more than one factor takes the following form:

$$X_i = a_{i1}F_1 + a_{i2}F_2 + \dots + a_{im}F_m + e_i$$

In the above, the terms F_1 , F_2 and F_m are m uncorrelated common factors.

The four steps of factor analysis can be summarised as:

- "First, the correlation matrix for all variables is computed...Variables that do not appear to be related to other variables can be identified from the matrix and associated statistics..."
- In the second step, factor extraction - the number of factors necessary to represent the data and the method of calculating them - must be determined...
- The third step, rotation, focuses on transforming the factors to make them more interpretable.
- At the fourth step, scores for each factor can be computed for each case. These scores can then be used in a variety of other analyses" (Norusis 1990: 323).

Manly (1994: 105) points out that the technique "is something of an art, and is certainly not as objective as other statistical methods". Value judgements can arise in the following areas. First, methods of identifying factors other than those using Pearson's (1901) principal components require additional assumptions about relationships within the data. Second, the literature appears to be remarkably unspecific about how results produced by factor analysis should be assessed. Variables which have a strong underlying factor structure will show high "communality" values, but it is not easy to specify what is "high" in a particular context.

Similarly, interpreting the meaning of factors implies a) identifying negative factor loadings which show a negative correlation and is straightforward, but b) identifying high positive loadings. Again, it can be difficult to determine what is "high"; Kline (1994: 6) reports that the rule of thumb is that:

"factor loadings are high if they are greater than 0.6 ...and moderately high if they are above 0.3".

The third point is that interpretation of factors can depend considerably upon the choice of rotation method, but as the aim of rotation is to aid interpretation, there is a teleological aspect to the literature's discussion of the issues.

As a check that the data was indeed suitable for factor analysis, customer responses to the importance (questions 1 to 23) and perception (questions 25 to 47) aspects of the survey were submitted to the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy, and the Bartlett Test of Sphericity in order to verify its suitability for factor analysis. Examination of the communality for each variable gave a measure of the proportion of variance within it which was accounted for by the factors, whilst the eigenvalue (the degree of the total variance attributed to each factor) could also be calculated (Norusis 1990: 324-326). The factor analysis was repeated for the customer perception responses weighted by the importance responses with the importance coefficients so calculated so as make the sum of Importance responses equal one for each respondent.

It was decided to utilise the principal components method of factor extraction, in order to minimise assumptions about the data. Consideration was also given to the choice of rotation method, and the varimax was decided upon as it should lead to factors which are easy to interpret (Norusis 1990: 328). The two drawbacks highlighted by Lawley and Maxwell (1963) did not apply in this instance.

"The varimax method appears to have two main limitations. In the first place, the pattern of loadings obtained by its use may change considerably if additional factors are included in the rotation. In the second place the method is not very helpful where a dominant general factor exists" (Lawley and Maxwell 1963: 75).

Ultimately, interpretation of the factors was relatively straight-forward. From examining examples in the literature (particularly Harman 1976), and in the context of the actual results achieved it was decided to allow those factor loadings of 0.6 and above to determine the character of the interpretation made of the factor.

7.5.7.3 Validity

Having taken steps to measure the internal consistency of the survey instrument, consideration was also given to its validity. Litwin (1995: 33) describes validity simply as "how well (the instrument) measures what it sets out to measure". Four types of validity are discussed in the literature and they are treated in turn in what follows.

Face validity is based upon a cursory view of the instrument by untrained individuals, to see if it makes sense to them (Litwin 1990: 35). The argument for this procedure is presumably that these individuals are more likely to see the questionnaire in a manner similar to the respondents who will not have been initiated into the shared paradigms and language of the research community. The piloting process, described earlier in this chapter, addressed these issues, at least in part.

"Content validity is a subjective measure of how appropriate the items seem to a set of reviewers who have some knowledge of the subject matter" (Litwin 1995: 35).

No special measures could be taken in this respect. However, since the instrument is based upon others that have been reported in the academic press, it could be said to have a heritage of peer review and academic acceptability.

Criterion validity is a measure of how well the survey instrument performs against another, widely accepted instrument or a predictor of some kind (Litwin 1995: 37). The literature review (Chapter Four) suggests that despite a decade of services quality research, there is still no undisputed "gold standard". This is particularly the case with respect to leisure services. Thus it was not possible to assess a concurrent criterion validity using an established scale. However, steps were taken to establish a predictive validity, that is the ability of the survey instrument to forecast future events, behaviours, attitudes or outcomes (Litwin 1995: 40). This was done through assessing the ability of the unweighted and importance-weighted customer perception scores to predict customers' overall satisfaction with the service in response to survey question 50 which read "Overall, how satisfied are you with the service provided by centre x?".

The thinking behind this approach is that if the survey instrument was asking about issues which were important to customers in their consumption of the service, their assessment of the service provider's performance on individual questions would give a good indication of their overall assessment of the service. On the other hand, if the questionnaire was asking about issues which were tangential to customers, answers to individual questions would give a poor indication of customers' overall perception. In order to calculate the ability of the instrument to predict responses to question 50, multiple regression of the factor scores

resulting from factor analysis of customer perception responses (section. 7.5.7.2 above) was undertaken with responses to question 50 as the dependent variable. The measure of dispersion is provided by the coefficient of determination (the R^2 statistic). Norusis' comment upon the R^2 statistic is pertinent:

"Partitioning the sum of the squares of the dependent variable allows another interpretation of R^2 . It is the proportion of variation in the dependent variable explained by the model" (Norusis 1990:190).

Thus the value of R^2 is the proportion of the variance in responses to question 50 which is attributable to responses to questions 25 to 47. The procedure was repeated for the importance weighted customer perception factor scores. SPSS Release 6.0 for MS Windows was used for this investigation.

The final form of validity considered here is construct validity. This is concerned with the practical usefulness of a particular scale or instrument over time.

"Often (construct validity) is not calculated as a quantifiable statistic. Rather, it is frequently seen as a gestalt of how well a survey instrument performs in a multitude of settings and populations over a number of years" (Litwin 1995: 43).

Construct validity may be thought of in two ways (Litwin op. cit.) Convergent validity implies that several instruments measuring the same phenomenon come to a similar measurement. Divergent validity implies that a particular instrument has its own special measurement which is of value in practice.

It is difficult to establish construct validity over a relatively short time-scale (Litwin 1995) because a body of knowledge about the research problem, and about the instruments used to address it, is required. Although the use of survey instruments to measure leisure service quality goes back roughly a decade (see Chapter Four), use in the context of quality management methods is new, and there has been insufficient opportunity for such knowledge to be put in place. However, a "gestalt" attempt to show a relationship with previous research is made in the context of discussion of the results of the customer and staff surveys. Thus construct validity has been approached through a comparison of the factor structures produced with those produced by the use of other instruments which are reported in the literature.

A summary of the investigation of survey instrument reliability and validity is presented below as Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Summary of methods used to evaluate survey instrument reliability and validity		
Property	Method	Comment
<i>Reliability</i>		
Test-retest	Not addressed	Unfeasible: in this research design respondents cannot be resurveyed
Alternate form	Not addressed	Unfeasible: longer instrument risks respondent fatigue
Internal consistency	Factor analysis	Test of degree of association between variables and the proportion of total variance accounted for
<i>Validity</i>		
Face	Pilot	Qualitative feedback received from respondents
Content validity	Not addressed	Unfeasible, but heritage of content from other research
Criterion - concurrent	Not addressed	Unfeasible: no other instrument as "gold standard"
Criterion - predictive	Regression of factor scores	Test of ability to predict overall satisfaction
Construct	"Gestalt" assessment	Conducted in light of results

7.5.7.4 Comparison of customer responses between cases

Having considered above the methods used to ascertain the reliability and validity of the survey instrument, we now consider the methods used to compare responses from the cases.

A nonparametric method was chosen as the method to investigate hypotheses A1, A2 and B1, which all required a between-cases comparison of customer responses to the survey instrument. There are two reasons why a nonparametric method is appropriate. First, as Coshall (1989: 7-8) suggests, ordinal data, such as produced by Likert scales, does lend itself to methods based on analysis of the median rather than the mean. Hence a ranking method, such as performed by the major nonparametric tests, is appropriate.

Second, the specific data produced for the research reported here show considerable departures from normality. In Chapter Six it was noted that leisure services researchers such as MacKay and Crompton (1990), had commented upon the negative skew resulting from perceptions measurements based upon Likert scales. The "Examine" procedure of SPSS version 6.0 for Vax/ VMS was used to produce frequency counts and boxplots of responses to questions 1 to 23, and of questions 25 to 40 and of question 50. This also showed highly skewed responses (see Appendix 10.6). Thus any test for a null hypothesis should not assume a normal distribution, and nonnormality suggests use of a nonparametric method.

"The focal point of parametric analysis is some population parameter for which the sampling statistic follows a *known distribution*, with measurements being made at the *interval or ratio scale*. When one or more of these requirements or assumptions are not satisfied, then the so-called nonparametric methods can be used. An alternative term is *distribution-free*

methods, which focuses particularly on the fact that the distribution of the sampling statistic is not known" (Kazmier 1996: 373).

"(Nonparametric tests) are most useful in situations where parametric procedures are not appropriate; when the data are nominal or ordinal, or when interval data are from markedly nonnormal distributions. Significance levels for certain nonparametric tests can be determined regardless of the shape of the population distribution because they are based on ranks" (Norusis 1990: 227).

Against these advantages must be set the fact that nonparametric procedures are less powerful as tests than their parametric counterparts. In his discussion of this issue, Coshall (1989: 8, 63) notes that the measure used to assess the power of statistical tests, asymptotic relative efficiency (ARE) of the Kruskal-Wallis test (described below) is 95.5% of that of its parametric equivalent, the F test, if the populations are normal.

As customers for both the liP and ISO 9002 organisations fall into three groups each (three case studies were investigated for each of these methods) it is important to analyse variance both between cases and between the cases when grouped by the two quality management methods. The standard nonparametric test for several independent samples was developed by Kruskal and Wallis (1952).

"The Kruskal-Wallis test is used to test the hypothesis that several populations have the same medians. As such, it is the non parametric equivalent of the one-factor completely randomized design of the analysis of variance. It is assumed that the several populations have the same form and dispersion for the above hypothesis to be applicable, because differences in form or dispersion would also lead to rejection of the null hypothesis. The values for the several independent random samples are required to be at least at the ordinal scale" (Kazmier 1996: 376).

Accordingly, the Kruskal-Wallis test was applied to these responses. The Kruskal-Wallis H statistic has a chi-square distribution and the significance statistic (P), must be calculated with reference to the Degrees of Freedom (DF). The test was applied in two ways for each variable. First it was applied to the data from each case, to test the null hypothesis that there was no difference in responses between cases, generating H1. Second it was applied to the cases grouped by their ISO 9002 and liP quality management methods so as to test the null hypothesis that there was no difference in responses between the two groups, generating H2. This procedure generates the following types of result:

- First, where there is no significant difference between cases and therefore no significant difference between the two quality management groups.
- Second, where there is a significant difference between cases, but no significant difference between groups.
- Third, where there is a significant difference between cases and a significant difference between the two groups.

The third result type was clearly of most interest since it shows that there was indeed a difference between the response of customers in the liP and ISO 9002 groups of cases. However, in order to evaluate the above, it was important to know what proportion of the variance between cases was accounted for by grouping according to quality management method. An indication of this is provided by the ratio $H2/H1$, although as a measure of dispersion the H statistic has flaws similar to that of the chi-square. Therefore, a null hypothesis was postulated that there was no variance between cases apart from that accounted for by grouping by quality management method, and this was tested for each variable by calculating the value of $H1-H2$ and looking up the resulting value of P for 4 (i.e. 6-2) degrees of freedom on a table of chi-square values.

For those variables where $H1-H2$ yields a value of P less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and it likely that there are underlying differences between the cases other than their quality management method. For those where the value of P is greater than 0.05 the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, and differences between the cases, other than those due to grouping by quality management method, must be assumed to arise through random variation. Thus this approach allows for an investigation of variation both within and between the two groups of cases.

Kruskal-Wallis tests were also undertaken on the set of cases including the St. George's Pool case, which used no special quality management method. This was done for purely indicative reasons. The research hypotheses imply that a lack of quality management methods would result in poorer levels of customer perception as compared to the cases with ISO 9002 or liP. However, as there was only one case surveyed, it is more likely that special factors could influence the outcome.

The survey instrument included an opportunity for respondents to write in comments about issues they find important, and about their perceptions of the particular centre which they visit. The researcher classified these responses into four groups: tangibles, processes, staff and "other". A comparison of the volume of responses in each category was then made between the cases grouped by quality management method.

7.6 Chapter Seven: Concluding remarks

It is a striking feature of the literature reviewed in Chapters Three to Five, that it provides no template of research design for investigation of the relative effectiveness of service quality management methods. Consequently the researcher has had to elaborate his own design, drawing upon the work of others as appropriate. In this chapter, a rich methodology has been

detailed. The first stage of this research was to investigate basic operational and financial characteristics of the services under study and to elucidate quality management methods in use. A postal survey was undertaken in order to accomplish this. The results obtained from this research, studied in the light of the literature review (see Chapters Three to Five), enabled guiding hypotheses to be elaborated, and these were outlined in Chapter Six. In summary these were formulated as follows:

- Guiding hypothesis A: Organisations working to ISO 9002 have better processes and management of tangibles than similar organisations not working to ISO 9002.
- Guiding hypothesis B: Organisations working to the Investors in People standard have better employee management than similar organisations not working to IiP.

These hypotheses were investigated through case studies.

Selection of the cases to be studied was done according to the following criteria. First, cases must offer a sport and recreation service from a local authority-owned leisure facility. Second, they must be registered under one of the two standards under investigation. Third they must offer the researcher suitable access, permitting extensive interviews with the management team and assisting in the administration of a customer survey. All cases met these criteria; all but one (Hartham) met a further criterion: they had an inner-city London catchment area.

Thus the second stage of primary research was designed to obtain a measure of ecological validity through exploiting the opportunities for in-depth interviews which is presented by case studies. In order to investigate the hypotheses use was made of the largely qualitative results provided by the management team interviews, which were based around an instrument developed from one published by the EFQM. However, it was also intended to gain population validity with respect to the customers of each case through the use of the survey method. A customer survey instrument was developed for this purpose. Thus the hypotheses were also researched through examining differences in customer responses between cases and cases grouped by quality management method. These responses were investigated through a highly quantitative approach relying on statistical analysis.

Factor analysis was undertaken on the customer survey responses in order to assess the construct validity of the survey instrument. Predictive validity of the instrument was evaluated through regression of the factor scores against respondents' scores for overall customer satisfaction. Differences between cases and between cases grouped by quality management method, were analysed using the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test.

Results generated by the first, exploratory, stage of primary research are provided in Chapter Eight. Results from the second, analytical, primary research stage are reported in Chapter Nine.

Chapter Eight

Results of the first stage of primary research

Summary

This chapter reports the main findings of the first stage of primary research which was a postal survey of sport, recreation and leisure facility managers carried out early in 1995. The objectives of the survey were:

- to identify quality management methods in use;
- to identify customer satisfaction monitoring methods in use;
- to gather outline organisational data relating to the size of the business and the customer base;
- to ascertain how satisfactory respondents believed their quality management arrangements to be;
- to investigate relationships between quality management arrangements and respondents' level of satisfaction with these arrangements.

The response rate was 388 from 1700 questionnaires (23%) of which 271 (70%) were from those involved in delivering local authority sport and recreation services.

Those responses from local authority connected services yielded the following results:

- About 19% of respondents had used no quality management technique, but 50% had used more than one method.
- The most significant externally validated methods were liP, which was used by 23% of respondents, and BS5750/ ISO 9000, used by 13%.
- Almost all respondents had taken measures to monitor customer satisfaction, 52% having administered a customer questionnaire in the previous twelve months.
- The facilities managed by respondents were mainly of small or medium size, expressed in terms of turnover, number of employees and management or supervisory positions.
- The services themselves appear relatively complex in management terms as they offer a mix of activities with large server-to-customer element, and those in which the interaction is mainly with the facility and its equipment.
- Respondent satisfaction with quality management arrangements increases with the number of quality management techniques employed.
- Respondents using ISO 9000 appear satisfied with their quality management arrangements, but a proportion of those using liP appear to be dissatisfied.

8.0 Preamble

The previous chapter set out the objectives for the survey in section 7.3.0 and reported the method employed to develop and administer the mail survey instrument used for this first, exploratory stage of primary research. Also detailed (7.3.3) were the means used to analyse the results generated by the survey. In this chapter these survey results are reported in detail. The following approach is adopted. First, an introductory section presents information about the objectives for this first stage of primary research. Second, frequency counts of all responses are presented in tabular and graphical format. Within this part of the chapter, responses about general organisational characteristics are followed by those about quality management. Third, frequency counts for responses which come from leisure services connected with local authority provision are separately reported. Once again, general organisation characteristics, followed by quality management responses are presented in tabular and graphical format. Fourth, statistical analysis of the quality management data for

the local authority connected responses is reported. Last, conclusions are drawn from these results in the light of the literature reviewed in this thesis.

The survey instrument itself may be found as Appendix Two, and a complete count of results as Appendix Three.

8.1. An overview of all responses

8.1.0 Organisational characteristics - results

Table 8.1 below reports responses to survey section 1, which asks about the nature of the business.

Table 8.1: All responses - Nature of business	
Section 1: NATURE OF BUSINESS	
Dry sports only	109
Swimming Pool	25
"Wet and dry" centre	164
Health and fitness centre	48
Other	42 n= 388

The "other" category includes fourteen respondents who identified their facility as "wet and dry and fitness", eight "hotel leisure facilities" and eighteen other miscellaneous facilities.

Table 8.2 shows responses to section two, which asked about the ownership of the business.

Table 8.2: All responses - Ownership of business	
Section 2: OWNERSHIP OF BUSINESS	
Commercial Sector	
Commercial organisation independently providing services to public	70
Commercial organisation running contract for local authority	35 n= 105
Other	
Public Sector	
Local Authority Leisure Service contract run by DSO	162
School/local authority Dual Use/ Joint Provision	78
Education - school sector	
Other	21 n= 261
Voluntary Sector	
Independent School	5
Community Group	3
National Voluntary Body	4
Other	17 n= 29

The "other" category in the public sector was mainly accounted for by sports facilities belonging to universities and further education colleges. A wide variety of responses was

covered by the "other" category of voluntary sector responses, mostly relating to incorporation method (such as "company limited by guarantee", "registered charity" etc.).

In Figure 8.1 all responses to survey section two were recategorised to bring together organisations delivering local authority (L.A.) sports, recreation and leisure services; most of these are delivered within the context of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) arrangements (see 5.7.0). These have been labelled "L.A. connected" and are those organisations, of varying types, which were delivering services for local authorities. The "Commercial sector" consisted of those enterprises which operated outside CCT, for example leisure facilities operated by hotels and private fitness or sports clubs. The "Voluntary sector" were charitable and similar bodies which provide leisure, sport and recreation services but were not connected with the provision of local authority services.

Table 8.3 shows the number of staff employed, and the number of management and supervisory positions. This should be read in conjunction with Table 8.4, which indicates the annual turnover.

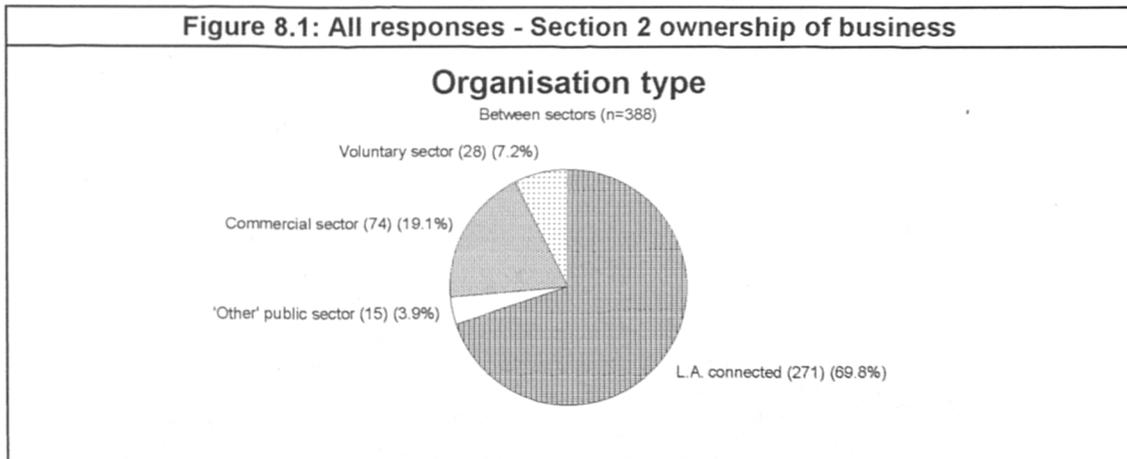


Table 8.3: All responses - Number of Staff Employed

Section 3: NUMBER OF STAFF EMPLOYED	
Less than 5	34
5 - 14	120
15 - 24	70
25 - 34	52
35 - 49	39
50 or more	67 n= 382
Number of management/ supervisory positions	
less than 5	52
5 - 9	55
10 - 14	20
15 or more	11 n= 138

Table 8.4: All responses - Annual turnover	
Section 4: TURNOVER	
less than £50,000	41
£50,000 to £149,000	87
£150,000 to £499,000	134
£500,000 to £999,999	52
over £1million	51 n= 365

Table 8.5 reports the patterns of use asked about in section 5 of the survey. Figures relate to facility usage in the week prior to completing the questionnaire; responses to questions about hours open per week, hours use for taught or coached activities and hours actively programmed have been recoded into bands of hours.

Table 8.5: All responses - Usage patterns	
Section 5: USAGE PATTERNS	
Number of hours open to customers during week	
Under 30 hours	16
30 - 59 hours	44
60 - 89 hours	110
Over 90 hours	200 n= 370
Number of customer visits during week	
Under 2500	153
2500 - 4999	86
5000 - 7499	36
7500 - 9999	19
Over 10,000	50 n= 344
Number of hours use per week from taught or coached activities	
Under 30 hours	135
30 - 59 hours	117
60 - 89 hours	29
Over 90 hours	14 n= 295
Activities programmed at certain times	
Yes	350
No	20 n= 370
[If yes, hours per week so programmed]	
Under 30 hours	114
30 - 59 hours	88
60 - 89 hours	30
Over 90 hours	25 n= 257
Is there a membership?	
Yes	243
No	135 n= 378
[If yes, may non-members also use the facility?]	
Yes	209
No	32 n= 241

In the following Table 8.6 responses to section 6, which asked respondents to estimate the customer profile to the nearest 10%, are reported. In order to briefly summarise these responses, only the mean value for each item is recorded.

Table 8.6: All responses - Customer Profile	
Section 6: CUSTOMER PROFILE (Mean %)	
Gender	
Male	54
Female	47 n= 101
Age	
Under 16	22
16 - 24	19
25 - 44	35
45 - 59	18
60+	11 n= 105
Social Class	
A, B, C1	54
C2, D, E	46 n= 100

8.1.1 Organisational characteristics - discussion

Of the 388 responses, about two-thirds were from public sector organisations, and about a quarter from the commercial sector, the remainder being from voluntary sector respondents.

Over two-thirds of respondents' facilities turned over less £½ million per annum; 40% employed less than 15 people. There was a proportion of larger concerns: nearly 14% had a turnover of over £1 million, over 17% had 50 or more employees. Survey section five enquired about usage patterns, including the number of customer visits per week. Table 8.5 shows that the modal response was less than 2500 visits per week and nearly 70% of respondents' facilities receiving less than 5000 visits per week. The impression given by these findings is that these organisations are of small size, at least in comparison with the organisations which are typically the focus of quality movement/ services management authors such as Oakland (1995) (Esso, Carnaud-Metal Box), Garvin (1988) (the air conditioning manufacturing industry) or Parasuraman et al (1988) (e.g. banks and telephone companies).

On the other hand, responses from the questions on usage patterns indicated that these amenities may be relatively complex in service management terms, as far as may be ascertained from a simple survey instrument. Respondents were asked how many hours each week their facility opened to the public. Nearly 69% of respondents' facilities were open 80 or more hours per week. The implication is that management of tangibles is made more complex through intensity of use, and the likelihood that operations connected to tangibles, such as maintenance or the receipt of supplies, will be carried out during opening hours when they might impact on customer service. In many cases management may also be complicated by having membership schemes whilst also facilitating use by non-members.

Management of people may also be complex because of the communication issues which arise when shift systems are required.

The survey enquiry into usage patterns also asked about the number of hours use per week from taught or coached activities. Several respondents commented that this was a difficult question to answer because they had more than one activity area in which taught activities took place. However, the intention of the section was to give a very broad indication of the role of the inter-personal element within the service package, and the results generally show that the taught element is significant for most respondents since the modal response was the 20-39 hours per week band, and 38% of respondents had 40 or more hours per week of taught or coached activities.

8.1.2 Quality management methods - results

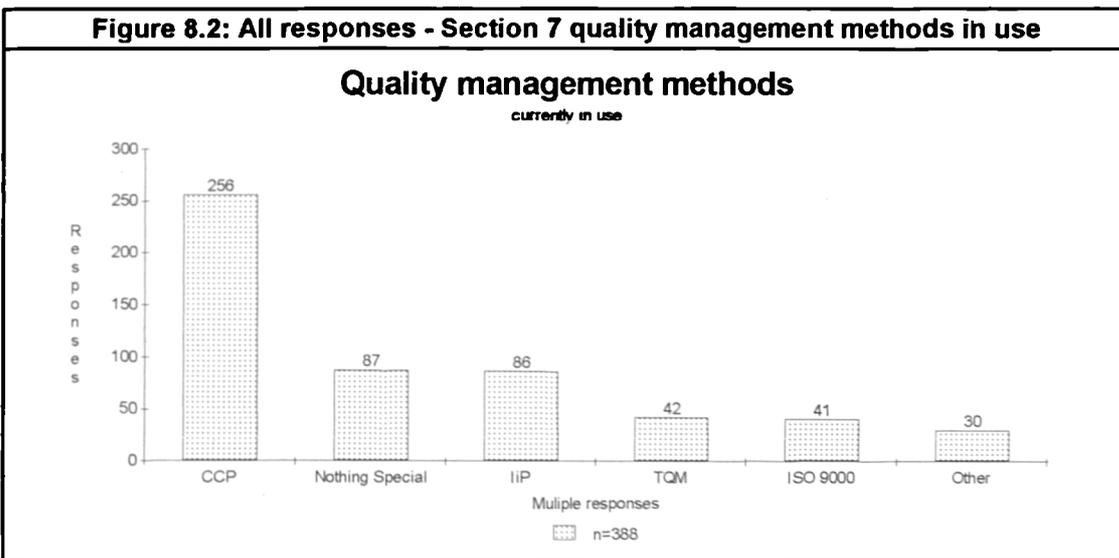
Table 8.7 reports responses to questions about quality management arrangements currently operated, those under consideration and those discontinued in the past 12 months. Most respondents (nearly 66%) indicated they had a customer care programme of some type. The most popular (22%) externally certified standard was Investors in People, followed by ISO 9000 (at nearly 11%). About 11% also indicated that they used TQM. Other methods in use, written in by respondents, included the Charter Mark (8 responses), the Fitness for Industry training initiative¹ (5 responses), service quality procedures (5 responses), National Vocational Qualifications/ Scottish Vocational Qualifications (3 responses), quality circles (2 responses) and several other categories in which there was a single response. Although many respondents indicated that they used more than one quality management method, 22% of respondents indicated that they had no quality management method as such.

Responses to the question about quality management methods under consideration underscored the interest in the external standards; BS 5750/ ISO 9000 was being considered by 70 respondents and IIP by 69. TQM was under consideration by 65 respondents and customer care programmes by 55. Only 22% of respondents (86 responses) were not considering any addition to their quality management arrangements. On the other hand, very few (17) respondents had discontinued a quality management method in the previous twelve months.

Responses to the question about current methods in operation are also represented graphically in Figure 8.2 below.

¹ This is a private sector initiative aimed at improving the training available to employees in the fitness and exercise sector.

Table 8.7: All responses - Quality management arrangements			
Section 7: QUALITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS			
Arrangements currently operated			
Total Quality Management (TQM)	42		
BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	41		
Investors in People (IiP)	88		
Customer care programme (CCP)	257		
No special quality management arrangements	89		(multiple responses)
Other	30	tot= 547	(multiple responses)
Arrangements under consideration			
Total Quality Management	65		
BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	70		
Investors in People	69		
Customer care programme	55		
None under consideration	86		(multiple responses)
Other	10	tot= 355	(multiple responses)
Arrangements discontinued in past 12 months			
Total Quality Management	1		
BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	5		
Investors in People	2		
Customer care programme	5		
None discontinued	224		
Other	4	tot= 241	



Respondents were also asked (survey section 8) which customer satisfaction monitoring methods they had employed in the previous twelve months. These responses are shown in Table 8.8 and Figure 8.3 below. About 95% of respondents had monitored customer satisfaction, and 75% had used more than one method. The most frequently used technique (about 88%) was the monitoring of customer complaints and comments.

Table 8.8: All responses - Section 8 customer satisfaction methods used in previous year

Section 8: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MONITORING			
Complaints/ comments monitoring	343		
Visits by monitors/ inspectors	189		
Exit questionnaires	177		
Mystery guests	66		
Focus Groups	56		
Non-user survey (Non U survey)	95		
No satisfaction monitoring procedure	95		(multiple responses)
Other	39	tot=1060	

Figure 8.3: All responses - Section 8 customer satisfaction methods used in previous year



Respondents were also asked to state their degree of satisfaction with their own quality management arrangements. These answers are reported in Table 8.9 below.

Table 8.9: All responses - Respondent's assessment of quality management arrangements

Section 9: ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS	
Highly satisfactory	32
Satisfactory	252
Unsatisfactory	70
Highly unsatisfactory	5 n= 359

8.1.3 Quality management methods - discussion

As Lentell and Morris (1995) suggested, the frequency of the use of customer care programmes as a quality management method is not a surprising finding, because there is no external standard for them, and even relatively limited measures could be included in this category. About 11% of respondents indicated that they used TQM, although as this is more of a management philosophy and not an external standard (3.3.0) caution is required in evaluating what this means in practice. About 23% of respondents were undertaking an Investors in People programme, which was a surprising finding, as it had not previously been understood as being a significant quality management method for sport, recreation and leisure services. Roughly half that number were making use of BS 5750/ ISO 9000. 24% of respondents had no special QM arrangements (see Figure 8.2).

At the time of the survey, many respondents were actively considering adopting quality management methods, each of TQM, ISO 9000, IiP and Customer care programme being considered by between 15% and 20% of respondents. On the other hand, very few respondents had discontinued a method in the previous twelve months.

About 95% of respondents had monitored customer perceptions of service, and 75% had used more than one method. The most popular method was complaints and comments monitoring which covers a wide variety of approaches, from simply logging unsolicited comments and complaints, through encouraging customer feedback through suggestion boxes or comment forms. The use of visiting inspectors to monitor quality is heavily associated with local authority services (153 out of 188) representing the client monitoring function of services managed under contract. The case study research (see Chapter Nine) confirmed that, for local authority sport and recreation services, there is a heavy reliance on inspection, which is effectively a reliance on "proxy" customers. The frequency (45% of all respondents had deployed them within the past year) of the use of customer exit questionnaires is unsurprising, given the relative ease of their development, deployment and analysis. More surprising is the frequency of use of techniques which require considerable organisational investment, and possibly external expertise, such as mystery guests, focus groups and non-user surveys. The first two are clearly associated with a desire to explore in depth the perceptions of current customers, whilst the latter is for elucidating the expectations and perceptions of those who, for whatever reason, are not current customers.

Thus this overview of quality management practices produced a picture of uneven development. Some respondents were managing to a recognised standard such as ISO 9000 or IiP; others appeared to have brought forward their own means of managing the quality received by the customer, for example through customer care programmes. On the other

hand, a sizeable proportion of respondents recognised no special measures taken to manage quality. All but 5% of respondents had taken some steps to monitor customer satisfaction, although for some this may have been a passive monitoring of complaints and comments as they come in. However, many clearly took active measures to elucidate customer perceptions of service, and many respondents had taken more than one such measure in the past year.

When respondents were asked how satisfied they were with their QM arrangements, nearly 80% indicated that they were satisfied or highly satisfied. Clearly, many respondents who are not managing to any external standard remain satisfied with their arrangements.

8.2 Local authority connected responses

8.2.0 Introduction

Given that the focus of the second stage of the primary research for this thesis was upon case studies drawn from local authority leisure services, it makes sense in what follows to conduct a separate analysis of local authority connected responses to the survey used in this first primary research stage. As was pointed out in Chapter Five (5.7.0), since the 1988 Local Government Act, Compulsory Competitive Tendering means that a variety of organisations (local authority Direct Service Organisations, commercial contractors, voluntary bodies) are responsible for managing local authority sport and leisure services. It is these respondents, either running contracts for local authorities under the terms of the 1988 Act, or directly delivering local authority services which fall outside its remit, which are scrutinised in the following.

8.2.1 Organisational characteristics - results

Table 8.10 shows a breakdown of these responses by facility type. Respondents were asked in survey section one what type of facility they managed, in terms of the activities they could host. These answers are shown in Table 8.10 and Figure 8.4 below. Most facilities (56%) offered both swimming-related activities and sports hall sports and/ or gymnasium or fitness related activities. These are shown as "wet and dry" in the graphic below. 32% of respondents managed facilities which offered dry sports only, or dry sports with gymnasium or fitness related activities. A further 23 (9%) of responses were from swimming pools. The remaining responses were from health and fitness establishments and from facilities offering entertainment (municipal halls etc.).

Table 8.10: Local authority connected responses - Nature of business		
Section 1: NATURE OF BUSINESS		
Dry sports only	81	
Swimming Pool	23	
"Wet and dry" centre	137	
Health and fitness centre	4	
Other	18	n= 263

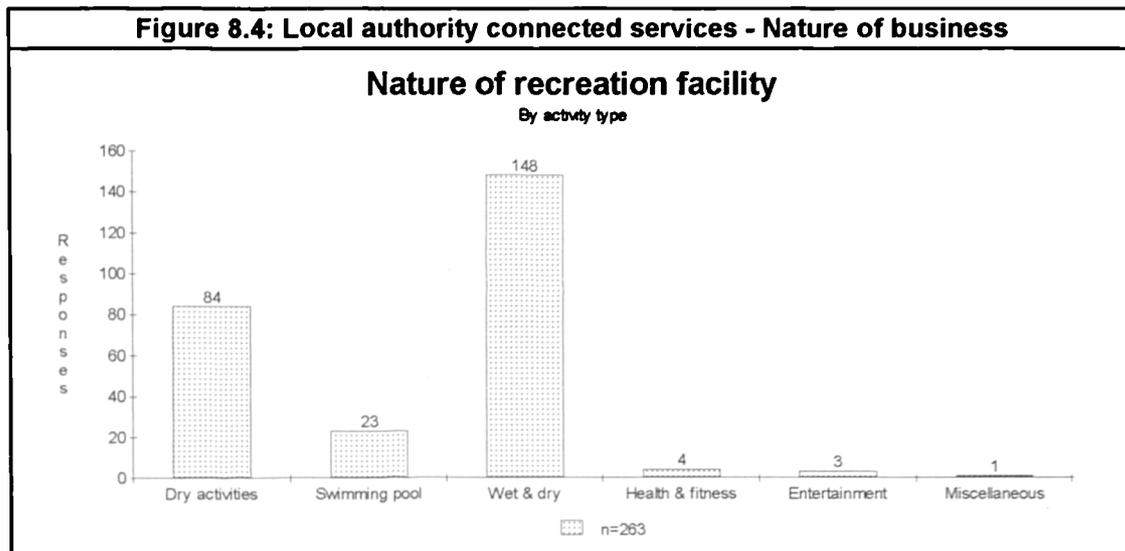
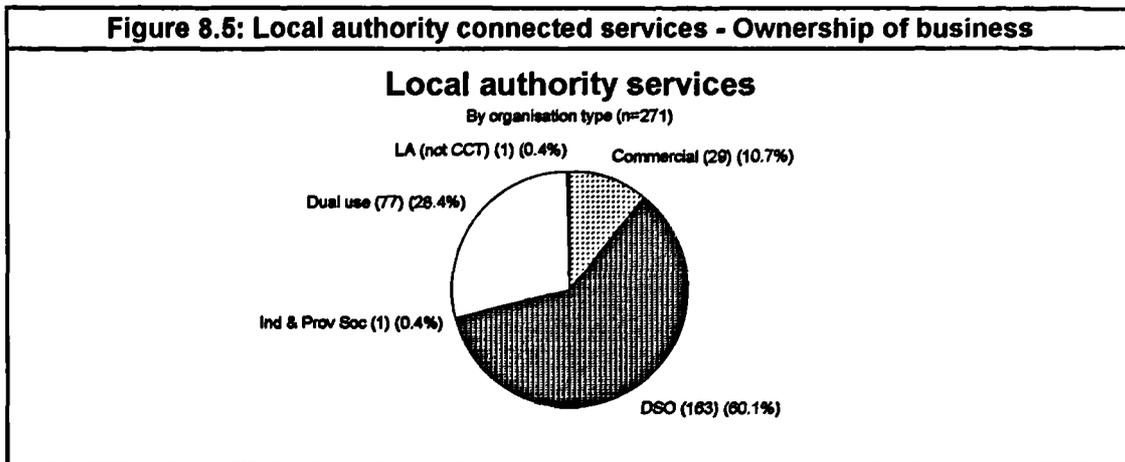


Table 8.11 and Figure 8.5 show how these respondents categorised themselves when asked to specify the ownership of the business.

Table 8.11: Local authority connected responses - Ownership of business		
Section 2: OWNERSHIP OF BUSINESS		
Commercial Sector		
Commercial organisation running contract for local authority	29	
Public Sector		
Local Authority Leisure Service contract run by DSO	163	
School/local authority Dual Use/ Joint Provision	77	
L.A.(not CCT)	1	
Voluntary Sector		
Industrial and provident society	1	n= 271



Over 71% of local authority connected responses were from organisations managing contracts under the CCT provisions. Most of these organisations were local authority Direct Service Organisations (DSOs). Twenty-nine responses were from commercial contractors managing these services and one was from an industrial and provident society. Of the "non-defined" services all bar one (77) were from dual-use centres which are sport and recreation facilities provided both for schools and the local community; they are normally outside the limits of the CCT legislation.

Survey section three asked respondents to select a band which indicated the number of employees of their facility, represented as full-time equivalents. Of these respondents, 52% employed less than 25 people in terms of full-time equivalents. Responses to survey section three also show the number of managers employed; most facilities having less than ten management or supervisory positions (see Table 8.12; Figures 8.6, 8.7 below).

Table 8.12: Local authority connected responses - Number of staff employed		
Section 3: NUMBER OF STAFF EMPLOYED		
Less than 5	13	
5 - 14	67	
15 - 24	57	
25 - 34	42	
35 - 49	33	
50 or more	51	n= 263
Number of management/ supervisory positions		
less than 5	23	
5 - 9	47	
10 - 14	15	
15 or more	4	n= 89

Figure 8.6: Local authority connected services by no. of staff employed (survey section 3)

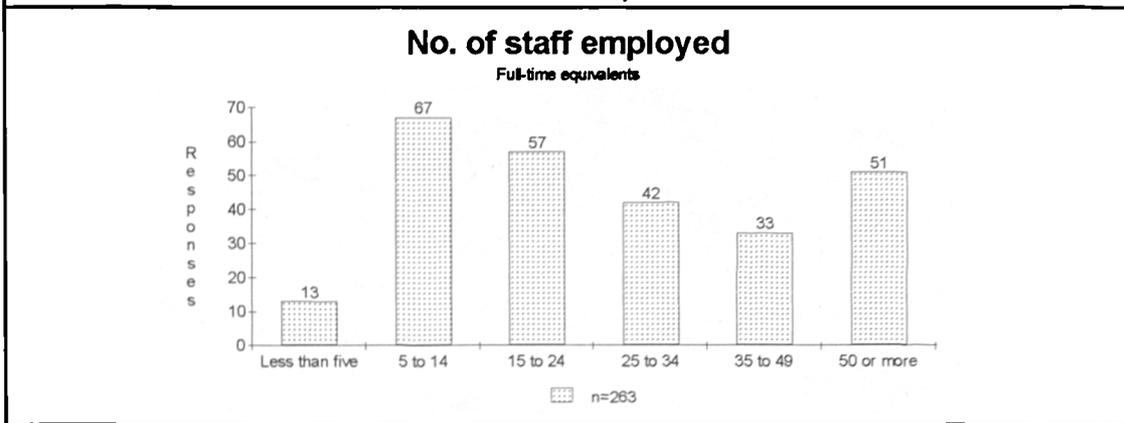
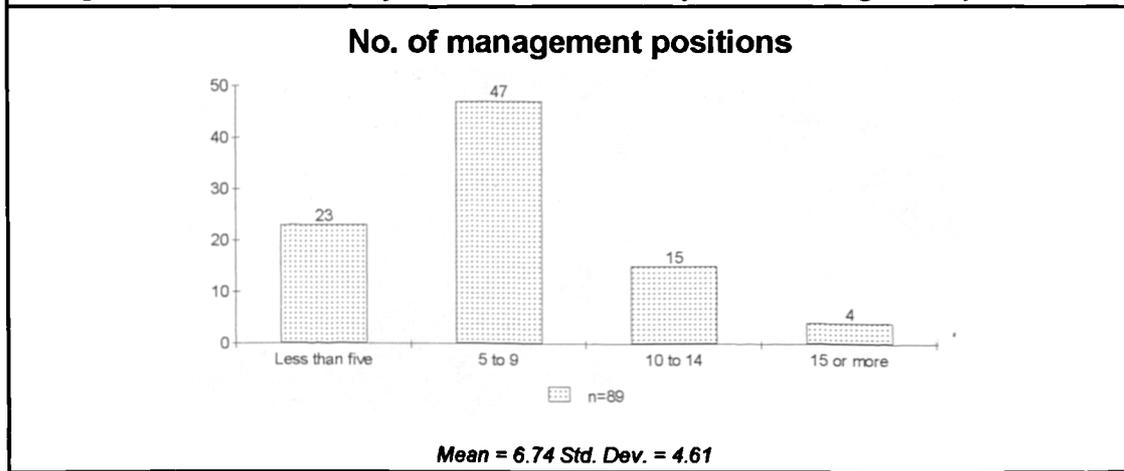


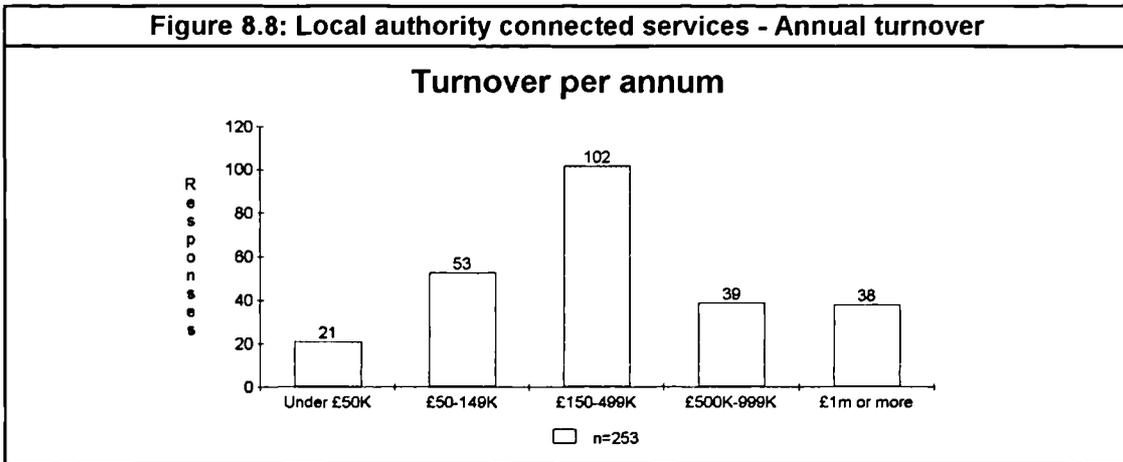
Figure 8.7: Local authority connected services by no. of management positions



Responses to survey section four, the annual turnover, are shown in Table 8.13 and Figure 8.8. 69% of respondents managed facilities with a turnover of less than £½ million, and only 15% of facilities had a turnover of £1 million or more.

