Impact of External Customers’ Satisfaction on Organizational Sustainability. A Case Study of United States International University-Africa

BY

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UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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IMPACT OF EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS’ SATISFACTION ON ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY. A CASE STUDY OF UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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A Research Project Report submitted to the Chandaria School of Business in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Masters in Business Administration

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UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
STUDENT’S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than the United States International University in Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed: ___________________________  Date: ___________________________

Kairu Susan Muthoni (631009)

This project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

Signed: ___________________________  Date: ___________________________

Prof. Paul Katuse

Signed: ___________________________  Date: ___________________________

Dean, Chandaria School of Business
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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this project to my parents, Mr. & Mrs. Kairu for their incredibly humbling support throughout this very engaging process. Your sacrifice and encouragement gave me a sound platform to begin and conclude this project. I also dedicate this project to my grandparents who have been my anchor throughout my academic journey.
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the level of satisfaction of an organization’s external consumers impacts the organization’s sustainability, taking USIU-Africa’s as a point in case. The study sought to answer the following: Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to study at the institution as opposed to other local universities; Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to continue pursuing their education at the university and; mechanisms USIU can put in place to improve customer satisfaction.

This study adopted a descriptive research survey design. It found answers to questions by analyzing specific variable relationships which in this case were related to the impact of satisfaction of external customers on an organization’s sustainability. The population for this study consisted of Kenyan Masters and Undergraduate students at USIU who total to 5,439 students. The sampling frame comprised of male and female Kenyan USIU Undergraduate and Master’s students. The list was obtained from USIU’s Registrar’s Office with the latest figures dated 12th December-15. As for the sample size, the study used a sample population of 60 of the 5,439 Kenyan USIU students. The study adopted a stratified sampling technique whereby the strata consisted of 47 Kenyan Undergraduates and 13 Master’s students.

This study adopted a stratified sampling technique and simple random sampling was then used to pick respondents from each strata. The study entailed use of questionnaires to collect primary data and were useful in obtaining objective data because the participants were not manipulated in any way by the researcher in filling a questionnaire. Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were coded and entered in the computer using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) program then analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies and presented in tables and figures.

This study would be beneficial to the USIU management since, it offers insight into the competitive advantage that the institution has over other local and international Universities and potentially contribute to USIU’s strategy in terms of positioning itself as the University of choice to its targeted students. This study would also help USIU’s prospective students to identify the fundamentals of service delivery in relation to Higher Education as evidenced by feedback from current students at the institution. This study would also be of significant value to researchers and members of the academic fraternity to understand students’ preferences in higher learning.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

USIU : United States International University

CSR : Corporate Social Responsibility

HE : Higher Education
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Parker (2001) customer satisfaction can be viewed as an outcome of a consumption activity or experience. She goes ahead to note that currently, the most widely adopted description of customer satisfaction is that of a process. Feciková (2004) agrees with this, identifying that, customer satisfaction is a feeling which results from a process of evaluating what was received against that expected. Feciková (2004) goes ahead to note that for an organization there are two kinds of customers: external customers and internal customers. External customers are the customer in the marketplace whereas internal customers are those customers within the organization, that is, the employees of the corporation.

Sustainability, on its part, is the extent to which the current activities of a company, nation or a region are capable of being sustained in the long term Sadler (2004). According to Thomas (2012) it can also be termed as, “an increase in productivity and/or reduction of consumed resources without compromising product or service quality, competitiveness or profitability while helping to save the environment.”

Closely related to sustainability is the term sustainable development which means meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, Crowther and Capaldi (2008). It can also be more simply termed as maintaining a positive process of social change Crowther and Capaldi (2008). “In the 1980s, and early 1990s, this concept was applied almost exclusively to the impact of human’s activities on the physical and ecological environment. More recently, however, the term is used in a wider sense and includes their impact on society and the economy” Sadler (2004).

Spitzec and Hansen (2010) agree with Freeman (1984, p.46) stating that a stakeholder in an organization is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives. They also agree with Lozano (2005) who recognizes that from the corporate perspective some stakeholders such as employees and customers are critical for survival. According to Galpin (2015) both industry leaders and academics acknowledge that sustainability is important to the long-term success of both
firms and communities in which they operate. However, the means in which managers can lead and position their organizations to be more sustainable remains uncertain. As stakeholders in an organization, customers are important in regards to promoting the sustainability of the organization. Customer satisfaction is a key issue to survive Rampersad (2001) and Feciková (2004) concurs, appreciating that the key to organizational survival is the retention of satisfied customers. She points out that in an atmosphere of heavy competition it is dangerous to be a non-customer oriented organization. She notes that most markets are very competitive and to survive, organizations need to produce product and services of very good quality that yield highly satisfied and loyal customers. Feciková (2004) further adds that establishing and achieving customer satisfaction is a main goal of business nowadays, because there is a very clear and strong relationship between the quality of product, customer satisfaction and profitability.

Rampersad (2001) identifies that the organization needs to consider the needs and expectations that customers have and the extent to which it complies with these needs and wants. More so, if the organization does not meet these needs, it needs to identify the reasons according to its customers. This can further be evidenced from Edvardsson (1998), who noted that a common definition of service quality is that the service should correspond to the customer’s expectations and satisfy their needs and requirements. He, however, notes that, “Although the definition is customer-oriented, it should not be interpreted as meaning that the service provider should always comply with the customer and his wishes.” He argues that to be able to offer customers the right quality, the needs and demands of employees and owners need to be taken into account.

There are three dimensions of sustainability which are: environmental, economic and social Sadler (2004). The environmental dimension is concerned with preservation of systems and processes Crowther and Capaldi (2008). It entails assessing an organization’s impact in regards to ‘emission of greenhouse gases,’ pollution of water bodies, destruction of forests, extinction of species, animal rights, disposal of toxic waste as well as exhaustion of non-renewable resources. Economic sustainability is defined as the continuing ability of a business to be competitive and to create sufficient added value to meet the expectations of investors while making adequate investment in its future Sadler (2004). It has also been used to mean that the business will remain economically active and successful into the future Crowther and Capaldi (2008). The social dimension is concerned with the impact organizations have in a society, for instance in terms of the
quality of education and training; healthcare; sports facilities, youth clubs as well as the creation of employment opportunities Sadler (2004). This research focuses on the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainability as pertaining to USIU’s processes in meeting student’s needs and wants aimed at achieving customer satisfaction. According to Velazquez, (2011) theoretically, a sustainable organization would be an organization with enough sustainability knowledge, would act according to, and would be considered as a role model to prevent, eliminate and/or reduce the environmental and occupational risks associated with its operations while enhancing and strengthening its profitability” He, however, notes that no such kind of an organization exists yet but there is room to explore how firms may better become sustainable learning organizations.

Still in reference to sustainability, Galpin (2015) notes that a well articulated mission statement provides critical signals to the organizational stakeholders regarding the aims of the organization and can ultimately lead to positive outcomes that benefit the entire firm. Galpin (2015) also agrees with Harget and Williams (2009) by identifying that shared values have been found to be a key component of aligning decision-making and behaviors with a firm’s sustainability efforts. Rampersad (2001) emphasizes that it is important to measure customer orientation continuously. This can be done through customer surveys, phone interviews and customer panel discussions According to Veloutsou et., al (2004) universities compete both internationally and nationally. He concurs with (Jarvis, 2000) who points out that as competition among institutions in the higher and further education sector intensifies, they increasingly behave as corporations. Arif et al., (2013) concurs, observing that “more universities are driven toward retaining their customers, realizing that sustainability depends upon the service quality they provide to students, their primary customers.”

When