Table 8.13: Local authority connected responses - Annual turnover

Section 4: TURNOVER		
less than £50,000	21	
£50,000 to £149,000	53	
£150,000 to £499,000	102	
£500,000 to £999,999	39	
over £1 million	38	n= 253

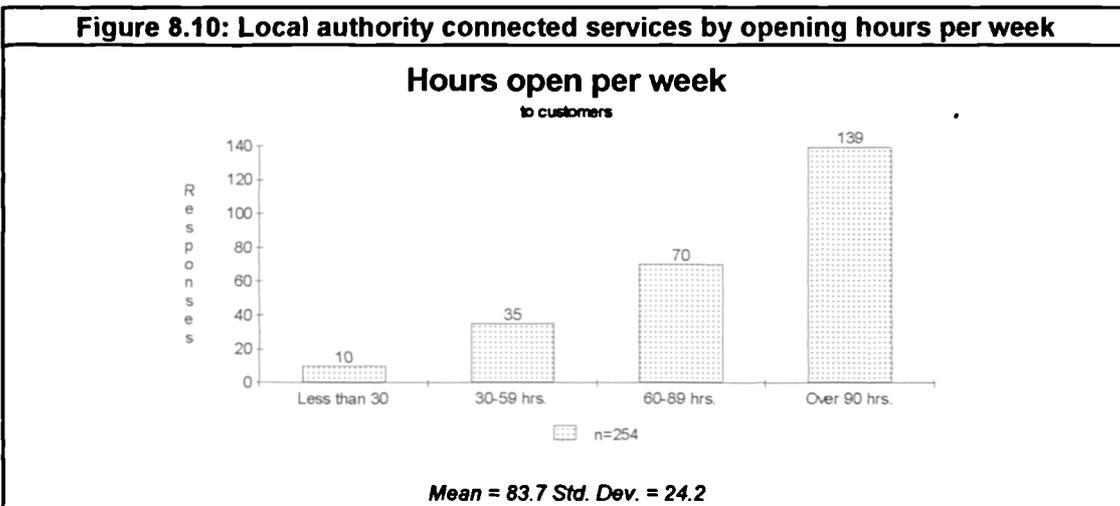
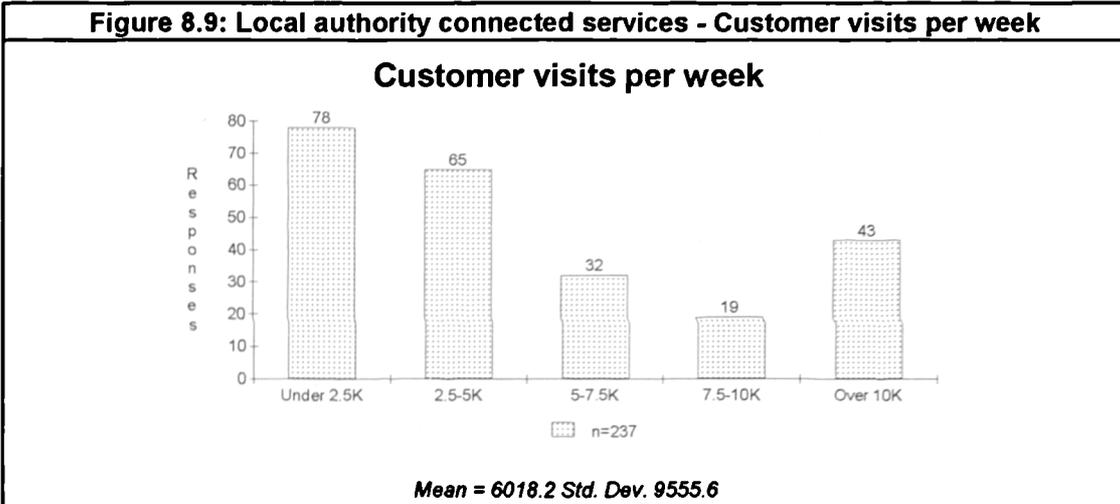


Survey section five enquired about usage patterns, including the number of customer visits per week. Table 8.14 and Figure 8.9 report these results, and show that the modal response

Table 8.14: Local authority connected responses - Usage patterns

Section 5: USAGE PATTERNS			
Number of hours open to customers during week			
Under 30 hours	10		
30 - 59 hours	35		
60 - 89 hours	70		
Over 90 hours	139	n=	254
Number of customer visits during week			
Under 2500	78		
2500 - 4999	65		
5000 - 7499	32		
7500 - 9999	19		
Over 10,000	43	n=	237
Number of hours use per week from taught or coached activities			
Under 30 hours	85		
30 - 59 hours	95		
60 - 89 hours	17		
Over 90 hours	10	n=	207
Activities programmed at certain times			
Yes	247		
No	7	n=	254
[If yes, hours per week so programmed]			
Under 30 hours	66		
30 - 59 hours	63		
60 - 89 hours	20		
Over 90 hours	20	n=	169
Is there a membership?			
Yes	138		
No	118	n=	256
[If yes, may non-members also use the facility?]			
Yes	135		
No	3	n=	138

was less than 2500 visits per week and 60% of respondents' facilities received less than 5000 visits per week. Respondents were asked how many hours each week their facility opened to the public. These responses are shown in Figure 8.10 below. Nearly 55% of respondents' facilities were open 90 or more hours per week.



The survey enquiry into usage patterns also asked about the number of hours use per week from taught or coached activities (Table 8.14 above). As noted in section 8.2.1, several respondents commented that this was a difficult question to answer because they had more than one activity area in which taught activities took place. However, the researcher believed that it was justifiable to use the results to calculate the proportion of opening hours used for taught activities (Figure 8.11 below).

Figure 8.11: Local authority connected services - Proportion of opening hours used for taught or coached activities

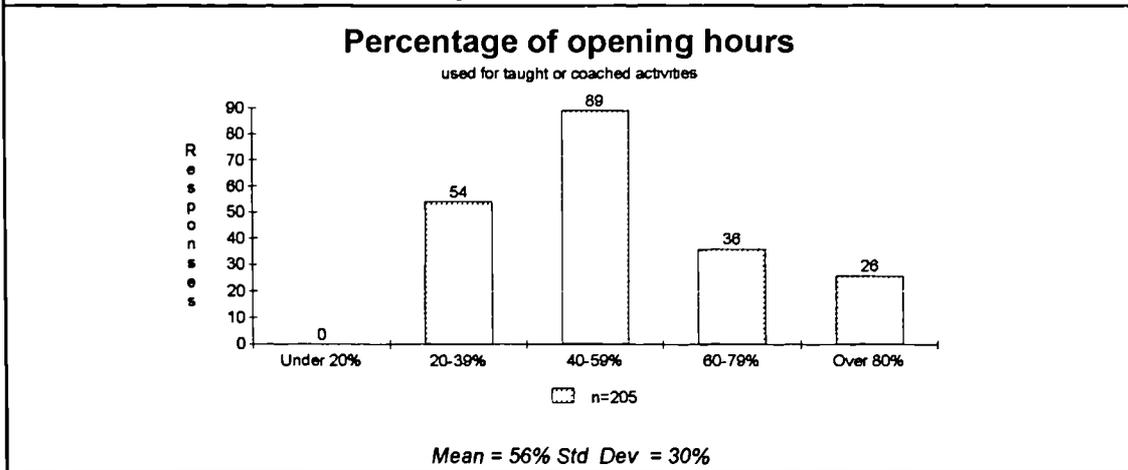


Table 8.15 below reports for this local authority subset the answers of respondents to those questions which asked them to estimate the user profile of their facility. For brevity, only the mean values are reported here.

Table 8.15: Local authority connected responses - Customer profile

Section 6: CUSTOMER PROFILE (Mean %)		
Gender		
Male	53	
Female	47	n= 196
Age		
Under 16	24	
16 - 24	18	
25 - 44	34	
45 - 59	16	
60+	10	n= 159
Social Class		
A, B, C1	50	
C2, D, E	49	n= 118

8.2.2 Organisational characteristics - discussion

The mix of facility types (Table 8.10 and Figure 8.4) indicates the range of services now provided in sport, recreation and leisure by local authorities (5.7.0). The high proportion of respondents from Direct Service Organisations (Table 8.11 and Figure 8.5) reflects their success in winning through the tendering process, as detailed in Chapter Five (5.7.0).

In section 8.2.1 above, it was suggested that for all respondents, organisational size was typically small as compared with those organisations which have been the main focus of the quality management literature. Again, with these local authority responses, one of the striking results (Table 8.12; Figure 8.6) was the relatively small number of staff typically

employed, with 52% employing less than 25 people in terms of full-time equivalents. The turnover figures (Table 8.13; Figure 8.8) again indicate relatively small undertakings in financial terms. The customer visit responses again indicate a small size for the facilities under study (Table 8.14; Figure 8.9), with the modal response being less than 2500 visits per week and 60% of respondents' facilities receiving less than 5000 visits per week.

In this subset, in spite of the generally small size of these facilities as management units, other responses from the questions on usage patterns indicated that these amenities may be relatively complex in service management terms. Opening hours are typically long, with 55% of respondents providing their services for 90 or more hours per week, suggesting that shift systems are a significant feature of the operation.

The results also show (Figure 8.11) that taught activities play a considerable role within the service offering of these facilities. The implication is that these services do involve two types of service encounter: first, those in which server-customer interaction is normally very limited (e.g. reception) and second, those in which it forms the major part of the service delivery because the customer is interacting with an instructor or coach. As Figure 8.11 shows, this second type of encounter often forms a significant part of the total service offering. Thus respondents are managing a service which offers a mix of "soft" and "hard" service (Levitt 1972), or as Thomas (1978) put it, "people-based" and "equipment-based". This finding underlines the usefulness of Lovelock's (1983) classification of services discussed in Chapter Four (see Figures 4.3 and 4.5) suggesting that in both market and management terms activities with tuition can be seen as different from those without it. Similarly, it highlights the significance of Chelladurai's (1992) work in that it suggests that these services are offering both consumer and human services. The quality management implication is that both the quality of tangibles and serving staff is important; management of server quality is likely to be most significant in these taught or coached (human service) encounters.

8.2.3 Quality management methods - results

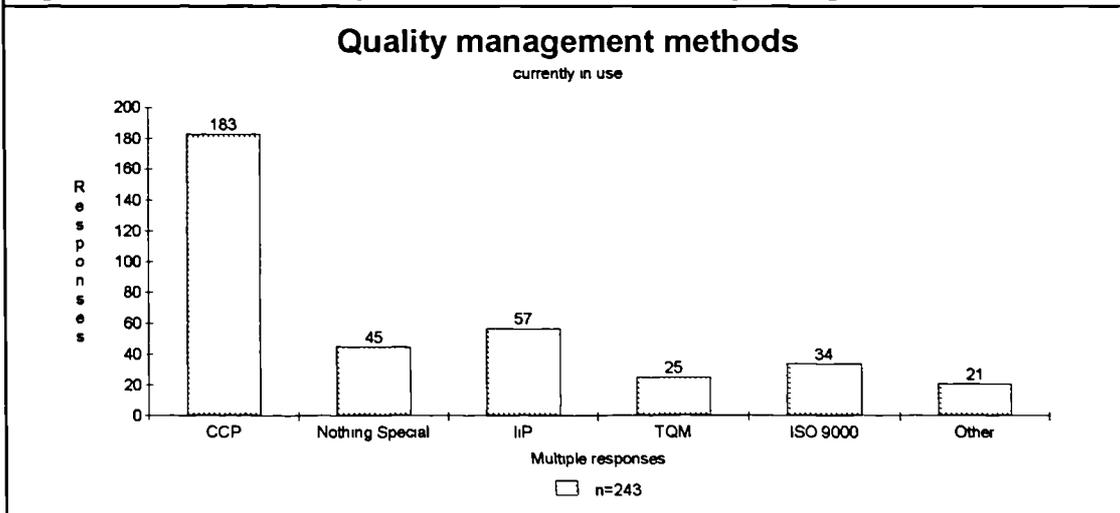
As reported above in part 8.2.2 of this chapter, respondents were asked to indicate which quality management methods they used and below the results for local authority connected responses are considered. Multiple responses could be made against this survey section since respondents could indicate one of four specified management methods, and also write in a response under the "other" category. The pattern of responses to questions on quality management methods in use in this local authority related subset shown in Table 8.16 and Figure 8.12 below, is generally similar to that reported for all responses in Table 8.7 and Figure 8.2 above. About 75% (183) of these respondents indicated that they had a customer care programme; 10% (25) made use of TQM. Of the two external standards, BS 5750/

ISO 9000 was used by 14% (34) of respondents and liP by 23% (57). A further 45 (19%) had no special quality management method.

As can be seen from Table 8.16, only 41 respondents (17%) were not considering adding to their quality management arrangements. Roughly equal numbers were considering TQM (56), BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (58) and liP (50). 39 respondents were considering a customer care programme. Very few (11) respondents had discontinued a quality management method in the previous twelve months.

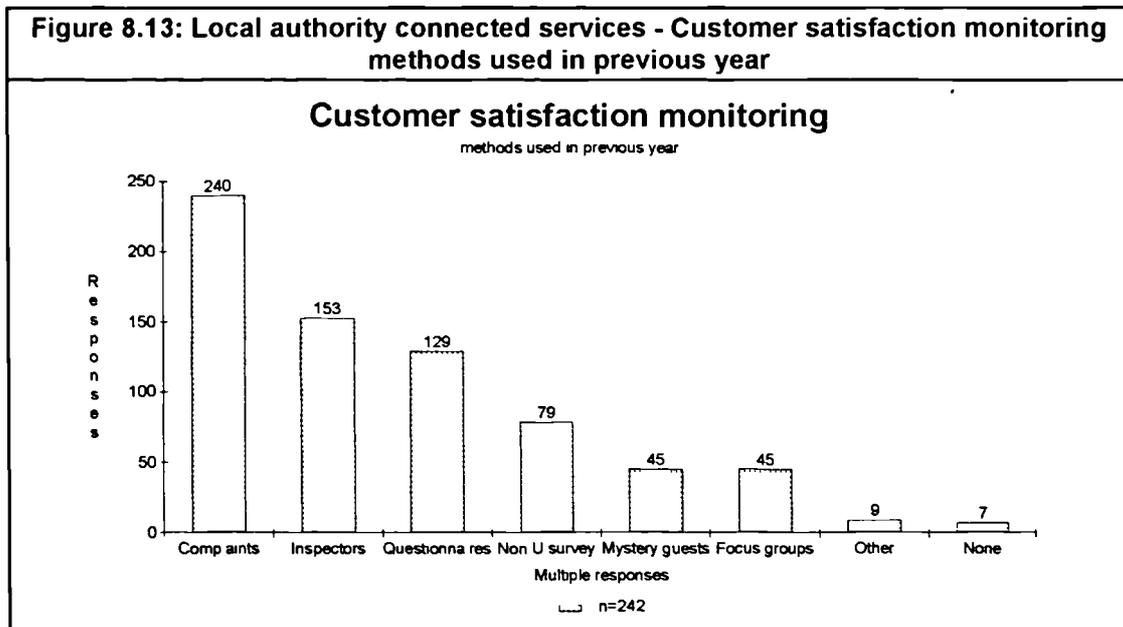
Table 8.16: Local authority connected responses - Quality management methods			
Section 7: QUALITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS			
Arrangements currently operated			
Total Quality Management	25		
BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	34		
Investors in People	57		
Customer care programme	183		
No special quality management arrangements	45		(multiple responses)
Other	21	tot= 365	responses)
Arrangements under consideration			
Total Quality Management	56		
BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	58		
Investors in People	50		
Customer care programme	39		
None under consideration	41		(multiple responses)
Other	9	tot= 253	responses)
Arrangements discontinued in past 12 months			
Total Quality Management	1		
BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	5		
Investors in People	1		
Customer care programme	4		(multiple responses)
None discontinued	146	tot= 157	responses)

Figure 8.12: Local authority connected services - Quality management methods used



Above (part 8.2.2 of this chapter) the customer satisfaction monitoring methods employed by the entire sample were discussed. We now move on to consider responses from the local authority cohort which are represented in Table 8.17 and graphically in Figure 8.15 below. Almost all respondents believed that they had taken some measures to help them monitor customer perceptions of their service, and 82% recorded that they had used more than one method so to do. After complaints and comments monitoring, inspection is the next most frequently cited monitoring method (61% of respondents), followed by questionnaires (51%) and non-user surveys (31%).

Table 8.17: Local authority connected responses - Customer satisfaction methods		
Section 8: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MONITORING		
Complaints/ comments monitoring	240	
Visits by monitors/ inspectors	153	
Exit questionnaires	129	
Mystery guests	79	
Focus Groups	45	
Non-user survey (Non-U survey)	45	
No satisfaction monitoring procedure	9	(multiple responses)
Other	7	tot= 707



The survey also asked managers to tick a statement which best corresponded to their own level of satisfaction with their quality management arrangements. These results are shown in the Table 8.18 below.

8.2.4 Quality management methods - discussion

The number of customer care programmes (CCP) indicates the priority which local authorities have given to customer relations in recent years, but the absence of an external standard for these makes it difficult to assess their impact on service quality, and to

Table 8.18: Local authority connected responses - Respondent's assessment of QM arrangements		
Section 9: ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS		
Highly satisfactory	14	
Satisfactory	179	
Unsatisfactory	52	
Highly unsatisfactory	2	n= 247

determine if they were actually in use as specified. As suggested in Chapter Three (3.3.0), there is no external certification of TQM, which means that although use of it may be claimed, it can be difficult to establish that it is in fact in place. Prior to framing the second, case study based phase of primary research, some of the respondents who had indicated adherence to TQM were contacted by the researcher. These managers had identified with the continuous improvement element of TQM but did not seem to have in place other aspects such as company-wide quality control or quality chain analysis, which would justify considering them as TQM examples.

However, the findings about the two externally validated methods are of considerable significance. ISO 9000 was utilised by 13% of respondents, and liP by 23% of respondents. Whilst the former finding was unsurprising in view of the international significance of the Standard, and its known role for local authorities post CCT (see Chapters Three and Five), the latter finding was new knowledge. It is in agreement with Robinson's (1998) research, conducted at roughly the same time which also revealed a substantial use of liP in local authority leisure services. Section seven of the survey also asked about methods under consideration or discontinued. A further 58 (23%) of respondents were considering introducing ISO 9000 in future, and 50 (20%) were considering liP, indicating that the significance of these two standards might increase in future. Five respondents indicated discontinuation of ISO 9000 certification and one had discontinued liP registration, though there is no way of telling at what stage in the registration process these initiatives were ended.

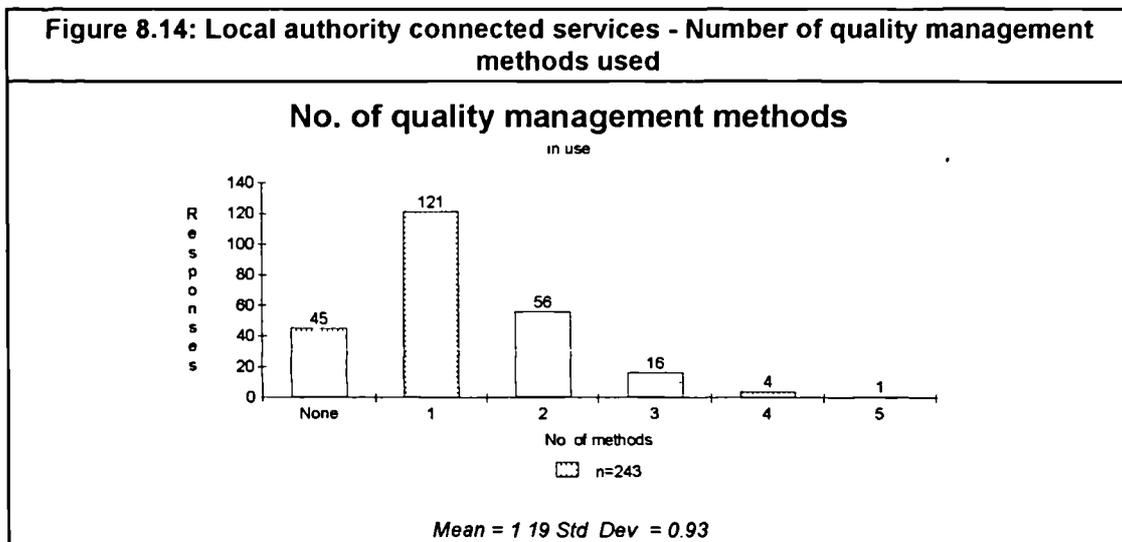
For the customer satisfaction monitoring responses, it is apparent that, once again, the pattern of responses for the local authority subset is similar to those reported for all responses, with the proviso that the former responses make relatively more use of monitoring methods other than complaints and comments. In particular the use of inspectors is highly correlated with the local authority subset, accounting for 153 out of the 188 total of positive responses to this question. This probably represents monitoring, by the local authority client, of the contractor under the arrangements for CCT. After complaints and

comments monitoring, inspection is the next most frequently cited monitoring method (61% of respondents), followed by questionnaires (51%) and non-user surveys (31%).

8.2.5 Analysis of the quality management results

The following part of this chapter records the results of further analysis upon the quality management and customer satisfaction monitoring. The researcher wished to ascertain if there was any correlation between the use of these management and monitoring methods and respondents' stated degree of satisfaction with their quality management arrangements. However, sections seven (quality management arrangements) and eight (customer satisfaction monitoring) of the mail survey instrument allowed multiple responses, and this complicated the analysis. The results of these investigations is reported below.

For section seven (quality management methods currently in use), the findings were that whereas 19% used no special quality management method, 50% used a single method and 31% more than one quality management method (Figure 8.14).



The large number of multiple responses to this survey section made difficult the task of establishing correlations between quality management and respondents' own level of satisfaction with their quality management arrangements. However, responses to it were investigated in two ways. First, respondents' satisfaction levels were tabulated against the number of methods employed. Second, satisfaction levels were tabulated against the quality management methods used, admitting cases where customer care programmes are employed in addition to one other method, but excluding other cases of multiple quality arrangements. This was necessary because most respondents (75%) employed customer care programmes.

Table 8.19 indicates that there was a significant, linear, relationship between the number of quality management methods in use and manager's satisfaction with their quality management arrangements. This is not a surprising finding; indeed the process of conducting a survey on this topic may bring home to managers not previously familiar with quality management what could be done, and thus decrease their levels of satisfaction with arrangements at their own place of work. Similarly those managers most active in quality initiatives are likely to feel that they are making progress in quality management. This method produced evidence of differential satisfaction levels according to the quality management arrangements in place, and although significance levels were well within the 5% confidence limit, the number of cells with low expected frequency implies caution in interpretation of Table 8.20.

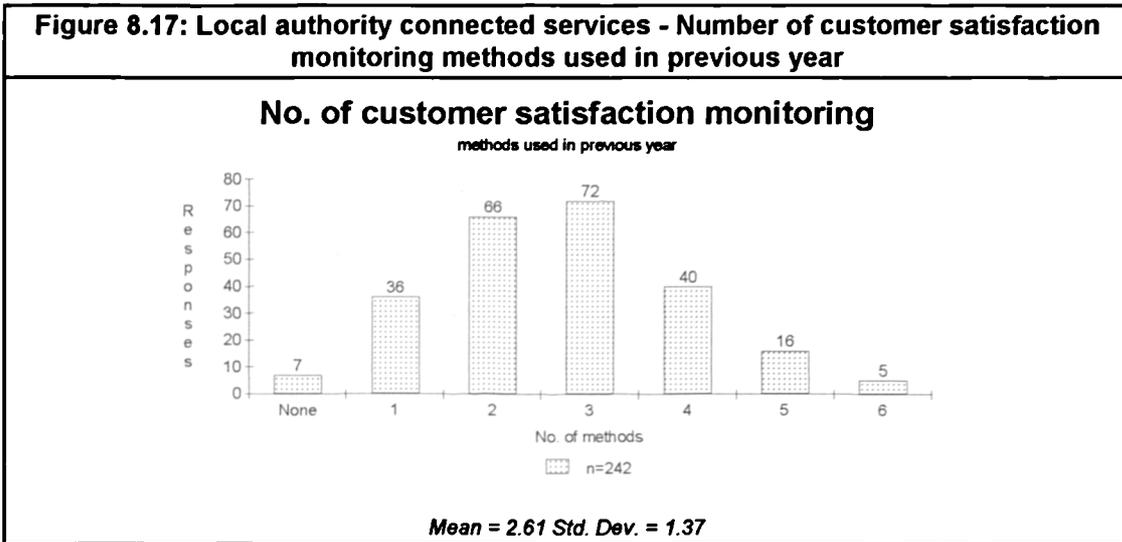
Table 8.19: Local authority connected responses: Own assessment of QM by number of QM methods					
<i>Own assessment of QM arrangements</i>	Highly Satis.	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Highly Unsatis.	Total
<i>No. of QM Methods</i>					
0		23	20	2	45
1	4	96	21		121
2	3	45	8		56
3	3	11	2		16
4	2	2			4
5	1				1
Totals	14	179	52	2	243
Pearson Chi-Square	Value: 69.63450	DF: 15	Significance: 0.00000		
Mantel-Haenszel test for linear association	Value: 31.30258	DF: 1	Significance: 0.00000		
Cells with expected frequency <5: 16 of 24 (66.7%)					

Table 8.20: Local authority connected responses: Own assessment of QM by type of QM method (controlling for no. of QM methods)					
<i>Own assessment of QM arrangements</i>	Highly Satis.	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Highly Unsatis.	Total
<i>QM Method</i>					
None		23	20	2	45
TQM		2			2
ISO 9000	1	10			11
liP		6	3		9
CCP	6	116	23		145
Other		5	1		6
Totals	7	162	47	2	218
Pearson Chi-Square	Value: 32.42726	DF: 15	Significance: 0.00563		
Cells with expected frequency <5: 18 of 24 (75%)					

Although the sample size for both ISO 9000 and liP is small, there is an indication that managers using the former appear to be satisfied with their quality management

arrangements. On the other hand, a proportion (three of nine) of managers using liP find their quality management arrangements unsatisfactory.

Customer satisfaction monitoring methods were subjected to a similar analysis. Figure 8.17 below shows that most respondents (82%) had used more than one customer satisfaction monitoring method during the previous year, with the modal response being three such methods. 55% of all respondents had used three or more such methods.



A similar approach to that taken with analysis of multiple quality management methods was adopted in tabulating managers' satisfaction against customer satisfaction monitoring methods. However, no similarly significant relationship could be found between respondent's levels of satisfaction with their own quality management arrangements and customer satisfaction monitoring (see Table 8.21 below). Those respondents who utilised the most satisfaction monitoring methods tended to be more satisfied with their quality management arrangements than others, but this finding is weakened as at 7%, it falls outside the 5% confidence limits. Thus those respondents who had utilised several means of ascertaining customer perceptions seemed to be those most active in other aspects of quality management, rather than those with a reason to believe that service quality is poor. Nevertheless, it is also reasonable to postulate that this finding is due to chance, as the 5% confidence condition is not met.

In order to investigate relationships between the type of customer satisfaction method employed and respondents' own level of satisfaction with their quality management arrangements, cases were admitted where complaints and comments monitoring was used in addition to one other method, but other cases of multiple customer satisfaction monitoring

methods were excluded. This was necessary because nearly all (99%) of respondents had made use of complaints and comments monitoring.

Table 8.21: Local authority connected responses: Own assessment of QM by number of customer satisfaction monitoring methods					
<i>Own assessment of QM arrangements</i>	Highly Satis.	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Highly Unsatis.	Total
<i>No. of customer satisfaction monitoring methods</i>					
0		6	1		7
1		22	14		36
2	2	47	17		66
3	5	59	8		72
4	4	30	5	1	40
5	2	10	4		16
6	1	2	2		5
Totals	14	179	52	2	242
Pearson Chi-Square	Value: 27.49431	DF: 18	Significance: 0.07018		
Mantel-Haenszel test for linear association	Value: 5.70980	DF: 1	Significance: 0.01687		
Cells with expected frequency <5: 18 of 28 (64.3%)					

There is no apparent relationship between the type of monitoring method used and the respondents' level of satisfaction with quality management arrangements (Table 8.22). This is in contrast with the results reported in Table 8.20, which showed a relationship between quality management method and respondents' level of satisfaction with their quality management arrangements.

Table 8.22: Local authority connected responses: Own assessment of QM by type of customer satisfaction method (controlling for no. of customer satisfaction monitoring methods)					
<i>Own assessment of QM arrangements</i>	Highly Satis.	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Highly Unsatis.	Total
<i>Customer satisfaction monitoring method</i>					
None		6	1		7
Complaints		19	11		30
Inspectors	1	21	5		27
Questionnaires		20	8		28
Mystery guests			1		1
Focus Group		1	2		3
Non-user surv.	1	6	2		9
Other		1	1		2
Totals	2	74	31		107
Pearson Chi-Square	Value: 13.83755	DF: 14	Significance: 0.46188		
Cells with expected frequency <5: 17 of 24 (70.8%)					

8.3 Chapter 8: Concluding remarks

This chapter has reported the results of first primary research stage using a postal survey of managers of sports and recreation facilities, the purpose of which was:

- to identify quality management methods in use;
- to identify customer satisfaction monitoring methods in use;
- to gather outline organisational data relating to the size of the business and the customer base;
- to ascertain how satisfactory respondents believed their quality management arrangements to be;
- to investigate relationships between quality management arrangements and respondents' level of satisfaction with these arrangements.

The survey produced 388 responses to a mail survey, a return rate of 23%, of which about 70% were from services connected with local authority provision.

Against the first objective for this stage of the research, to identify quality management methods utilised, it has been shown that there is much variation in the responses to questions about quality management methods. 19% of respondents used no quality management technique; 50% of respondents used one method and the remainder used more than one. The most used technique was the customer care programme, and a considerable number of respondents (11%) indicated TQM. Of the externally certificated methods available ISO 9000 and liP were the most significant, being utilised by 11% and 22% of respondents respectively. The use of multiple quality management methods by many respondents, implies that further study would be complex. Within the local authority connected cohort, there was also considerable variation in involvement in quality management practices since nearly a third of respondents used more than one quality management method whereas nearly 20% used none. Two external standards were used by many respondents: liP was used by 23% and ISO 9000 by 13% of respondents.

In view of what is known about the impact of the quality movement in the UK public sector (see 5.4), the identification of many respondents with TQM is not surprising. Nor is the popularity of BS 5750/ ISO 9000 in the post-CCT environment, since many local authority "clients" specified in their contract documentation that the contractor should attain this standard. However, the finding that so many respondents used liP can be described as new knowledge, and coincides with research results reported by Robinson (1998). Considering these results in the light of the EFQM model discussed in Chapter Three (3.3.1) it would appear that those respondents registered to ISO 9000, have approached quality

management by putting "Processes" at the forefront, whilst those registered to liP have done so by putting an emphasis on "People management".

The services management literature reviewed in Chapter Four, suggests that service quality perceived by the customer is of central importance in service quality management. Thus monitoring the perceptions of customers is a key component in managing service quality, and much of the services management literature is concerned with measurement of these perceptions. The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) quality model, and the "user-based" quality perspectives from the quality "movement" also suggest that monitoring customer perceptions is an important part of quality management. The second objective of this first stage of primary study was to identify customer satisfaction monitoring methods in use. Nearly all respondents had utilised at least one method of obtaining feedback from customers, but the most common form was receiving complaints and comments from customers which may be a passive or reactive means of picking up dissatisfaction. There was also a considerable reliance on inspection, presumably reflecting monitoring by the local authority client. Nevertheless the majority of respondents had sought feedback on customer perceptions; for example 52% had administered a customer questionnaire in the previous twelve months. Of the local authority connected subset, 82% had made use of more than one customer monitoring method. Here too there was a heavy utilisation of complaints and comments monitoring, and one cannot be sure how actively this feedback was sought. There was also a reliance on "proxy customers" through inspection. However, a majority of respondents had taken proactive measures to secure customer feedback, more than half having used questionnaires.

In relation to the third objective of investigating a range of organisational characteristics, the survey showed the impact of CCT upon the pattern of local authority leisure service provision in that the management of the majority of facilities responding had been subject to competitive tender. Most of these facilities were managed by local authority Direct Service Organisations (DSOs) which is to be expected given the success of DSOs in winning the contracts in the first rounds of competition. However, commercial organisations were also a significant component within the local authority connected responses.

The mainstream quality "movement" literature, reviewed in Chapter Three, has chiefly been concerned with large enterprises. In contrast, it was noticeable that the size of the facilities managed by respondents was small to medium, as measured by turnover, number of staff, and number of management or supervisory positions. On the other hand, the services themselves appeared relatively complex comprising a mixture of "hard" and "soft" service, typically offered over a long period each week.

Below are considered findings against the fourth and fifth objectives, which related to ascertaining respondents' levels of satisfaction with their quality management arrangements. Most respondents (79%) were satisfied or very satisfied with their quality management arrangements. For the local authority connected cohort, respondents' level of satisfaction with their quality management arrangements rose with the number of quality management methods they use. Whereas respondents using ISO 9000 appeared satisfied with their quality management arrangements, there was evidence of dissatisfaction from a proportion of those using liP. There was no relationship between respondents' satisfaction levels and the type of monitoring methods employed.

Chapter Nine

Results of the second stage of primary research

Summary

This chapter reports the results of the second stage of primary research. First, a brief overview of the characteristics of these case study sites and their management is given. Then the results of investigations into the reliability and validity of the customer questionnaire instrument used to obtain "external" measures of service quality are reported. Also reported are the results of survey measurements using this instrument, and of the interviews with management teams which formed the "internal" service quality measures.

- Factor analysis of the responses to the customer survey instrument showed that there was a good level of internal consistency reliability. The resultant factors were capable of an interpretation which indicated good levels of construct validity; although the factors were not identical with those of previous studies, they showed that instrument was appropriate for investigating the guiding hypotheses. However, the scale items on the instrument did not perform well in predicting overall customer satisfaction.
- Results of Kruskal-Wallis tests on customer survey responses do not support guiding hypotheses A1 and A2, suggesting that if the ISO 9002 registered cases do have better management of tangibles and processes than the liP registered ones, this is not apparent to customers.
- Results of Kruskal-Wallis tests on customer survey responses do support guiding hypothesis B1, suggesting that customers thought that the liP cases had better staff.
- The interviews with managers tended to support guiding hypothesis A3, suggesting that managers of the ISO 9002 cases thought that their management of resources and processes was stronger than did the managers of the liP cases. However the gap between the two sets of cases was not large.
- The interviews with managers partially supported guiding hypothesis B2, and there was clear evidence that aspects of people management were stronger in the liP registered cases than in the ISO 9002 ones.
- Managers of the ISO 9002 registered cases were strongly of the view that registration assisted them to provide a more consistent, safer service. Responses from managers of the liP registered cases were more mixed, but most felt that it had improved staff training and development.
- There was evidence from the liP registered cases that the Standard had positively affected staff recruitment and retention.

Some quality issues faced by managers were similar irrespective of the quality management standard in use.

- Neither standard seemed to have a systematic impact on ensuring that work was driven by customer needs, wants and expectations. In part this was because of the role played by the CCT specification, and in part because neither standard sets levels of performance for ensuring that customer needs, wants, expectations and perceptions of service are regularly ascertained.
- All cases had problems with their performance review systems, partly because of the impact of casualisation and part-time working.
- No cases scored well on the "people satisfaction" element, and few measures of this element were in place.
- "Impact on society" was difficult for managers to define and appeared not to be part of a quality discourse within these services.

9.0 Preamble

The previous chapter reported the results of the preliminary postal survey, which established that ISO 9000 and liP were frequently used external standards in the management of local

authority sports and recreation services. This chapter reports the results of the investigation of the use of these standards using the case study method described in Chapter Seven (7.5).

The order in which these findings are reported are as follows. First, a very brief outline of each of the cases studied is presented, further information being provided in Appendix Seven. Second, the results of tests to establish the validity and reliability of the customer survey instrument (7.5.7.0 - 7.5.7.3) are reported and discussed. Third, comparison of the customer survey results between cases is reported and discussed (7.5.7.4). Fourth, the interviews with case study site managers and management team members are reported and discussed. Last, concluding remarks reflect back on these results and attempt to highlight the key findings.

9.1 Overview of the cases

In Chapter Seven it was suggested that the case study method enabled a depth of understanding to be obtained about each case; however the implication is that only a small number of cases can be investigated. It is in principle therefore difficult to demonstrate that cases are "typical". Given that the nature of each case study site is determined by peculiarities of location, facility design and age, local authority objectives and catchment area as well as by management peculiarities, it is not possible to exclude variations extraneous to the study. However Appendix Seven attempts to summarise the peculiarities

Table 9.1 Outline of characteristics of cases
<p><i>No quality management method</i> St. George's Pools, Shadwell Wet centre with additional dry facilities, constructed 1969 Managed by: City Centre Leisure (commercial sector)</p>
<p><i>Preparing for ISO 9002 registration</i> Arches Leisure Centre, Greenwich Wet and dry centre, constructed 1926, major rehabilitation 1988 Managed by: Greenwich Leisure Ltd (industrial and provident society)</p>
<p><i>ISO 9002 registered</i> Highbury Pool, Highbury Wet centre with additional gym, constructed 1984 Managed by: Sobell Variety Islington Trust (Aqua Terra) externalised from LB Islington, Direct Service Organisation (DSO) Kensington Sports Centre, North Kensington Wet and dry centre, pool constructed 1970, dry side facilities added 1985. Managed by: City Centre Leisure (commercial sector) Seven Islands Leisure Centre, Rotherhithe Wet centre with additional dry facilities, constructed 1980 Managed by: L.B. Southwark DSO</p>
<p><i>IIIP registered</i> Hartham Pool, Hertford Wet centre, originally constructed 1958, converted to indoor centre 1990 Managed by: East Herts DSO Newham Leisure Centre, Newham Wet and dry centre, constructed 1990 Managed by: Newham Leisure DSO Waterfront Leisure Centre, Woolwich Wet and dry centre, constructed 1990 Managed by: Greenwich Leisure Ltd (industrial and provident society)</p>

of each case. An overview of some of the essential characteristics is also provided by Figure 9.1 above.

These cases have certain similarities. They are all "recreation" focused in the sense that their purpose is to facilitate participation rather than the promotion of high levels of performance. They all have work with schools as an important component of their programmes. All of the centres bar one (Hartham) are located in inner London; their catchment areas are either poor in socio-economic terms or mixed. All are local authority owned facilities, which were run directly by local authority departments prior to the introduction of CCT legislation.

At the time of the study, various forms of management were in place under contract, public sector Direct Service Organisation (DSO), commercial, and not-for-profit (Trust and Industrial/ provident society). However, the non-DSO organisations have all evolved from local authority departments in the recent past. City Centre Leisure, which managed St. George's Pools and Kensington Sports Centre, originated from the decision of Westminster City Council to introduce tendering for its leisure service ahead of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering legislation, the Chief Executive of the company having formerly been the Assistant Director of Leisure at Westminster. Greenwich Leisure (managing Arches and Waterfront Leisure Centres) now an industrial and provident society, was formerly the DSO of the London Borough of Greenwich. Aqua Terra Trust (managing Highbury Pool) has recently been created from the DSO of the London Borough of Islington. The managers of these case study sites, although operating in a new organisational environment, had all developed as managers within local authority leisure departments.

Table 9.2 Outline of results by case

Case name	No. of interviews	No. of customer surveys
<i>No quality management method</i>		
St. George's Pools	3	95
<i>Preparing for ISO 9000 registration</i>		
Arches Leisure Centre	3	
<i>ISO 9000 registered</i>		
Highbury Pool	3	83
Kensington Sports Centre	3	204
Seven Islands Leisure Centre	3	73
Sub-total ISO 9000 registered	9	360
<i>liP registered</i>		
Hartham Pool	3	151
Newham Leisure Centre	3	122
Waterfront Leisure Centre	3	92
Sub-total liP registered	9	365
Total	24	820

As outlined in Chapter Seven, external and internal methods were used to study each case. An outline of the numbers of interviews and customer respondents are provided in Table 9.2. The two elements of investigation were:

- Separate individual interviews with the centre manager and two members of the management team.
- A customer survey

9.2 The validity and reliability of the customer survey instrument

9.2.1 Internal consistency reliability

This section reports the results of procedures set out in section 7.5.7.2. The customer survey instrument (see Appendix Five) consists of two major sections. The first section (question 1 to 23) asked respondents about the importance of certain attributes of leisure centres; the second section (questions 25 to 47) asked them about how well the leisure centre they visited performed against the same attributes. Both sections were scored on seven point Likert scales. The results of factor analysis on customer responses to questions 1 to 23 (importance) are shown in Tables 9.3 and 9.4. below.

Tables 9.5 and 9.6 report the results of factor analysis on responses to questions 25 to 47 (customer perceptions). In Tables 9.3 and 9.5, variables with a high factor loadings of over 0.6 (see 7.5.7.2) are highlighted in underlined type. The information reported in these tables shows a highly satisfactory situation for internal consistency reliability. First all of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and the Bartlett test, produced highly significant results, showing that the data was highly suitable for factor analysis. Second, factor analysis produced distinct factors, four for importance and three for perception (Tables 9.3 and 9.5). Communalities and eigenvalues are presented in Table 9.4. and 9.6.

Tables 9.4 and 9.6 provide good evidence for the strength of a structure underlying the individual variables. All but four of the importance variables, and three of the perceptions ones, have communalities of 50% or more, implying that the factor structure explains the majority of the variance in the remaining variables. Further, evidence from the eigenvalues shows that a considerable proportion of overall variance is explained by the factors, namely 57% for importance and 61% for perception. However, it should be noted from the eigenvalues that the factors have widely differing powers in accounting for variance within the scale items. For the importance responses, the eigenvalue of Factor 1 is twice that of the other three factors together, accounting for 37% of the total variance explained (57%). For the perception responses, the eigenvalue of Factor 1 is relatively even greater, being about three times that of the other two factors together, and accounting for 47% of the 61% of total variance explained by the model.

**Table 9.3 Factor analysis of customer importance responses
(varimax rotated factor matrix)**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .91587
 Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 9758.6463, Significance = .00000
 VARIMAX converged in 8 iterations.

	Factor_1	Factor_2	Factor_3	Factor_4
1. It is important to me that a leisure centre has secure car/bike parking areas	0.15979	0.53714	0.11771	-0.00854
2 It is important to me that a leisure centre is easily accessible from public transport	0.20611	<u>0.60261</u>	0.00055	0.05393
3 It is important to me that a leisure centre is always clean	<u>0.72410</u>	0.01670	0.13906	0.13403
4 It is important to me that a leisure centre is always well maintained	<u>0.80913</u>	0.00621	0.07775	0.16611
5 It is important to me that a leisure centre has equipment of high quality	<u>0.68298</u>	0.24131	0.09791	0.15321
6 It is important to me that a leisure centre maintains its equipment well	<u>0.78373</u>	0.14762	0.04400	0.17764
7 It is important to me that a leisure centre is physically comfortable	0.52131	0.31203	0.44822	0.03223
8 It is important to me that a leisure centre is pleasant to be in	0.54293	0.23672	0.51888	0.03308
9 It is important to me that the staff at a leisure centre are friendly	0.47682	0.21040	<u>0.60710</u>	0.04061
10. It is important to me that the staff at a leisure centre respond to customers needs	0.54632	0.10541	0.42991	0.16395
11. It is important to me that the staff at a leisure centre are presentable	0.04247	0.24570	<u>0.71660</u>	0.24818
12 It is important to me that staff at a leisure centre are easily identified	0.14160	0.19816	<u>0.62744</u>	0.32590
13 It is important to me that a leisure centre employs experienced staff	0.23939	-0.05729	0.49930	0.54927
14 It is important to me that a leisure centre employs knowledgeable staff	0.30434	-0.01789	0.44927	0.55004
15 It is important to me that officials (umpires, judges etc) at a leisure centre are qualified, experienced and consistent	0.16513	0.39672	0.14067	0.50627
16 It is important to me that a leisure centre is well organised	0.54138	0.08799	0.26079	0.53068
17. It is important to me that a leisure centre is well run	<u>0.60226</u>	0.03053	0.24935	0.45893
18 It is important to me that activities at a leisure centre always start and finish on time	0.11695	0.25460	0.12344	<u>0.62515</u>
19 It is important to me that a leisure centre has up-to-date information available on activities, events and results	0.23635	0.43022	0.06182	<u>0.61570</u>
20. It is important to me that a broad range of activities is offered by a leisure centre	0.21703	<u>0.61588</u>	0.17216	0.39570
21. It is important to me that good food and drink are available at a leisure centre	-0.01052	<u>0.72622</u>	0.25995	0.16560
22. It is important to me that a creche or similar child-minding service is provided by a leisure centre	-0.07066	<u>0.71716</u>	0.12272	0.20939
23. It is important to me that a leisure centre gives its customers good value for money	0.41873	0.20295	0.26961	0.24977

Table 9.4: Variable communalities and factor eigenvalues for customer importance responses

	<u>Communality</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Eigenvalue</u>	<u>% of var.</u>
1. It is important to me that a leisure centre has secure car/bike parking areas	0.32798	1	8.54055	37.1
2. It is important to me that a leisure centre is easily accessible from public transport	0.40853	2	2.17887	9.5
3. It is important to me that a leisure centre is always clean	0.56191	3	1.26571	5.5
4. It is important to me that a leisure centre is always well maintained	0.68837	4	<u>1.01065</u>	<u>4.4</u>
			Tot. Var.	56.5
5. It is important to me that a leisure centre has equipment of high quality	0.55776			
6. It is important to me that a leisure centre maintains its equipment well	0.66952			
7. It is important to me that a leisure centre is physically comfortable	0.57107			
8. It is important to me that a leisure centre is pleasant to be in	0.62113			
9. It is important to me that the staff at a leisure centre are friendly	0.64184			
10. It is important to me that the staff at a leisure centre respond to customers needs	0.52128			
11. It is important to me that the staff at a leisure centre are presentable	0.63728			
12. It is important to me that staff at a leisure centre are easily identified	0.55921			
13. It is important to me that a leisure centre employs experienced staff	0.61158			
14. It is important to me that a leisure centre employs knowledgeable staff	0.59733			
15. It is important to me that officials (umpires, judges etc) at a leisure centre are qualified, experienced and consistent	0.46075			
16. It is important to me that a leisure centre is well organised	0.65047			
17. It is important to me that a leisure centre is well run	0.63645			
18. It is important to me that activities at a leisure centre always start and finish on time	0.48455			
19. It is important to me that a leisure centre has up-to-date information available on activities, events and results	0.62385			
20. It is important to me that a broad range of activities is offered by a leisure centre	0.61263			
21. It is important to me that good food and drink are available at a leisure centre	0.62250			
22. It is important to me that a creche or similar child-minding service is provided by a leisure centre	0.57821			
23. It is important to me that a leisure centre gives its customers good value for money	0.35159			

**Table 9.5: Factor analysis of customer perceptions responses
(varimax rotated factor matrix)**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .93331
 Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 6627.5340 Significance = .00000
 VARIMAX converged in 6 iterations.

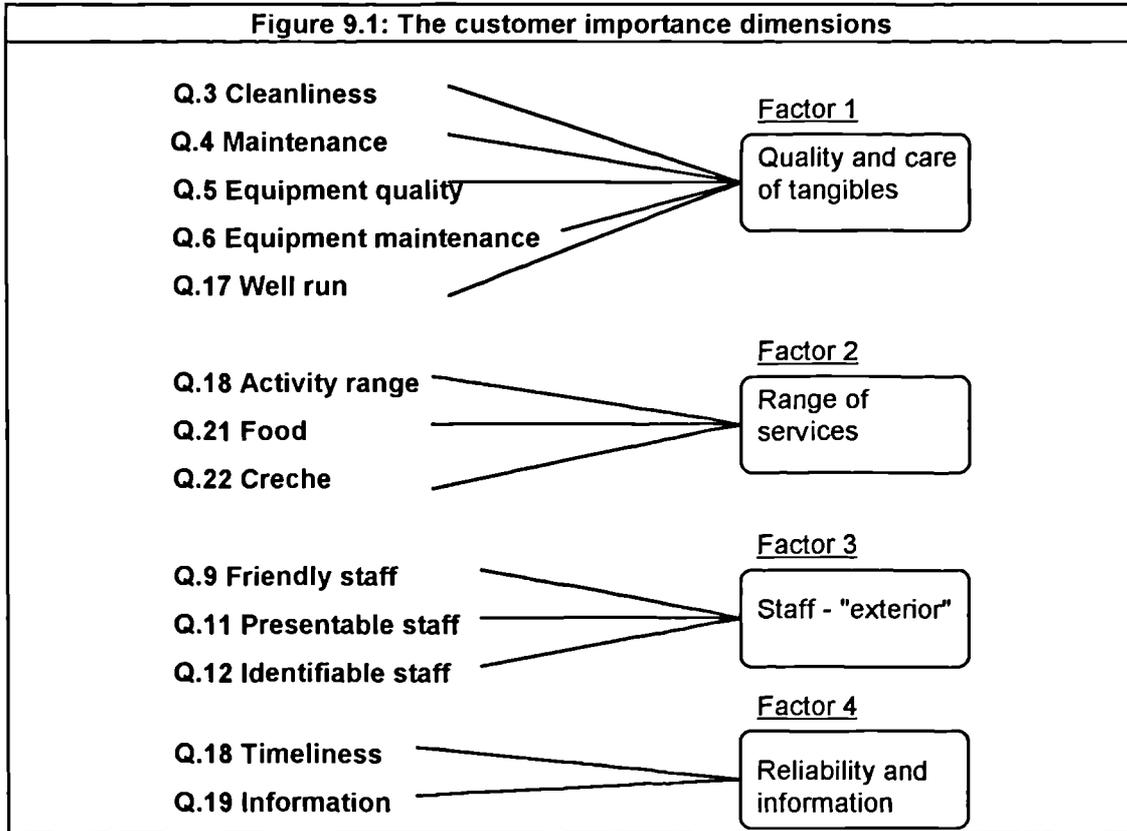
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
25. Centre x has secure car/bike parking areas	0.39644	0.00870	0.45976
26. Centre x is easily accessible from public transport	0.24882	0.24007	0.42287
27. Centre x is always clean	<u>0.76808</u>	0.23671	0.15954
28. Centre x is always well maintained	<u>0.82887</u>	0.20162	0.14553
29. The equipment at Centre x is of high quality	<u>0.80580</u>	0.20769	0.22694
30. The equipment at Centre x is well maintained	<u>0.81878</u>	0.24296	0.14406
31. Centre x is physically comfortable	<u>0.73400</u>	0.26173	0.26670
32. Centre x is pleasant to be in	<u>0.61164</u>	0.43787	0.28856
33. The staff at Centre x are friendly	0.22569	<u>0.77087</u>	0.04898
34. Centre x staff respond to customers needs	0.34793	<u>0.73409</u>	0.15913
35. The staff at Centre x are presentable	0.19876	<u>0.75364</u>	0.19469
36. Centre x staff are easily identified	0.01952	<u>0.74062</u>	0.21768
37. Centre x employs experienced staff	0.33267	<u>0.70643</u>	0.25026
38. Centre x employs knowledgeable staff	0.31125	<u>0.72140</u>	0.31457
39. Officials (umpires, judges etc.) at Centre x are qualified, experienced and consistent	0.25174	0.45080	0.55413
40. Centre x is well organised	0.54921	0.26816	0.50855
41. Centre x is well run	0.56795	0.36457	0.46815
42. Activities at Centre x always start and finish on time	0.52224	0.16051	0.50504
43. Centre x has up-to-date information available on activities, events and results	0.38419	0.24231	<u>0.64699</u>
44. A broad range of activities is offered by Centre x	0.17113	0.27352	<u>0.72144</u>
45. Good food and drink are available at Centre x	0.34917	0.14166	<u>0.60628</u>
46. A creche or similar child-minding service is provided by Centre x	-0.06849	0.08827	<u>0.68399</u>
47. Centre x gives its customers good value for money	0.44880	0.30640	0.46423

Table 9.6: Variable communalities and factor eigenvalues for customer perception responses

	<u>Communality</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Eigenvalue</u>	<u>% of var.</u>
25. Centre x has secure car/bike parking areas	0.36862	1	10.7515	46.7
26. Centre x is easily accessible from public transport	0.29836	2	1.83479	8
27. Centre x is always clean	0.67143	3	<u>1.46992</u>	<u>6.4</u>
28. Centre x is always well maintained	0.74886		Tot. Var.	61.1
29 The equipment at Centre x is of high quality	0.74394			
30. The equipment at Centre x is well maintained	0.75018			
31 Centre x is physically comfortable	0.67838			
32. Centre x is pleasant to be in	0.64911			
33. The staff at Centre x are friendly	0.64758			
34. Centre x staff respond to customers needs	0.68527			
35 The staff at Centre x are presentable	0.64538			
36 Centre x staff are easily identified	0.59629			
37 Centre x employs experienced staff	0.67235			
38 Centre x employs knowledgeable staff	0.71625			
39 Officials (umpires, judges etc.) at Centre x are qualified, experienced and consistent	0.57366			
40 Centre x is well organised	0.63217			
41 Centre x is well run	0.67465			
42 Activities at Centre x always start and finish on time	0.55357			
43. Centre x has up-to-date information available on activities, events and results	0.62491			
44. A broad range of activities is offered by Centre x	0.62457			
45. Good food and drink are available at Centre x	0.50956			
46. A creche or similar child-minding service is provided by Centre x	0.48033			

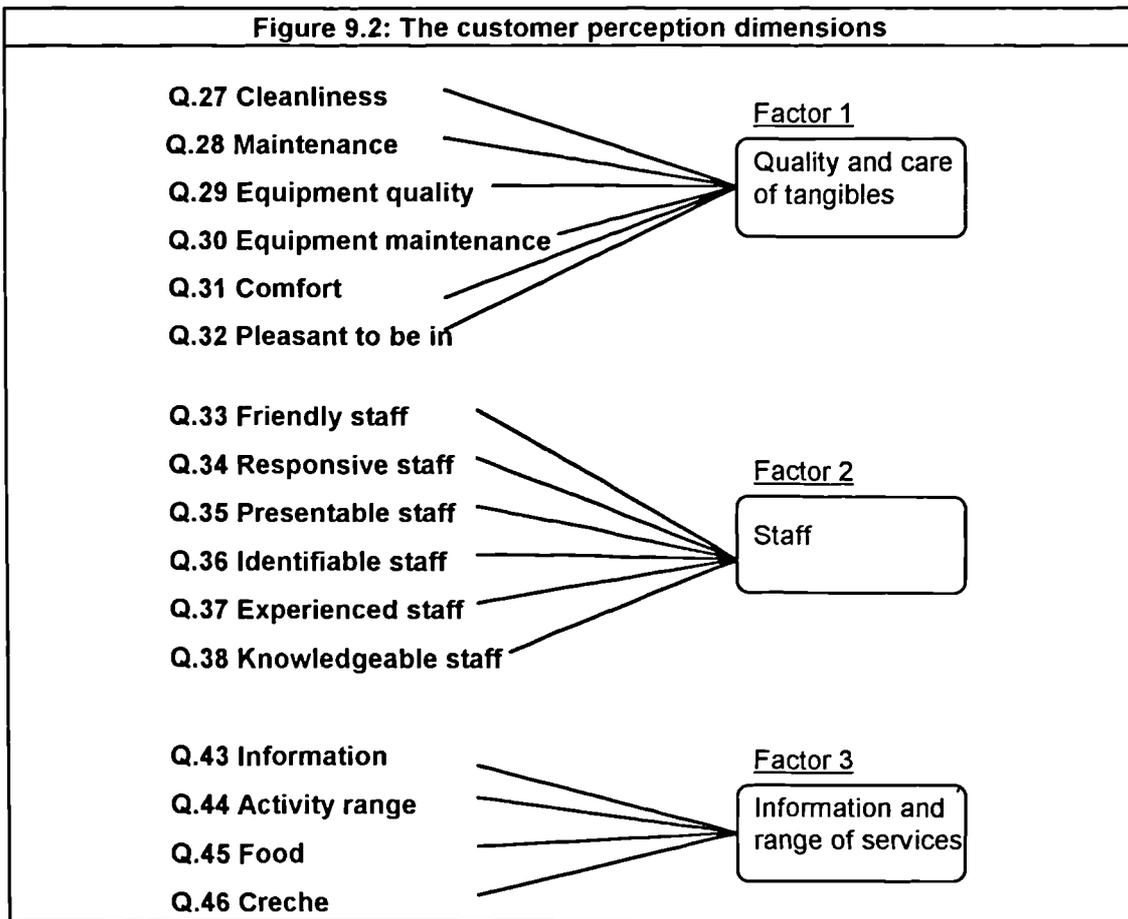
9.2.2 Interpretation of the customer importance and perception factors

An interpretation of these results is given in Figure 9.1. The results presented in tables 9.3 to 9.6 readily lend themselves to interpretation. In Figures 9.1 and 9.2 below the factors emerging from the customer responses for importance and perception are identified and named. The character of the factors has been determined by those variables which have high factor loadings of over 0.6 in the varimax rotation, shown underlined in the preceding tables.



Thus the strongest component of the importance judgements made by customers in terms of the variable communalities and the eigenvalue of Factor one, appeared to be those associated with quality and care of tangibles of the centre itself. Finding correspondences for it with the general services literature is difficult because this instrument was based on research specific to public sector leisure centres (Howat et al 1996). The general services literature is also mostly concerned with perceptions and expectations. However, there are similarities with Parasuraman et al's (1988) "tangibles" though some tangibles-related processes (e.g. maintenance) were also included. Another process variable (question 17 - well run) also featured, perhaps as it is was seen by respondents as being largely about tangibles. This first importance factor was thus called "Quality and care of tangibles". Factor two, here named as "Range of services" corresponds with Howat et al's (1996) secondary services, but with the inclusion of activity range (question 20). The third importance factor was clearly associated with staff, but of the six "mainstream" staff-related questions (i.e. not including "officials"), it included only some of those which are "visible" to customers (friendliness, presentability and identifiable) and is identified as "Staff - exterior". The final factor was weaker than the other three including timeliness (question 18) and information (question 19). This was therefore named as "Reliability and information".

Having examined the importance dimensions we now move on to consider the customer perception ones. These are shown graphically in Figure 9.2.



Factor analysis of the customer perception responses produced a three factor structure. Again, the strongest factor was associated with tangibles and the processes required to support them. It was similar to the importance factor one, but with "well run" substituted for by "comfort" and "pleasant to be in", and was thus given the same name of "Quality and care of tangibles". This factor appears to closely resemble the "General facility" dimension found by Howat et al (1996).

A similar correspondence with Howat et al (1996) was found in the second factor, which grouped the six questions which asked about "mainstream" staff. Thus "Staff" was the name given to factor two. The third factor is similar to the second importance factor, but including question 43 about information. It was named "Information and range of services".

Having reviewed the customer perception factors, what follows is an examination of the factor structure which emerges when customer perceptions were weighted by the importance attached to each scale item. The results of this factor analysis are given in Tables 9.7 and

9.8, again with high factor loadings of over 0.6 being highlighted in underlined type on Table 9.7.

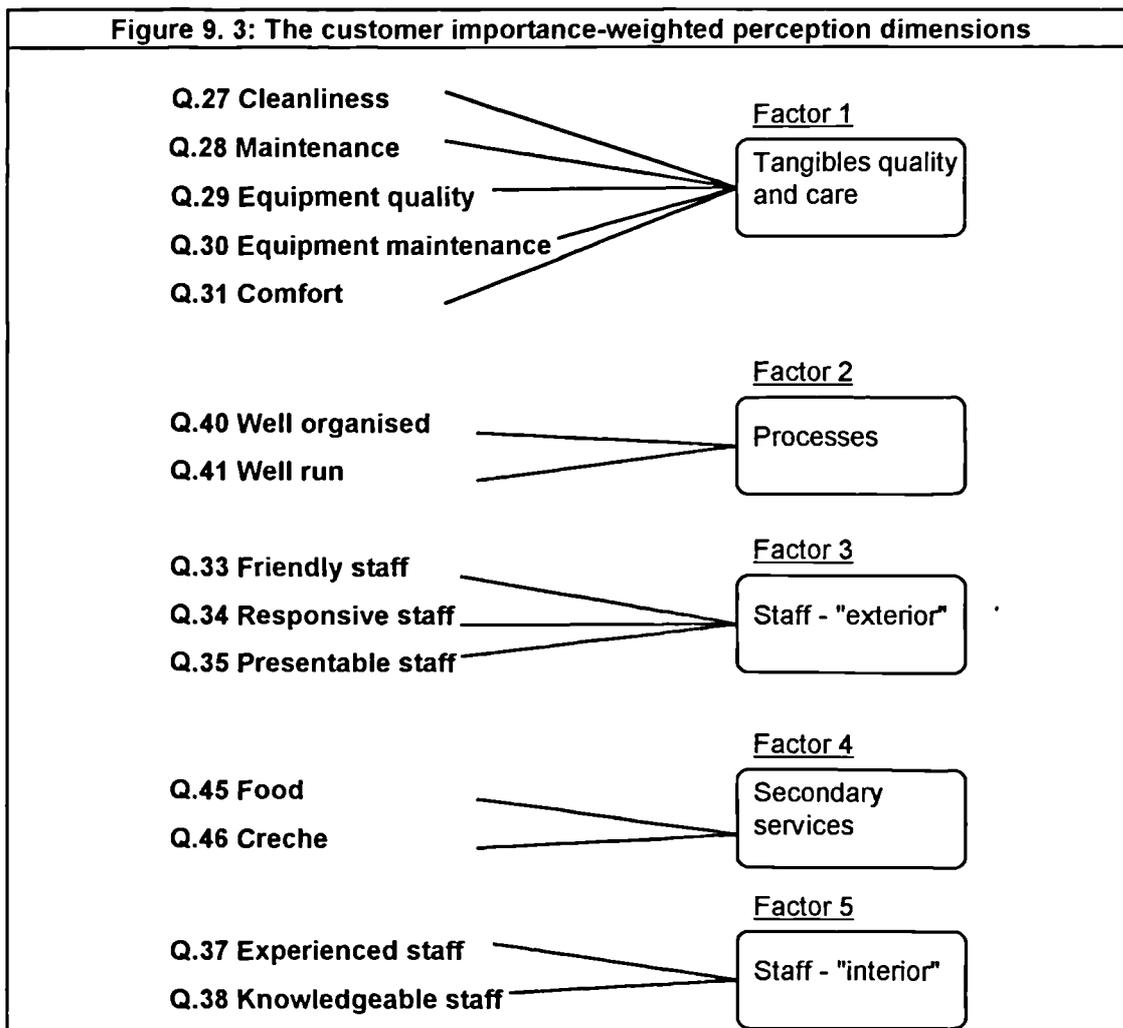
Of these importance-weighted results (Table 9.8), five of the variables had communalities of less than 50%; of the total variance, 59% is accounted for by the factors. Once again, the eigenvalue of Factor 1 was much higher, at about 7.4, than that of the other four factors. At 32.2%, Factor 1 accounted for over half of all the variance explained, the other factors each accounted for between 9% and 4.4% of total variance.

Table 9.7 Factor analysis of importance-weighted customer perceptions responses (varimax rotated factor matrix)					
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .86547					
Bartlett Test of Sphericity = 3983.7541, Significance = .00000					
VARIMAX converged in 15 iterations.					
	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>	<u>Factor 4</u>	<u>Factor 5</u>
25. Centre x has secure car/bike parking areas	.31772	.06786	-.07400	.41437	.04820
26 Centre x is easily accessible from public transport	.31968	-.16617	-.00912	.46001	.06977
27 Centre x is always clean	<u>.75731</u>	.19279	.16247	.01356	.01969
28 Centre x is always well maintained	<u>.84674</u>	.20775	.07612	-.02065	.10232
29 The equipment at Centre x is of high quality	<u>.72406</u>	.13728	.19255	.25828	.09981
30 The equipment at Centre x is well maintained	<u>.77376</u>	.14863	.14711	.07910	.20926
31 Centre x is physically comfortable	<u>.61950</u>	.31415	.22274	.17601	.12081
32 Centre x is pleasant to be in	.48842	.37816	.43568	.14461	.01886
33 The staff at Centre x are friendly	.19698	.26444	<u>.76097</u>	-.12007	.06902
34 Centre x staff respond to customers needs	.25859	.17714	<u>.70646</u>	.01294	.16499
35 The staff at Centre x are presentable	.10227	.04003	<u>.68624</u>	.20459	.18946
36 Centre x staff are easily identified	.03963	-.09331	.54189	.18487	.35380
37 Centre x employs experienced staff	.24433	.18562	.29210	-.02670	<u>.75497</u>
38. Centre x employs knowledgeable staff	.16720	.24328	.33189	-.01554	<u>.72501</u>
39 Officials (umpires, judges etc.) at Centre x are qualified, experienced and consistent	.04167	.11008	.18366	.47192	.42832
40 Centre x is well organised	.28581	<u>.74688</u>	.17591	.00926	.15704
41. Centre x is well run	.34478	<u>.71543</u>	.26854	-.05958	.16588
42. Activities at Centre x always start and finish on time	.14368	.57232	-.05585	.28509	.23476
43 Centre x has up-to-date information available on activities, events and results	.07515	.49439	-.11790	.42300	.38790
44. A broad range of activities is offered by Centre x	.03294	.44131	.05671	.53629	.30129
45 Good food and drink are available at Centre x	.15466	.12528	.21595	<u>.68292</u>	-.08564
46. A creche or similar child-minding service is provided by Centre x	-.10702	.06519	.05281	<u>.72033</u>	-.05382
47. Centre x gives its customers good value for money	.31133	.55800	.31832	.07608	-.12270

	<u>Communality</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Eigenvalue</u>	<u>Pct of Var</u>	<u>Cum Pct</u>
25. Centre x has secure car/bike parking areas	0.28505	1	7.39708	32.2	32.2
26. Centre x is easily accessible from public transport	0.34637	2	2.06059	9.0	41.1
27. Centre x is always clean	0.63766	3	1.75964	7.7	48.8
28. Centre x is always well maintained	0.77682	4	1.34222	5.8	54.6
29. The equipment at Centre x is of high quality	0.65685	5	1.00712	4.4	59.0
30. The equipment at Centre x is well maintained	0.69249				
31. Centre x is physically comfortable	0.57766				
32. Centre x is pleasant to be in	0.59264				
33. The staff at Centre x are friendly	0.70698				
34. Centre x staff respond to customers needs	0.62473				
35. The staff at Centre x are presentable	0.56074				
36. Centre x staff are easily identified	0.46327				
37. Centre x employs experienced staff	0.75017				
38. Centre x employs knowledgeable staff	0.72317				
39. Officials (umpires, judges etc) at Centre x are qualified, experienced and consistent	0.45375				
40. Centre x is well organised	0.69520				
41. Centre x is well run	0.73389				
42. Activities at Centre x always start and finish on time	0.48770				
43. Centre x has up-to-date information available on activities, events and results	0.59336				
44. A broad range of activities is offered by Centre x	0.57745				
45. Good food and drink are available at Centre x	0.55996				
46. A creche or similar child-minding service is provided by Centre x	0.54027				
47. Centre x gives its customers good value for money	0.53046				

Figure 9.3 below gives a graphical representation of this structure, based upon those variables with high factor loadings. The first factor was once again, tangibles-related having a structure similar to the first unweighted perception factor, but no longer including the "pleasant to be in" variable (question 32). However, an unexpected finding was that answers to questions 40 and 41 (well organised and well run) emerge as a separate, second, factor, named here as "Processes". The single staff dimension which was apparent in the unweighted perception scores redistributes to two factors, named here as "Staff - exterior", for the same reasons as the similarly named importance factor, and "Staff - interior" (because these attributes relate to the innate experience and knowledge of staff). This latter category seems to bear a resemblance to SERVQUAL's (Parasuraman et al 1988) "Assurance" dimension, whilst the former is more akin to "Empathy" plus some staff-related

tangibles (presentable staff). Responses to question 36 (identifiable staff) redistributed more evenly than the other staff variables between the two dimensions which meant that it did not achieve a value high enough to be included in either, although the value for "Staff-exterior" is the higher of the two. The fourth factor included food and drink (question 45) and creche (question 46), and has been classified here as "Secondary services", appearing to be similar to the dimension identified by Howat et al (1996).



Once again, it was evident from the variable communalities and from the eigenvalue of the "Quality and care of tangibles" dimension that it was a much stronger factor than the others.

Reflecting back on these factor structures a number of points seem to be salient. First, when customers were asked about what is important to them about leisure centres *in the abstract*, they produced a factor structure which related several variables which were also related together in their assessment of their particular venue. Thus key aspects of general facility cleanliness, maintenance and equipment quality and maintenance are associated together

by customers and are of the greatest importance to them, strongly influencing their perceptions of particular venues.

Second, customer responses to the questions about mainstream staff clearly associated together, but respondents placed more importance on visible and behavioural cues they got from staff than upon "assurance" qualities such as knowledge and experience. This redistributed the staff attributes to two dimensions when the importance-weighted responses were factorised.

Third, importance-weighting the customer responses showed a dimension which corresponds to aspects of processes (question 40 "well organised" and question 41 "well run").

Fourth, it was noticeable that some questions did not appear in any dimension. The locational tangibles of parking and public transport did not seem to play a major role either in the importance or perception factors. Unlike the antipodean work of Howat et al (1996) car parking did not factor in with other "general facility" tangibles. The addition of a question on public transport, which was validated in the piloting of the instrument, was not supported by the final results. Neither did question 39 (officials) associate with other staffing variables, perhaps because it proved to be less relevant in the cases examined, than in the Australia/ New Zealand context. The cases were very much based around recreational sport where no officials would be required. In UK competitions officials are usually supplied by the teams or the governing body of the sport, not by the centre, and this difference might also explain the difference in results between Howat et al's (1996) findings and these ones.

Fifth, the dimensional distinction made by Howat et al (ibid.) between "General facility" and "Core services" could not be reproduced in this research. The relevant variables did not separate out from tangibles or from secondary services. Tangibles and processes associated with the care of tangibles, did not separate out into two dimensions. However, the notion of "secondary services" does seem to be supported, although only when importance-weighted perceptions were considered did they appear without being accompanied by the variable associated with activity range. It may be that customers wanted to be able to investigate or access a wide range of activities and services at their leisure centre, either in terms of activities, refreshment and relaxation (food and drink) or in terms of child-care. It might also be the case that in Australia and New Zealand, where the CERM CSQ was developed, that there were more customers interested in competitive sport, as opposed to recreational sport who are more likely to be interested in general facilities.

9.2.3 Construct validity

Having made an interpretation of the factor and dimensional structure of the responses to the survey instrument, it is now possible to consider the issue of construct validity. The hypotheses to be investigated by this research require an assessment to be made about customer perceptions of:

- tangibles;
- processes and
- staff.

The factor structures produced appear to show that the questions asked in the survey instrument are different aspects of underlying factors which appear to be those associated with tangibles and their care, and with "mainstream" staffing. In different configurations, these dimensions appeared in the importance, perception and importance-weighted perception factor structures. However, it is only in the importance-weighted perception scores that processes other than those directly associated with tangibles care appeared as a separate dimension. Whilst it is clear that the scale would have been improved through further purification and development, it is also apparent that it does indeed provide a measure of the elements it was intended to survey.

The results indicate some aspects of convergence and some of divergence, with the results of previous research using other instruments. Most customer service survey instruments have identified aspects of tangibles as a feature (e.g. "Tangibles" in SERVQUAL and "General facility" and "Core services" in the CERM CSQ). Similarly aspects of staff appearance and behaviour also feature (e.g. "Assurance" and "Empathy" in SERVQUAL and "Staff" in the CERM CSQ). The "Secondary services" dimension of Howat et al (1996) is also evident particularly in the importance-weighted factor structure.

Apart from the above examples of convergence, there are also some examples of divergence, which is to be expected given that the survey instrument differed from both SERVQUAL and the CERM CSQ (see 7.5.4 - 7.5.5).

The key divergences are, first that tangibles and the cleansing/ maintenance processes required to support them feature as a dimension. Although there are similarities with other results, the precise configuration appears unique. Second, importance-weighting allows "Processes" to emerge as a dimension. Third, the importance-weighted structure produces two staff-related dimensions in a way which seems intermediate between the CERM CSQ and SERVQUAL. More research on this subject will be required before a judgement can be reached about the merits of each approach.

9.2.4 Criterion (predictive) validity

Table 9.9 presents the results of multiple regression of the three factor scores generated by the factor analysis of the customer responses to questions 25 to 47. The dependent variable was question 50, which asked customers to record their overall level of satisfaction on a Likert scale.

Table 9.9 Multiple regression (stepwise) of three unweighted customer perception factors generated by factor analysis			
Regression step one: Factor 1			
Multiple R		.47069	
R Square		.22155	
Adjusted R Square		.21921	
Standard Error		.97678	
Regression step two: Factor 2			
Multiple R		.57774	
R Square		.33379	
Adjusted R Square		.32978	
Standard Error		.90498	
Regression step three: Factor 3			
Multiple R		.65751	
R Square		.43232	
Adjusted R Square		.42717	
Standard Error		.83665	
Analysis of Variance			
DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
Regression	3	176.44473	58.81491
Residual	331	231.69258	.69998
F =	84.02399	Signif F =	.0000

It can be noted that the three factors contributed differentially to the prediction of overall satisfaction. Factor 1 accounted for just over half of the variance explained by the three factors, the other two factors accounted for, very roughly, one-quarter each. In total, the scale items have an ability to predict 43% of the variance in overall satisfaction.

Similarly when the importance-weighted perception factor scores were regressed (Table 9.10), Factors 1 and 2 accounted for 32% of the total variance in responses question 50, which was about two-thirds of the total variance explained through the regression analysis. Overall, this importance-weighting of the perception scores produced a model only slightly better than the unweighted one at accounting for variance in the dependent variable - 47% was explained (Table 9.10). At first sight this seems a disappointing finding, given that the instrument is based on attributes which had been through a major development process in Australia and New Zealand. However, this finding can be explained in three ways.

First, there are bound to be centre-specific issues at each case study site which influence overall satisfaction but about which a generic questionnaire cannot ask. Second, no

Table 9.10 Multiple regression (stepwise) of five importance-weighted customer perception factors generated by factor analysis			
Regression step one:	Factor 2		
Multiple R	.42616		
R Square	.18161		
Adjusted R Square	.17895		
Standard Error	.99534		
Regression step two:	Factor 1		
Multiple R	.57415		
R Square	.32965		
Adjusted R Square	.32526		
Standard Error	.90230		
Regression step three:	Factor 3		
Multiple R	.63498		
R Square	.40320		
Adjusted R Square	.39733		
Standard Error	.85275		
Regression step four:	Factor 4		
Multiple R	.66407		
R Square	.44099		
Adjusted R Square	.43363		
Standard Error	.82667		
Regression step five:	Factor 5		
Multiple R	.68748		
R Square	.47263		
Adjusted R Square	.46392		
Standard Error	.80426		
Analysis of Variance			
	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square
Regression	5	175.64599	35.12920
Residual	303	195.99155	.64684
F =	54.30921	Signif F =	.0000

developmental process similar to that undertaken by Parasuraman et al (1988) in respect of SERVQUAL and Howat et al (1996) in respect of the CERM CSQ, had taken place in respect of this instrument. The time and resource constraint reasons for this have been dealt with in the chapter on method. It is likely that an iterative process using qualitative and quantitative results to purify the scale would have increased its predictive power. Third, the instrument asked about overall satisfaction, rather than overall estimation of service quality (see 7.5.5). If the latter had been asked about, the predictive power of the instrument may have been greater (see discussion of service quality and satisfaction in section 4.3.1).

9.2.5 Reflection: the consistency and predictive power of the survey instrument

The above sections on the reliability and validity of the customer survey instrument have established that it:

- was reliable in the sense of having a considerable degree of internal consistency;
- had predictive validity sufficient to account for 47% of the variance in customers' overall satisfaction assessments;
- had a factor structure which demonstrates a high degree of construct validity.

The results of use of the instrument to investigate the guiding hypotheses of the research is reported in the following sections.

These results give considerable, but not complete, support to the experimental design. The results of factor analysis show a high degree of internal consistency, with the majority of variance attributable to a small number of factors. The ability of the instrument to predict overall satisfaction is less impressive. It is clear that it was asking about some of the issues that matter in overall satisfaction judgements, but there appeared to be other influences on these judgements which were not asked about in the survey instrument.

9.3 Results of use of the customer survey instrument

9.3.0 Introduction

The research hypotheses suggest that customers will have a differential evaluation of processes, tangibles and staff according to the quality management method in use. In this section, customer responses are compared between the different cases, and between the different cases grouped by their quality management method.

9.3.1 Likert scales

9.3.1.0 Importance

Tables 9.11 and 9.12 report the results of Kruskal-Wallis tests upon the responses to the customer survey questions 1 to 23 about importance. Table 9.11 shows these results for all seven sites, including St. George's Pools. Thus it compares three sites using liP, three using ISO 9002 and one using no quality management method. Table 9.12 shows these results for six sites, excluding St George's Pools thereby comparing only the liP sites and the ISO 9002 ones.

The variables highlighted in bold font on these tables are those where there was a significant difference (i.e. P is less than 0.05) in medians between cases, and where grouping by quality management method also showed a significant difference. Thus, for these variables it was possible to assert that there was a significant difference in customer responses between the cases, and this is also true of the ISO 9002 and liP quality management group. The columns

on the right of the tables give the mean rankings between groups, those groups shown in bold font are those receiving the highest placed ranks. In Table 9.11 those figures in italics are the intermediate placed ranks.

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case			By QM method			Mean rankings		
	<i>H1</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>H2</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>IIP</i>	<i>ISO 9000</i>	<i>No QM</i>
	(corrected for ties)			(corrected for ties)					
1. Secure car/bike parking areas	33.1303	6	0.0000	15.0341	2	0.0005	449.13	388.23	391.41
2 Accessible from public transport	25.7180	6	0.0003	2.9101	2	0.2334	406.61	430.82	395.76
3. Cleanliness	27.1686	6	0.0001	1.2713	2	0.5296	411.21	421.02	433.32
4 Maintenance	43.9875	6	0.0000	2.7840	2	0.2486	405.16	425.16	432.62
5. Equipment quality	18.2644	6	0.0056	7.5176	2	0.0233	425.84	425.12	362.69
6 Equipment maintenance	26.2789	6	0.0002	1.8183	2	0.4029	414.76	424.77	395.68
7 Physical comfort	10.2550	6	0.1143	1.5767	2	0.4546	410.17	427.14	400.49
8. Pleasant to be in	13.9435	6	0.0303	8.5345	2	0.0140	399.64	439.98	384.36
9 Friendly staff	10.5739	6	0.1025	8.5682	2	0.0138	423.39	428.81	358.73
10. Staff responsiveness	21.1345	6	0.0017	11.9072	2	0.0026	404.58	442.95	370.21
11. Staff presentability	22.0993	6	0.0008	10.0145	2	0.0067	432.65	418.57	347.57
12 Identifiable staff	14.9207	6	0.0209	4.2307	2	0.1206	427.80	416.93	373.14
13. Experienced staff	14.3667	6	0.0258	6.1408	2	0.0464	428.63	409.07	365.91
14. Knowledgeable staff	16.5530	6	0.0111	10.9423	2	0.0042	438.01	411.28	354.45
15. Quality of officials	20.9365	6	0.0019	18.4515	2	0.0001	403.61	437.07	326.86
16 Well organised	27.6014	6	0.0001	3.4327	2	0.1797	426.58	411.47	381.52
17 Well run	13.1456	6	0.0408	1.1837	2	0.5533	417.04	419.56	393.49
18 Timeliness	21.1835	6	0.0017	0.5079	2	0.7757	409.43	421.29	412.94
19 Information	12.3612	6	0.0544	6.6565	2	0.0359	424.90	412.69	357.88
20. Broad activity range	69.6558	6	0.0000	25.6395	2	0.0000	428.00	429.69	299.89
21. Food and drink	103.6033	6	0.0000	17.5710	2	0.0002	426.10	425.04	317.13
22. Creche or similar	55.5797	6	0.0000	18.5942	2	0.0001	433.13	406.88	316.09
23 Value for money	14.3773	6	0.0257	1.2470	2	0.5361	418.20	417.40	392.50

Key.
H: Kruskal-Wallis statistic; *DF*: Degrees of freedom, *P*: Significance

The investigation of the variance between cases which is explained by their grouping by quality management method (see 7.5.7.4) is given in Appendix Eight (Tables A8.1, A8.2, A8.5 and A8.6).

contd./

Table 9.12: Kruskal-Wallis test rankings of customer responses to questions about importance (excluding St. George's Pools)

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case			By QM method			Mean rankings	
	<i>H1</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>H2</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>IIP</i>	<i>ISO 9000</i>
	(corrected for ties)			(corrected for ties)				
1. Secure car/bike parking areas	32.0219	5	0.0000	13.8255	1	0.0002	395.58	341.61
2. Accessible from public transport	25.2122	5	0.0001	2.1037	1	0.1469	358.85	380.44
3. Cleanliness	26.0007	5	0.0001	0.5155	1	0.4728	366.74	375.36
4. Maintenance	42.5627	5	0.0000	2.0223	1	0.1550	361.31	378.95
5. Equipment quality	10.9697	5	0.0520	0.0006	1	0.9805	372.16	371.83
6. Equipment maintenance	25.2461	5	0.0001	0.5183	1	0.4716	366.12	375.02
7. Physical comfort	9.7476	5	0.0827	1.0490	1	0.3057	362.07	377.14
8. Pleasant to be in	11.9039	5	0.0361	6.4728	1	0.0110	350.81	386.78
9. Friendly staff	2.1862	5	0.8228	0.1360	1	0.7123	369.01	374.04
10. Staff responsiveness	15.9179	5	0.0071	6.5354	1	0.0106	353.67	387.79
11. Staff presentability	13.9342	5	0.0160	0.6207	1	0.4308	376.37	364.43
12. Identifiable staff	11.1503	5	0.0485	0.4049	1	0.5246	375.67	366.19
13. Experienced staff	9.4988	5	0.0907	1.3812	1	0.2399	374.90	357.87
14. Knowledgeable staff	8.1419	5	0.1486	2.6039	1	0.1066	381.97	358.66
15. Quality of officials	6.8298	5	0.2336	4.3317	1	0.0374	348.71	378.96
16. Well organised	25.3499	5	0.0001	0.9105	1	0.3400	376.06	362.76
17. Well run	11.9805	5	0.0351	0.0278	1	0.8676	367.88	370.16
18. Timeliness	21.2542	5	0.0007	0.5085	1	0.4758	363.27	373.90
19. Information	6.0990	5	0.2967	0.5004	1	0.4793	370.60	360.23
20. Broad activity range	45.0453	5	0.0000	0.0084	1	0.9268	367.82	369.21
21. Food and drink	84.6548	5	0.0000	0.0007	1	0.9790	367.30	367.7
22. Creche or similar	38.8248	5	0.0000	2.1681	1	0.1409	374.17	351.67
23. Value for money	13.2661	5	0.0210	0.0037	1	0.9513	369.40	368.58

Key:
H Kruskal-Wallis statistic, *DF*: Degrees of freedom; *P* Significance

9.3.1.1 Perceptions

Tables 9.13 and 9.14 below show the results of the Kruskal-Wallis tests on questions about perceptions. Table 9.13 shows these results for all seven sites, including St. George's Pools. Thus it compares three sites using IIP, three using ISO 9002 and one using no quality management method. Table 9.14 shows these results for six sites, excluding St George's Pools thereby comparing only the IIP sites and the ISO 9002 ones.

The use of bold and italic font on these tables follows the same format as for Tables 9.11 and 9.12. The investigation of the variance between cases which is explained by their grouping by quality management method (see 7.5.7.4) is given in Appendix Eight (Tables A8.2, A8.3, A8.7 and A8.8).

Table 9.13 : Kruskal-Wallis test rankings of customer responses to questions about perception (including St. George's Pools)

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case			By QM method			Mean rankings		
	H1	DF	P	H2	DF	P	liP	ISO 9000	No QM
	(corrected for ties)			(corrected for ties)					
25. Secure car/bike parking areas	103.8409	6	0.0000	60.3845	2	0.0000	468.03	341.77	347.47
26. Accessible from public transport	144.5003	6	0.0000	7.2367	2	0.0268	419.69	408.21	348.08
27. Cleanliness	25.6644	6	0.0003	16.4080	2	0.0003	449.84	381.78	392.62
28. Maintenance	40.3145	6	0.0000	28.2347	2	0.0000	456.08	365.33	426.12
29. Equipment quality	52.9928	6	0.0000	37.0161	2	0.0000	461.54	358.02	398.73
30. Equipment maintenance	41.9212	6	0.0000	20.2460	2	0.0000	446.34	369.83	418.7
31. Physical comfort	26.4153	6	0.0002	1.9310	2	0.3808	423.19	400.23	421.68
32. Pleasant to be in	20.3152	6	0.0024	3.7082	2	0.1566	431.71	401.68	396.73
33. Friendly staff	40.2132	6	0.0000	7.2346	2	0.0269	435.89	401.34	376.35
34. Staff responsiveness	17.7991	6	0.0068	5.4856	2	0.0644	430.67	392.55	396.22
35. Staff presentability	22.8063	6	0.0009	7.1202	2	0.0284	434.74	403.75	371.94
36. Identifiable staff	19.0467	6	0.0041	8.3254	2	0.0156	433.31	411.54	360.59
37. Experienced staff	46.2057	6	0.0000	15.1825	2	0.0005	425.17	371.47	344.46
38. Knowledgeable staff	49.3706	6	0.0000	22.0026	2	0.0000	429.66	385.25	309.64
39. Quality of officials	34.3887	6	0.0000	26.4549	2	0.0000	387.25	349.53	258.14
40. Well organised	16.0818	6	0.0133	6.6167	2	0.0366	435.73	392.95	400.61
41. Well run	19.3568	6	0.0036	7.0671	2	0.0292	434.41	390.88	395.94
42. Timeliness	28.1745	6	0.0001	8.1808	2	0.0167	417.31	369.41	393.94
43. Information	32.3183	6	0.0000	20.0116	2	0.0000	444.49	374.55	368.07
44. Broad activity range	25.8141	6	0.0002	11.0650	2	0.0040	426.80	410.90	337.82
45. Food and drink	70.1213	6	0.0000	10.0636	2	0.0065	431.98	379.09	387.55
46. Creche or similar			not asked of all cases						
47. Value for money	13.6416	6	0.0469	8.8227	2	0.0121	439.98	389.32	419.76

Key.
H Kruskal-Wallis statistic; *DF*: Degrees of freedom, *P*: Significance

These tests established that there were significant differences in customer responses between the ISO 9002 and liP cases in relation to four survey questions about importance and sixteen about perceptions. Table 9.14 shows that for all questions concerned the liP group received higher scores than the ISO 9002 ones.

contd./

Table 9.14: Kruskal-Wallis test rankings of selected responses to questions about perceptions (excluding St. George's Pool)

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case			By QM method			Mean rankings	
	H1	DF	P	H2	DF	P	liP	ISO 9000
	(corrected for ties)			(corrected for ties)				
25. Secure car/bike parking areas	95.3682	5	0.0000	53.4866	1	0.0000	408.16	297.63
26. Accessible from public transport	139.5911	5	0.0000	0.4145	1	0.5197	419.69	408.21
27. Cleanliness	25.0684	5	0.0001	15.6882	1	0.0001	396.74	335.90
28. Maintenance	39.9772	5	0.0000	27.8974	1	0.0000	406.23	325.66
29. Equipment quality	53.0243	5	0.0000	37.0556	1	0.0000	409.20	316.90
30. Equipment maintenance	41.7457	5	0.0000	20.8700	1	0.0000	397.77	329.76
31. Physically comfort	26.2560	5	0.0001	1.7786	1	0.1823	423.19	400.23
32. Pleasant to be in	19.5204	5	0.0015	3.0592	1	0.0803	431.71	401.68
33. Friendly staff	37.0361	5	0.0000	4.2455	1	0.0394	382.01	351.61
34. Staff responsiveness	17.1258	5	0.0043	4.9975	1	0.0254	380.62	347.15
35. Staff presentability	18.8814	5	0.0020	3.3899	1	0.0656	434.74	403.75
36. Identifiable staff	12.7048	5	0.0263	1.8037	1	0.1793	433.31	411.54
37. Experienced staff	41.5002	5	0.0000	10.5299	1	0.0012	374.47	326.64
38. Knowledgeable staff	34.3920	5	0.0000	7.1209	1	0.0076	374.86	335.36
39. Quality of officials	13.0668	5	0.0228	5.4124	1	0.0200	335.19	302.15
40. Well organised	15.5644	5	0.0082	6.2250	1	0.0126	385.14	347.44
41. Well run	18.5316	5	0.0023	6.5198	1	0.0107	385.04	346.59
42. Timeliness	28.3668	5	0.0000	8.2348	1	0.0041	370.76	328.08
43. Information	29.2059	5	0.0000	17.1172	1	0.0000	389.73	327.89
44. Broad activity range	15.5281	5	0.0083	0.8587	1	0.3541	426.80	410.90
45. Food and drink	68.8346	5	0.0000	9.4151	1	0.0022	431.98	379.09
46. Creche or similar			not asked	of all cases				
47. Value for money	13.4927	5	0.0192	8.7063	1	0.0032	391.12	346.34
50. Overall satisfaction	22.9075	5	0.0004	5.7188	1	0.0168	355.13	320.75

Key.
H Kruskal-Wallis statistic; *DF* Degrees of freedom, *P* Significance

However, the proportion of variance between cases that was accounted for by their grouping by quality management method differs considerably between variables (Tables A8.1 to A8.4). Table A8.4 for example, suggests that when just the liP cases were compared with the ISO 9000 ones, this grouping accounts for 70% of the variance between cases for some of the responses about perception of key tangibles (questions 28, maintenance, and 29, equipment quality). For the responses about perceptions of staff the proportion of variation accounted for is smaller being as low as 14% for question 46 (identifiable staff). Tables A8.7 and A8.8 suggest that for most variables, there are real differences between the cases which are not explained by their grouping by quality management method.

9.3.2 Qualitative (write-in) responses

The researcher categorised write-in responses according to whether they appeared to be primarily about "tangibles", "processes", "staff" or could not be so categorised in which case they were included in an "other" category. Each category was further divided into "negative" i.e. critical comments, and "positive" i.e. comments which expressed satisfaction with the customer experience. Figure 9.4 reports the analysis of customers' write-in responses as classified into these eight categories.

These results show that most comments are negative ones, about either tangibles or processes. Many of the tangibles-negative complaints were about changing rooms, showers, lockers and toilets. Process-related complaints tended to be concerned with bookings problems, cancellation of classes or queues at reception. Table 9.15 is a contingency table applying the Pearson chi-square test to these categories. It shows that differences between the type of responses between the ISO 9002 and liP quality management groups are not significant.

Figure 9.4 Analysis of customer's write-in responses to question 51 (any other comments about the service at centre x)

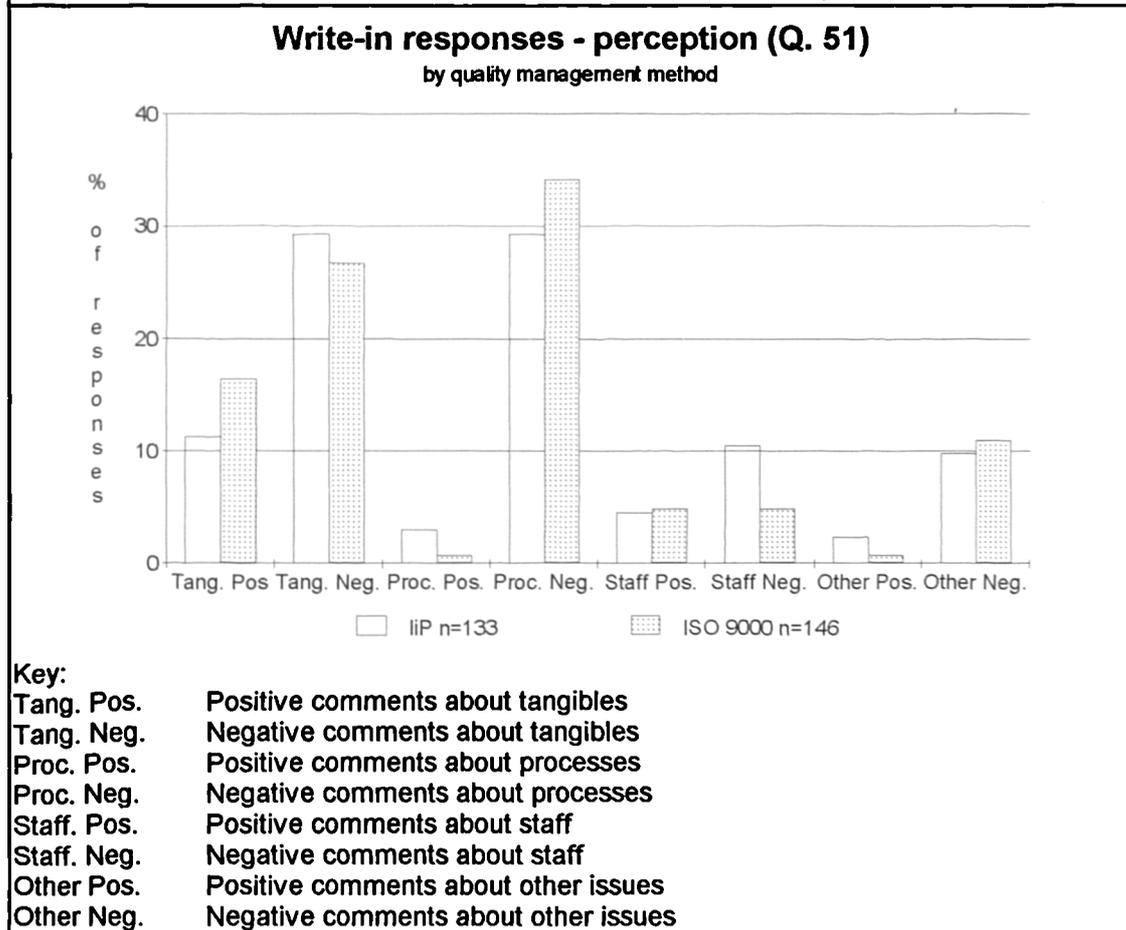


Table 9.15: Contingency table of write-in response categories

QM Group	Category of write-in response								Total
	Tangibles positive	Tangibles negative	Process positive	Process negative	Staff positive	Staff negative	Other positive	Other negative	
liP	15	39	4	39	6	14	3	13	133
ISO 9002	24	39	1	50	7	7	2	16	146
Totals	39	78	5	89	13	21	5	29	279

Pearson chi-square: Value: 7.56777 DF: 7 Significance: 0.37224
 Minimum expected frequency: Value: 2.384
 Cells with expected frequency <5 - 4 of 16

9.3.3 Discussion

It had not been hypothesised that there should be any causal relationship between quality management methods and the importance customers ascribe to different aspects of the leisure service. It was perhaps surprising therefore, to have four instances of correlation (Table 9.12). The difference in responses to question 1 (parking) was probably due to differences in the parking facilities between the centres. It happens that the ISO 9002 centres had no off-road parking available for customers, whereas the liP centres all did. Since a greater proportion of the former may therefore come by foot or public transport, they attached less importance to this service element. Such an interpretation is supported by the customers' perceptions about this element, with Table 9.14 showing a much higher ranking for the liP centres than for the ISO 9002 ones for question 25.

Explanations for the other three questions for which there is a significant difference in importance scores are rather more difficult. However, it is likely that both are the consequence of programming differences between cases, which have attracted customers with divergent views on these issues. The finding that, for most of the questions asked about importance, there is no significant difference between the two groups of cases is helpful from a methodological point of view since it implies that, overall, customers are seeking similar services.

Having discussed the customer responses on importance, we now move onto consideration of the findings on customer perceptions of the centres. It was hypothesised (hypotheses A1 and A2) that customers of organisations working to ISO 9002 would perceive that they had better management of processes and tangibles than similar organisations not working to the standard. The above results do not support these hypotheses. Four questions, 40 (well organised), 41 (well run), 42 (timeliness) and 43 (information), can be said to directly reflect processes and for all four questions a significant amount of the variance between cases was accounted for by the quality management method groupings. However, the ISO 9002 group is ranked lower than the liP one.

The questions about tangibles fell into three groups. Questions 25 (parking) and 26 (public transport) were essentially locational tangibles which may be considered as beyond the influence of the two standards under study. Question 25 has been discussed above and there was no significant difference between the two groupings in response to question 26. Questions 29 (equipment quality), 31 (physical comfort) and 32 (pleasant to be in) primarily related to the level of provision inherent in the centres' fabric and equipment, which was likely to flow from fundamental investment decisions. Only in responses to question 29 (equipment quality), was there a significant difference between the two groups of responses, and Table 9.14 shows this to be in favour of the liP group. Of most interest are the responses which fell within the "Quality and care of tangibles" dimension, that is responses to questions 27 (cleanliness), 28 (centre maintenance) and 30 (equipment maintenance). These issues fell squarely within the remit of a quality system and are similar to everyday functions carried out by the manufacturing sector from which the ISO 9002 series originated. Customer responses for these three questions were significantly different between the two groupings, accounting for a large proportion of the total variance between cases. But again, customers in the liP group rated their centres more highly than did the ISO 9002 customers (Table 9.14).

Hypothesis B1 proposed that customers of the liP registered organisations would perceive that they had better quality staff as compared to customers of similar organisations not registered to the Standard. Seven survey questions asked about centre staff namely, 33 (friendly staff), 34 (responsive staff), 35 (presentable staff), 36 (identifiable staff), 37 (staff experience), 38 (knowledgeable staff) and 39 (officials). There were significant differences between the two groups of cases for responses to all but questions 35 and 36. Table 9.14 shows that the liP cases are ranked more highly and it may thus be concluded that these findings support the guiding hypothesis.

Comparisons of the liP and ISO 9002 groups of cases with St. George's Pools which used no quality management method were purely indicative. Nevertheless it is worth noting that for some variables customers responses achieve a middle rank between liP and ISO 9002, perhaps suggesting that it is possible to manage aspects of customer perceptions of service without adopting a quality management standard.

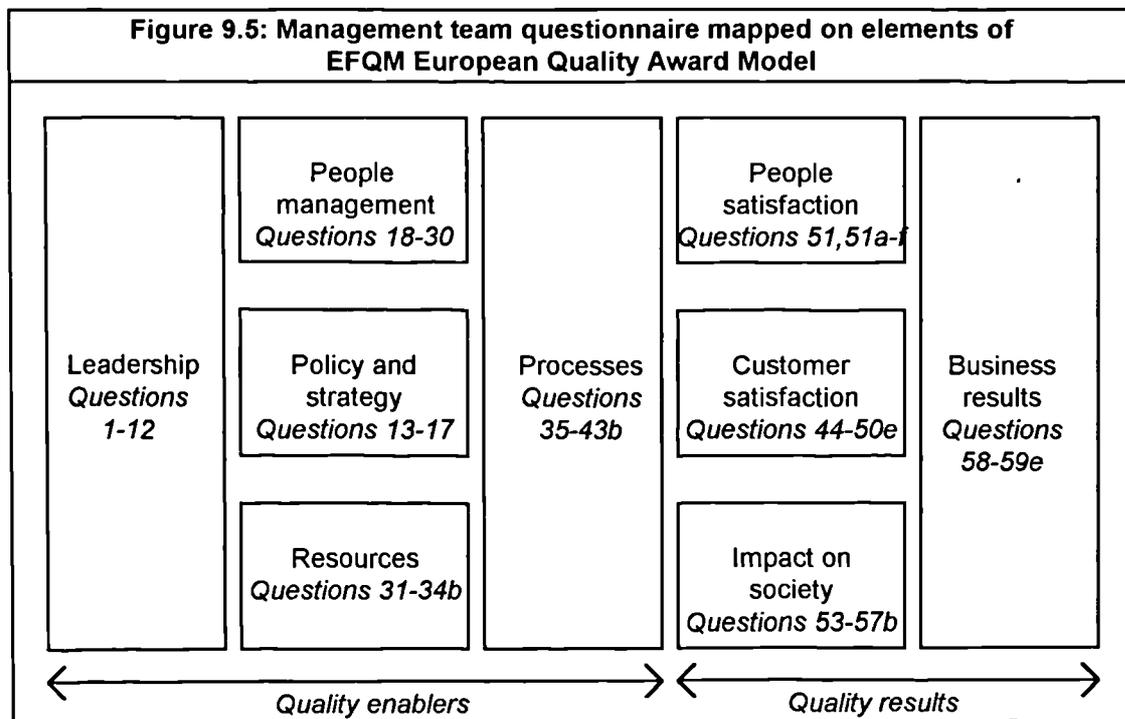
The tables shown in Appendix Eight show that for most of the variables asked about in the survey, there were differences in customer responses between the cases which were not accounted for by dividing them by quality management method. This was hardly surprising given that the number of cases studied was very small and not a random sample of leisure centres. In these circumstances, the many other different influences on customer

perceptions, apart from quality management method, which varied from case to case, were likely to have affected the results. This serves to underline the provisional nature of the results achieved in this study.

9.4 Interviews with managers and management team members

9.4.0 Introduction

Having reported and discussed the results of "external" measurements made through the customer survey, this chapter now progresses on to examine the results generated by "internal" investigation of the perceptions of the case study site managers and of those of members their management teams. In each case, a total of three interviews were conducted (7.5.2). The questions on the questionnaire instrument flowed from the elements of the EFQM EQA (7.5.2) and Figure 9.5 shows how these questions relate to each of these elements. Responses to questions about each of the EFQM EQA elements are discussed in turn below. The questionnaire itself is attached as Appendix Four.



As the interviews generated a high volume of information, only selected issues are covered in the following text and tables. Since the total number of interviews conducted was statistically small (24), results in the tables which follow are given in terms of numbers of responses, rather than percentages. Counts of responses to every interview question are given in Appendix Nine.

9.4.1 Leadership

The commitment of organisational leaders to quality management and improvement is considered to be a component for the success of quality programmes. When asked about the place of quality in strategic statements, all but one respondent asserted that quality was included as an aim (Table 9.16). The exception was the manager of Kensington Sports Centre, managed by a commercial sector company, who felt that his company's mission did not feature quality. The two members of his team thought that as quality of service was included as a specification to the contract they were managing, this was sufficient to include it as an organisational priority. This point underlines an issue which surfaced throughout the interviews, namely the complexity of roles under CCT. Staff are simultaneously working for their employing organisation (the contractor, whether commercial, public or voluntary sector) and through the contract, for the local authority. The precise emphasis given to the contractor's vision, vis-à-vis the local authority's was not always agreed between each of the three interviewees for each site.

Table 9.16 Interview Question No. 2			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do your organisation's strategic aims include its quality aims and values?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		6	6
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team		16	16
All Respondents	1	23	24

A flavour of the overarching quality statements is provided by Highbury Pool which had just converted from DSO to Trust status. The DSO quality statement, which was still displayed in the staff area read:

Provide quality services in a manner which achieves the highest level of customer satisfaction and value for money.

The statement which had replaced it in the Trust's top level document was:

Get it right first time, every time, for the benefit of the customer

It is important that commitment to quality is not simply a formal commitment in policy documents, but is continually underscored and reinforced through organisational communication (EFQM 1994). Accordingly respondents were asked to evaluate the role of managers senior to them in communicating quality values (Table 9.17), and in reinforcing quality through their behaviour and personal example (Table 9.18). They were also asked to

evaluate their own work in this respect (Table 9.19). These results tend to show more of a perceived commitment to quality from middle managers and junior managers, than from top managers since the team members evaluate their manager (i.e. the centre managers) more highly than the latter do their own (off-site) management. This is confirmed by the self - analysis demanded by Question 5. Several respondents remarked on the difficulties in keeping a quality focus in view of other performance targets and practical pressures, such as communicating through a shift system.

Table 9.17: Interview Question No. 3					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
In your estimation, to what extent do managers senior to you play a role in communicating quality aims and values?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1		2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1		2		3
Total Managers	2	6			8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			3	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2		2	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>	2		2	2	6
Total Team	4	7	5	16	16
All Respondents	6	13	5	24	24

Table 9.18: Interview Question No. 4					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
In your estimation, to what extent does your manager's behaviour, by example and action demonstrate and emphasise the quality aims and values of your organisation?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2		1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2			1	3
Total Managers	4	3	1	8	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			2	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			4	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1		2	3	6
Total Team	1	8	7	16	16
All Respondents	5	11	8	24	24

Table 9.19: Interview Question No. 5					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
To what extent does your behaviour, by example and action, demonstrate and emphasise the quality aims and values of your organisation?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers		1	5	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk		3		3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			4	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>		1	4	1	6
Total Team		1	11	3	15
All Respondents		2	16	5	23

Note: dk = don't know

Table 9.20: Interview Question No. 8					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
To what degree is your involvement in quality improvements a significant factor in your own personal appraisal and promotion prospects?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2		1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1	1	3
Total Managers		3	3	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1	1	3	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	4		6
Total Team	1	5	9	1	16
All Respondents	1	8	12	3	24

Table 9.21: Interview Question No. 9					
	Not	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
In your estimation, how personally involved is your manager in the recognition of the efforts made by individuals and teams in generating quality improvements?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1		1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3			3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2		3
Total Managers		5	2	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	1	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1	4	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	3	2		6
Total Team	1	5	7	3	16
All Respondents	1	10	9	4	24

There was considerable variation in the degree to which respondents felt that their managers were involved in recognising quality efforts (Table 9.21) and to which they were themselves so involved (Table 9.22). However, efforts on quality did not seem to feature very much as a factor in performance appraisal and promotion, except for those individuals who had been given a particular responsibility for quality (Table 9.20).

Table 9.22: Interview Question No. 10					
	Not	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
How personally involved are you in the recognition of the efforts made by members of your staff in generating quality improvements?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			3		3
Total Managers		1	6	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	2	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1	2	3	6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	4		6
Total Team		4	8	4	16
All Respondents		5	14	5	24

9.4.2 Policy and Strategy

This part of the questionnaire was intended to investigate the degree to which overall aims and values, such as those expressed in a mission statement, were translated into practical policies and goals for individuals and teams within the organisation. The adoption of a quality ethos was not reflected across all controlling documents in these organisations. Several respondents cited financial pressures as the main concern of their organisation; frequently these were seen as opposing or constraining quality initiatives (Table 9.23).

Questions 16 and 17 (Tables 9.24 and 9.25) sought to ascertain the degree to which the organisation's priorities, including its quality objectives, were understood by staff. There was considerable variation in the responses, including from within cases, but overall the

Table 9.23: Interview Question No. 13				
	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly tot.
To what extent do the policies, strategies plans & goals developed for your work reflect and strongly support the achievement of your organisation's stated quality aims and values?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	1	3
All Managers	2	5	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		6		6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	3	2	6
All Team	1	13	2	16
All Respondents	3	18	3	24

impression is that managers believe that many staff boundaries are delimited by their day-to-day work duties, without an appreciation of what the organisation is trying achieve. Most of the centres had moved to a "core and periphery" staffing model. At the core were full-time, permanent staff members; between them and the periphery were part-time permanent/ semi permanent staff; the periphery consisted of casual and sessional staff. Knowledge of, interest in, and commitment to goals and plans generally diminishes as one moves from core to periphery. A member of the management team in one of the liP cases said:

"The lack of familiarity of staff with goals and plans is not through management's want of trying. Staff say they are not told, but they don't read or listen at the lower levels. Casual and sessional staff certainly aren't as well informed as full or part-time staff" (Andy Foster, Duty Officer Hartham Pool) .

Table 9.24: Interview Question No. 16					
	None	Few	Most	All	tot.
In your estimation, how many of your staff can list the organisation's goal's relevant to their activity?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	1		3
Total Managers	1	5	2		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3			4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		3	2	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>		5	1		6
Total Team	1	11	3	1	16
All Respondents	2	16	5	1	24

Table 9.25: Interview Question No. 17					
	None	Few	Most	All	tot.
In your estimation, how many of your staff are familiar with the plans to achieve the organisation's goals in their areas?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2		3
Total Managers		5	3		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3			4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		3	2	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>		3	3		6
Total Team	1	9	5	1	16
All Respondents	1	14	8	1	24

9.4.3 People management

The implications of the TQM and the EFQM Model, as well as much of the services management literature is that plans for the recruitment, training and development of staff (and for their remuneration and reward) should flow from the work they need to do. Accordingly, Question 18 asked respondents about this aspect of their organisation.

There was a clear difference in response pattern between the two sets of cases (Table 9.26). All liP managers said that people plans were derived from strategic plans to a very high extent. Only one ISO 9002 manager said this; however he explained this was a recent development due to his employer being in the early stages of development towards seeking liP registration. Two members of the ISO 9002 teams were unable to respond to this question at all, and one was not confident of his answer; in contrast the liP members were confident in giving their own evaluation, although this was not generally as positive that made by their managers. Several of the liP respondents mentioned the role of liP in this context.

In Chapter 3 the quality role of performance appraisal systems was discussed. Several questions addressed this topic. All respondents indicated that their organisation had an appraisal or review system, and further questions sought to examine its efficacy. The results suggested that possession of liP did not necessarily imply a robust performance review system. Most respondents indicated a measure of scepticism about the appraisal systems. This related either to the difficulties of implementing a regular interview (annual in five cases and six-monthly in one), or to the lack of interest of parent organisations in formal reviews, or to the actual implementation of them being unhelpful.

Table 9.26: Interview Question No. 18					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
To what extent are your people plans directly derived from the needs of your strategic plans and goals (rather than just activities or based on ad hoc needs)					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2		1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>				3	3
Total Managers		4		4	8
<hr/>					
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		3	1		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2dk	1	2	1	4
<i>liP Team</i>		2	3	1	6
Total Team		6	6	2	14
All Respondents		10	6	6	22

Note: dk = don't know

Difficulties in implementation across a fluid and largely casualised workforce were referred to by several managers. Some felt that their own organisation attached only formal, rather than actual significance to the process; a surprising finding was that most managers had not themselves been appraised on a regular basis. One manager had just received her first review after an interval of "between three and four years". Other reservations related to inappropriate and inflexible systems operated by local authorities, or inappropriate conduct of the interview by appraisers.

All respondents indicated that the appraisal system included training and development needs, and most felt that the system helped at least in part for these to be identified, discussed, and at least partially, met. The liP sites generally indicated a higher level of satisfaction with this aspect of the performance appraisal system. However, more fundamental issues were not usually addressed through the appraisal system.

Table 9.27: Interview Question No. 19a					
	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent do you feel this (appraisal or review) process is respected by your staff?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers		3	4	1	8
<hr/>					
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1	2	2	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	3	2		6
Total Team	2	7	6	1	16
All Respondents	2	10	10	2	24

Table 9.28: Interview Question No. 20			
	No	Yes	tot.
Are you regularly appraised by your manager?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2	1	3
Total Managers	6	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2	4	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	5	6
Total Team	4	12	16
All Respondents	10	14	24

Questioning about training and development indicated a more robust and integrated approach in the liP cases, as compared to the ISO 9002 ones. Moreover, there were indications that the installation of these training systems had influenced both staff recruitment and retention.

"The last poolside person we appointed here came from a bingo hall and had no relevant qualifications; he got the job over someone who had got a pool bronze¹, but who didn't have the enthusiasm... We can recruit on the basis of the "sparkle in the eyes" now because it is a relatively simple matter to slot staff into training programmes... Sometimes we appoint people on the basis that they will achieve their NVQ. Being a public sector organisation we can't get rid of unsuitable people like David Lloyd² would. However, not achieving the NVQ in a reasonable time would be grounds for dismissal." (Dave Buck, Assistant Manager, Hartham Pool).

"The fact that we have had almost no turnover of staff over the last two years, in spite of our uncertain future contractual position here, I put down to our involvement in liP, and our consequent commitment to NVQs. Staff know that whatever happens in the future they are gaining qualifications here and increasing their employability." (Laura Greenfield, Manager Newham Leisure Centre).

The quality management literature and, to a lesser extent, services management research have commented upon the importance of involving staff in quality improvements. Therefore question 21 asked if people management methods included a process that involved managers and staff in generating service improvements. Nearly all responses were positive, but further questioning revealed these were mainly informal and low key, giving staff an opportunity to volunteer suggestions at staff meetings, or to put some comments into the suggestions box. Two cases had more formal schemes, one using quality teams, and another a "Bright Sparks" scheme offering employee recognition for special contributions.

¹ The Royal Life Saving Society's qualification for pool lifeguards

² A private sector company running sports and fitness clubs

Table 9.29: Interview Question No. 24					
	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent is the effort you make towards quality improvement recognised by your organisation?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2		1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2		1		3
Total Managers	5		3		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1		3		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2		2	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>	4		2		6
Total Team	7		7	2	16
All Respondents	12		10	2	24

There was a variation between respondents on their perception about the degree to which their own quality contributions were recognised, which reflected perceptions about the organisation itself and of the management style of their line managers (Table 9.29). However, managers and staff evaluated their own behaviour more evenly and more highly (Table 9.30). However, there was general agreement that it was not possible to reward those so recognised. Where performance-related pay schemes existed, these were based solely on measures of financial performance.

Table 9.30: Interview Question No. 25					
	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent do you recognise the effort your staff make towards quality improvement?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			3		3
Total Managers	1		7		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	1	1	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1 dk	1	4		5
<i>liP Team</i>		1	4	1	6
Total Team	1	3	9	2	14
All Respondents	1	4	16	2	23

Note: dk = don't know

9.4.4 Resources

The EFQM Model demands that resources necessary for quality are identified and that the quality implications of resource management decisions are clear. Because of the tangibles orientation of ISO 9002, it might be expected that this Standard would help organisations to score well against the resources EFQM element.

Table 9.31: Interview Question No. 31			
	No	Yes	On some items tot.
Does your manager have an approach which ensures that the allocation and use of financial resources reflect and support the quality aims and values?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2	1	3
Total Managers	6	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	3	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1 dk	3	2
<i>liP Team</i>	1 dk	5	5
Total Team	11	3	14
All Respondents	17	5	22

Note: dk = don't know

The questions in this section did not indicate large differences between the two sets of cases. However, responses to questions 32 and 32a-c (information about operations and resources) showed differences in the perception of the quality of on-site and off-site financial and throughput information, irrespective of which external standard was in force. Of the total of eight cases investigated the four which were DSO managed, or in the case of the Trust, recently DSO managed, had higher quality of information on-site, as compared to that centrally generated. Information received from central sources was less reliable, less up-to-date and had to be carefully checked by centre managers. These managers saw the central financial operation as something of an overhead which they had to carry and keep under scrutiny.

In contrast, the managers and teams of sites managed by the commercial enterprise and the industrial/ provident society thought that the information from central sources was of a quality on par with their own. The managers spoke of the central operation as a resource and valued the role of head office in picking up trends and in making cross-site comparisons. There is a suggestion here that, after nearly a decade of contracting for local authority leisure services, the traditional expenditure-based treasury function of local authority finance continues to exert a negative influence on leisure DSOs. In cases where organisations managing recreation facilities have had to set up from scratch, they have instituted trading-based systems more able to provide reliable and up-to-date information about expenditure and income.

9.4.5 Processes

The EFQM model conceives of processes in a manner very similar to that of ISO 9002. It is to be expected therefore, that organisations working to that standard would score better

under questions directed towards this element. In fact it was not possible from the quantitative responses to separate the two sets of cases on most ISO 9002 related items. However, there were some indications from team members that processes were better identified and allocated than in the liP cases (Table 9.32 refers).

	Unclear	Some clarity	Considerable clarity	Complete clarity	tot.
How clear is it who is responsible for each of these processes?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1			1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1		2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>			1	2	3
Total Managers	1	1	1	5	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			2	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			1	5	6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	2	2	6
Total Team		2	5	9	16
All Respondents	1	3	6	14	24

Qualitative responses, particularly from managers, also supported the proposition that ISO 9002 had been a major aid towards becoming "more organised" in the sense of being able to provide a more consistent service, based on a pre-defined service specification. All of these managers described how they had become "converted" to the worth of the standard from an original position of scepticism. The manager of Arches Leisure Centre described how he was using the standard to "boil down" the existing procedures into a much smaller integrated set, in the process producing a better fit between "reality" and the procedures. In another case the manager said:

"When we first became registered we saw the quality system as something additional we had to do. A bureaucratic necessity because it was demanded by the local authority client. In fact it has turned out to be very useful because it has made us develop one way of running the facility, rather than each shift having their own approach. Now, after a couple of years of operating under the standard, we understand it better. When re-registration comes up I want to go for a smaller, better focused system; this really will not be an add-on, instead the system will be the way we run this facility" (Andrea Keeble, Manager, Highbury Pools).

However, the kind of quality systems in place are limited in their requirements for continual gathering and evaluation of customer feedback . Usually, the contractor has access to customer comments and complaints, but this is not always covered by the quality system. Other monitoring takes place, often through the local authority client (see following section on customer satisfaction), but outside the context of the quality system (see Table 9.33). Similarly, benchmarking activity was not required. Where this was reported by respondents, it was a comparison with other facilities managed by the organisation, rather than with external organisations. The commercial sector organisations reported that an element of

external benchmarking could be achieved through work in bidding for new contracts, which enabled them to peruse specifications and examine past financial performance. However, although this provided some insights, it could not be said to constitute a satisfactory means of benchmarking of processes.

9.4.6 Customer satisfaction

Table 9.33: Interview Question No. 50 Customer feedback measures utilised in cases						
	Inspection by client (proxy customers)	Complaints/ comments	Annual customer survey (by client)	Annual customer survey (by contractor)	Regular customer survey (by contractor)	Customer panel or representatives
<i>No quality management method</i>						
St. George's Pools	*	*				
<i>Preparing for ISO 9002 registration</i>						
Arches Leisure Centre	*	*		*	*	*
<i>ISO 9002 cases</i>						
Highbury Pool	*	*			*	*
Kensington Sports Centre	*	*				
Seven Islands Leisure Centre	*	*	*			
<i>liiP cases</i>						
Hartham Pool	*	*	*			
Newham Leisure Centre	*	*	*			
Waterfront Leisure Centre	*	*		*	*	*

The element of the EFQM scheme which attempts to evaluate the impact the organisation has upon its external customers accounts for a greater percentage (20%) of the total points than any other, highlighting the importance of this element. The questions which flow from investigation of this aspect of the organisation fell into the following four categories:

- Complaints/ comments related (Questions 44-46), investigating both the systems for soliciting and analysing customer comments and the actual trends in volume of complaints;
- Issues related to factors which are likely to influence customer satisfaction (examples suggested by the interviewer were attainment of cleaning and maintenance specifications and staff time-keeping). Thus Question 47 asked if such factors were measured and analysed, about trends and benchmarking of results;

- Issues which related to key customer requirements of the service; how they are established, measured and managed through standards, goals and targets. Questions were asked about trends and about the benchmarking of results (Questions 48 and 49);
- Issues related to the measurement and management of the actual satisfaction perceptions of customers (Question 50).

Interpretation of the responses was aided by a review of the methods used for getting feedback from customers in each case. This is shown in Table 9.33 above.

Responses indicated that means of receiving complaints and comments were robust in all cases. All cases operated complaint/ comments cards or similar systems which all respondents felt to be easy for customers to use (see Table 9.34 below). These systems or their fore-runners predated registration under the Standards. The case which had no externally verified quality management method, also had a robust complaints and comments system. Thus such systems usually reflect a wider local authority concern to bring more responsiveness to their services.

	No	Yes	tot.
Do you have a system which, in your estimation, makes it easy for customers to complain (both verbally and in writing).			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3	3	
<i>liP Managers</i>	3	3	
Total Managers	8	8	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4	4	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	6	6	
<i>liP Team</i>	6	6	
Total Team	16	16	
All Respondents	24	24	

All managers were aware of the numbers of complaints and thought they would be aware of any trends. However, not all cases reported a decrease in the numbers of complaints, and two responses indicated the complexity of the issues involved:

"The number of complaints has actually gone up and so has the number of comments, but this is because we are doing more to solicit them than before" (Dave Buck, Assistant Manager, Hartham Pool).

"Since we added the new gym the number of complaints has gone up. This is due to our new customers using the old changing rooms which also serve the swimmers; our old changing rooms really aren't good enough for some of our new gym customers" (Andrea Keeble, Manager, Highbury Pool).

All managers and nearly all team members thought that factors likely to influence customer satisfaction were regularly measured. Tangibles have been the focus of inspection by client officers responsible for monitoring the contract (referred to as "white glove" inspections by several respondents). Thus all the cases made significant use of checklists and daily pre-opening inspections by supervisors or duty managers, and similar periodic inspections throughout the day. Checklists were archived, but not necessarily analysed unless the client inspection raised a problem. The time-keeping of staff was also monitored, although in one of the ISO 9002 cases staff time-sheets were examined off-site, the manager relying on his head office to alert him to sub-critical problems.

Once again, external comparison of this information was limited. Some respondents felt that discussions between centre managers provided an opportunity for comparison, whilst others felt that they simply could not say how their results compared with other facilities run by their organisation. Part of the problem is that the uniqueness of each centre meant that simple comparisons are often impossible. Responses to questions about benchmarking between organisations were all negative.

Answers to questions about the actual trend of measurements were mixed. No respondent was sure that a trend over a period of say, three years could be demonstrated, and answers tended to be subjective, very much coloured by the current issues. As one respondent remarked:

"In an ageing building like this one physical problems tend to go in spates, and thus we get many complaints about the same thing... I also have problems with one of my sessional coaches who runs several classes here, she has cancelled a couple of classes at the last minute and of course we get customer complaints about it" (Dave Buck, Assistant Manager Hartham Pool).

All of the case managers felt that they had a method for identifying key customer requirements of the service (Question 48), but the method cited was very different between respondents (Table 9.35). Thus some respondents put an emphasis on an essentially historical method (the specification) whilst others stressed various concurrent methods of identifying key customer requirements. More questioning led the researcher to believe that this aspect was usually initially represented by respondents as a stronger than it actually was shown to be by subsequent questions. A number of issues emerge from the responses.

Table 9.35: Interview Question No. 48a - Responses of Managers

<p>What is the method (for identifying the key customer requirements of your service)?</p> <p><i>No QM standard</i></p> <p>Annual user survey, and two customer representatives on Board</p> <p>Annual user survey</p> <p><i>ISO 9002 cases</i></p> <p>The contract specification identifies these, (it took account of a customer survey)</p> <p>The contract specification identifies these, and we have some customer feedback mechanisms (customer complaints and comments)</p> <p>Analysis of complaints, surveys, and our customer panel</p> <p><i>liP cases</i></p> <p>Customer feedback forms, customer forum and informal methods (Management By Walking About)</p> <p>Complaints led to the establishment of customer service standards, we continue to ask for comments and complaints</p> <p>Customer survey (undertaken by client), letters, suggestions and face-to-face contact</p>
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- Reliance on the specification assumes that it was based upon a clear understanding of key customer requirements, but in most cases little customer research had actually been carried out in order to inform this document.
- As the facilities are often engaged in offering new services to the public, either through facility enhancement or through programming changes, customer requirements need to be identified for these post-specification offerings. However, this need was not systematically addressed in any of the cases.
- A considerable reliance was placed upon complaints and comments from customers, and in five of the cases was the most significant form on ongoing feedback captured from customers. However, this seems likely to capture sources of dissatisfaction, rather than key customer requirements.
- The contract specification includes both items deemed to be important to customers and those of importance to the local authority client. The design of the systems, forms and questionnaires used to measure and evaluate customer perceptions is split between the contractor and the client, as is the operation of these customer feedback systems.
- Views about the value of methods which involve face-to-face contact varied. Meetings of user group representatives were considered to carry the risk of involving the same limited number of self-appointed representatives who had their own agenda. The experience of customer fora, panels or representatives seemed a more positive one.

Similarly, processes leading to the setting of goals and targets for improvement of factors which might influence customer satisfaction could also be stronger. These issues are thus closely connected with the responses to Question 49 (Table 9.36 below). There are clear indications that both sets of cases could give more attention to this aspect. It was also noticeable that three of the of ISO 9002 team members indicated that they did not know about this area of work and could not estimate an answer to the question.

Table 9.36: Interview Question No. 49					
	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of the factors which influence customer satisfaction are covered by a method for routinely setting targets/ goals for improvement?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3			3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1		2		3
Total Managers	1	3	3	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	1	1	1	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	3dk	1	2		3
<i>liP Team</i>		5	1		6
Total Team		7	4	1	12
All Respondents	1	10	7	2	20

Note: dk = don't know

Question 50 asked if the actual perceptions of customers were measured. These results are shown below in Table 9.37. Most respondents thought that customer satisfaction was regularly measured, referring to the methods outlined in Table 9.33 above. However, the researcher formed the view that only one case, Waterfront Leisure Centre, had installed an approach which would have enabled a positive answer to this question. Other centres were either relying on occasional or exceptional information (complaints and comments) or upon methods "owned" by the local authority client. One problem with the latter is that their design reflects the client's agenda and is not sufficiently orientated to practical quality issues in the manner that the literature reviewed in Chapter Four suggests is necessary. Another problem is that the disconnection with day-to-day management can lead to difficulties in acting upon the results, for example in the formulation of improvement goals referred to above.

Generally where respondents thought that customer satisfaction results were collected, they felt that some comparison with other facilities managed by their own organisation was undertaken. Only one respondent thought that comparison with facilities managed by other organisations was possible, referring to survey work undertaken by MORI for the local authority client.

	No	Yes	tot.
Are customer satisfaction results (that is the actual perceptions of the customer) regularly measured?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	4	5
<i>liP Team</i>	1	5	6
Total Team	6	9	15
All Respondents	7	16	23

Note: dk = don't know

Reflecting upon these results against the customer satisfaction element, several points are apparent. First, neither ISO 9002 or liP appears to have much impact on systems for measuring customer satisfaction or upon using the results to formulate management goals. No respondent mentioned either standard in their responses to this section of the interview. These results need to be considered in the light of those from the "Processes" section. Service organisations need to institute means which provide regular feedback about the perceptions of customers. Neither Standard appears to specify this need; this is particularly surprising in the case of ISO 9002, since other processes are dealt with in some detail. The "contract review" element of ISO 9002 does require periodic review of the customer specification, but it appears to be ineffective in moving organisations towards the continual monitoring of customer wants, needs and expectations which the services management paradigm suggests. Second, service quality/ customer satisfaction measurement is split between the client and contractor in ways which often seem unhelpful to quality improvement. The heavy emphasis from the client upon inspection by monitoring officers with the power to penalise the contractor, puts "proxy" customers in a more prominent position than real ones. Service quality measurement has thus become confused with "policing" contractual arrangements in a way which seems far removed from the tenets of the quality movement discussed in Chapter Three. Third, because the contractor and client monitoring officers are working against a base-line contract specification, it is important that this documentation is based upon customer research. This seems to have been limited, or non-existent in most cases. Fourth, although complaints and comments systems seemed well thought through in all cases, only one case had supplemented these with proactive systems for gauging customer perception on key service attributes on a regular basis. This organisation also surveyed customers in greater depth upon an annual basis. Fifth, the design of survey instruments did not generally take account of the studies reviewed in

Chapters Four and Six (4.3 and 6.1). Last, the ability to track customer perceptions over time, or to make comparison between facilities was limited by the lack of a common measurement regimen.

9.4.7 People satisfaction

One of the results factors which the EFQM model identifies is the satisfaction of employees with their work and work organisation. Accordingly the interview questionnaire asked respondents if factors which might be related to levels of staff satisfaction were regularly measured and analysed. Examples in the literature (EFQM 1994) and suggested to interviewees by the interviewer included negative indicators such as absenteeism, sickness, staff turnover, early leavers and grievances.

Responses (Table 9.38 below) showed no discernible pattern of responses between the two sets of case managers. Members of the ISO 9002 teams were more confident that these data was available, than were their liP counterparts. However, their responses to successive questions indicated that they did not know if the information was analysed (e.g. by job function and level). Results were generally made known to employees on an individual basis, if there was a management problem regarding that employee (e.g. high levels of sickness). External comparisons either between facilities within an organisation or between organisations were not undertaken. For those factors actually measured, the liP case managers responded positively to these questions, with the exception of those arising about extra-organisational comparisons.

	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of the factors which might be related to levels of staff satisfaction do you regularly measure?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	1	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1	1	3
Total Managers		3	3	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			2	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>				6	6
<i>liP Team</i>		1	2	3	6
Total Team		1	4	11	16
All Respondents		4	7	13	24

When the respondents were asked about steps taken directly to elucidate the level of satisfaction of staff, for example through the use of questionnaires or focus groups, the answers were very much in the negative (Table 9.39). Some respondents were surprised at the question even being asked, because the connection between employee satisfaction and service quality had not been explored within their organisation. There was an indication from

the responses that two liP cases had undertaken some work to investigate levels of employee satisfaction, but this could not be described as a major or ongoing commitment.

"We did some survey work on employee satisfaction prior to liP registration, but we have not followed it up, we really should get on this again" (Lorraine Petrinis, Manager Waterfront Leisure Centre).

The follow-up questions to those who had answered positively confirmed that little priority had been given to this element, since results were not analysed or compared externally.

	No	Yes	tot.
Are regular surveys conducted of the perceptions of your staff on various aspects of the organisation such as working environment, communications, career prospects, their managers, pay, appraisal, recognition, training morale and overall employee satisfaction?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2	1	3
Total Managers	7	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	6		6
<i>liP Team</i>	3	3	6
Total Team	13	3	16
All Respondents	20	4	24

In Chapter 3 it was noted that the liP Standard does not complement a focus on people management with one on people satisfaction. There is no discernible evidence from the interviews that liP registration has had much impact upon the priority given to this element or to the systems necessary to measure it directly.

9.4.8 Impact on society

The "impact on society" element of the EFQM Model highlights the need for any quality assessment to take account of the effect of the organisation upon the wider environment both social and natural. It can be difficult to apply this to public sector services, which usually seek to bring about some kind of social amelioration through the services they deliver. This is the case with leisure, sport and recreation services which are normally provided at public expense as a means to a social good (5.7.0). The adaptation of the EFQM self-assessment questionnaire used for this research asked respondents to consider the impact of their organisation upon people who were not its customers. This can be a difficult distinction to make because some work, (e.g. outreach to the local community) can be understood as being a good neighbour, marketing, or as fulfilling the local authority corporate mission. It was clear from the interviews that many respondents were thinking about these issues for the first time.

	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Does your facility have an active programme to...						
(53) reduce harm or nuisance to neighbours and the neighbourhood environment?						
(54) conserve and protect global resources?						
(55) contribute to the community?						
No QM standard Managers	1	1		2	2	
ISO 9000 Managers	2	1	2	1		3
liP Managers	1	2	1	2	2	1
Total Managers	4	4	3	5	4	4
No QM standard Team		4	1dk	3	2	2
ISO 9000 Team	2	4	3	3	3	3
liP Team		6	3	3	3	3
Total Team	2	14	6	9	8	8
All Respondents	6	18	9	14	12	12

Note: dk = don't know

There was a great deal of discussion about what constituted an "active programme" and differences of interpretation between members of the same organisation about how to evaluate the work they did in this area. The items most commonly cited in response to Question 53 (neighbours and neighbourhood environment) were noise and traffic problems, the degree of attention to these matching the particularities of the site location. All centres had a programme of energy conservation (Question 54) but respondents felt that this alone was not sufficient. Some centres were recycling waste paper, glass etc. Many examples were provided of service to the wider community outside the context of centre users and customers, such as work with local children or charity fund-raising; however, this tended to be approached upon an *ad hoc* basis, rather than as part of a considered programme of work. Very little comparison of work against this element seemed to be built into the *modus operandi* of these organisations, although some respondents felt that they would be able to demonstrate a favourable comparison with other facilities managed by their organisation.

In summary, one can say that respondents were much more aware of other management priorities, such as finance, customer care and health and safety than they were of work in this area. Respondents had not generally thought of quality service as embracing these activities. No differential influence of ISO 9002 or liP was detected in this section of the interviews.

9.4.9 Business results

In the commercial sector, measures designed to improve service quality are adopted to enhance business performance and/or competitiveness. In Chapter Five the somewhat different rationales of the public sector's involvement with quality management were reviewed. Discussion focused upon the degree to which relevant business results, both to the organisation and to the manager, had been identified. Further questions asked if results were improving and the extent to which benchmarking took place.

Those respondents from the liP cases felt more confident than the ISO 9002 ones, that the key business results had been identified and were measured. It seems likely that this was connected to the process necessary for liP registration; however, the interviews did not establish a causal link. All of the centres reported improving business results, and that since CCT, a great deal of management attention had been given to improving customer throughput and containing subsidy from the local authority. Respondents also indicated that continual and thorough examination of financial and throughput performance took place, and that comparisons were made between centres within the same organisation. However, mechanism for the external benchmarking of financial performance were much weaker, or non-existent in some cases.

Table 9.41: Interview Question No. 58

	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of the key results for your facility that, in your estimation, matter to your employing organisation, are identified and measured?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			1	2	3
Total Managers		3	3	2	8
<hr/>					
<i>No QM standard Team</i>				4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	3		5
<i>liP Team</i>			4	2	6
Total Team		2	7	6	15
All Respondents		5	10	8	23

Note: dk = don't know

Reviewing the results of this section of the interviews, one is left with the impression that the similarities between the two sets of cases are much greater than any differences. In recent years the financial situation of local authorities has become progressively more difficult and they have sought to reduce or contain their subsidy to these leisure facilities. In the environment produced by CCT, this has led to contractors focusing more clearly than before on increasing the number of customers they attract, whilst restructuring the workforce to limit costs. Managers were clear about the financial goals which they have to deliver, and all reported continuing improvement in this area. Where difficulties arise, they tend to relate to

the social goals of local authorities, which may conflict with the financial goals, or lead to difficulties of prioritisation.

9.4.10 Overall assessments by managers and team members

Having discussed the findings of the interviews against each element of the EFQM Quality Model, we now turn to the views of respondents on the Standards themselves.

The preliminary research reported in Chapter Nine suggested that whilst respondents using ISO 9002 were satisfied with their quality management arrangements, a proportion of those using liP were dissatisfied. The case studies also suggest this finding and provide indications as to why service managers may have made these assessments.

It has already been noted that all of the managers of cases registered under ISO 9002 (and of the Arches Leisure Centre which was preparing for registration) had moved away from a position of scepticism about the Standard. The reasons for this scepticism were related to its reputation as involving bureaucracy, and to its manufacturing provenance. Managers said:

"It (ISO 9002) has made us good at consistency. But we are not so good at continuous improvement. Our staffing structures and the rewards and incentives we use don't always get the best from our staff" (Bill Hayburn, Manager, Kensington Sports Centre).

"Prior to the quality system, there were procedures, but nothing was formalised, and comprehensive records weren't taken. Now, the act of signing a form is important here...if there is a non-conformance something is much more likely to happen to put it right than ever before. We do need to share the system more with all staff to help them to keep in mind the actual purpose of it, which is not just to satisfy an auditor" (Cliff Barker, Acting Manager, Seven Islands Leisure Centre).

There was therefore considerable agreement between these cases as to the usefulness of the standard in improving work processes and enabling a more consistent, safer, service to be provided. There was a strong perception that a learning process was involved for their organisations, and that in future, systems would be smaller and better focused. All cases saw the process of registration for and inspection against the standard as fair and objective.

Against these positive findings should be set some negative ones. There was a sense from the interviews with management team members (not with the managers) that for them quality and the *quality system* were synonymous. These respondents tended to see all issues which they understood as quality ones in terms of the system, rather than seeing the system as addressing only some quality elements. It was also evident that registration did not seem to assist in continuous improvement or in the development of processes to generate feedback about the perceptions of customers.

In contrast to the similarities between the views of the ISO 9002 cases, the liP cases had quite different views about the usefulness of registration. The Waterfront Leisure Centre was chosen by Greenwich Leisure Ltd. (GLL) as a pilot site for liP registration, with the intention of extending to all their sites, if useful to them.

"We felt that our personnel procedures and practices were perhaps above average, but needed improvement, and we thought that applying for (liP) registration would be a means of improving them. Although we put on the best show we could, we never expected to get registered first time round. We bamboozled the inspector really, he had never been involved with a leisure centre before. So we were surprised, and not all that pleased to get our registration...it has all been something of a farce" (Lorraine Petrinis, Manager, Waterfront Leisure Centre).

Thus, this case study site manager was unhappy with the results of the liP registration process, largely because they undertook very little development work in order to achieve it. GLL have not extended involvement in the scheme to their other leisure centres, although they intend to renew their registration at the Waterfront.

A more positive evaluation was given by Hartham Pool respondents who felt that the registration process had enabled them to supply some missing pieces of their people management systems. They felt that the involvement of staff, not only in the training but in training and development decision-making had been beneficial.

"What this quality does for staff is beneficial. It is more enjoyable for them if you have invested in prevention of poor quality. Work becomes positive and not negative, they enjoy contact with the customers and customer complaints have gone down" (Diane Burrige, Manager Hartham Pool).

Respondents at Newham Leisure Centre were the most positive.

"It was a big thing to get liP. If you look at those centres in the borough without liP, they just have no idea of first base. Communication systems work, team meetings work, training is good. There is an extent to which liP involves the naming of things already in place, but putting them together helped to start change. Registration did not of itself produce a big change, but continuing to work to the standard has" (Mandy Webb, Senior Administration Officer, Newham Leisure Centre).

The implication of these variations in perception of the standard and the registration process is that the Standard itself may not require a sufficiently high level in order to satisfy the aspirations of those organisations which are already moderately good at people management. Alternatively, the inspection prior to registration may not be sufficiently rigorous.

The interviews found that liP does have an impact on training and development, and this seems to beneficially influence recruitment and retention. Impact on other areas of people management was not evident.

"liP...it's Investors in Training really" Alex Upsdell, Assistant Manager, Waterfront Leisure Centre.

Two people issues were apparent in all cases, with liP registration making little impact on them. First, the performance review and appraisal system had problems in all centres.

"The exceptions (to changes brought about through liP) are work programmes and performance appraisals. We have problems in making these helpful, or even in ensuring that they happen and are taken seriously in the case of part time staff. It is difficult to get them to take due account of career development" (Mandy Webb, Senior Administration Officer, Newham Leisure Centre).

Second, all centres were struggling to cope with increased expectations from senior managers, and possibly from customers, whilst working with a small staff complement. This could work against quality objectives, as succinctly expressed by the manager of one of the ISO 9002 cases.

"Managers' time is very limited now; there are fewer of us and we have more to do. Amongst the staff there is increasing casualisation...we are much more reliant on casuals now, part-timers and temporary staff. To an extent this has collided with our aim of quality" (Andrea Keeble, Manager, Highbury Pool).

9.4.11 Discussion

Having used the interviews to provide a broad picture of the quality arrangements in place, attention is now paid to the specific hypotheses under study. In Chapter six (6.2.1), the following proposition about ISO 9002 was advanced as guiding hypothesis A.

- Guiding hypothesis A: Organisations working to ISO 9002 have better processes and management of tangibles than similar organisations not working to ISO 9002.

Further, it was postulated that,

- Guiding hypothesis A3: When managers are asked to score their organisation upon criteria used by the EFQM for the EQA, organisations working to ISO 9002 score more highly on the "Processes" and "Resource management" elements than do similar organisations not working to ISO 9002.

The above guiding hypotheses are supported by the interviews with respect to processes. Managers perceived registration under the Standard as having had a beneficial effect upon their work processes and organisation. They were the most confident about the aspects of processes investigated by the interviews. Their answers about processes were noticeably,

but not dramatically, more positive than were those of the liP cases. However, responses of the case without any quality management method were very much less positive about processes than the ISO 9002 respondents.

The following hypotheses were advanced (Chapter 6) in relation to liP (6.2.2).

- Guiding hypothesis B: Organisations working to the Investors in People standard have better employee management than similar organisations not working to liP.
- Guiding hypothesis B2: When managers are asked to score their organisation upon criteria used by the EFQM for the EQA, organisations working to liP score more highly on the "Employee management" and "Employee satisfaction" elements than do similar organisations not working to liP.

These guiding hypotheses are partially supported by the evidence generated from the interviews. Managers believed that top-level statements about employee policy were closely related to their organisations overall strategic statements. The liP cases clearly had better arrangements in place for staff development and training. There was evidence that this enabled them to recruit appropriately and to retain staff. However, it was apparent that in other people management areas such as the management of casualised workforce, performance review, recognition and rewarding of staff, they faced much the same problems as the other cases. There was no evidence to support a higher score for the liP cases on the people satisfaction element.

9.5 Chapter Nine: Concluding remarks

In this section, we reflect back upon the research on these cases, first considering the research process itself, and second, the results yielded.

In Chapter Seven (7.2) the limitations of the case study method were noted. These are underscored by the fact that it was impossible to find leisure centre cases which were identical in every respect apart from their choice of quality management method and it is clear that there were important differences between the cases chosen for study (9.1). The difficulty in carrying through the research design with respect to cases not using quality management meant that it was not possible to fully compare and contrast the two management standards with a baseline of no use of quality management methods.

Investigation of the survey instrument used to investigate external customer perceptions of service showed that it had both strengths and weaknesses. A considerable degree of internal consistency reliability was demonstrated through the factor analysis, and the factors themselves showed a good level of construct validity. The factors were similar, but not identical to, those produced in previous research, but appear to show that the instrument was

suitable for investigating the guiding hypotheses. However, multiple regression of the factor scores shows that the instrument was less able to predict overall satisfaction judgements than had been hoped, accounting for just under half of the variance in responses to the question about overall satisfaction.

The instrument developed for the (internal) management team interviews yielded a very rich picture of quality-related arrangements. All responses were scored and analysed, but the main role of quantitative responses was to support the qualitative responses given during the interview process.

Moving on to consider the results generated by the case research, it is evident from the "external" customer survey (9.2.2) that items relating to the quality and care of tangibles associate very strongly together. Moreover, the "Quality and care of tangibles" factor was much more important in accounting for variance in overall satisfaction than the other factors (9.2.4), suggesting that quality management of these items would be particularly valuable in terms of the overall customer experience. Although ISO 9002 seems to focus more on these issues than does liP, the customer survey pointed to the superiority of the liP cases over the ISO 9002 ones, in these areas as well as in staff-related issues. This was true even for items such as cleansing, centre maintenance and equipment maintenance which might be considered highly appropriate for an ISO 9002 quality system. Thus the survey results did not support the guiding hypotheses A1 and A2 about the efficacy of ISO 9002 in managing tangibles and processes, whilst lending support to B1 about the efficacy of liP in managing people.

A rather different picture was yielded by the management team interviews. It was apparent that managers of the ISO 9002 cases were highly supportive of registration, whereas the views of the liP case managers about registration under that standard were much more mixed. A similar result was picked up in the preliminary survey (reported in 8.2.5). However there was evidence that aspects of people management, especially staff training and development, were stronger in the liP cases, and that use of the standard had positively effected recruitment and retention of staff. However, the liP cases were no better in demonstrating high levels of employee satisfaction than were the ISO 9002 cases. Management of processes seemed to be somewhat stronger in the ISO 9002 cases. Thus guiding hypotheses A3 and B2 were partially supported by the "internal" study.

It is apparent that different perspectives were yielded by the "external" and "internal" studies. Whereas the "internal" view broadly supported the guiding hypotheses, the "external" view supported liP and not ISO 9002. Although several explanations could be put forward for

these findings, the researcher formed the view that the focus on processes engendered by ISO 9002 was helpful, but that many of the gains (e.g. reduction of waste, making the facility easier to manage, service consistency) were largely invisible to customers. The emphasis on employee development and training required by liP positively influenced recruitment and retention; it is entirely plausible that it was also of benefit in motivating staff. A possible explanation of the higher ratings customers gave in the liP cases to processes and care of the facilities' fabric and equipment was that training and motivational factors mean that staff of these centres were more likely to carry out procedures, and to be committed to the routine, even menial, cleaning and maintenance tasks, the carrying out of which impacts directly on customers.

The internal study showed several areas where the issues faced by managers were similar, irrespective of their approach to quality management, and these show some of the limitations of the two standards. First, neither standard seemed to have a systematic impact on ensuring that work was driven by customer needs, wants and expectations. In part this was because of the role played by the CCT specification, and in part because neither standard sets levels of performance for ensuring that customer needs, wants, expectations and perceptions of service are regularly ascertained. Second, all cases had problems with their performance review systems, partly because of the impact of casualisation and part-time working. Third, no cases scored well on the "people satisfaction" element, and few measures of this element were in place. Last "Impact on society" was difficult for managers to define and appeared not to be part of a quality discourse within these services.

Chapter Ten Conclusions

10.0 Preamble

This chapter seeks to reconceptualise the research described in the previous chapters, in order to examine the main findings and to discuss the contribution to knowledge that has been made by the study. The following format is used to cover this ground. First, the key findings of the literature review are revisited. The second section reflects upon the method and methodology employed, discussing the achievements and limitations of what was done with hindsight of the results. Third, the findings of the first and second stages of the primary research are highlighted and their implications discussed. Fourth, directions for future research are suggested. Finally, the overall contribution of the research is evaluated in light of the aims set for the investigation.

10.1 The literature

The literature reviewed suggests three substantially separate approaches to quality which can be roughly characterised as the "operations view of quality" (i.e. the traditional approach of the quality movement), the customer's view of quality (i.e. the services management perspective) and a focus on the relationship between citizen and state (i.e. public sector management). Whereas various authors had considered one of these strands from the vantage point of another, little seemed to have been done to take a more holistic view of all three of these strands.

The analysis of these three bodies of literature (6.3) produced what seems to be a new perspective. The quality movement work commenced with a view of quality as internal to the organisation, concentrating upon ensuring that processes produced error-free products (e.g. Shewhart 1931). More recently, it has been realised that these processes need to take account of the needs and wants of external customers. This is reflected in Quality Function Deployment (QFD), the Contract Review element of ISO 9002, and more particularly in the ethos of Total Quality Management which states that all internal processes should be driven by the demands of the external customer (e.g. Deming 1986; Oakland 1993, 1995). Although the EFQM European Quality Award (British Quality Foundation 1994-1) is often presented as a means of achieving TQM, the inclusion of measurement of quality results in the areas of employee satisfaction and impact on society suggests that quality is not only measured in terms of customer perceptions and business success. The implication is that quality should be viewed from the perspective of several stakeholder groups.

The service quality literature rejected the internal focus of the quality movement, suggesting that quality must be viewed in terms of customer expectations and perceptions of service

(e.g. Grönroos 1984, 1994-b; Parasuraman et al 1985). However, whilst the North American researchers appear to concentrate upon customer perceived quality, adherents of the Nordic School of services highlight the significance of the networks in which the organisation is situated, pointing out, for example, the importance of institutional regulation (e.g. Gummesson 1996; Gummesson et al 1997). Edvardsson and his co-researchers (Edvardsson et al 1994) propose that service quality should be evaluated as a trade-off between stakeholder groups (both internal and external to the organisation), encapsulating this in their concept of right quality as opposed to the best quality concept of the North American School of services, and indeed of the quality movement.

The view from public sector management is that quality evaluations have traditionally been made by the professionals delivering the service (e.g. Morgan and Murgatroyd 1994: 51-55). However, the previous Conservative administrations sought to reform the public sector so as to give more weight to the quality judgements of service managers and service users (Pollitt 1993; Walsh 1995-a). This involved a greater emphasis on resource utilisation criteria (efficiency) and on seeing service users as customers (e.g. du Gay and Salaman 1992). Critiques of this approach frequently centred upon the difficulty of defining public sector service quality in these apparently market-based terms (e.g. Walsh 1995-a, 1995-b). The incoming Labour government has sought a wider approach to the matter, as expressed in their Best Value initiative for local government services (e.g. Filkin 1997). This seems to represent a move from a customer vision of quality towards a stakeholder quality concept.

Thus all three parts of the literature reviewed show signs of asserting the need for a stakeholder-based approach to quality. This has important consequences for quality management, since elements other than those bearing on customer perceptions and shareholder/ taxpayer considerations must be controlled for quality. It also has important consequences for the *evaluation* of service quality management since it suggests factors additional to customer perceived service quality should be measured. In both quality management and the evaluation of it, the EFQM EQA model appears to have a role to play. It may be able to provide a bridge between these three intellectual traditions, since its stakeholder framework potentially provides a means of integrating the traditional concerns of each sector. However, it requires some development for public services to fully accommodate issues related to the quality of the political process and the variety of significant stakeholders which are raised in the public sector management literature.

This public sector management literature suggests that a feature of these services is the number of stakeholder groups, some more powerful than others, which have needs of service and which make demands on service providers (e.g. Clarke and Stewart 1987;

Harrow and Willcocks 1990; Mintzberg 1997). The implication is that each stakeholder group has its own quality agenda which they expect the service to deliver. Ideally, the quality expectations and perceptions of each group would be studied in order to make an assessment of service quality.

For local authority leisure services, Robinson (1997) suggested that relevant groups consisted of external groups including the direct user of the facility, the person who benefits from the service without directly using it, various internal customers and council tax payers. The several internal "customers", included politicians and other Council departments (Table 5.5). Internal stakeholders also include professional managers responsible for the service. Unlike some other public services (such as the health service), in local authority sport and leisure services the professionals with leisure expertise are also the operations managers who control the operation's resources (e.g. Coalter 1986, 1990-a; Henry 1993). It was concluded that these managers were both an important stakeholder group and in a position to know about the impact of quality management on other stakeholders. Thus it was decided that an investigation of quality management would need, as a minimum, to study the perceptions of these professional leisure managers and the perceptions of external customers, the service users.

The academic literature on sports and recreation service quality was small in volume and had largely been concerned with the measurement of perceived service quality. Such studies either used the unmodified SERVQUAL instrument (e.g. Williams 1998) or developed versions of it which were adapted to the specific nature of these services (e.g. Howat et al 1996). Although the latter addressed specific characteristics of sport and recreation services, none of them were free from flaws (6.1). None of the development work for these service-specific instruments had been undertaken in the UK. The remaining literature focused on applications of quality movement paradigms such as quality assurance, but there was very inadequate information on what quality management methods were practised in these services.

It became clear that none of the three main bodies of literature (i.e. the quality movement, services management and public services management) had succeeded in elaborating a method of assessing the efficacy of quality management practices. One concludes from the literature that making such an assessment is an inherently difficult task. Developing the means of measuring customer or end-user perceptions, although very important, is only one of several elements which need to be in place. Measurement of the perceptions of other stakeholders also needs to be done, and this is especially important for public sector services (see above). It is also important to compare results of those organisations using one

quality management method with those using a different one, and indeed with those using no quality management at all. The subsequent section examines the implications of these points for the method used in this study.

10.2 Method

The method used in the first stage of primary research (postal survey) was a standard approach to a need to conduct basic, exploratory research. The survey appears to have succeeded in establishing the main quality management and customer satisfaction monitoring methods in use in sport and recreation services. The inclusion of a question on how satisfied respondents were with their quality management arrangements also helped in the formulation of guiding hypotheses for the second stage of primary research. The extensive use of multiple methods of quality management was a surprise and with hindsight it is apparent that questions about how satisfactory quality management arrangements were should have been asked about each of the methods in use.

As was noted above (10.1) the literature offered little in the way of methodological models for comparison of quality management methods, so the second primary research stage was necessarily more innovative and is discussed below.

Although there was not a realistic alternative to a case study method, this approach suffers from the limitation that it can never be regarded as 'definitive' because it is difficult to show that the cases are typical, and to exclude variables other than those studied. Difficulties in obtaining access to organisations meant that it was not possible to select cases on purely objective criteria and the researcher used his own network of contacts in order to gain organisational entry. So in this research there were bound to be many differences between the sports centres and their customers, apart from quality management methods, which may have influenced results. The difference in management cultures engendered by the different forms of ownership (DSO, commercial enterprise, industrial and provident society) will have introduced other sources of variation. Thus caution is required in attributing differences between customer responses to the quality management methods in place; a larger study is required in order to substantiate the relationships which seem to have emerged from this research. Owing to problems in gaining and sustaining organisational access, the original intention to study a group of cases without any form of quality management had to be abandoned, and only one such case was fully studied. It was not fully possible therefore, to study the perceptions of managers and customers in organisations which have no involvement in quality management. Doing so would have assisted the interpretation of the results in the other cases, by providing a baseline for comparison. Against these limitations, the study had the advantage that the pre-existing relationship of trust between the researcher

and the facility managers meant that the latter readily yielded information, even that of a sensitive nature. Information about many variables was generated by the study. Although there were differences between the cases that could not be accounted for by grouping by quality management method, there were also significant differences between the cases when so grouped. In spite of the methodological limitations expressed above, it appeared that the method was sufficiently robust to facilitate the exploration of real differences in the effect of the two management standards.

All three parts of the literature review showed that the quality perceptions of all major stakeholders should be taken into account. Owing to the operations management focus (and the resource limitations) of this study two stakeholder groups were included, the customers or end-users and the managers/ management team. Ideally the perceptions of politicians and council chief officers would also have been included. However, the investigation of both "internal" and "external" elements added to the depth of the analysis as compared to other studies of quality management (e.g. Redman and Snape 1995; Lockwood et al 1996) which have only considered managers, or that of Williams (1998) which only considered customers. From this study it appears that managers and customers can have different perceptions of quality issues and the danger of relying on the perceptions of one stakeholder group is highlighted.

In the course of the second primary research stage, two instruments were developed which proved to be generally efficacious in use. The management interview questionnaire, developed from the EFQM EQA model, generated a very rich amount of qualitative information. The quantitative element to it, whilst helpful in supporting qualitative assessments, was perhaps rather less useful than had originally been anticipated.

For the "external" research, it was pointed out above (10.1) that there was no suitable customer survey instrument available from other studies; the CERM CSQ appeared to be the "best fit" for this research but could not be obtained from its originators. Thus the researcher was forced to originate a customer survey instrument, based on the published results of others. The development of this instrument proved to be complex and resource intensive. Although it took customers three or four minutes to complete, most customers appeared willing to fill out the form, particularly when asked to do so by sports centre staff. The questionnaire was successful in generating strong factor structures which were interpretable in terms of the key concepts within the guiding hypotheses (tangibles, staff, processes); however its ability to predict overall customer satisfaction was disappointing. Ideally, further stages of refinement and confirmatory factor analysis would have been undertaken, but this was beyond the resources of the researcher.

Overall, the methodology developed here represents a modest but definite advance in an area where much more research is needed. In particular, it sought evidence from customers about their perceptions of the services and developed a customer survey instrument tailored for the services in question. By developing an interview instrument for the management teams, based on the EFQM, EQA, the method was able to examine the customer results against a broad knowledge of quality-related issues in each case.

10.3 Findings of primary research

10.3.0 First stage of primary research stage

The postal survey of leisure facility managers, showed a widely varying development of quality management within the industry, and within local authority facilities. Although nearly 20% of respondents had not used any quality management method, the majority were active using one or more quality management methods. Many were using internally validated, and possibly internally developed, quality mechanisms, in particular customer care programmes. Others were operating recognised standards such as ISO 9000 (14%) and liP (23%). The popularity of liP had not previously been reported in these services, but has since been supported through the work of Robinson (1998). Many respondents were considering these standards for use in the future.

These quality management choices should be understood in the context of the small or medium size of most of the organisations responding to the survey. This may mean that a considerable proportion of their resources would have been devoted to developing their quality management initiatives. It was noted (3.4.1) that a criticism of ISO 9000 is the resources securing registration involves, particularly for smaller organisations. The case study stage of research found pointers that this criticism has been overplayed: although considerable work was involved in securing registration, this did not seem to unduly tax organisational resources. Moreover, the experience of the Arches and Highbury cases showed that standard could be used to simplify a heritage of complex procedures.

Nearly all respondents could report that they had made use of at least one method of getting feedback from customers. However there was considerable reliance upon complaints and comments from customers (which may be reactive rather than proactive) and upon "proxy customers" (inspectors). 52% of respondents had administered a customer questionnaire in order to obtain feedback from customers. The service quality paradigms reviewed in Chapter Four suggest that it is important for service organisations to actively seek feedback from customers. Whilst it is a positive feature that many of these organisations were doing so, the evidence from the cases was that little or no attention was paid to the services quality

literature when managers designed customer survey instruments, probably weakening the reliance that could be placed on the resulting data.

Although some respondents were not making use of any quality management method, a surprising number were using multiple methods, and utilising several customer satisfaction monitoring methods. This raised the question of how, if at all, these different approaches were integrated to form a coherent management regime. The case study research showed that different elements of quality management were not often well integrated, with customer monitoring having little relationship to the ISO 9002 or liP regimen, and with a degree of confusion about who (contractor or client) "owned" customer monitoring programmes. However, most respondents (79%) were satisfied or very satisfied with their quality management arrangements. For the local authority connected cohort, respondents' satisfaction with their quality management arrangements rose with the number of quality management methods they used. Although the case study research did not specifically address the issue of why this might be so, it was apparent the facility managers were aware that each method addressed only certain aspects of service quality. It seems likely therefore that managers using multiple quality management methods would be more content that they were tackling a fuller range of service quality issues. Respondents using ISO 9000 were satisfied with these arrangements, but a proportion of those using liP appeared dissatisfied. These differing internal perceptions of the two standards were broadly confirmed by the second stage of primary research.

The current Labour government wishes to move the focus of local authority service quality away from a narrow market approach towards a broader conception which recognises the differing constituencies which these services must serve. The evidence from the survey was that there was no shortage of experience of quality technique in local authority sport and recreation services. However, little was known about the effectiveness of these techniques either in the narrow sense of customer perceptions or in the broader sense of their effect on attributes which impact on other stakeholders. The second stage of the research provided knowledge of this subject by investigating the efficacy of ISO 9002 and liP as quality management methods in these services.

10.3.1 Second stage of primary research

The development and deployment of the customer survey instrument in the second primary research stage has made a significant contribution to the understanding of how customers make quality judgements of sport and recreation services. The review showed some research on customer expectations and perceptions of these services, but very little research of the importance they attach to different aspects of service. The factor structures for

"importance" and "perception" whilst sharing similarities, also have some major differences which suggests that the way in which customers view these services in general is different from how they view the service offer of a particular leisure facility. The "perceptions" factor structure had some similarities to that found by Howat et al (1996) when they developed the CERM CSQ. However, this study did not yield factors corresponding to "core services" and "secondary services" found by the CERM researchers. The difference in factor structures may be due to the difference in instrument format (expectations-perceptions in the CERM CSQ as against importance-perceptions in this study) or to cultural differences between the Australian/ New Zealand customers of Howat et al's study and those in this one. Taylor et al (1993) found such differences in their use of SERVQUAL in recreation services in different countries.

The factor structure produced by this instrument was radically different from that generated by the SERVQUAL instruments of Parasuraman et al (1988, 1991, 1993). This is to be expected given the quite different item pools from which the two scales were constructed. Never-the-less, some rough similarities emerged. The "quality and care of tangibles" dimension is similar to that of Parasuraman's "tangibles", whilst the "staff" dimension roughly includes both Parasuraman's "empathy" "responsiveness" and "assurance". The "processes" dimension which emerged in the importance-weighted perception scores has some similarity with Parasuraman's "reliability" dimension.

One of the features of all three factor structures (importance, perception, importance-weighted perception) yielded by the investigation was the strength of the "Quality and care of tangibles" factor, suggesting issues such as centre cleanliness, maintenance and equipment quality were strongly associated together in customers minds. Moreover, of the customer perception factors, this factor was clearly the most important in predicting overall customer satisfaction (Table 9.9). In importance-weighted format (Table 9.10) the "Quality and care of tangibles" factor accounted for slightly less of the variance in overall satisfaction than did the "Processes" factor, but these two factors together are much better at predicting overall satisfaction than the other three factors. These findings run counter to a theme evident in much services quality literature, that service reliability (e.g. see Zeithaml et al 1990) and staff-customer encounters (e.g. Carlzon 1987) are the key determinants of overall customer perceptions of service.

Researchers in leisure, recreation and sport had not reported the customer-importance rankings of the different dimensions of service generated by use of SERVQUAL or sports service specific versions of it. Thus the result from this research is a contribution to understanding quality in these services, as it suggests that the quality of tangibles and the

care given to them are highly significant in the overall service satisfaction evaluations made by customers, and certainly more significant than perceptions of staff quality. Processes visible to customers are also important in these evaluations.

A note of caution should be sounded in relation to the interpretation of these survey results because, even in importance-weighted format, multiple regression of the factor scores accounted for less than half (47%) of the variance in responses to questions about respondents overall satisfaction with the service. Two main explanations have been put forward. First, that there were items other than those asked about in the questionnaire which influenced overall perceptions of service. Second, that asking about customers' overall perception of service quality might have produced a better fit between the individual questionnaire items and their overall perception of service, since the literature suggests that satisfaction and service quality are overlapping and interrelated, but are not identical constructs (e.g. Cronin and Taylor 1992; Anderson 1994; Zeithaml and Bitner 1996). In this instance, customer satisfaction might also have been influenced by factors such as the price of the service or its perceived value to the customer, as well as by the perceived level of quality.

Having commented upon the contribution to the understanding of *service quality* in these services which has been generated by this study, we now examine how the results have increased knowledge of *service quality management*. It was proposed in guiding hypothesis A3:

- When managers are asked to score their organisation upon criteria used by the EFQM for the EQA, organisations working to ISO 9002 score more highly on the "Processes" and "Resource management" elements than do similar organisations not working to ISO 9002.

The managers and management teams of the ISO 9002 group held this standard in high regard, and appeared to believe that it had helped them to build a more consistent, safer and less wasteful management regimen. The internal study partially supported the above propositions and there was evidence of better arrangement of processes management in this group as compared to the liP group. However, there were only slight differences between the two groups on "Resource management" issues, but this element was much weaker in the case which was quality inactive. This suggests that management of resources is improved by adoption of either standard; the fact that something is done is more important than which standard is chosen.

Although ISO 9002 specifies the need for reviews of the service specification through the element of contract review, neither this element nor other elements specify monitoring of

customer needs, wants, expectations and perceptions of service. Thus the standard does not appear to help raise the profile of the "customer satisfaction" results factor of the EFQM EQA. Neither does it clarify the confused purposes of monitoring of this element, or ownership of monitoring programmes which was evident in the case studies (9.4.6). However, rather similar problems existed in the liP group of cases. It seems that services using these standards need to supplement them with a clear programme of monitoring customer perceptions, evaluating the results, and incorporating appropriate organisational responses into work design, implementation and control.

Generally the ISO 9002 group seemed to have a less robust approach to the "people management" element of the EFQM EQA than the liP group. Neither group scored well on the "people satisfaction" element, which had a low profile for these managers. The former finding is unsurprising given that liP is conceived as a people management standard. Although measuring people satisfaction is clearly one way of assessing the quality of people management, it is clear from a reading of the liP standard that there is no requirement to undertake such measurement. Thus the second finding is not surprising either for liP or for ISO 9002. However, organisations wishing to move towards the EQA version of TQM need to develop ways of measuring the satisfaction of staff with their work and work organisation, irrespective of whether or not they are registered to liP.

These findings have significant implications for the future of ISO 9002 in the services studied, and perhaps in the wider local government context. The standard seems to have something to offer in terms of improvement of the management of processes and tangible assets. It seems to gain the support of operations managers through making service management easier and more consistent. However, the standard does not seem to contribute much to people management which, owing to the inseparability of service production, is a vital area for services. Additionally, the "Contract review" element of the standard does not appear to properly specify processes for the gaining of customer feedback. In fact, customer feedback mechanisms were generally outside the quality system in the cases studied.

Guiding hypotheses A1 and A2 were put forward about the perceptions of customers:

- When the perceptions of customers of organisations working to ISO 9002 are compared with perceptions of customers of similar organisations not working to ISO 9002, they show the former to be more satisfied with processes.
- When the perceptions of customers of organisations working to ISO 9002 are compared with perceptions of customers of similar organisations not working to ISO 9002, they show the former to be more satisfied with tangibles.

The indicative results produced by this study do not support these hypotheses. Statistical tests on the results of the customer survey suggested that customers did not rate the processes or tangibles of the ISO 9002 group as highly as did customers of the liP group. Whatever the impact of the standard upon these aspects of the operation, the study did not produce evidence that these were apparent to customers. No previous research seems to have investigated this aspect, and so it is impossible to judge if this is peculiar to the cases studied. However, were this finding to be confirmed by other studies, it would have far-reaching implications for quality management in these kind of services. It suggests that use of the standard cannot be relied upon to create higher perceptions of service in customers; since this is a major concern of public services (and indeed of commercial sector ones) it must raise questions about the effectiveness of the standard in this context. The literature review found that the ISO 9000 series was an outcome of the internally focused stage of development of the quality movement. The evidence from the services in this study is that managers believe that ISO 9002 helps them to meet their business results objectives, and much of the gain from process improvement is internal, through the reduction of waste, reprocessing or duplication of effort etc. This is mirrored in gains in business results (cost reduction) but will not necessarily be noticed directly by customers, particularly where the main improvements are made to back room processes. Although one would hope that front office customer-processing operations will also benefit from the standard, they are not its main focus. On reflection therefore, it is unsurprising that process improvements do not lead to a consequential raising of customer perceptions of service as compared to those facilities not managed to the standard.

Managers of the liP registered group of cases had a varied estimation of the usefulness of the standard. The Newham Leisure Centre had placed achievement of the standard, and working to it, at the heart of a process of beneficial change, and managers there had a very high opinion of it. The Hartham Pool management team were also broadly supportive, but gave less prominence in their work to the standard. The Waterfront Leisure Centre management team were the most critical, and felt that the contribution the standard had made to their work was generally modest. Since there is very little literature on the operation of the standard, one cannot assess how typical these findings are. It is possible that the reason for this mix of attitudes to liP flows from variation in the registration regime itself. Other reasons might be due to the considerable changes in staff numbers and roles perceived by several respondents as deleterious to staff and to the service itself. It is likely to be more difficult for organisations to sell programmes such as liP to their middle management in these circumstances. The consequence is that promoters of the standard need to give more attention to wider employment policies if they wish to secure more support for it.

Turning now to the impact of liP on the service, guiding hypothesis B2 put forward the following proposition:

- When managers are asked to score their organisation upon criteria used by the EFQM for the EQA, organisations working to liP score more highly on the "Employee management" and "Employee satisfaction" elements than do similar organisations not working to liP.

The evidence from the study partially supported the above, in that there was clear evidence that aspects of people management were stronger in the liP cases. Use of the standard appeared to have had a beneficial effect on staff recruitment, training and development, whilst also aiding staff retention. The literature suggests that these elements are likely to bear critically upon service encounters (e.g. Bitner et al 1990) and upon customer care (Lewis 1990, 1995), and it would be expected they would therefore bear positively on customer perceptions of service. Measures of employee satisfaction (both indirect and direct) were weak in the liP cases and no stronger than in the other ones. The service literature has frequently shown the close connection between employee motivation, morale or demeanour and level of service quality perceived by the customer (e.g. Czepiel et al 1985-b; Bateson 1985; Lewis 1990, 1995). Although employee satisfaction is likely to have a considerable bearing upon service quality as understood as customer perceptions, the research was not able to explore this, as none of the cases measured people satisfaction. Since "People satisfaction" is also a quality results factor of the EQA, measurement of it is also directly relevant to a stakeholder conception of service quality. Thus there is a powerful argument for extension of the standard to cover direct and indirect measures of employee satisfaction.

A principle of liP is that human resource policies should flow from the fundamental requirements of the business expressed in the business plan. The evaluation made by the researcher was that this had been a helpful process for the cases leading to internal quality benefits, but that like the contract review process of ISO 9002, it was an insufficient mechanism for originating a focus on customer needs, wants and expectations. As liP is "sold" primarily as a people management standard it is unsurprising that it did not seem to provide a continuing emphasis on obtaining feedback from customers about their perceptions. The services literature (e.g. Parasuraman et al 1985), suggests that it is important that organisations understand customer perceptions and take account of them in the way they set up the work of staff. Thus customer perceptions are likely to have implications for staff duties and for employee recruitment, training and development. Unfortunately, this issue is inadequately dealt with by the standard which does not appear to integrate capture of customer perceptions with a focus on the practice of staff. Like the ISO

9002 cases, in the liP cases gaining of customer feedback, and acting on it, was essentially accomplished outside the framework of the standard. The implication is that, for the standard to better serve as a service quality management method, modification of it is required for it to more effectively assist in addressing the "Customer satisfaction" element of the EQA.

It is unsurprising in view of the guiding hypotheses that management of processes and tangible resources in the liP group did not appear so robust as in the ISO 9002 cases. The different foci of the two standards imply such a result.

For the "external" study the following was proposed as guiding hypothesis B1:

- When the perceptions of customers of organisations working to liP are compared with perceptions of customers of similar organisations not working to liP, they show the former to be more satisfied with staff.

The customer survey produced evidence that supported this proposition, in that statistical tests showed that customer scores for the liP group were significantly higher than for the ISO 9002 group against the staff-related variables. This result is an encouraging one since it implies that use of the standard assists in controlling or improving customer perceptions of a vital aspect of service, that is the quality of staff.

An unexpected finding was that the liP group of cases were also rated more highly by customers on attributes such as the care of tangibles. A possible explanation for this rests with the ability of the standard to assist in the recruitment, training and motivation of staff who were therefore more likely to perform duties associated with these attributes in a high quality manner. If this result were to be substantiated by future research, it would suggest that the standard has a major role to play in sustaining service quality.

Reflecting upon the overall assessment of the two standards, one can say that, through their different mechanisms both generated internal benefits through reducing waste or errors. Neither standard has the external focus which is suggested by the services quality literature or by the "customer satisfaction" results factor of the EQA. However, liP appeared to positively influence customer perception of service across a range of service attributes when compared with ISO 9002.

10.4 Directions for future research

10.4.0 Conceptual development

In 10.1 above it was suggested that the literature reviewed in this thesis had been interpreted in an original way. However, more can be done to develop the potential of the models involved, and to test their relevance to practice. In particular, more can be done to adapt the

EFQM EQA for public sector services. Although the current model was useful in the simple application made in this study, largely because of its operations management rather than political policy focus, it also became clear that the model had some difficulties in unambiguously accommodating all of the quality issues raised in the public sector literature. For example, it is difficult to distinguish the leadership of politicians and senior officers, although these are of a quite different nature in their origins and on their impact on the service. As discussed in Chapter Five, the political framework, and political interventions in the sport/ recreation service arise from the interaction between the electorate, service stakeholders and the motivations of individual politicians. These factors may have a very significant, and sometimes unpredictable, impact on the service, but it is difficult to place them on the EQA model. Thus the health of the political processes also has a crucial bearing on local authority services, but this is quite separate from the operational issues addressed by the processes element of the quality "enablers". Within the quality "results" factors similar difficulties can be found in placing the social results which are the prime purpose of the service.

Another area for conceptual development would be to adapt some of the insights of the Nordic School of Services for the public sector. Relationship marketing, the marketing equilibrium and the concepts of networks of exchange appear highly relevant in an era when local authorities have a considerable role as purchasers of services from others or as facilitators within partnership arrangements, rather than acting just as direct service providers (e.g. see Leach et al 1994: 209-236).

10.4.1 Quality management methods

It seems apparent from the literature review that surprisingly little is known about the issues that arise through the deployment of quality management standards, generally in public sector services or specifically in sport and recreation services. liP in particular has not yet generated much academic research. There is a clear need for research in this area, this study having provided evidence of differences between management and customer responses to liP and ISO 9002. These need to be tested with firmer hypotheses and a large "paired" sample. There is also a role for the utilisation of qualitative methods to generate a depth of insight.

Within public sector sport and recreation services, there is a need for a larger study of quality management, along the lines of that reported in this study, but with a greater number of cases and greater geographical spread. Such a study would also need to incorporate a consideration of the quality perceptions of more stakeholder groups than was possible in this research (in particular, politicians and senior officers).

The first stage of primary research showed that very few respondents used the "Other" category to write in that they had some kind of citizen involvement mechanism as a quality management method, although it is unclear whether this was due to the lack of such mechanisms or to their not being seen as related to service quality. The "internal" study of the second stage of primary research (9.4.6) showed that two facilities were making use of methods which involved face-to-face meetings with customers such as customer panels or a community forum. A further two had had experience of such mechanisms in the past. However, managers did not regard these activities as part of the "social result" of their service. A related issue is the means of assessing the overall impact on society of local authority sport and recreation services. From the "internal" study (9.4.8) it seems that consideration of the impact of the service on people who are not direct customers of it has not been connected with the quality management discourse. Managers appeared to be comfortable with the notion that they owed a duty of service quality to the customer or end-user; they were much less comfortable with the concept of a quality duty towards a wider community. Yet these aspects of service quality are a vital component of the Best Value initiative. There is a need for further research into citizen involvement in these services, so as to ascertain which methods of achieving the involvement of the wider community are successful. This needs to be coupled with an investigation of the impact of sports provision on communities, so that realistic quality objectives and programmes can be formulated.

10.4.2 Customer surveys for sport and recreation services

The implication of the discussion of the method employed in the second stage of primary research (10.3 above) is that further research could develop a survey instrument suitable for use for UK public sector sport and recreation services. Additional qualitative and quantitative research stages could refine the survey instrument and remedy some of deficiencies which became apparent in the evaluation of it (9.2) for this research. Such an instrument would be invaluable, not only for future comparative studies of the kind undertaken here, but also for use by facility managers as a self-monitoring instrument, informing their quality management practices.

10.5 An assessment of the contribution of this research

The following aims were put forward for the first stage of this study (1.0):

- to identify the range of quality management approaches available to (sport and recreation) services;
- to ascertain the quality management approaches actually used in practice.

The study has indeed advanced knowledge against both of these aims. The literature review, summarised in 10.1 above, suggested three overarching perspectives on quality from the quality movement, services management and public sector management. The quality movement suggests approaches which try to control internal work processes (as in quality control and quality assurance such as ISO 9000) whilst connecting them with the needs of external customers (as in TQM, or through techniques such as QFD). Services management emphasises quality as perceived by the external customer and quality models such as the "Gap model" of Parasuraman et al (1985) suggest means of aligning service delivery with the expectations of customers. Public sector management has a strong tradition of "internal" quality control through the "bureau-professional" model (Butcher 1994). As professional-client relationships have been overlain with concepts of the client as customer, there has been increasing interest in notions of quality control and assurance drawn from the quality movement. There has also been a more limited interest in using the services literature to develop instruments to measure the service expectations and perceptions of end-users. However, the critiques of the tradition of public sector management in both the "bureau-professional" and "managerialist" forms suggest quality involves seeing end-users as citizens and not consumers, bringing them into the management structure.

Reflecting upon the implications of the work done in the second stage of primary research for the relationship between public sector service quality and market mechanisms, CCT seems to have produced a mixture of positive and negative effects on service quality. The intention of CCT was that competition between contractors for contracts would drive down unit costs, producing gains in quality for the taxpayer (i.e. economy and efficiency gains). Quality for the consumer would be enhanced, partly by freeing purchasers (the local authority "client") to specify it, choosing contractors offering the highest service quality consistent with VfM and monitoring them to ensure quality promises were delivered. Consumer quality would also be enhanced through encouraging consumer choice between providers in a "quasi-market" (Prime Minister 1991, Prime Minister and Duchy of Lancaster 1992). From the case studies, there seem to be three main ways in which this vision has indeed been the case in practice.

First, CCT has forced local authorities to take an interest in service quality issues, often for the first time. It involved losing day-to-day control of provision, and it was therefore important to specify levels of service. All of the cases registered to ISO 9002 at the time of the study, were working to client specifications which demanded registration from the contractor. All the centres were regularly inspected by the local authority client (9.4.6), enabling senior managers (and possibly, politicians) to have a much better understanding of service levels than was the case before CCT. Second, there seem to have been benefits in introducing new organisations into service delivery, with the commercial/ voluntary sector

operators having much more appropriate financial and resources off-site support for their facilities (9.4.5). These benefits are also apparent in the access of the non-DSO organisations to commercial sources of capital which had enabled the provision of new gyms at the Arches Leisure Centre and St. George's Pool at no cost to the taxpayer. Third, it is clear that in the new competitive environment, the sport and recreation centres were performing well in the Business Results area (9.4.9). All respondents reported continuous improvement in this field; they were being set clear and realistic targets and were achieving them. Quality for the taxpayer was therefore enhanced.

Against these successes must be set a series of quality problems or anomalies that have been thrown up by CCT. The role of the contract specification produces a sometimes unhelpful tension into the work if customers want or need services/ service levels not allowed by the contract documentation (9.4.6). Since it appeared that little customer research had generally informed the specification, this situation arose not infrequently. A second point is related to the first. The local authority clients were monitoring the contracts through regular inspections, often on a more than weekly basis, checking aspects of the service against the specification. Because of the power of monitoring officers to penalise the contractor, this further increased the profile of the specification and the proxy customer (i.e. the inspector) over the real customers. Moreover, the local authority client usually played a role in the monitoring feedback from customers, either through complaints, or through design and control of periodic customer surveys.

Thus CCT has been characterised by a confusion of quality roles (9.4.1), and this led to problems in identifying who *owned* quality. Two of the major themes of the quality movement are that quality should be driven by customers, and that part of the organisation's leadership's quality commitment is to ensure that those carrying out the work are willing and able to take responsibility for doing it well (e.g. Deming 1986; Oakland 1995). In effect the contractors managing the sports services have two customers, the public using the service and the local authority client. However the legal framework between client and contractor has been designed in terms of maximising competition for contracts, to which local authorities responded by through the creation of highly prescriptive specifications and onerous monitoring regimes (Coalter 1995). This created a poor environment for managing the contractor-service user relationship, as service users had far less power over the contractor than the local authority client. The quality movement literature suggests that monitoring and analysis of processes is a vital aspect of quality control (e.g. Shewhart 1931; Juran 1974, 1992); the services management literature suggests that for services a key aspect of this is monitoring the service user's needs, wants, expectations and perceptions of service (e.g. Parasuraman et al 1985, 1988; Grönroos 1990). The operational involvement of

the local authority client in these process monitoring functions (9.4.5/ 9.4.6) was harmful to quality because it substituted a contract policing rationale for what should have been a service improvement one, at the same time as disempowering the contractor and service personnel.

These issues need to be seen in the context of the service economy/ efficiency rationale of CCT, which coincided with great financial pressures on local government. The clear impression from the cases was that the local authority clients were looking to the leisure service contractors as a source of financial economies, in the knowledge that increased use of facilities would lead to greater income from customers or that greater use of part-time or casual staff could reduce costs. These changes allowed net subsidies from the client to be reduced. The efficiency impacts of CCT on the case studies appear to be quite similar to those described in other services (e.g. Walsh 1995-b: 222-238) or local authority leisure services in general (e.g. Taylor and Page 1994; Coalter 1995). Study of the cases showed that much greater emphasis was placed on achieving financial targets, as compared to achieving quality goals. This was reflected in the issues which featured in performance appraisals of managers (9.4.1). This financial emphasis had also obscured, at least to an extent, a management focus on the wider impact of the services. Managers were not very aware of the impact of the service on people who were not direct users of it (9.4.8). This aspect is closely bound up with the social result of the service, and thus with the reasoning behind public sector provision of sport and leisure.

Scholars such as Pollitt (1986, 1987) and Walsh (1995-b) have commented upon the confused thinking on quality evident in the Conservative government's quasi-market programme. Pollitt remarked in the context of reforms to the National Health Service:

...while public service 'quality' is a popular theme in current political and managerial rhetoric, actual attempts to 'do anything about it' are both driven by conceptual inconsistencies and deeply coloured by bureaucratic and professional politics. As yet the final users of the NHS service have played only a limited, and largely passive role in the establishment of quality criteria and in the organisational arrangements by which such criteria are applied and monitored." (Pollitt 1987, quoted in Walsh 1995-b: 248).

Walsh (1995-b: 249) concluded that:

"There is little evidence that the (quasi-market) changes introduced have had either beneficial or deleterious impacts in the case of complex public services".

The evidence from this study is that CCT has been a mixed blessing in managing service quality. It has, at the very least, contributed to an environment which has produced better economies and efficiencies in local authority sport and leisure services. In this sense it has

helped to generate better quality for the taxpayer. It has also prompted the introduction of some new service organisations, and the widespread take-up of quality management practices, into service delivery. Because prior to CCT, there was very little tracking of service user perceptions, it is not possible to know what the impact of CCT has been on service to the customer. However, it is most unlikely that, overall, CCT had adversely affected service quality to users of services provided by the case studies, given the greater attention now given to quality management. Morgan and Murgatroyd (1994) suggested that market-like mechanisms in the public sector would facilitate progress of the quality improvement approach of TQM. However, the evidence from the cases showed that in some ways the structures and relationships CCT had generated were an obstacle to service improvement philosophies and practices. Thus the evidence is that CCT is very far from being a panacea for quality received by the service user.

In principle, the replacement of CCT by Best Value should enable some of the current difficulties to be overcome. Best Value shifts the quality emphasis from the economy/efficiency sphere, towards "effectiveness". This enables a more complex view to be taken of it since quality can be envisaged as involving judgements of the taxpayer, service users, professional and staff providing the service and by the wider community. However, to move forward from the current situation opportunities would need to be grasped in the following areas.

First, mechanisms for evaluating these different aspects of quality need to be elaborated. These may be simple and qualitative in some aspects (e.g. community fora for assessing local community impact) or highly quantitative and technical in others (customer satisfaction measures/ performance indicators etc.). Second, means need to be found of sharing quality related information between service providers in a spirit of service improvement (external benchmarking was almost completely absent from the case studies). Third, the ownership of service quality should be clarified to a much greater degree than at present. Managers of the services need to be clear that it is their responsibility to monitor all of the stakeholders' views of quality and to take consequential appropriate action. Fourth, where contracts are used to deliver services there needs to be a more symbiotic relationship between "client" and contractor than seems to have been the case in most of the case studies. It may be that the absence of compulsion may help to generate an atmosphere of mutual trust and shared commitment to service improvement. If local authority clients feel that they must set up and police the contract in a manner similar to the practice under CCT, then much of the opportunity for progress will be lost. Fifth, people management issues need to feature more strongly in the service quality discourse in these services, but in a quite different way from that done hitherto. The effects of casualisation, delayering and increased workloads need to

be factored into an approach which sees achieving people satisfaction as an important result of quality management.

The review of literature showed that there was little knowledge of the quality management methods in use in sport and recreation services, and the first primary research stage was important in bridging that knowledge gap. It showed that many of the services under study had given considerable attention to controlling processes, particularly those which directly affect customers (e.g. through developing customer care programmes, or through developing procedures for improvement in human resource management via liP). Others had focused on processes (particularly those directed at tangibles) via ISO 9002. This research also showed that most services had taken steps to secure feedback from customers, using a wide variety of means so to do. However, the second stage of research raised questions about how effective these means were in practice; monitoring of customer perceptions of the service, and acting upon them, appears to be substantially outside the management arrangements of both standards. Although neither research stage specifically focused on means of involving the citizen/ consumer through user committees, fora or more general community panels, it is apparent that these mechanisms are sometimes used, but were cited by only a very small number of respondents.

Moving on to reflect on the implications of some of the other findings of the second stage of primary research, the crucial role of service tangibles in customer satisfaction was highlighted in section 10.3.1. These results seem to put in perspective the initiatives taken by many local authorities in recent years to introduce programmes designed to enhance the presentability, identifiability and demeanour of leisure services staff towards customers. The unglamorous items of changing rooms, showers and toilet facilities often seem to be the cause of customer dissatisfaction. Investment in quality plant, fixtures, fittings and equipment is likely to have a substantial impact on satisfaction, provided that this is supported by rigorous routine maintenance and cleaning programmes. Of all the keys to securing better customer satisfaction with the leisure service, improving the tangibles may be the most effective.

The aims set for the second stage of primary research were:

- to elucidate the issues that arise through the deployment of two quality management standards (International Standards Organisation standard 9002 [ISO 9002] and Investors in People [liP]); and
- to evaluate the efficacy of these standards (ISO 9002 and liP) in practice.

The research described in this thesis has contributed to knowledge against these aims in several ways. In what follows the two aims are dealt with together; the evaluation is ordered through focusing first on ISO 9002 and then liP.

The differences revealed by the study between the customer responses in the ISO 9002 and liP registered cases can be summarised as showing better performance in the liP cases. This must be regarded as an indicative rather than a definitive result (see section 10.2 above), but at the very least suggests further questions for research (see section 10.4 above). There had been very little comparative work on different approaches to quality management in the literature to act as a baseline for this study, and there is thus a pioneering element to the results achieved here.

Although the better performance of the liP cases on questions associated with the "Staff" factor is unsurprising, it was unexpected that customers also gave higher scores to the liP cases for items which would be more directly addressed by ISO 9002 (e.g. cleaning and maintenance). It should be noted that one contribution of this investigation was to suggest that of the factors identified, the quality and care of tangibles was the most significant factor in predicting overall customer satisfaction. Thus the quality management method most effective in gaining high customer scores against this factor is likely to also achieve higher scores for overall customer judgements of service. The results reported in Chapter Nine suggest that the liP group achieved higher scores for this overall judgement.

In Chapter Nine (9.5) it was noted that there seemed to be a difference between the results of the "external" and "internal" studies. The management team interviews suggested superior performance in the liP cases in aspects of "People management", but not in "People satisfaction". Management of "Processes" and "Resources" seemed to be rather stronger in the ISO 9002 cases than in the liP ones. Moreover, managers of the former group were all positive about their assessment of the standard, whereas the views of the liP case managers were more mixed. This repeats a pattern found in the first stage of primary research.

Thus, the evidence from this study does clearly suggest that aspects of "people management" were better in the liP cases and that customers perceived those staff as being of better quality than at ISO 9002 registered centres. The results for "tangibles" and "processes" are more difficult to assess. Managers of the ISO 9002 group felt that the standard had had a beneficial impact and were all supportive of registration, but customers of these sports and leisure facilities rated their processes and care of tangibles less highly than did customers of the liP registered cases.

A number of reasons could be put forward to explain these findings. It is the researcher's opinion that the focus on processes engendered by ISO 9002 was helpful, but that many of the gains (e.g. reduction of waste, making the facility easier to manage, service consistency) were largely invisible to customers. The emphasis on employee development and training required by liP positively influenced recruitment and retention; it is entirely plausible that it was also of benefit in motivating staff. It is not surprising that customers should have had a better opinion of the liP staff than the ISO 9002 ones; more surprising are the higher ratings they gave in these cases to processes and care of the facilities' fabric and equipment. A possible explanation is that training and motivational factors mean that staff of centres registered to liP were more likely to carry out procedures, and to be committed to the routine, even menial, cleaning and maintenance tasks, the carrying out of which impacted directly on customers.

The mixed views held by managers and management team members of the utility of liP may be due in part to an unevenness in the inspection regimes which lead to registration (as evidenced by the experience of the Waterfront Centre). However, it might also be concluded that a mixed reception would be highly probable in a period when major changes and problems beset human resource management in local government. An issue here is the impact of casualisation and de-layering which had increased pressures on employees, and perhaps particularly on management grades. Such issues were evident in all cases and appeared to have contributed to the problems of the performance review systems.

There is sense in which the findings of the study support the findings of Lockwood et al's (1996) researches in the hotel industry (3.4.1). For these public sector services also, ISO 9002 does seem akin to using a sledgehammer to crack a nut. Although the support of managers for the Standard was impressive, the researcher was left with the impression that for all but the most disorganised services, a considerably smaller investment in "getting organised" might have had the same result. Although there was less uniform management support for liP than found by Lockwood et al, one might draw roughly the same conclusion about it as those researchers did for the hotel sector (3.5.2). Compared with ISO 9002 it seems to achieve a better balance between documentation, impact on customers and involvement of staff in the Standard.

Three other issues should also be highlighted as evident across all the cases, as they show some of the limitations of the two standards. First, no cases scored well on the "people satisfaction" element, and few indirect measures, and very few direct measures of this element had taken place. Second, "Impact on society" was difficult for managers to define and appeared not to be part of a quality discourse within these services. Last, neither

standard seemed to have a systematic impact on ensuring that work was driven by customer needs, wants and expectations. In part this was because of the role played by the CCT specification, and in part because neither standard sets levels of performance for ensuring that customer needs, wants, expectations and perceptions of service are regularly ascertained.

Succinctly expressed the following lessons for management practice in local authority sport services emerge from this research:

First, invest in the tangible items of the service offer, particularly in areas which often cause dissatisfaction, such as changing rooms, showers and so on; keep these tangibles in good order through rigorous maintenance and cleansing programmes.

Second, take the opportunity presented by the new Best Value environment to jettison those features of CCT which seem to work against quality. This would mean abandoning large prescriptive service specifications in favour of a more flexible framework drawn from the needs and wants of stakeholders as expressed by them during a process of active engagement with the local authority. It would also mean abandoning a reliance on external inspection as a means of "policing" service quality. It should be replaced by a service improvement philosophy in which the policy centre and the sports facility operation work together to set service standards and to draw up quality performance measurement regimes to be implemented by the operation itself.

Third, it is important to take into account the services quality literature in devising means of tracking service users views of service quality. There is scope for co-operation between local authorities in developing customer survey instrumentation, and in sharing the results of quality monitoring. There is in fact a case for developing mechanisms which will facilitate benchmarking between similar sports facilities on a range of quality and performance issues.

Fourth, investment in staff training and development does seem to be a way of managing service quality for the service user. There does thus seem to be an important role in these services for the Investors in People standard. Quality management methods, such as ISO 9002, drawn from the quality movement, are claimed to improve both efficiency for the business and quality of the user. Whilst such methods may achieve the former in these services it seems less likely that they have a significant impact on customer perceptions of service quality.

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Appendix One Synthesised Quality Model Tasks

	Technical quality dimensions (what)		Functional quality dimensions (how)	
	Human resources	Physical resources	Human resources	Physical resources
Dimensions include	Knowledge Technical ability	Machines Material Facilities Technology	Service- mindedness Internal relations	Accessibility Appearance
Planning tasks	Design systems performance objectives and capabilities		Design operations performance objectives and capabilities	
	Marketing research Job design Skills inventory Individual and team performance criteria Compensation	Marketing research Service mix design Information system design Production and supply resource Facility layout	Marketing research Policy and procedure setting Scheduling criteria	Marketing research Service portfolio System capacity Hours of operation
Implementation tasks	Achieve system performance		Execute operations performance	
	Recruit Select Train Quality and performance incentives	Site selection Resource allocation Build Manufacture Service delivery Pricing and promotion decisions	Internal marketing (culture) Training Personnel assignment Expediting	Service delivery Maintenance System upgrade
Controlling tasks	Evaluate system performance		Evaluate operational performance	
	Customer satisfaction research Complaint analysis Employee evaluation Critical incident reporting	Customer satisfaction research Complaint analysis Facility evaluation System failure analysis	Customer satisfaction research Complaint analysis Employee evaluation "Blueprinting"	Customer satisfaction research Complaint analysis Facility evaluation

Source: Brogowicz et al (1990: 35)

Appendix Two
First stage of primary research: survey instrument

Centre for Leisure and Tourism Studies

SURVEY: QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN SPORT AND RECREATION		
1. NATURE OF BUSINESS		
<i>[Answer one only]</i>		
Dry sports only	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Swimming pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
"Wet and dry" centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Health and fitness centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Other, please specify:—		[5]
2. OWNERSHIP OF BUSINESS		
Commercial Sector:		
<i>[Answer one only]</i>		
Commercial organisation independently providing services to public	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Commercial organisation running contract for local authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Other, please specify:—		[6]
Public Sector:		
<i>[Answer one only]</i>		
Local Authority Leisure Service contract run by DSO	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
School/local authority Dual Use/Joint Provision	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Education – school sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Education – FE or HE sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Other, please specify:—		[7]
Voluntary Sector:		
<i>[Answer one only]</i>		
Independent School	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Community Group	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
National Voluntary Body	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Other, please specify:—		[8]
3. NUMBER OF STAFF EMPLOYED		
<i>[Represent part-timers as full-time equivalents. Tick one only.]</i>		
Less than 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
5–14	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
15–24	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
25–34	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
35–49	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
50 or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 [9]
Please write in the number of management/ supervisory positions:—		[10–11]
4. TURNOVER		
<i>[Annual Turnover of your facility, public sector exclude debt charges and central recharges. Tick one only.]</i>		
less than £50,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
£50,000 to £149,999	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
£150,000 to £499,999	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
£500,000 to £999,999	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
over £1 million	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 [12]
5. USAGE PATTERNS		
<i>[Refers to facility usage in week prior to completing questionnaire.]</i>		
Number of hours open to customers during week:—	<input type="text"/>	[13–15]
Number of customer visits during week:—	<input type="text"/>	[16–20]
Number of hours use per week from taught or coached activities:—	<input type="text"/>	[21–22]
Are some activities programmed to take place at particular times?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[23]
If yes, how many hours per week were so programmed?:—	<input type="text"/>	[24–26]
Do you have a membership?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[27]
If yes, may non-members also use your facility?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[28]

Please turn over.

6. CUSTOMER PROFILE			
<i>[Estimate to nearest 10%]</i>			
Gender:	Age:	Social Class:	
Male _____ [29-30]	Under 16 _____ [33-34]	A,B,C1 _____ [43-44]	
Female _____ [31-32]	16-24 _____ [35-36]	C2,D,E _____ [45-46]	
	25-44 _____ [37-38]		
	45-59 _____ [39-40]		
	60+ _____ [41-42]		
7. QUALITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS			
Arrangements currently operated			
<i>[Answer all that apply]</i>			
Total Quality Management	<input type="checkbox"/>		[47]
BS 5750/ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	<input type="checkbox"/>		[48]
Investors in People	<input type="checkbox"/>		[49]
Customer Care programme	<input type="checkbox"/>		[50]
No special quality management arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>		[51]
Other, please specify: - _____			[52]
Arrangements under consideration			
<i>[Answer all that apply]</i>			
Total Quality Management	<input type="checkbox"/>		[53]
BS 5750/ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	<input type="checkbox"/>		[54]
Investors in People	<input type="checkbox"/>		[55]
Customer Care programme	<input type="checkbox"/>		[56]
None under consideration	<input type="checkbox"/>		[57]
Other, please specify: - _____			[58]
Arrangements discontinued in past 12 months			
<i>[Answer all that apply]</i>			
Total Quality Management	<input type="checkbox"/>		[59]
BS 5750/ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	<input type="checkbox"/>		[60]
Investors in People	<input type="checkbox"/>		[61]
Customer Care programme	<input type="checkbox"/>		[62]
None discontinued	<input type="checkbox"/>		[63]
Other, please specify: - _____			[64]
8. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MONITORING			
<i>[Methods used in past 12 months. Answer all that apply.]</i>			
Complaints/comments monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>		[65]
Visits by monitors/inspectors	<input type="checkbox"/>		[66]
Exit questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>		[67]
Mystery guests	<input type="checkbox"/>		[68]
Focus groups	<input type="checkbox"/>		[69]
Non-user survey	<input type="checkbox"/>		[70]
Other, please specify: - _____			[71]
9. YOUR ASSESSMENT OF YOUR QUALITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS			
<i>[How satisfactory are current arrangements? Tick one only.]</i>			
Highly satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>		1
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>		2
Unsatisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>		3
Highly unsatisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>		4 [72]
10. ANY OTHER COMMENTS:			
			[73-74]
			[75-76]
If the name/address on our envelope to you was incorrect, please enter the correct details below: -			
Are you interested in taking part in the second stage of this research?			
Yes	No		[77]

Appendix Three

First stage of primary research: count of responses to postal questionnaire

All Responses

Section 1: NATURE OF BUSINESS

Dry sports only	109
Swimming Pool	25
"Wet and dry" centre	164
Health and fitness centre	48
Other	42 n= 388

Section 2: OWNERSHIP OF BUSINESS

Commercial Sector

Commercial organisation independently providing services to public	70
Commercial organisation running contract for local authority	35 n= 105
Other	

Public Sector

Local Authority Leisure Service contract run by DSO	162
School/local authority Dual Use/ Joint Provision	78
Education - school sector	
Other	21 n= 261

Voluntary Sector

Independent School	5
Community Group	3
National Voluntary Body	4
Other	17 n= 29

Section 3: NUMBER OF STAFF EMPLOYED

Less than 5	34
5 -14	120
15 - 24	70
25 - 34	52
35 - 49	39
50 or more	67 n= 382

Number of management/ supervisory positions

less than 5	52
5 - 9	55
10 - 14	20
15 or more	11 n= 138

Section 4: TURNOVER

less than £50,000	41
£50,000 to £149,000	87
£150,000 to £499,000	134
£500,000 to £999,999	52
over £1million	51 n= 365

Section 5: USAGE PATTERNS

Number of hours open to customers during week

Under 20 hours	6	
20 - 39 hours	17	
40 - 59 hours	35	
60 - 79 hours	56	
80 - 99 hours	142	
100 - 119 hours	110	n= 366

Number of customer visits during week

Under 2500	153	
2500 - 4999	86	
5000 - 7499	36	
7500 - 9999	19	
Over 10,000	50	n= 344

Number of hours use per week from taught or coached activities

Under 20 hours	70	
20 - 39 hours	112	
40 - 59 hours	68	
60 - 79 hours	22	
Over 80 hours	20	n= 292

Activities programmed at certain times

Yes	350	
No	20	n= 370

[If yes, hours per week so programmed]

Under 30 hours	114	
30 - 59 hours	88	
60 - 89 hours	30	
Over 90 hours	25	n= 257

Is there a membership?

Yes	243	
No	135	n= 378

[If yes, may non-members also use the facility?]

Yes	209	
No	32	n= 241

Section 6: CUSTOMER PROFILE (Mean %)

Gender

Male	54	
Female	47	n= 330

Age

Under 16	22	
16 - 24	19	
25 - 44	35	
45 - 59	18	
60+	11	n= 254

Social Class

A, B, C1	54	
C2, D, E	46	n= 187

Section 7: QUALITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Arrangements currently operated

Total Quality Management	42	
BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	41	
Investors in People	88	
Customer care programme	257	
No special quality management arrangements	89	
Other	30	n= 547

Arrangements under consideration

Total Quality Management	65	
BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	70	
Investors in People	69	
Customer care programme	55	
None under consideration	86	
Other	10	n= 355

Arrangements discontinued in past 12 months

Total Quality Management	1	
BS 5750/ ISO 9000 (Quality Assurance)	5	
Investors in People	2	
Customer care programme	5	
None discontinued	224	
Other	4	n= 241

Section 8: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MONITORING

Complaints/ comments monitoring	343	
Visits by monitors/ inspectors	189	
Exit questionnaires	177	
Mystery guests	66	
Focus Groups	56	
Non-user survey	95	
No satisfaction monitoring procedure	95	
Other	39	n= 1060

Section 9: MANAGER'S ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Highly satisfactory	32	
Satisfactory	252	
Unsatisfactory	70	
Highly unsatisfactory	5	n= 359

Policy and strategy

This section asks you to assess how your organisation translates quality aims and values into its overall planning activity. Please do this by reflecting upon your own experience of managing within your organisation.

The questions try to ascertain whether policy and strategy are based on reliable facts and information, and whether the Mission Statement (or similar top-level document) is matched by achievable and realistic plans at facility level. It also asks you if you make use of comparisons with other facilities (both those managed by your own and by other organisations).

Policy and strategy

(13) *If you previously answered "Yes" to Q.2 ("do your organisation's strategic statements include its quality aims and values?"), to what extent do the policies, strategies, plans and goals developed for your work reflect and strongly support the achievement of your organisation's stated quality aims and values?*

Not at all Slightly Considerably To a very high extent

(14) When planning and managing your work, what use do you make of the following types of information:

• (14a) Feedback on the performance of internal processes, such as facility cleaning, staff scheduling, facility/ equipment maintenance, ordering and receipt of supplies?

Not used Slight use Considerable use Used to a very large extent

• (14b) Feedback on the performance of your suppliers?

Not used Slight use Considerable use Used to a very large extent

• (14c) Comparisons with other facilities managed by your organisation?

Not used Slight use Considerable use Used to a very large extent

• (14d) Comparisons with facilities managed by other organisations?

Not used Slight use Considerable use Used to a very large extent

(15) Do you and your manager have a method for ensuring that top-level goals are feasible, and consistent with and deployed into lower level targets and plans?

No Yes

• (15a) *If you answered yes to Q.15 above, what is this method? (Please write in below.)*

(16) In your estimation, how many of your staff can list the organisation's goals relevant to their activity?

None Few Most All

(17) In your estimation, how many of your staff are familiar with the plans to achieve the organisation's goals in their areas?

None Few Most All

People Management

This section explores how your organisation develops and involves all of its staff in achieving improvements. It asks you to reflect upon your own experience of managing in order to ascertain the degree to which your organisation identifies and develops the skills that staff need in order to enable it to achieve its aims. It addresses how staff goals and targets are aligned to those of the organisation (e.g. through performance appraisal), and whether people processes such as performance appraisal and training are well respected by employees. It also investigates the degree to which employees are empowered to act and become involved in improving the organisation.

People Management

(18) To what extent are your people plans (e.g. recruitment, training and development) directly derived from the needs of the strategic plans and goals (rather than just activities or free-standing plans based on *ad hoc* needs)?

Not at all Slightly Considerably To a very high extent

(19) Do you have a process for regularly appraising/ reviewing employees' performance?

No Yes

Please answer Qs. 19a and 19b if you answered "Yes" to Q. 19 above:

• (19a) To what extent do you feel that this process is respected by your staff?

Not at all Slightly respected Considerably respected Highly respected

• (19b) Does the appraisal process include training and career development needs?

No Yes

(20) Are you regularly appraised by your manager?

No Yes

(21) Does your organisation have a process that involves you and your staff in generating service improvements?

No Yes

• (21a) *If you answered "Yes" to Q.21 above, does this process involve employees both as individuals and work teams?*

No Yes

(22) To what extent are you empowered to act and take responsibility for decisions and changes concerned with quality?

Not at all Slightly Considerably To a very high extent

• (22a) *If your answer to Q.22 above was "Slightly", "Considerably" or "To a very high extent", does your organisation have a means of actively ensuring that this increased empowerment is without significant increased risk (e.g. financial or legal risk) to the organisation?*

No Yes

• (22b) *If you answered "Yes" to Q.22a above, what are these means? (Please write in below.)*

(23) To what extent are your staff empowered to act and take responsibility for decisions and changes concerned with quality?

Not at all Slightly Considerably To a very high extent

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(24) To what extent is the effort you make towards quality improvement recognised by your organisation?

Not at all Slightly Considerably To a very high extent

- **(24a) If your answer to Q.24 above was "Slightly", "Considerably" or "To a very high extent", is this effort rewarded equally to other considerations (such as meeting income/cost targets, length of service, qualifications)?**

No Yes

(25) To what extent do you recognise the effort your staff make towards quality improvement?

Not at all Slightly Considerably To a very high extent

- **(25a) If your answer to Q.25 above was "Slightly", "Considerably" or "To a very high extent", is this effort rewarded equally to other considerations (such as meeting operational targets, length of service, qualifications)?**

No Yes

(26) How effective are two-way communications between you and your staff?

Ineffective Slightly effective Considerably effective Highly effective

(27) Do you feel that you are well-informed by your manager?

No Yes

(28) Do you feel that your opinions are valued by your manager?

No Yes

(29) In your estimation, how many of your staff would agree that they are well-informed?

None Few Most All

(30) In your estimation, how many of your staff would agree that you value their opinions?

None Few Most All

Resource Management

The purpose of this section is to get your assessment of how your organisation's key material resources (such as finance, information technology, supplies and new technologies) are aligned with its quality aims, targets and values. Question 31 below asks if financial allocations are made to further quality aims and values.

Resource Management

(31) If you answered "Yes" to Q.2 overleaf ("do your organisation's strategic statements include its quality aims and values?"), does your manager have an approach which ensures that the allocation and use of financial resources reflect and support these quality aims and values?

No Yes

• (31a) Do you have such an approach?

No Yes

(32) To what extent is all relevant information about your organisation's operations and resources available to your manager?

Not at all Slightly Considerably To a very high extent

• (32a) To what extent is such information available to you and/ or appropriate members of your staff?

Not at all Slightly Considerably To a very high extent

Please answer Qs.32b - 32e if your answer to Q.32a above was "Slightly", "Considerably" or "To a very high extent":

• (32b) How reliable is such information ?

Unreliable Fairly reliable Considerably reliable Completely reliable

• (32c) How up to date is such information?

Not at all Slightly Considerably To a very high extent

• (32d) Where appropriate is such information available to customers?

No Yes

• (32e) Where appropriate is such information available to suppliers?

No Yes

(33) Do you have a method for continual improvement in the effective use and control of resources?

No Yes

Please answer Qs.33a - 33d if your answer to Q.33 above was "Yes":

• (33a) What is this method? (Please write in below.)

• (33b) How effective is this method?

Ineffective Slightly effective Considerably effective Highly effective

• (33c) Does this include reduction in wastage (e.g. energy consumption)

No Yes

• (33d) Does this method include the better use of fixed assets (e.g. space and equipment)?

No Yes

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(34) Do you have a method for identifying and implementing the use of alternative or new technologies which can improve your service or the processes which create it?

No

Yes

Please answer Qs. 34a and 34b if your answer to Q. 34 above was "Yes":

- (34a) What is this method? (Please write in below.)

- (34b) How effective is this method?

Ineffective

Slightly effective

Considerably effective

Highly effective

Processes

This section examines how the organisation manages the "front office" processes that bring the customer to the service and bring the service to the customer. Such processes include customer reception, maintenance and cleansing of activity and ancillary areas (e.g. changing rooms and circulation space); customer interaction with your facility, its equipment and personnel.

Also examined in this section are those "back room" processes which, though largely invisible to the customer, are critical to the creation and delivery of the service. These processes include design and specification of activity and ancillary areas and equipment; design and programming of the activities themselves; pricing; ordering and receipt of supplies, and staff scheduling. Also covered here are support activities such sales promotion, finance and maintenance of business records, personnel functions etc.

I am interested in finding out to what extent the nature of these processes is known, controlled, documented, audited and subject to activity aimed at improvement. This section most closely resembles the core requirements of BS 5750/ ISO 9000.

Processes

(35) Are the processes critical to the success of your facility identified?

No Yes

Please answer Qs.35a - 35c if you answered "Yes" to Q.35 above:

• (35a) How clear is it who is responsible for each of these processes?
Unclear Some clarity Considerable clarity Complete clarity

• (35b) For how many of these processes are performance indicators established?
No processes Some processes Most processes All processes

• (35c) For how many of these processes have stanards or requiremnts been specified?
No processes Some processes Most processes All processes

• (35d) *If you answered "Some", "Most" or "All" to Q.35c above, how many of these processes are actually operated and controlled according to these standards or requirements?*
No processes Some processes Most processes All processes

(36) Do you have a system for ensuring that customer requirements lead to the modification or development of existing services?

No Yes

(37) Do you have a system for ensuring that changes in customer requirements are translated into specifications for new services?

No Yes

• (37a) *If you answered "Yes" to Q.37 above, what is this system? (Please write in below.)*

(38) Is there a comprehensive development plan for new services?

No Yes

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(39) Do you regularly analyse operational data in order to identify opportunities and needs so as to source a programme of continuous improvement of your processes?

No Yes

Please answer Qs.39a and 39b if you answered "Yes" to Q.39 above:

- (39a) Do you compare operational data with other facilities managed by your organisation?

No Yes

- (39b) Do you compare operational data with other facilities managed by other organisations?

No Yes

(40) Do you regularly analyse feedback from customers in order to identify opportunities and needs so as to source a programme of continuous improvement of your processes?

No Yes

Please answer Qs.40a and 40b if you answered "Yes" to Q.40 above:

- (40a) Do you compare feedback from customers with other facilities managed by your organisation?

No Yes

- (40b) Do you compare feedback from customers with other facilities managed by other organisations?

No Yes

(41) How often do you use your records, audit results and other findings to ensure that systems are improved through the implementation of root-cause cures (rather than "quick-fixes"), so preventing the recurrence of the problem?

Never Sometimes Often Always

(42) How many of your support activities (e.g. finance, Information Technology management, sales promotion, personnel, legal) are documented, controlled and continuously improved to at least the same level as your mainstream service activities?

No activities Some activities Most activities All activities

(43) Do you and/ or your manager take routine actions to make suppliers aware of your current and future quality and other requirements?

No Yes

Please answer Qs.43a and 43b if you answered "Yes" to Q.43 above:

- (43a) Is there a system for ensuring that the above requirements can be met, and are being met by suppliers?

No Yes

- (43b) Are suppliers regularly informed and made aware of their performance (rather than just taking *ad hoc* actions to correct current problems)?

No Yes

Customer Satisfaction

Here we consider the way your organisation measures and evaluates aspects of your operation which bear directly on customer satisfaction levels. Do you have standards, targets and goals for these aspects of your operation? It asks if you know about the key requirements of your customers. We also consider the ways in which you directly measure and evaluate your customers' actual levels of satisfaction with your service (for example through surveys or other methods of asking customers).

Some questions also ask about comparisons with other facilities. Where trends and levels are asked for, these should ideally relate to at least a three year period.

Customer Satisfaction

(44) Do you have a system which, in your estimation, makes it easy for customers to complain (both verbally and in writing)?

No Yes

(45) Are you aware of the number of complaints?

No Yes

• (45a) If you answered "Yes" to Q.45 above, is the number of complaints falling?

No Yes

(46) Were there to be any trends or common features of complaints, would you be aware of them?

No Yes

(47) Do you evaluate your facility's management of the customer relationship through measures of items that probably influence customer satisfaction (such as the attainment of cleaning/maintenance specifications, time-keeping etc.)?

No Yes

• (47a) If you answered "Yes" to Q.47 above, are these things regularly measured?

No Yes

• (47b) If you answered "Yes" to Q.47a above, do you know the results of these measurements?

No Yes

Please answer Qs. 47c - 47e if you answered "Yes" to Q.47b above:

• (47c) Performance against how many of these measurements is showing an improving trend?

No measures Some measures Most measures All measures

• (47d) Can you demonstrate that performance against these measures is comparable with or better than the results of other facilities managed by your organisation?

No Yes

• (47e) Can you demonstrate that performance against these measures is comparable with or better than the results of other facilities managed by other organisations?

No Yes

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(48) Do you have a method for identifying the key customer requirements of your service?
No Yes

If you answered "Yes" to Q.48 above, please answer Qs.48a - 48g as appropriate:

- (48a) What is this method? (Please write in below.)

- (48b) How many of the key customer requirements are addressed by well-defined standards and service levels?

No requirements Some requirements Most requirements All requirements

- (48c) *If you answered "Some", "Most" or "All" to Q.48b above, is the performance of your facility in meeting the above standards routinely measured?*

No Yes

- (48d) *If you answered "Yes" to Q.48c above, are the results of these measurements known to you?*

No Yes

Please answer Qs. 48e - 48g if you answered "Yes" to Q.48d above:

- (48e) Performance against how many of these measures is showing an improving trend?

No measures Some measures Most measures All measures

- (48f) Can you demonstrate that performance against these measures is similar to/ better than the results of other facilities managed by your organisation?

No Yes

- (48g) Can you demonstrate that performance against these measures is similar to/ better than the results of other facilities managed by other organisations?

No Yes

(49) How many of the factors which influence customer satisfaction [Qs.47 and 48], are covered by a method for routinely setting targets/ goals for improvement?

No factors Some factors Most factors All factors

(50) Are customer satisfaction results (that is the actual perceptions of the customer) regularly measured?

No Yes

Please answer Qs. 50a - 50e if you answered "Yes" to Q.50 above:

- (50a) Are the results for your service made known to you?

No Yes

- (50b) Are these customer satisfaction results showing an improving trend?

No Yes

- (50c) Can you demonstrate that these customer satisfaction results are similar to/ better than those of other facilities managed by your organisation?

No Yes

- (50d) Can you demonstrate that these customer satisfaction results are similar to/ better than those of other facilities managed by other organisations?

No Yes

- (50e) Do you have a method for routinely setting targets/ goals for improvement in performance against the measures of customer perceptions of satisfaction?

No Yes

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(52) Are regular surveys conducted (e.g. through questionnaires or focus groups) of the perceptions of your staff on various aspects of the organisation such as working environment, communications, career prospects, their managers, pay, appraisal, recognition, training, morale and overall employee satisfaction?

No Yes

Please answer Qs. 52a - 52g if you answered "Yes" to Q.52 above:

- (52a) Have steps been taken to establish the relevance or appropriateness of these measures?

No Yes

- (52b) Are the results analysed by job function and job level?

No Yes

- (52c) Are the results of the surveys made known to your employees?

No Yes

- (52d) Are the results of the above measures showing a generally improving trend?

No Yes

- (52e) Can you demonstrate that these results are comparable with or better than those of other facilities operated by your organisation?

No Yes

- (52f) Can you demonstrate that these results are comparable with or better than those of other facilities operated by other organisations?

No Yes

- (52g) How often do these measurements lead to appropriate management action?

Never Sometimes Often Always

Impact on Society

This part of the questionnaire is intended to investigate the impact of your facility upon the wider community. By this we mean the impact you have on people who are not actually your customers. Are you a "good neighbour", do you work to conserve natural resources, avoiding pollution and waste, do you contribute to your community in ways other than looking after your customers (for example by supporting charitable work)?

Impact on Society

(53) Does your facility have an active programme to reduce harm or nuisance to neighbours and the neighbourhood environment?

No Yes

(54) Does your facility has an active programme to conserve and protect global resources (e.g. energy conservation, recycling, waste)?

No Yes

(55) Does your facility has an active programme to contribute to the community (e.g. through charitable work, education, activity in professional associations)?

No Yes

(56) Do you have any other programmes related to your facility's impact on the wider community?

No Yes

- (56a) *If you answered "Yes" to Q.56 above, what is this programme(s). (Please write in below.)*

(57) Are activities in the above areas showing a positive trend?

No Yes

Please answer Qs. 57a and 57b if you answered "Yes" to Q.57 above:

- (57a) Can you demonstrate these results to be similar to/ better than other facilities managed by your organisation?

No Yes

- (57b) Can you demonstrate these results to be similar to/ better than other facilities managed by other organisations?

No Yes

Appendix Five

Second stage of primary research: Customer survey instrument

University of North London
Centre for Leisure and Tourism Studies

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please help us to monitor our service by completing this questionnaire (please do so after you have finished your activity today if it is more convenient). It only takes three or four minutes to complete. A table and chairs for this purpose has been provided in the reception lobby. **Please return completed forms to the customer comments box.** The forms will be analysed by the Centre for Leisure and Tourism Studies, not by leisure facility staff.

Section One: What matters to you as a leisure facility customer?
The statements below describe features of leisure facilities. We would like to know your feelings as to how important it is to you that a leisure facility should have each feature. If you circle 1 then that feature is unimportant to you, and it does not matter to you whether the leisure facility has it or not. If you circle 7, then that feature is very important to you and you feel it essential for a leisure facility. If you do not feel so strongly, use the appropriate number in between to describe your feelings. *Please answer all the questions.*

		S T R O N G L Y					D I S T R O N G L Y	
	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
1. It is important to me that a leisure facility has secure car/bike parking areas	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[8]
2. It is important to me that a leisure facility is easily accessible from public transport	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[9]
3. It is important to me that a leisure facility is always clean	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[10]
4. It is important to me that a leisure facility is always well maintained	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[11]
5. It is important to me that a leisure facility has equipment of high quality	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[12]
6. It is important to me that a leisure facility maintains its equipment well	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[13]
7. It is important to me that a leisure facility is physically comfortable	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[14]
8. It is important to me that a leisure facility is pleasant to be in	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[15]
9. It is important to me that the staff at a leisure facility are friendly	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[16]
10. It is important to me that the staff at a leisure facility respond to customers needs	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[17]

	STRONGLY AGREE				STRONGLY DISAGREE				
11. It is important to me that the staff at a leisure facility are presentable	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[18]	
12. It is important to me that staff at a leisure facility are easily identified	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[19]	
13. It is important to me that a leisure facility employs experienced staff	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[20]	
14. It is important to me that a leisure facility employs knowledgeable staff	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[21]	
15. It is important to me that officials (umpires, judges etc.) at a leisure facility are qualified, experienced and consistent	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[22]	
16. It is important to me that a leisure facility is well organised	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[23]	
17. It is important to me that a leisure facility is well run	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[24]	
18. It is important to me that activities at a leisure facility always start and finish on time	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[25]	
19. It is important to me that a leisure facility has up-to-date information available on activities, events and results	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[26]	
20. It is important to me that a broad range of activities is offered by a leisure facility	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[27]	
21. It is important to me that good food and drink are available at a leisure facility	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[28]	
22. It is important to me that a creche or similar child-minding service is provided by a leisure facility	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[29]	
23. It is important to me that a leisure facility gives its customers good value for money	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[30]	

24. Are there any other features of leisure facilities which are important to you as a customer? (Please write in below)

.....
.....

Section Two: Features of Hartham Pool

The following set of statements is about Hartham Pool. Circling a 1 means that you strongly disagree that Hartham Pool has that feature; circling a 7 means that you very strongly agree the feature is present here. Circling numbers in the middle shows that your feelings are less strong. *Please try to answer every question - even if you have no direct experience of the particular feature of Hartham Pool, please answer according to the impression that you have formed.*

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
	STRONGLY AGREE						DIS STRONGLY AGREE	
25. Hartham Pool has secure car/bike parking areas	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[33]
26. Hartham Pool is easily accessible from public transport	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[34]
27. Hartham Pool is always clean	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[35]
28. Hartham Pool is always well maintained	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[36]
29. The equipment at Hartham Pool is of high quality	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[37]
30. The equipment at Hartham Pool is well maintained	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[38]
31. Hartham Pool is physically comfortable	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[39]
32. Hartham Pool is pleasant to be in	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[40]
33. The staff at Hartham Pool are friendly	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[41]
34. Hartham Pool staff respond to customers needs	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[42]
35. The staff at Hartham Pool are presentable	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[43]
36. Hartham Pool staff are easily identified	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[44]
37. Hartham Pool employs experienced staff	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[45]
38. Hartham Pool employs knowledgeable staff	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[46]
39. Officials (umpires, judges etc.) at Hartham Pool are qualified, experienced and consistent	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[47]

	S T R O N G L Y							
	A G R E E						D I S A G R E E	
40. Hartham Pool is well organised	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[48]
41. Hartham Pool is well run	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[49]
42. Activities at Hartham Pool always start and finish on time	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[50]
43. Hartham Pool has up-to-date information available on activities, events and results	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[51]
44. A broad range of activities is offered by Hartham Pool	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[52]
45. Good food and drink are available at Hartham Pool	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[53]
46. Hartham Pool gives its customers good value for money	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[55]

47. How often have you visited Hartham Pool in the past 12 months? (please tick box)

- (i) First time (1)
 - (ii) 2- 11 times (2)
 - (iii) 12-23 times (3)
 - (iv) 24 or more times (4)
- [56]

48. What activity have you come here for today? (please write in below)

..... [57-58]

49. Overall, how satisfied are you with the service provided at Hartham Pool?

	S A T I S F I E D							
	V E R Y						D I S S A T I S F I E D	
	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	[59]

50. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the service at Hartham Pool? (Please write in below)

..... [60-61]

• **Please return completed questionnaires to the customer comments box.**

Thank you for your help.

Appendix Six

Example of staff briefing note

**UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH LONDON**
Centre for Leisure and Tourism Studies
The Business School
Holloway Road
London N7 8HN
UK

Tel: 0171 607 2789

Service Quality in Sports and Recreation Services

Seven Islands Leisure Centre is taking part in a research project run by Bob Lentell, from the Centre for Leisure and Tourism Studies at the University of North London. The project is investigating the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to managing the services quality received by customers. Several other centres in and around London are also taking part.

It is hoped that the results of the study will help managers generally to improve the ways they manage service quality, but also be of particular value to Seven Islands Leisure Centre in developing your service here.

There are two aspects to the study:

1. A Customer Satisfaction Survey

- This is a survey completed by customers themselves.
- Your manager has identified times at which the forms will be given out at reception for the week beginning 17th March 1997.
- We would like a minimum of 200 completed forms.
- Although the form is quite long, it is simple to complete and only takes three or four minutes to do.
- There are two sections to the form. Section One asks about how important different features of leisure centres are to them as customer. Section Two asks them if they agree that these features are present here.
- Please do not give guidance to customers about what answer to make on the form. If they ask you to, please just say "answer according to your feelings or impressions".

2. In-depth interview questionnaire

- Your manager and two members of staff selected by her will be interviewed by the researcher.
- Again this is not a test! Simply a chance to explore feelings about the service here in more depth.

Bob Lentell
11/03/97

Appendix Seven

Overview of cases

Cases with no quality management standard

- **St. George's Pool**

Location

The Highway, Shadwell, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Facilities

Ageing (built 1969) 25 metre pool and learner pool, and rather rudimentary refreshment facilities. The building was built with some classrooms and considerable circulation space, some of which has been converted into a fitness suite by the contractor.

Staffing

21 full-time, 9 part-time.

Management

Operated by City Centre Leisure Ltd (CCL), for LB. Tower Hamlets. CCL outbid the Direct Service Organisation (DSO) for the contract in the second round of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) in 1994. Customer numbers were very low during the last years of DSO management, and CCL had found that elementary good management practices had dramatically increased throughput. During the course of the research CCL gained the contract for other leisure facilities in the borough, the manager of St George's Pool moving to take on management of several sites, appointing a deputy to take operational control of the Pool.

Quality Management

The DSO has left no heritage of quality management, and the local authority client¹ had at best expressed sporadic interest in it, limiting their demands in this field to specifying an annual user survey to be carried out by the contractor. Although CCL operates ISO 9002 at some of its other sites in different boroughs, it had refrained from introducing at St. George's Pool because of the uncertainty about contract renewal; after consolidating their position in the borough in 1997, they were considering introduction of the standard.

Inspection visits by the client take place about weekly, but the main issues that arise both for real and proxy customers are consequences of lack of investment in the fabric of the building, which is the responsibility of the client. Particular difficulties arose from the great difficulties in meeting customer expectations of changing rooms and showers, when these facilities had already reached the end of their service lifespan. Some difficulties also arose

¹ In the context of this appendix client refers to the local authority acting as client with respect to the contractor. Thus the client specifies and subsidises the service, the contractor is responsible for operational management according the criteria specified in the contract.

from old plant which could not always maintain pool water and air temperatures at the desired level.

- **Arches Leisure Centre**

Location

Trafalgar Road, Blackheath, London Borough Greenwich.

Facilities

This is a large 1926 double pool building, fully rehabilitated in 1988. One pool is now leisureised and used extensively by mum/toddlers etc. whilst the other is the fitness pool, with pool side cubicles retained. There is a small sports hall, used extensively for aerobics, martial arts etc., also a small studio which is to be extended to accommodate a 30+ class. Classroom suite (upstairs) and pleasant catering facilities. The most important new addition is the Millennium fitness suite, provided by the contractor at a cost of £340K and to private gym specifications. This has proved to highly popular and was due to bring in £500K in the first year of operation.

Staffing

20 full time staff and a further 70 casual or part-time staff.

Management

Managed for LB Greenwich by Greenwich Leisure Ltd which is an Industrial and Provident Society. This was formed from the Greenwich DSO prior to CCT, and is an unusual arrangement which enables the organisation combine control of the organisation by the workforce, professional management and working to a contract from LB Greenwich.

Quality Management

The organisation as a whole has a Chartermark. The Arches Leisure Centre was seeking registration under ISO 9002, and was due to go "live" with the quality system three months after the interviews took place (i.e. in February 1997). Extensive customer monitoring systems with complaints/ comments monitoring; annual customer survey by contractor. Customer representatives sit on a customer panel.

ISO 9002 registered cases

- **Highbury Pool**

Location

Highbury Fields, Highbury, London Borough of Islington

Facilities

25m pool and learner pool, opened in 1984, for the most part well maintained; fitness gym constructed (in extension of existing building) 1996. Gym customers have to share changing rooms and showers with swimmers, which causes some friction between these user groups.

Staffing

14 full-time, 10-15 casual part-time staff (precise number depending on season).

Management

The CCT contract was won by the Islington DSO, but the Council decided to "externalise" the their leisure management by converting it into a voluntary trust (Sobell Variety Trust, trading as Aqua Terra).

Quality Management

Registered for ISO 9002 in 1995. Complaints and comments monitoring system. Customer survey by contractor every year and two customer representatives have places on the new Trust Board.

- **Kensington Sports Centre**

Location

Walmer Road, North Kensington, LB Kensington and Chelsea

Facilities

Main pool of 33m; 15m teaching pool, sports halls..catering facilities, but rather rudimentary. The swimming pool was constructed in 1970 and is showing some signs of ageing; it needs some capital investment, this does seem to be going ahead in a staged programme. The dryside facilities were built in 1985.

Staffing

40 full-time staff, 55 part-timers and casuals.

Management

Contract won by CCL on the introduction of CCT (borough did not mount an internal bid).

Quality Management

ISO 9002 registration after two years was specified in the contract documentation.

- **Seven Islands Leisure Centre**

Location

Rotherhithe New Road, Rotherhithe, LB Southwark

Facilities

25m pool, learner pool, fitness gym, multi-use hall used for aerobics, children's' gymnastics etc.,sauna and sunbeds. The facility was constructed in 1980, but was extensively rehabilitated in 1995.

Staffing

22 full-time, depending on the season an average of 28 part-time and sessional staff.

Management

Managed by LB Southwark DSO. After the election of the present government, the Council successfully applied to become one of the Best Value pilot authorities and will therefore be exempt from further rounds of CCT. During the most of the period of study, the manager's post was filled on a temporary basis by the who had been responsible for bringing in the quality system. Towards the end of the study period an external candidate obtained the manager's post, but quickly moved on to other employment.

Quality Management

The first facility in the borough o get registration under ISO 9002. They make use of a borough-wide (across all services) complaints and comments monitoring system, but this is owned by the client rather than the contractor in that completed forms often go to the council offices. The client is also responsible for an annual customer survey. Frequent inspections (twice weekly) by the client had been the norm, but the client was in the process of redefining its role and intended to inspect less. The client had decided to ask the contractor to seek liP registration, but at the time of study preparations for this had not reached down to operational level.

liP registered cases

- **Hartham Pool**

Location

Recreation ground, Hartham Lane, Hertford.

Facilities

25m pool, diving pool, learner (toddler) pool, these were originally an outdoor lido (built 1958) which was covered in 1990. Outdoor facilities are: artificial surface tennis courts, football pitches, bowls (practice and quality greens), pitch 'n putt, putting. The indoor facility was based on an original outdoor lido and probably already had most of its useful life, and some quite difficult maintenance problems were arising. The manager hopes that bids to fund a replacement building will be successful. The centre had more car parking spaces than any of the other sites, but owing to its location had a high proportion of customers arriving by car, which meant that car parking space was sometimes inadequate.

Staffing

13 full-time, 26 part-time.

Management

Managed by East Hertfordshire DSO. The leisure section of the DSO is small, managing only one other facility and Hartham Pool. The contract was won in the first round in 1992, and was renewed in 1997 for the period until 2002.

Quality Management

The pool pioneered leisure facility registration under liP in East Herts. The pool solicit comments on a standard form, but the other customer feedback measure (an annual user survey) seems owned by the client. Regular, traditional inspection visits take place by the client.

- **Newham Leisure Centre**

Location

Prince Regent Lane, Newham, LB Newham

Facilities

A substantial wet/dry facility, built in 1990. 25 metre pool and learner pool, 8 badminton court hall, projectile area, fitness suite, steam sauna, function suite, multi-purpose areas (2) bar and cafeteria. Large open reception, carpeted circulation space. Wet end and dry end of large common changing room. Outdoors, there is also a running track and Astroturf pitches. Customers for the outdoor facilities use another set of changing rooms accessed from the exterior.

At the time of the study there were signs of wear and tear in the building and it was due shortly for a refit. The outdoor astroturf worn out (strangely not included in sports fund bid which had renovated athletics track). Some car parking.

Staffing

20 full-time staff, 25 part-time staff, 85 sessional staff.

Management

Managed by Newham Leisure DSO. The client was originally very keen to keep management of the centre in house and wrote a very detailed specification for the contract. Since the Leisure DSO won the contract relationships had deteriorated somewhat, and appeared to be the most difficult of all the cases investigated. At the time of the study the centre manager thought it likely that the DSO would lose the contract when it was re-tendered after April 1997 (in fact the contract was retained by the DSO).

Quality Management

The centre manager had led the liP registration bid, in 1993. This was followed by a move to secure status as a NVQ registered centre, which was achieved in 1996. As temporary measure, in 1992 they had set up quality circles, but they were transformed into three groups, health and safety, programming and events. There is a draconian inspection regime; inspections take place four times a month, and there is no system of default points as is usual in other contracts since a poor inspection will lead to an immediate fine on the contractor. There is a standard complaints and comments system, but this is owned more by the client than by the contractor. The client also commissions an annual survey of customers, into which the contractor has no real input.

- **Waterfront Leisure Centre**

Location

High Street, Woolwich, LB Greenwich

Facilities

Leisure pool, fitness suite, four badminton court sports hall, activity hall for aerobics, martial arts etc. squash courts, sauna and sunbeds.

Staffing

45 full-time, 60 part-time and sessional staff.

Management

As for Arches Leisure Centre, managed by GLL. During the study period the centre manager left on maternity leave, and the centre had two replacement managers over a period of a few months. It is a large and complex site, and the represents a considerable management challenge.

Quality Management

The GLL systems operated at the Arches, also operate at the Waterfront. However, the Centre is also registered to liP. The company wished to build up its experience of different quality management initiatives, and elected the Waterfront for liP, with the active agreement of the then manager.

Appendix Eight

Tables A8.1 to A8.4 use the Kruskal-Wallis H statistic to indicate the proportion of the variance between cases which is explained by their grouping by quality management method. This is shown by the final column (H2/H1). Tables A8.1 and A8.2 deal with customer responses to the survey questions on importance, and Tables A8.3 and A8.4 with survey questions about perceptions.

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case			By QM method			Mean rankings			H2/H1
	H1	DF	P	H2	DF	P	///P	ISO 9000	No QM	
	(corrected for ties)			(corrected for ties)						
1. Secure car/bike parking	33 1303	6	0.0000	15.0341	2	0.0005	449.13	388.23	391.41	0.45
2 Accessible from public transport	25.7180	6	0.0003	2.9101	2	0.2334	406.61	430.82	395.76	0.11
3 Cleanliness	27.1686	6	0.0001	1.2713	2	0.5296	411.21	421.02	433.32	0.05
4 Maintenance	43.9875	6	0.0000	2.7840	2	0.2486	405.16	425.16	432.62	0.06
5 Equipment quality	18.2644	6	0.0056	7.5176	2	0.0233	425.84	425.12	362.69	0.41
6 Equipment maintenance	26.2789	6	0.0002	1.8183	2	0.4029	414.76	424.77	395.68	0.07
7 Physical comfort	10.2550	6	0.1143	1.5767	2	0.4546	410.17	427.14	400.49	0.15
8 Pleasant to be in	13.9435	6	0.0303	8.5345	2	0.0140	399.64	439.98	384.36	0.61
9 Friendly staff	10.5739	6	0.1025	8.5682	2	0.0138	423.39	428.81	358.73	0.81
10 Staff responsiveness	21.1345	6	0.0017	11.9072	2	0.0026	404.58	442.95	370.21	0.56
11 Staff presentability	22.0993	6	0.0008	10.0145	2	0.0067	432.65	418.57	347.57	0.45
12 Identifiable staff	14.9207	6	0.0209	4.2307	2	0.1206	427.80	416.93	373.14	0.28
13 Experienced staff	14.3667	6	0.0258	6.1408	2	0.0464	428.63	409.07	365.91	0.43
14 Knowledgable staff	16.5530	6	0.0111	10.9423	2	0.0042	438.01	411.28	354.45	0.66
15 Quality of officials	20.9365	6	0.0019	18.4515	2	0.0001	403.61	437.07	326.86	0.88
16 Well organised	27.6014	6	0.0001	3.4327	2	0.1797	426.58	411.47	381.52	0.12
17 Well run	13.1456	6	0.0408	1.1837	2	0.5533	417.04	419.56	393.49	0.09
18 Timeliness	21.1835	6	0.0017	0.5079	2	0.7757	409.43	421.29	412.94	0.02
19 Information	12.3612	6	0.0544	6.6565	2	0.0359	424.90	412.69	357.88	0.54
20. Broad activity range	69.6558	6	0.0000	25.6395	2	0.0000	428.00	429.69	299.89	0.37
21 Food and drink	103.6033	6	0.0000	17.5710	2	0.0002	426.10	425.04	317.13	0.17
22 Creche or similar	55.5797	6	0.0000	18.5942	2	0.0001	433.13	406.88	316.09	0.33
23 Value for money	14.3773	6	0.0257	1.2470	2	0.5361	418.20	417.40	392.50	0.09

Key.
H: Kruskal-Wallis statistic; DF: Degrees of freedom; P: Significance

Table A8.2: Kruskal-Wallis test rankings of customer responses to questions about importance (excluding St. George's Pools)

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case			By QM method			Mean rankings		H2/H1
	H1	DF	P	H2	DF	P	IIP	ISO 9000	
	(corrected for ties)			(corrected for ties)					
1. Secure car/bike parking	32.0219	5	0.0000	13.8255	1	0.0002	395.58	341.61	0.43
2. Accessible from public transport	25.2122	5	0.0001	2.1037	1	0.1469	358.85	380.44	0.08
3. Cleanliness	26.0007	5	0.0001	0.5155	1	0.4728	366.74	375.36	0.02
4. Maintenance	42.5627	5	0.0000	2.0223	1	0.1550	361.31	378.95	0.05
5. Equipment quality	10.9697	5	0.0520	0.0006	1	0.9805	372.16	371.83	0.00
6. Equipment maintenance	25.2461	5	0.0001	0.5183	1	0.4716	366.12	375.02	0.02
7. Physical comfort	9.7476	5	0.0827	1.0490	1	0.3057	362.07	377.14	0.11
8. Pleasant to be in	11.9039	5	0.0361	6.4728	1	0.0110	350.81	386.78	0.54
9. Friendly staff	2.1862	5	0.8228	0.1360	1	0.7123	369.01	374.04	0.06
10. Staff responsiveness	15.9179	5	0.0071	6.5354	1	0.0106	353.67	387.79	0.41
11. Staff presentability	13.9342	5	0.0160	0.6207	1	0.4308	376.37	364.43	0.04
12. Identifiable staff	11.1503	5	0.0485	0.4049	1	0.5246	375.67	366.19	0.04
13. Experienced staff	9.4988	5	0.0907	1.3812	1	0.2399	374.90	357.87	0.15
14. Knowledgeable staff	8.1419	5	0.1486	2.6039	1	0.1066	381.97	358.66	0.32
15. Quality of officials	6.8298	5	0.2336	4.3317	1	0.0374	348.71	378.96	0.63
16. Well organised	25.3499	5	0.0001	0.9105	1	0.3400	376.06	362.76	0.04
17. Well run	11.9805	5	0.0351	0.0278	1	0.8676	367.88	370.16	0.00
18. Timeliness	21.2542	5	0.0007	0.5085	1	0.4758	363.27	373.90	0.02
19. Information	6.0990	5	0.2967	0.5004	1	0.4793	370.60	360.23	0.08
20. Broad activity range	45.0453	5	0.0000	0.0084	1	0.9268	367.82	369.21	0.00
21. Food and drink	84.6548	5	0.0000	0.0007	1	0.9790	367.30	367.7	0.00
22. Creche or similar	38.8248	5	0.0000	2.1681	1	0.1409	374.17	351.67	0.06
23. Value for money	13.2661	5	0.0210	0.0037	1	0.9513	369.40	368.58	0.00

Key.

H Kruskal-Wallis statistic, DF Degrees of freedom, P Significance

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case			By QM method			Mean rankings			H2/H1
	H1	DF	P	H2	DF	P	IIP	ISO 9000	No QM	
	(corrected for ties)			(corrected for ties)						
25. Secure car/bike parking	103.8409	6	0.0000	60.3845	2	0.0000	468.03	341.77	347.47	0.58
26. Accessible from public transport	144.5003	6	0.0000	7.2367	2	0.0268	419.69	408.21	348.08	0.05
27. Cleanliness	25.6644	6	0.0003	16.4080	2	0.0003	449.84	381.78	392.62	0.64
28. Maintenance	40.3145	6	0.0000	28.2347	2	0.0000	456.08	365.33	426.12	0.70
29. Equipment quality	52.9928	6	0.0000	37.0161	2	0.0000	461.54	358.02	398.73	0.70
30. Equipment maintenance	41.9212	6	0.0000	20.2460	2	0.0000	446.34	369.83	418.7	0.48
31. Physical comfort	26.4153	6	0.0002	1.9310	2	0.3808	423.19	400.23	421.68	0.07
32. Pleasant to be in	20.3152	6	0.0024	3.7082	2	0.1566	431.71	401.68	396.73	0.18
33. Friendly staff	40.2132	6	0.0000	7.2346	2	0.0269	435.89	401.34	376.35	0.18
34. Staff responsiveness	17.7991	6	0.0068	5.4856	2	0.0644	430.67	392.55	396.22	0.31
35. Staff presentability	22.8063	6	0.0009	7.1202	2	0.0284	434.74	403.75	371.94	0.31
36. Identifiable staff	19.0467	6	0.0041	8.3254	2	0.0156	433.31	411.54	360.59	0.44
37. Experienced staff	46.2057	6	0.0000	15.1825	2	0.0005	425.17	371.47	344.46	0.33
38. Knowledgeable staff	49.3706	6	0.0000	22.0026	2	0.0000	429.66	385.25	309.64	0.45
39. Quality of officials	34.3887	6	0.0000	26.4549	2	0.0000	387.25	349.53	258.14	0.77
40. Well organised	16.0818	6	0.0133	6.6167	2	0.0366	435.73	392.95	400.61	0.41
41. Well run	19.3568	6	0.0036	7.0671	2	0.0292	434.41	390.88	395.94	0.37
42. Timeliness	28.1745	6	0.0001	8.1808	2	0.0167	417.31	369.41	393.94	0.29
43. Information	32.3183	6	0.0000	20.0116	2	0.0000	444.49	374.55	368.07	0.62
44. Broad activity range	25.8141	6	0.0002	11.0650	2	0.0040	426.80	410.90	337.82	0.43
45. Food and drink	70.1213	6	0.0000	10.0636	2	0.0065	431.98	379.09	387.55	0.14
46. Creche or similar			not asked of all cases							
47. Value for money	13.6416	6	0.0469	8.8227	2	0.0121	439.98	389.32	419.76	0.65
50. Overall satisfaction	22.9075	5	0.0004	5.7188	1	0.0168	355.13	320.75		0.25

Key.
H Kruskal-Wallis statistic, *DF* Degrees of freedom, *P*: Significance

Table A8.4: Kruskal-Wallis test rankings of selected responses to questions about perceptions (excluding St. George's Pool)

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case			By QM method			Mean rankings		H2/H1
	H1	DF	P	H2	DF	P	IIP	ISO 9000	
	(corrected for ties)			(corrected for ties)					
25 Secure car/bike parking	95.3682	5	0.0000	53.4866	1	0.0000	408.16	297.63	0.56
26. Accessibility from public transport	139.5911	5	0.0000	0.4145	1	0.5197	419.69	408.21	0.00
27 Cleanliness	25.0684	5	0.0001	15.6882	1	0.0001	396.74	335.90	0.63
28 Maintenance	39.9772	5	0.0000	27.8974	1	0.0000	406.23	325.66	0.70
29 Equipment quality	53.0243	5	0.0000	37.0556	1	0.0000	409.20	316.90	0.70
30 Equipment maintenance	41.7457	5	0.0000	20.8700	1	0.0000	397.77	329.76	0.50
31 Physically comfort	26.2560	5	0.0001	1.7786	1	0.1823	423.19	400.23	0.07
32 Pleasant to be in	19.5204	5	0.0015	3.0592	1	0.0803	431.71	401.68	0.16
33 Friendly staff	37.0361	5	0.0000	4.2455	1	0.0394	382.01	351.61	0.11
34 Staff responsiveness	17.1258	5	0.0043	4.9975	1	0.0254	380.62	347.15	0.29
35 Staff presentability	18.8814	5	0.0020	3.3899	1	0.0656	434.74	403.75	0.18
36 Identifiable staff	12.7048	5	0.0263	1.8037	1	0.1793	433.31	411.54	0.14
37 Experienced staff	41.5002	5	0.0000	10.5299	1	0.0012	374.47	326.64	0.25
38 Knowledgeable staff	34.3920	5	0.0000	7.1209	1	0.0076	374.86	335.36	0.21
39 Quality of officials	13.0668	5	0.0228	5.4124	1	0.0200	335.19	302.15	0.41
40 Well organised	15.5644	5	0.0082	6.2250	1	0.0126	385.14	347.44	0.40
41 Well run	18.5316	5	0.0023	6.5198	1	0.0107	385.04	346.59	0.35
42 Timeliness	28.3668	5	0.0000	8.2348	1	0.0041	370.76	328.08	0.29
43 Information	29.2059	5	0.0000	17.1172	1	0.0000	389.73	327.89	0.59
44 Broad activity range	15.5281	5	0.0083	0.8587	1	0.3541	426.80	410.90	0.06
45 Food and drink	68.8346	5	0.0000	9.4151	1	0.0022	431.98	379.09	0.14
46 Creche or similar			not asked of all cases						
47 Value for money	13.4927	5	0.0192	8.7063	1	0.0032	391.12	346.34	0.65
50 Overall satisfaction	22.9075	5	0.0004	5.7188	1	0.0168	355.13	320.75	0.25

Key.

H Kruskal-Wallis statistic, DF Degrees of freedom, P Significance

Tables A8.5 to A8.8 test the null hypothesis that there no differences between the cases apart from that accounted for by their grouping by quality management method. The Kruskal-Wallis H statistic (H1-H2) has been calculated and the value of P looked up in Chi-square tables for four (6-2) degrees of freedom. Where the value of P is less than 0.05, it is highly likely that there is a difference between the mean perceptions of centres' customers not explained by their quality management methods. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected. Where the value of P is greater than 0.05, there is no reason to reject the hypothesis, in which case differences between the cases, apart from those explained by grouping by quality management method, are likely to arise from random variation.

Table A8.5: Significance of variance in mean test rankings of customer responses to questions about importance (including St. George's Pools)									
Null hypothesis: There is no difference between cases other than that accounted for by grouping by quality management method									
Customer survey question number and attribute	By case		By QM method		H1-H2		Chi Sq critical value	P	Accept or reject null hypothesis
	H1	DF	H2	DF		DF			
	(corrected for ties)		(corrected for ties)						
1 Secure car/bike parking	33 1303	6	15 0341	2	18.10	4	13.28	<0.01	reject
2 Accessible from public transport	25 7180	6	2 9101	2	22.81	4	18.46	<.001	reject
3 Cleanliness	27.1686	6	1.2713	2	25.90	4	18.46	<.001	reject
4 Maintenance	43 9875	6	2 7840	2	41.20	4	18.46	<.001	reject
5 Equipment quality	18 2644	6	7 5176	2	10.75	4	9.49	<0.05	reject
6 Equipment maintenance	26 2789	6	1 8183	2	24.46	4	18.46	< .001	reject
7 Physical comfort	10 2550	6	1 5767	2	8.68	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
8 Pleasant to be in	13 9435	6	8 5345	2	5.41	4	4.88	<0.30	accept
9 Friendly staff	10 5739	6	8 5682	2	2.01	4	1.65	<0.80	accept
10 Staff responsiveness	21.1345	6	11.9072	2	9.23	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
11 Staff presentability	22.0993	6	10.0145	2	12.08	4	11.67	<0.02	reject
12. Identifiable staff	14.9207	6	4.2307	2	10.69	4	9.49	<0.05	reject
13 Experienced staff	14 3667	6	6.1408	2	8.23	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
14 Knowledgable staff	16.5530	6	10.9423	2	5.61	4	4.88	<0.30	accept
15 Quality of officials	20 9365	6	18 4515	2	2.49	4	2.2	<0.70	accept
16 Well organised	27.6014	6	3.4327	2	24.17	4	18.46	<.001	reject
17 Well run	13 1456	6	1.1837	2	11.96	4	11.67	<0.02	reject
18. Timeliness	21.1835	6	0.5079	2	20.68	4	18.46	<.001	reject
19 Information	12.3612	6	6 6565	2	5.70	4	4.88	<0.30	accept
20 Broad activity range	69.6558	6	25.6395	2	44.02	4	18.46	<.001	reject
21. Food and drink	103.6033	6	17.5710	2	86.03	4	18.46	<.001	reject
22 Creche or similar	55.5797	6	18 5942	2	36.99	4	18.46	<.001	reject
23 Value for money	14 3773	6	1 2470	2	13.13	4	11.67	<0.02	reject

Key:
H: Kruskal-Wallis statistic, DF Degrees of freedom, P Significance

Table A8.6: Significance of variance in mean test rankings of customer responses to questions about importance (excluding St. George's Pools)

Null hypothesis: There is no difference between cases other than that accounted for by grouping by quality management method

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case		By QM method		H1-H2		Chi- Sq critical value	P	Accept or reject null hypothesis
	H1	DF	H2	DF		DF			
	(corrected for ties)		(corrected for ties)						
1. Secure car/bike parking	32.0219	5	13.8255	1	18.20	4	13.28	<0.01	reject
2. Accessible from public transport	25.2122	5	2.1037	1	23.11	4	18.46	<.001	reject
3. Cleanliness	26.0007	5	0.5155	1	25.49	4	18.46	<.001	reject
4. Maintenance	42.5627	5	2.0223	1	40.54	4	18.46	<.001	reject
5. Equipment quality	10.9697	5	0.0006	1	10.97	4	9.49	<0.05	reject
6. Equipment maintenance	25.2461	5	0.5183	1	24.73	4	18.46	<.001	reject
7. Physical comfort	9.7476	5	1.0490	1	8.70	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
8. Pleasant to be in	11.9039	5	6.4728	1	5.43	4	4.48	<0.30	accept
9. Friendly staff	2.1862	5	0.1360	1	2.05	4	1.65	<0.80	accept
10. Staff responsiveness	15.9179	5	6.5354	1	9.38	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
11. Staff presentability	13.9342	5	0.6207	1	13.31	4	13.28	<0.01	reject
12. Identifiable staff	11.1503	5	0.4049	1	10.75	4	9.49	<0.05	reject
13. Experienced staff	9.4988	5	1.3812	1	8.12	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
14. Knowledgeable staff	8.1419	5	2.6039	1	5.54	4	4.88	<0.30	accept
15. Quality of officials	6.8298	5	4.3317	1	2.50	4	2.2	<0.70	accept
16. Well organised	25.3499	5	0.9105	1	24.44	4	18.46	<.001	reject
17. Well run	11.9805	5	0.0278	1	11.95	4	11.67	<0.02	reject
18. Timeliness	21.2542	5	0.5085	1	20.75	4	18.46	<.001	reject
19. Information	6.0990	5	0.5004	1	5.60	4	4.88	<0.30	accept
20. Broad activity range	45.0453	5	0.0084	1	45.04	4	18.46	<.001	reject
21. Food and drink	84.6548	5	0.0007	1	84.65	4	18.46	<.001	reject
22. Creche or similar	38.8248	5	2.1681	1	36.66	4	18.46	<.001	reject
23. Value for money	13.2661	5	0.0037	1	13.26	4	11.67	<0.02	reject

Key.

H Kruskal-Wallis statistic, DF Degrees of freedom, P Significance

Table A8.7: Significance of variance in mean test rankings of customer responses to questions about perception (including St. George's Pools)
 Null hypothesis: There is no difference between cases other than that accounted for by grouping by quality management method

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case		By QM method		H1-H2		Chi Sq Critical value	P	Accept or reject null hypothesis
	H1	DF	H2	DF		DF			
	(corrected for ties)		(corrected for ties)						
25. Secure car/bike parking	103 8409	6	60.3845	2	43.46	4	18.46	<.001	reject
26 Accessible from public transport	144 5003	6	7 2367	2	137.26	4	18.46	<.001	reject
27 Cleanliness	25 6644	6	16.4080	2	9.26	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
28 Maintenance	40.3145	6	28.2347	2	12.08	4	11.67	<0.02	reject
29 Equipment quality	52 9928	6	37.0161	2	15.98	4	13.28	<0.01	reject
30 Equipment maintenance	41 9212	6	20.2460	2	21.68	4	18.46	<.001	reject
31 Physical comfort	26.4153	6	1.9310	2	24.48	4	18.46	<.001	reject
32 Pleasant to be in	20 3152	6	3 7082	2	16 61	4	13.28	<0.01	reject
33 Friendly staff	40 2132	6	7.2346	2	32.98	4	18.46	<.001	reject
34 Staff responsiveness	17 7991	6	5.4856	2	12.31	4	11.67	<0 02	reject
35 Staff presentability	22 8063	6	7.1202	2	15.69	4	13.28	<0 01	reject
36 Identifiable staff	19 0467	6	8 3254	2	10 72	4	9.49	<0.05	reject
37 Experienced staff	46 2057	6	15.1825	2	31.02	4	18.46	<.001	reject
38 Knowledgeable staff	49 3706	6	22 0026	2	27.37	4	18.46	<.001	reject
39 Quality of officials	34 3887	6	26 4549	2	7 93	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
40 Well organised	16 0818	6	6 6167	2	9.47	4	7.78	<0.10	
41 Well run	19 3568	6	7 0671	2	12 29	4	11.67	<0.02	reject
42 Timeliness	28 1745	6	8 1808	2	19.99	4	18.46	<.001	reject
43 Information	32 3183	6	20 0116	2	0.62	4	0.43	<0.98	accept
44 Broad activity range	25 8141	6	11.0650	2	0.43	4	0.43	<0.98	accept
45 Food and drink	70.1213	6	10 0636	2	0.14	4	0.3	<0.99	accept
46 Creche or similar									
47 Value for money	13 6416	6	8 8227	2	0.65	4	0.43	<0.98	accept
50 Overall satisfaction	22 9075	5	5 7188	2	0 25	4	0.3	<0 99	accept

Key.

H Kruskal-Wallis statistic, DF Degrees of freedom; P: Significance

Table A8.8: Significance of variance in mean test rankings of customer responses to questions about perception (excluding St. George's Pool)

Null hypothesis: There is no difference between cases other than that accounted for by grouping by quality management method

Customer survey question number and attribute	By case		By QM method		H1-H2		Chi Sq	P	Accept or
	H1	DF	H2	DF		DF	critical		reject null
	(corrected for ties)		(corrected for ties)				value		hypothesis
25 Secure car/bike parking	95 3682	5	53 4866	1	41.88	4	18.46	<.001	reject
26 Accessibility from public transport	139 5911	5	0 4145	1	139 18	4	18.46	<.001	reject
27 Cleanliness	25 0684	5	15 6882	1	9.38	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
28 Maintenance	39 9772	5	27 8974	1	12.08	4	11.67	<0.02	reject
29 Equipment quality	53 0243	5	37 0556	1	15.97	4	13.28	<0.01	reject
30 Equipment maintenance	41.7457	5	20 8700	1	20.88	4	18.46	<.001	reject
31 Physical comfort	26 2560	5	1 7786	1	24.48	4	18.46	<.001	reject
32 Pleasant to be in	19 5204	5	3 0592	1	16.46	4	13.28	<0 01	reject
33 Friendly staff	37 0361	5	4 2455	1	32.79	4	18.46	<.001	reject
34 Staff responsiveness	17 1258	5	4 9975	1	12.13	4	11.67	<0.02	reject
35 Staff presentability	18 8814	5	3 3899	1	15.49	4	13.28	<0.01	reject
36 Identifiable staff	12.7048	5	1 8037	1	10.90	4	9.49	<0.05	reject
37 Expenenced staff	41 5002	5	10 5299	1	30.97	4	18.46	<.001	reject
38 Knowledgable staff	34 3920	5	7.1209	1	27.27	4	18.46	<.001	reject
39 Quality of officials	13 0668	5	5 4124	1	7.65	4	5.99	<0.20	accept
40 Well organised	15 5644	5	6 2250	1	9 34	4	7.78	<0.10	accept
41 Well run	18 5316	5	6 5198	1	12.01	4	11.67	<0.02	reject
42 Timeliness	28 3668	5	8 2348	1	20.13	4	18.46	<.001	reject
43 Information	29 2059	5	17 1172	1	12.09	4	11.67	<0.02	reject
44 Broad activity range	15 5281	5	0 8587	1	14.67	4	13.28	<0.01	reject
45 Food and drink	68 8346	5	9 4151	1	59.42	4	18.46	<.001	reject
46 Creche or similar									
47 Value for money	13 4927	5	8 7063	1	4.79	4	3.36	<0.50	accept
50 Overall satisfaction	22 9075	5	5 7188	1	17.19	4	13.28	<0.01	reject

Key.

H Kruskal-Wallis statstc DF Degrees of freedom, P Significance

Appendix Nine

Second stage of primary research: Responses of interviewees

Note

24 interviews were carried out. However, not all of the interview questions were asked of all respondents since negative answers to some questions meant that some subsequent questions could be omitted.

Leadership

Table A9.1 Interview Question No. 1					
	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent are managers senior to you personally involved in generating strategic statements for the direction and culture of your organisation?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2			1	3
Total Managers	2		2	4	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	2	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	3		6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	1	3	6
Total Team		5	6	4	16
All Respondents		7	8	8	24

Note: dk= don't know

Table A9.16 Interview Question No. 2			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do your organisation's strategic aims include its quality aims and values?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		6	6
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team		16	16
All Respondents	1	23	24

Table A9.3: Interview Question No. 3					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
In your estimation, to what extent do managers senior to you play a role in communicating quality aims and values?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1		2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1		2		3
Total Managers	2		6		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			3	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2		2	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>	2		2	2	6
Total Team	4		7	5	16
All Respondents	6		13	5	24

Table A9.4: Interview Question No. 4					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
In your estimation, to what extent does your manager's behaviour, by example and action demonstrate and emphasise the quality aims and values of your organisation?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2		1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2			1	3
Total Managers	4		3	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			2	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			4	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1		2	3	6
Total Team	1		8	7	16
All Respondents	5		11	8	24

Table A9.5: Interview Question No. 5					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
To what extent does your behaviour, by example and action, demonstrate and emphasise the quality aims and values of your organisation?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1		2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers	1		5	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk		3		3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			4	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1		4	1	6
Total Team	1		11	3	15
All Respondents	2		16	5	23

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.6: Interview Question No. 6					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
In your estimation, to what extent are quality aims and values practised by other managers and staff throughout your organisation?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>					2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1		2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers	3		4	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1		3		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1		3	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>	2		3	1	6
Total Team	4		9	3	16
All Respondents	7		13	4	24

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.7: Interview Question No. 7					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
To what extent are you personally involved in reviewing progress and commitment on quality improvements?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>				2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers	0		4	4	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	2		2		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	3		1	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>	3		2	1	6
Total Team	8		5	3	16
All Respondents	8		9	7	24

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.8: Interview Question No. 8					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
To what degree is your involvement in quality improvements a significant factor in your own personal appraisal and promotion prospects?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2		1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1	1	3
Total Managers		3	3	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1	1	3	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	4		6
Total Team	1	5	9	1	16
All Respondents	1	8	12	3	24

Table A9.9: Interview Question No. 9					
	Not	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
In your estimation, how personally involved is your manager in the recognition of the efforts made by individuals and teams in generating quality improvements?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1		1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3			3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2		3
Total Managers		5	2	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	1	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1	4	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	3	2		6
Total Team	1	5	7	3	16
All Respondents	1	10	9	4	24

Table A9.10: Interview Question No. 10					
	Not	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
How personally involved are you in the recognition of the efforts made by members of your staff in generating quality improvements?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			3		3
Total Managers		1	6	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	2	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1	2	3	6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	4		6
Total Team		4	8	4	16
All Respondents		5	14	5	24

Table A9.11: Interview Question No. 11					
	Not	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
How involved are you in meeting with customers order to generate quality improvements?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1	1	3
Total Managers	1	4	2	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4			4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1	2	3		6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	1	4		6
Total Team	2	7	7	0	16
All Respondents	3	11	9	1	24

Table A9.12: Interview Question No. 12					
	Not	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
How involved are you in meeting with suppliers of goods or services to your organisation in order to generate quality improvements?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	2			3
Total Managers	2	4	2	0	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	2	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	3	1	1	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	3	2		6
Total Team	4	5	5	2	16
All Respondents	6	9	7	2	24

Policy and strategy

Table A9.13: Interview Question No. 13					
	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent do the policies, strategies plans & goals developed for your work reflect and strongly support the achievement of your organisation's stated quality aims and values?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1		2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers	2		5	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			4		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			6		6
<i>liP Team</i>	1		3	2	6
Total Team	1		13	2	16
All Respondents	3		18	3	24

Table A9.14: Interview Question No. 14a					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
When planning and managing your work, what use do you make of feedback on the performance of internal processes?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			3		3
Total Managers		1	7		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	1	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1		3	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>		1	3	2	6
Total Team	1	2	7	6	16
All Respondents	1	3	14	6	24

Table A9.15: Interview Question No. 14b					
	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
When planning and managing your work, what use do you make of feedback on the performance of suppliers?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	1		3
Total Managers	2	4	2		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	3		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2	3	1		6
<i>liP Team</i>		3	2	1	6
Total Team	2	7	6	1	16
All Respondents	4	11	8	1	24

Table A9.16: Interview Question No. 14c						
		None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
When planning and managing your work, what use do you make of comparisons with other facilities managed by your organisation?						
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			1	1	1	3
Total Managers			5	2	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			3	1		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	1	1	1	5
<i>liP Team</i>			3	2	1	6
Total Team		2	7	4	2	15
All Respondents		2	12	6	3	23

Note: dk=don't know

Table A9.17: Interview Question No. 14d						
		None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
When planning and managing your work, what use do you make of comparisons managed by other organisations?						
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	1			3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1		3
Total Managers		3	4	1		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2			4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	4			1	5
<i>liP Team</i>		1	3	2		6
Total Team		7	5	2	1	15
All Respondents		10	9	3	1	23

Note: dk=don't know

People management

Table A9.18 Interview Question No. 15				
		No	Yes	tot.
Do you and your manager have a method for ensuring that top-level goals are feasible, and consistent with and deployed into lower level targets and plans?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>			3	3
Total Managers			8	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			6	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	1	4	5
Total Team		1	14	15
All Respondents		1	22	23

Note: dk=don't know

Table A9.19: Interview Question No. 15a- Responses of managers	
What is the method used for ensuring that top-level goals are feasible, and consistent with and deployed into lower level targets and plans?	
<i>No QM Standard</i>	
<i>ISO 9002</i>	
Discussions at budget times or on project initiation; monthly managers' meetings; work plans and appraisal system.	
<i>liP</i>	
Development plan; meetings of duty managers, communication and training; work programmes; appraisal process, business plan.	

Table A9.20: Interview Question No. 16					
	None	Few	Most	All	tot.
In your estimation, how many of your staff can list the organisation's goal's relevant to their activity?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	1		3
Total Managers	1	5	2		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3			4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		3	2	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>		5	1		6
Total Team	1	11	3	1	16
All Respondents	2	16	5	1	24

Table A9.21: Interview Question No. 17					
	None	Few	Most	All	tot.
In your estimation, how many of your staff are familiar with the plans to achieve the organisation's goals in their areas?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2		3
Total Managers		5	3		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3			4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		3	2	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>		3	3		6
Total Team	1	9	5	1	16
All Respondents	1	14	8	1	24

	None	Slight	Considerable	High	tot.
To what extent are your people plans directly derived from the needs of your strategic plans and goals (rather than just activities or based on ad hoc needs)					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2		1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>				3	3
Total Managers		4		4	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		3	1		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1	2	1	4
<i>liP Team</i>		2	3	1	6
Total Team		6	6	2	14
All Respondents		10	6	6	22

	No	Yes	tot.
Do you have a process for regularly reviewing/ appraising employees' performance?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	5	5
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team		15	15
All Respondents	1	22	23

Note: dk=don't know

	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent do you feel this (appraisal or review) process is respected by your staff?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2		1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers	3		4	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1	2	2	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	3	2		6
Total Team	2	7	6	1	16
All Respondents	2	10	10	2	24

Table A9.25: Interview Question No. 19b			
	No	Yes	tot.
Does the appraisal process include training and career development needs?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		6	6
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team		16	16
All Respondents	1	23	24

Table A9.26: Interview Question No. 20			
	No	Yes	tot.
Are you regularly appraised by your manager?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2	1	3
Total Managers	6	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2	4	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	5	6
Total Team	4	12	16
All Respondents	10	14	24

Table A9.27: Interview Question No. 21			
	No	Yes	tot.
Does your organisation have a process that involves you and your staff in generating service improvements?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2	4	6
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team	3	12	15
All Respondents	4	19	23

Note: dk=don't know

Table A9.28: Interview Question No. 21a				
	(If yes to Q.21)	No	Yes	tot.
Does this process involve employees both as individuals and teams?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>			3	3
Total Managers		1	6	7
Does this process involve employees both as teams and individuals?				
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk		3	3
<i>liP Team</i>			6	6
Total Team		1	10	11
All Respondents		2	16	18

Note: dk=don't know

Table A9.29 Interview Question No. 22						
		Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent are you empowered to act and take responsibility for decisions and changes concerned with quality organisation?						
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1			1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2			3
<i>liP Managers</i>			1		2	3
Total Managers		2	3		3	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	2		1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1		4		1	6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	3		1	6
Total Team	1	3	9		3	15
All Respondents		1	5	12	6	24

Table A9.30: Interview Question No. 22a				
	(If yes to Q.22)	No	Yes	tot.
Does your organisation have a means of actively ensuring that this increased empowerment is without significant increased risk?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2	3
Total Managers		2	6	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	1	3	4
<i>liP Team</i>		2	3	5
Total Team		3	10	13
All Respondents		5	16	21

Note: dk=don't know

Table A9.31: Interview Question No. 22b - Responses of managers	
(If yes to Q.22) What are these means? <i>No QM Standard</i> Senior management monthly review. <i>ISO 9002</i> Purchasing threshold, employee regulations; budget authorisation procedure, risk averse culture; purchasing limit (£500). <i>liP</i> Financial accountability and discipline, but managers set own budgets; research before action, finance procedures, managers need to obtain senior management authorisation for big changes.	

Table A9.32: Interview Question No. 23						
		Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent are your staff empowered to act and take responsibility for decisions and changes concerned with quality?						
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>				2	1	3
Total Managers			4	3	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2			4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1dk	1	1	3	5
<i>liP Team</i>		1	4	1		6
Total Team		4	7	4		11
All Respondents		4	11	7	1	23

Note: dk=don't know

Table A9.33: Interview Question No. 24						
		Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent is the effort you make towards quality improvement recognised by your organisation?						
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1		3
Total Managers			5	3		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1		3		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		2		2	2	6
<i>liP Team</i>		4		2		6
Total Team		7		7	2	16
All Respondents		12		10	2	24

Table A9.34: Interview Question No. 25					
		Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly tot.
To what extent do you recognise the effort your staff make towards quality improvement?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1		1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>				3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>				3	3
Total Managers		1		7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	1	1	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1 dk	1	4		5
<i>liP Team</i>		1	4	1	6
Total Team	1	3	9	2	14
All Respondents	1	4	16	2	23

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.35: Interview Question No. 26					
		Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly tot.
How effective are two-way communications between you and your manager?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>				3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1	1	3
Total Managers		2	4	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		3	1		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			3	3	6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	2	2	6
Total Team		5	6	5	16
All Respondents		7	10	7	24

Table A9.36: Interview Question No. 27			
		No	Yes tot.
Do you feel that you are well informed by your manager?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2
Total Managers		1	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			6
<i>liP Team</i>			6
Total Team		1	15
All Respondents		2	22

Table A9.37: Interview Question No. 28			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do you feel that your opinions are valued by your manager?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers		8	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		6	6
<i>liP Team</i>	2	4	6
Total Team	3	13	16
All Respondents	3	21	24

Table A9.38: Interview Question No. 29					
	None	Few	Most	All	tot.
In your estimation, how many of your staff would agree that they are well-informed?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2		3
Total Managers		1	7		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	3		1		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1		5		6
<i>liP Team</i>	3		2	1	6
Total Team	7		8	1	16
All Respondents	8		15	1	24

Table A9.39: Interview Question No. 30					
	None	Few	Most	All	tot.
In your estimation, how many of your staff would agree that you value their opinions?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2		3
Total Managers		1	7		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	2		2		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2		4		6
<i>liP Team</i>	3		2	1	6
Total Team	7		8	1	16
All Respondents	8		15	1	24

Resource management

Table A9.40: Interview Question No. 31				
	No	Yes	On some items	tot.
Does your manager have an approach which ensures that the allocation and use of financial resources reflect and support the quality aims and values?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	1	3
Total Managers		6	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		3	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1 dk	3	2	5
<i>liP Team</i>	1 dk	5		5
Total Team		11	3	14
All Respondents		17	5	22

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.41: Interview Question No. 31a		
	No	Yes
Does you have an approach which ensures that the allocation and use of financial resources reflect and support the quality aims and values?		
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3
Total Managers		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2dk	4
<i>liP Team</i>		6
Total Team		14
All Respondents		22

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.42: Interview Question No. 32					
	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent is all relevant information about your organisation's operations and resources available to your manager?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	1	3	
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	1		2	
Total Managers	1	4		5	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2	4	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	3	2	5	
<i>liP Team</i>		2	4	6	
Total Team		7	8	15	
All Respondents		1	11	8	20

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.43: Interview Question No. 32a						
		Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
To what extent is all relevant information about your organisation's operations and resources available to you and appropriate members of your staff?						
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>				1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>				3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>				1	2	3
Total Managers				5	3	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			2	1	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1dk	1	4		5
<i>liP Team</i>			1	2	3	6
Total Team			4	7	4	15
All Respondents			4	12	7	23

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.44: Interview Question No. 32b						
		Not	Fairly	Considerably	Completely	tot.
(If yes to Q 32a)						
How reliable is this information?						
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>				2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>				2	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>				2	2	4
Total Managers			0	6		6
<i>No QM standard Team</i>				3	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			2	3		5
<i>liP Team</i>			2	1	3	6
Total Team			4	7	4	15
All Respondents			4	13	4	21

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.45: Interview Question No. 32c						
		Not	Fairly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
(If yes to Q 32a)						
How up to date is this information?						
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>					2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>				1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>				1	2	3
Total Managers				2	6	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>				2	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			1	2	2	5
<i>liP Team</i>			1	3	2	6
Total Team			2	7	6	15
All Respondents			2	9	12	23

Table A9.46: Interview Question No. 32d			
	No	Yes	tot.
(If yes to 32a)			
Where appropriate is such information available to customers?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	2	5	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	2	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	4	1	5
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	1	4
Total Team	7	7	14
All Respondents	9	12	21

Table A9.47: Interview Question No. 32e			
	No	Yes	tot.
(If yes to 32a)			
Where appropriate is such information available to suppliers?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2	1	3
Total Managers	6	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	3	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	4	4
<i>liP Team</i>	5	1	6
Total Team	12	2	14
All Respondents	18	4	22

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.48: Interview Question No. 33			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do you have a method for continual improvement in the effective use and control of resources?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	0	8	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	1	4
<i>liP Team</i>	2	4	6
Total Team	4	11	15
All Respondents	4	19	23

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.49: Interview Question No. 33a - Responses of managers	
(If yes to Q.33) What is this method?	
<i>No QM Standard Managers</i> Feedback from operations departments via monthly meeting; records (stock and finance) are reviewed.	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i> Performance review, ISO 9000; monitoring of staff, materials; fine tuning programme; continuous review of procedures as part of quality system.	
<i>liP Managers</i> Through meetings and feedback; defined budget under continual review for VfM; budget process.	

Table A9.50: Interview Question No. 33b					
	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
(If yes to Q 33)					
How up to date is this information?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>			1	2	3
Total Managers		1	4	3	8
<hr/>					
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			1	2	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2dk	2	1		3
<i>liP Team</i>		2	2		4
Total Team		4	4	2	10
All Respondents		5	8	5	18

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.49: Interview Question No. 33c				
	No	Yes	tot.	
(If yes to 33)				
Does this include reduction in wastage (e.g. energy consumption)				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3	
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3	
Total Managers	1	7	8	
<hr/>				
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			3 3	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	4	
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	1	3	
Total Team		3	7 10	
All Respondents		4	14 18	

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.52: Interview Question No. 33d			
		No	Yes tot.
<i>(If yes to 33)</i>			
Does this include the better use of fixed assets (e.g. space and equipment)?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			3 3
<i>liP Managers</i>			3 3
Total Managers		2	6 8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	2 3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	1	3 4
<i>liP Team</i>	2dk		2 2
Total Team		2	7 9
All Respondents		4	13 17

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.53: Interview Question No. 34			
		No	Yes tot.
Do you have a method for identifying and implementing the use of alternative or new technologies which can improve your service or the processes which create it?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2 3
<i>liP Managers</i>			3 3
Total Managers		3	5 8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		3	1 4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	3	2 5
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	1	4 5
Total Team		7	7 14
All Respondents		10	12 22

Table A9.51: Interview Question No. 34a - Responses of managers	
<i>(If yes to Q. 34)</i>	
What is this method?	
<i>No QM Standard managers</i>	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	
Performance review, Management by Objectives, customer feedback, competitor analysis; rely on manager.	
<i>liP</i>	
Bringing in suggestions, learning from other sites; identify organisational needs and allocate in budgetary process (e.g. computers); look at what is happening in the industry.	

Table A9.52: Interview Question No. 34b					
	Not	Slightly	Considerably	Highly	tot.
<i>(If yes to Q 34)</i>					
How effective is this method?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>					0
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1		1		2
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers	1		3	1	5
<hr/>					
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			1		1
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			2		2
<i>liP Team</i>	2		1	1	4
Total Team	2		4	1	7
All Respondents	3		7	2	12

Processes

Table A9.55: Interview Question No. 35			
	No	Yes	tot.
Are the processes critical to the success of your facility identified?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<hr/>			
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		6	6
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team		16	16
All Respondents	1	23	24

Table A9.56: Interview Question No. 35a					
	Unclear	Some	Considerable	Complete	tot.
		clarity	clarity	clarity	
<i>(If yes to Q35)</i>					
How clear is it who is responsible for each of these processes?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1			1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1		2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>			1	2	3
Total Managers	1	1	1	5	8
<hr/>					
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			2	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			1	5	6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	2	2	6
Total Team		2	5	9	16
All Respondents	1	3	6	14	24

Table A9.57: Interview Question No. 35b					
	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
(If yes to Q35)					
For how many of these processes are performance indicators established?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1			1
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2		3
<i>iiP Managers</i>		1	1	1	3
Total Managers		3	3	1	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	1	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1	2	3	6
<i>iiP Team</i>		3	1	2	6
Total Team		6	4	6	16
All Respondents		9	7	7	23

Table A9.58: Interview Question No. 35c					
	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
(If yes to Q35)					
For how many of these processes have standards or requirements been specified?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1			
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2	1	3
<i>iiP Managers</i>		1	2		3
<i>iiP Managers</i>					0
Total Managers		1	4	1	6
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	3	1	6
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			4	2	6
<i>iiP Team</i>			2	2	4
Total Team		2	9	5	16
All Respondents		3	13	6	22

Table A9.59: Interview Question No. 35d					
	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
(If yes to Q35c)					
How many of these processes are actually operated and controlled according to these standards or requirements?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1		1
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2	1	3
<i>iiP Managers</i>		1	2		3
Total Managers		1	5	1	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	1	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			4	2	6
<i>iiP Team</i>		1	4	1	6
Total Team		2	9	5	16
All Respondents		3	14	6	23

Table A9.60: Interview Question No. 36			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do you have a system for ensuring that customer requirements lead to the modification or development of existing services?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers		8	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		6	6
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team	1	15	16
All Respondents	1	23	24

Table A9.61: Interview Question No. 37			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do you have a system for ensuring that changes in customer requirements are translated into specifications for new services?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	2	3
Total Managers	2	6	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	3	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2dk	1	3
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team	4	10	14
All Respondents	6	16	22

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.62: Interview Question No. 37a - Responses of managers
(If yes to Q. 37) What is this system? <i>No QM Standard Managers</i> <i>ISO 9000 Managers</i> Providing we can control it within the contract specification, then customer comments, satisfaction survey - otherwise must negotiate with client; customer comments, customer panels, marketing survey analysis; "customer connect" system - can implement suggestions if need be. <i>liP Managers</i> Customer comments lead to change in operating procedures or training of staff; surveys, action and development plans; annual customer survey, customer comments scheme survey of customer groups.

Table A9.63: Interview Question No. 38			
	No	Yes	tot.
Is there a comprehensive development plan for new services?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	2	3
Total Managers	2	6	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	3	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2dk 1	3	4
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team	4	10	14
All Respondents	6	16	22

Table A9.64: Interview Question No. 39			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do you regularly analyse operational data in order to identify opportunities and needs so as to source a programme of continuous improvement of processes?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	2	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		6	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	5	6
Total Team	2	14	16
All Respondents	3	21	24

Table A9.65: Interview Question No. 39a			
	No	Yes	tot.
(If yes to Q. 39)			
Do you compare operational data with other facilities managed by your organisation?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	2
Total Managers	1	6	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	2	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2dk 2	2	4
<i>liP Team</i>		4	4
Total Team	3	8	11
All Respondents	4	14	18

Table A9.66: Interview Question No. 39b			
(If yes to Q. 39)	No	Yes	tot.
Do you compare operational data with other facilities managed by other organisations?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	1	2
Total Managers	5	2	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	2	1	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	3dk	3	2 5
<i>liP Team</i>	4	1	5
Total Team	9	4	13
All Respondents	14	6	20

Table A9.67: Interview Question No. 40			
(If yes to Q. 39)	No	Yes	tot.
Do you regularly analyse feedback from customers in order to identify opportunities and needs for a programme of continuous improvement of your processes?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3	3	
<i>liP Managers</i>	3	3	
Total Managers	8	8	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4	4	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	6	6	
<i>liP Team</i>	6	6	
Total Team	16	16	
All Respondents	24	24	

Table A9.68: Interview Question No. 40a			
(If yes to Q. 39)	No	Yes	tot.
Do you compare feedback from customers with other facilities managed by your organisation?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	2	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	2	1 3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	3	2 5
<i>liP Team</i>		3	3 6
Total Team		8	6 14
All Respondents		9	13 22

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.69: Interview Question No. 40b				
(If yes to Q. 39)	No	Yes	tot.	
Do you compare feedback from customers with other facilities managed by other organisations?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3		3	
<i>liP Managers</i>	3		3	
Total Managers	7	1	8	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	3		3	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	1	3
<i>liP Team</i>	3dk	6		6
Total Team	11	1	12	
All Respondents	18	2	20	

Table A9.70: Interview Question No. 41					
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	tot.
How often do you use your records, audit results and other findings to ensure that systems are improved through root-cause cures, preventing recurrence of the problem?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers	1	2	4	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			6		6
<i>liP Team</i>		2	4		6
Total Team		4	12	0	16
All Respondents	1	6	16	1	24

Table A9.71: Interview Question No. 42					
	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of your support activities are documented, controlled and continuously improved to at least the same level as your mainstream service activities?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2		3
Total Managers	1	3	4		8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	1	2		3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk		5		5
<i>liP Team</i>		4	2		6
Total Team		5	9		14
All Respondents	1	8	13		22

Table A9.72: Interview Question No. 43			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do you and/ or your manager take routine actions to make suppliers aware of your current and future quality requirements?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	2	3
Total Managers	2	6	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2	4	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	2	3
Total Team	5	10	15
All Respondents	7	16	23

Table A9.73: Interview Question No. 43a			
	No	Yes	tot.
(If yes to Q. 43) Is there a system for ensuring that the above requirements can be met, and are being met by suppliers?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	2
Total Managers	1	5	6
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	2	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		4	4
<i>liP Team</i>		3	3
Total Team	1	9	10
All Respondents	2	14	16

Table A9.74: Interview Question No. 43b			
	No	Yes	tot.
(If yes to Q. 43) Are suppliers regularly informed and made aware of their performance (rather than just taking ad hoc actions to correct current problems)?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	2
Total Managers	3	3	6
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	2	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	3	1	4
<i>liP Team</i>	3		3
Total Team	7	3	10
All Respondents	10	6	16

Customer satisfaction

Table A9.75: Interview Question No. 44			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do you have a system which, in your estimation, makes it easy for customers to complain (both verbally and in writing).			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3	3	
<i>liP Managers</i>	3	3	
Total Managers	8	8	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4	4	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	6	6	
<i>liP Team</i>	6	6	
Total Team	16	16	
All Respondents	24	24	

Table A9.76: Interview Question No. 45			
	No	Yes	tot.
Are you aware of the number of complaints?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3	3	
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	2	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4	4	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1	5	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1	5	6
Total Team	2	14	16
All Respondents	3	21	24

Table A9.77: Interview Question No. 45a			
	No	Yes	tot.
(If yes to Q. 45)			
Is the number of complaints falling?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	1	2
Total Managers	4	3	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4	4	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2	4	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	4	5
Total Team	3	12	15
All Respondents	7	15	22

Table A9.78: Interview Question No. 46			
	No	Yes	tot.
Were there to be any trends or common features of complaints, would you be aware of them?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>liP Managers</i>	3	3	
Total Managers	7	7	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4	4	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	6	6	
<i>liP Team</i>	6	6	
Total Team	16	16	
All Respondents	23	23	

Table A9.79: Interview Question No. 47			
	No	Yes	tot.
Do you evaluate your facility's management of the customer relationship through measures of items that probably influence customer satisfaction (such as the attainment of cleaning/ maintenance specifications etc)?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	23	23	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3	3	
<i>liP Managers</i>		0	
Total Managers	4	4	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4	4	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	6	6	
<i>liP Team</i>	1	5	6
Total Team	1	15	16
All Respondents	1	19	20

Table A9.80: Interview Question No. 47a			
	No	Yes	tot.
(If yes to Q. 47)			
Are these things regularly measured?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3	3	
<i>liP Managers</i>	3	3	
Total Managers	0	8	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4	4	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	6	6	
<i>liP Team</i>	6	6	
Total Team	0	16	16
All Respondents	0	24	24

Table A9.81: Interview Question No. 47b			
	(If yes to Q. 43a)	No	Yes tot.
Do you know the results of these measurements?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2
<i>liP Managers</i>			3
Total Managers		1	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		2	4
<i>liP Team</i>			6
Total Team		2	14
All Respondents		3	21

Table A9.82: Interview Question No. 47c					
	(If yes to Q. 47b)	None	Some	Most	All tot.
Performance against how many of these measurements is showing an improving trend?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>				2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>				2	2
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	1		3
Total Managers		2	5	0	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	3		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1	2	2	5
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	2	2		4
Total Team		4	7	2	13
All Respondents		6	12	2	20

Table A9.83: Interview Question No. 47d			
	(If yes to Q. 47b)	No	Yes tot.
Can you demonstrate that performance against these measures is comparable with or better than the results of other facilities managed by your organisation?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2
Total Managers		1	6
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	2
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	2	2
Total Team		6	6
All Respondents		7	12

Table A9.84: Interview Question No. 47e			
	(If yes to Q. 47b)	No	Yes tot.
	Can you demonstrate that performance against these measures is comparable with or better than the results of other facilities managed by other organisations?		
	<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2
	<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	2
	<i>liP Managers</i>	3	3
	Total Managers	7	0 7
	<i>No QM standard Team</i>	2	1 3
	<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk 4	4
	<i>liP Team</i>	1dk 3	1 4
	Total Team	9	2 11
	All Respondents	16	2 18

Table A9.85: Interview Question No. 48			
		No	Yes tot.
	Do you have a method for identifying the key customer requirements of your service?		
	<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2
	<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3	3
	<i>liP Managers</i>	3	3
	Total Managers	0	8 8
	<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4 4
	<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1	5 6
	<i>liP Team</i>	1dk 1	4 5
	Total Team	2	13 15
	All Respondents	2	21 23

Table A9.86: Interview Question No. 48a	
What is the method (for identifying the key customer requirements of your service)?	
<i>No QM standard</i>	
Annual user survey, and two customer representatives on Board	
Annual user survey	
<i>ISO 9002 cases</i>	
The contract specification identifies these, (it took account of a customer survey)	
The contract specification identifies these, and we have some customer feedback mechanisms (customer complaints and comments)	
Analysis of complaints, surveys, and our customer panel	
<i>liP cases</i>	
Customer feedback forms, customer forum and informal methods (Management By Walking About)	
Complaints led to the establishment of customer service standards, we continue to ask for comments and complaints	
Customer survey (undertaken by client), letters, suggestions and face-to-face contact	

Table A9.87: Interview Question No. 48b					
(If yes to Q. 48)	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of the key customer requirements are addressed by well-defined standards and service levels?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2			2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers		2	4	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	1	2		3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk		4		4
<i>liP Team</i>			2	2	4
Total Team		1	8	2	11
All Respondents		3	12	4	19

Table A9.88: Interview Question No. 48c			
	No	Yes	tot.
Is the performance of your facility in meeting the above standards regularly measured?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	3	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	3	3
<i>liP Team</i>		4	4
Total Team		10	10
All Respondents	1	17	18

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.89: Interview Question No. 48d			
	No	Yes	tot.
Are the results of these measurements regularly measured?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	6	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	3	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	1	2
<i>liP Team</i>		4	4
Total Team	1	9	10
All Respondents	2	15	17

Table A9.90: Interview Question No. 48e					
(If yes to Q. 48d)	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
Performance against how many of these measures is showing an improving trends?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1		1
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	1		2
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	1		3
Total Managers		3	3		6
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk		3		3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	1	1		2
<i>liP Team</i>		1	3		4
Total Team		2	7		9
All Respondents		5	10		15

Table A9.91: Interview Question No. 48f				
(If yes to Q. 47b)	No	Yes	tot.	
Can you demonstrate that performance against these measures is comparable with or better than the results of other facilities managed by your organisation?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	2	
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3	
Total Managers	1	5	6	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	2	1	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	1	1	2
<i>liP Team</i>		1	3	4
Total Team		4	5	9
All Respondents		5	10	15

Table A9.92: Interview Question No. 48g				
(If yes to Q. 47b)	No	Yes	tot.	
Can you demonstrate that performance against these measures is comparable with or better than the results of other facilities managed by other organisations?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2		2	
<i>liP Managers</i>	2	1	3	
Total Managers	5	1	6	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	3		3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2		2
<i>liP Team</i>		4		4
Total Team		9		9
All Respondents		14	1	15

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.93: Interview Question No. 49					
	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of the factors which influence customer satisfaction are covered by a method for routinely setting targets/ goals for improvement?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3			3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1		2		3
Total Managers	1	3	3	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	1	1	1	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	3dk	1	2		3
<i>liP Team</i>		5	1		6
Total Team		7	4	1	12
All Respondents	1	10	7	2	20

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.94: Interview Question No. 50				
	No	Yes	tot.	
Are customer satisfaction results (that is the actual perception of the customer) regularly measured?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3	
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3	
Total Managers	1	7	8	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	4	1	5
<i>liP Team</i>		5	5	
Total Team		5	9	14
All Respondents		6	16	22

Table A9.95: Interview Question No. 50 (qualitative responses) Customer feedback measures utilised in cases						
	Inspection by client (proxy customers)	Complaints/ comments	Annual customer survey (by client)	Annual customer survey (by contractor)	Regular customer survey (by contractor)	Customer panel or representatives
<i>No quality management method</i>						
St. George's Pools	*	*				
<i>Preparing for ISO 9002 registration</i>						
Arches Leisure Centre	*	*		*	*	*
<i>ISO 9002 cases</i>						
Highbury Pool	*	*			*	*
Kensington Sports Centre	*	*				
Seven Islands Leisure Centre	*	*	*			
<i>liP cases</i>						
Hartham Pool	*	*	*			
Newham Leisure Centre	*	*	*			
Waterfront Leisure Centre	*	*		*	*	*

Table A9.96: Interview Question No. 50a			
(If yes to Q. 50)	No	Yes	tot.
Are the results for your service made known to you?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>liP Managers</i>	3	3	
Total Managers	7	7	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	3	3	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1	1	
<i>liP Team</i>	5	5	
Total Team	9	9	
All Respondents	16	16	

Table A9.97: Interview Question No. 50b			
(If yes to Q. 50)	No	Yes	tot.
Are these customer satisfaction results showing an improving trend?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>liP Managers</i>	1dk	2	2
Total Managers	6	6	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	3	3	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1	1	
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	4	4
Total Team	8	8	
All Respondents	14	14	

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.98: Interview Question No. 50c			
(If yes to Q. 50)	No	Yes	tot.
Can you demonstrate that these customer satisfaction are similar to/ better than those of other facilities managed by your organisation?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>liP Managers</i>	2	1	3
Total Managers	3	4	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	2	1	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1		1
<i>liP Team</i>	2	3	5
Total Team	5	4	9
All Respondents	8	8	16

Table A9.99: Interview Question No. 50d			
(If yes to Q. 50)	No	Yes	tot.
Can you demonstrate that these customer satisfaction are similar to/ better than those of other facilities managed by other organisations?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>liP Managers</i>	3		3
Total Managers	6	1	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	2	1	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1		1
<i>liP Team</i>	1dk	4	4
Total Team	7	1	8
All Respondents	13	2	15

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.100: Interview Question No. 50e			
(If yes to Q. 50)	No	Yes	tot.
Do you have a method for routinely setting targets/ goal for improvement in performance against the measures of customer perceptions of satisfaction?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	2
Total Managers	3	3	6
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1		1
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1	1
<i>liP Team</i>	1	4	5
Total Team	2	5	7
All Respondents	5	8	13

Employee satisfaction

Table A9.101 Interview Question No. 51					
	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of the factors which might be related to levels of staff satisfaction do you regularly measure?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1		1	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1		1	1	3
Total Managers	3		3	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			2	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>				6	6
<i>liP Team</i>	1		2	3	6
Total Team	1		4	11	16
All Respondents	4		7	13	24

Table A9.102: Interview Question No. 51a			
(If yes to Q. 51)	No	Yes	tot.
Have steps been taken to establish the relevance or appropriateness of these measures?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	3	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2dk	1	3
<i>liP Team</i>	3	3	6
Total Team	7	7	14
All Respondents	8	14	22

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.103: Interview Question No. 51b			
(If yes to Q. 51)	No	Yes	tot.
Are the results analysed by job function and job level?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	2	3
Total Managers	5	3	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	3
<i>liP Team</i>	2	4	6
Total Team	4	11	15
All Respondents	9	14	23

Table A9.104: Interview Question No. 51c			
(If yes to Q. 51)	No	Yes	tot.
Are the results made known to your employees?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	1	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2	1	3
Total Managers	6	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	2	2	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	5	1	6
<i>liP Team</i>	4	2	6
Total Team	11	5	16
All Respondents	17	7	24

Table A9.105: Interview Question No. 51d			
(If yes to Q. 51)		No	Yes tot.
Are the results of the above measures showing a generally improving trend?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1 2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			3 3
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2 3
Total Managers		2	6 8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	1	2 3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk		5 5
<i>liP Team</i>	2dk	2	2 4
Total Team		3	9 12
All Respondents		5	15 20

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.106: Interview Question No. 51e			
(If yes to Q. 51)		No	Yes tot.
Can you demonstrate that these results are similar to or better than those of other facilities managed by your organisation?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2 2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2 3
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	1 3
Total Managers		3	5 8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	1	2 3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2dk	3	1 4
<i>liP Team</i>		1	5 6
Total Team		5	8 13
All Respondents		8	13 21

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.107: Interview Question No. 51f			
(If yes to Q. 51)		No	Yes tot.
Can you demonstrate that these results are similar to or better than those of other facilities managed by other organisations?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	3
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	1 3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers		5	1 6
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	2	1 3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	5	5
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team		13	1 14
All Respondents		18	2 20

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.108: Interview Question No. 52			
	No	Yes	tot.
Are regular surveys conducted of the perceptions of your staff on various aspects of the organisation such as working environment, communications, career prospects, their managers, pay, appraisal, recognition, training morale and overall employee satisfaction?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	2	1	3
Total Managers	7	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	6		6
<i>liP Team</i>	3	3	6
Total Team	13	3	16
All Respondents	20	4	24

Table A9.109: Interview Question No. 52a			
(If yes to Q. 52)	No	Yes	tot.
Have steps been taken to establish the relevance or appropriateness of these measures?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1
Total Managers	1	1	2
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			
<i>liP Team</i>	2	1	3
Total Team	2	1	3
All Respondents	3	2	5

Table A9.110: Interview Question No. 52b			
(If yes to Q. 52)	No	Yes	tot.
Are the results analysed by job function and job level?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1
Total Managers		1	1
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			
<i>liP Team</i>	1	2	3
Total Team	1	2	3
All Respondents	1	3	4

Table A9.111: Interview Question No. 52c			
	(If yes to Q. 52)	No	Yes tot.
Are the results made known to your employees?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1
Total Managers		1	1
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			
<i>liP Team</i>		2	1 3
Total Team		2	1 3
All Respondents		2	2 4

Table A9.112: Interview Question No. 52d			
	(If yes to Q. 52)	No	Yes tot.
Are the results of the above measures showing a generally improving trend?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1
Total Managers		1	1
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			
<i>liP Team</i>		1	1 2
Total Team		1	1 2
All Respondents		2	1 3

Table A9.1138: Interview Question No. 52e			
	(If yes to Q. 52)	No	Yes tot.
Can you demonstrate that these results are similar to or better than those of other facilities managed by your organisation?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1
Total Managers		1	1
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			
<i>liP Team</i>		2	1 3
Total Team		2	1 3
All Respondents		3	1 4

Table A9.114: Interview Question No. 52f			
	(If yes to Q. 52)	No	Yes tot.
Can you demonstrate that these results are similar to or better than those of other facilities managed by other organisations?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	1
Total Managers		1	1
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>			
<i>liP Team</i>		3	3
Total Team		3	3
All Respondents		4	4

Table A9.115: Interview Question No. 52g					
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	tot.
How often do these results lead to management action?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>					
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>					
<i>liP Managers</i>			1		1
Total Managers			1	1	2
<i>No QM standard Team</i>					
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>					
<i>liP Team</i>	1		2		2
Total Team	1		2	2	5
All Respondents	1		3	3	7

Table A9.116: Interview Question Nos. 53, 54, 55						
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Does your facility have an active programme to...						
(53) reduce harm or nuisance to neighbours and the neighbourhood environment?						
(54) conserve and protect global resources?						
(55) contribute to the community?						
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1	2	2		
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	1	2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>	1	2	1	2	2	1
Total Managers	4	4	3	5	4	4
<i>No QM standard Team</i>						
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>						
<i>liP Team</i>		4	1dk	3	2	2
Total Team	2	4	3	3	3	3
<i>liP Team</i>		6	3	3	3	3
Total Team	2	14	6	9	8	8
All Respondents	6	18	9	14	12	12

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.117: Interview Question No. 56			
		No	Yes tot.
Do you have any other programmes related to your facility's impact on the wider community?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1 2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2 3
<i>liP Managers</i>			3 3
Total Managers		2	6 8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk		3 3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	5	1 6
<i>liP Team</i>		1	4 5
Total Team		6	8 14
All Respondents		8	14 22

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.118: Interview Question No. 56a - Responses of managers
(If yes to Q. 56) What is this programme(s)? <i>No QM standard Managers</i> Extra concessions on prices; working with local health group. <i>ISO 9000 Managers</i> Crime prevention with police, road safety and cycle proficiency; health referral. <i>liP Managers</i> Mayor's charity, support for local schools; emergency planning, carer days; educational programme, "Project Trident", work experience, college links, staff-school visit programme, water safety lessons.

Table A9.119: Interview Question No. 57			
		No	Yes tot.
Are activities in the above areas showing an improving trend?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1 2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			2 2
<i>liP Managers</i>		1	2 3
Total Managers		2	5 7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk		3 3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	2 4
<i>liP Team</i>			4 4
Total Team		2	9 11
All Respondents		4	14 18

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.120: Interview Question No. 57a				
(If yes to Q. 57)	No	Yes	tot.	
Can you demonstrate that these results are similar to or better than those of other facilities managed by your organisation?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	1	2	
<i>liP Managers</i>		2	2	
Total Managers	2	3	5	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	2	1	3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		1	1	
<i>liP Team</i>	1	3	4	
Total Team	3	5	8	
All Respondents	5	8	13	

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.121: Interview Question No. 57b				
(If yes to Q. 57)	No	Yes	tot.	
Can you demonstrate that these results are similar to or better than those of other facilities managed by other organisations?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2		2	
<i>liP Managers</i>	2		2	
Total Managers	5		5	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	3		3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1		1	
<i>liP Team</i>	2	2	4	
Total Team	6	2	8	
All Respondents	11	2	13	

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.121: Interview Question No. 57b				
(If yes to Q. 57)	No	Yes	tot.	
Can you demonstrate that these results are similar to or better than those of other facilities managed by other organisations?				
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1		1	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2		2	
<i>liP Managers</i>	2		2	
Total Managers	5		5	
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1dk	3		3
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1		1	
<i>liP Team</i>	2	2	4	
Total Team	6	2	8	
All Respondents	11	2	13	

Note: dk = don't know

Business results

Table A9.122: Interview Question No. 58					
	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of the key results for your facility that, in your estimation, matter to your employing organisation, are identified and measured?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	1		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			1	2	3
Total Managers		3	3	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>				4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	3		5
<i>liP Team</i>			4	2	6
Total Team		2	7	6	15
All Respondents		5	10	8	23

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.123: Interview Question No. 58a			
(If yes to Q. 58)	No	Yes	tot.
Are these results known to you?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers		8	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	2	3	5
<i>liP Team</i>	1	5	6
Total Team	3	12	15
All Respondents	3	20	23

Table A9.124: Interview Question No. 58b					
(If yes to Q. 58a)	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of these key results are showing an improving trend?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		1	2		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	3
Total Managers		1	6	1	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		1	2	1	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		2	2		4
<i>liP Team</i>		2	3		5
Total Team		5	7	1	13
All Respondents		6	13	2	21

Table A9.125: Interview Question No. 58c			
	(If yes to Q. 58a)	No	Yes tot.
	Are these results compared with those of other facilities managed by your organisation?		
	<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2	2
	<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2 3
	<i>liP Managers</i>		3 3
	Total Managers	1	7 8
	<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4 4
	<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		5 5
	<i>liP Team</i>		5 5
	Total Team	0	14 14
	All Respondents	1	21 22

Table A9.126: Interview Question No. 58d			
	(If yes to Q. 58a)	No	Yes tot.
	Are these results compared with those of other facilities managed by other organisations?		
	<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	1	1 2
	<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	2	1 3
	<i>liP Managers</i>	1	1 2
	Total Managers	4	3 7
	<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4 4
	<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	3 3
	<i>liP Team</i>	4	1 5
	Total Team	11	1 12
	All Respondents	15	4 19

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.127: Interview Question No. 58e			
	(If yes to Q. 58a)	No	Yes tot.
	Is the resulting evaluation of your facility's performance one that shows your performance as similar to/ better than the others?		
	<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2 2
	<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2 2
	<i>liP Managers</i>		3 3
	Total Managers		7 7
	<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3 4
	<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	3 3
	<i>liP Team</i>		5 5
	Total Team	1	11 12
	All Respondents	1	18 19

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.128: Interview Question No. 59					
	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of the key results for your facility that, in your estimation, matter to you as a manager, are identified and measured?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>			1	1	
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			3		
<i>liP Managers</i>			2	1	
Total Managers			6	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>			2	2	
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	1dk	2	3	1	
<i>liP Team</i>					
Total Team		2	5	3	10
All Respondents		2	11	5	18

Note: dk = don't know

Table A9.129: Interview Question No. 59a			
(If yes to Q. 59)	No	Yes	tot.
Are these results known to you?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		3	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	0	8	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		5	5
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team	0	15	15
All Respondents	0	23	23

Table A9.130: Interview Question No. 59b					
(If yes to Q. 59a)	None	Some	Most	All	tot.
How many of these key results are showing an improving trend?					
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		1	1		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>			3		3
<i>liP Managers</i>			1	1	2
Total Managers		1	5	1	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		2	2		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>		4	1		5
<i>liP Team</i>		3	3		6
Total Team		9	6		15
All Respondents		10	11	1	22

Table A9.131: Interview Question No. 59c			
(If yes to Q. 59a)	No	Yes	tot.
Are these results compared with those of other facilities managed by your organisation?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers	1	7	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>		4	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	4	1	5
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team	4	11	15
All Respondents	5	18	23

Table A9.132: Interview Question No. 59d			
(If yes to Q. 59a)	No	Yes	tot.
Are these results compared with those of other facilities managed by other organisations?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>	2		2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>	1	2	3
<i>liP Managers</i>	3		3
Total Managers	6	2	8
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	4		4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	5		11
<i>liP Team</i>	5	1	6
Total Team	14	1	15
All Respondents	20	3	23

Table A9.133: Interview Question No. 59e			
(If yes to Q. 59a)	No	Yes	tot.
Is the resulting evaluation of your facility's performance one that shows your performance as similar to/ better than the others?			
<i>No QM standard Managers</i>		2	2
<i>ISO 9000 Managers</i>		2	2
<i>liP Managers</i>		3	3
Total Managers		7	7
<i>No QM standard Team</i>	1	3	4
<i>ISO 9000 Team</i>	4dk	1	1
<i>liP Team</i>		6	6
Total Team	2	9	11
All Respondents	2	16	18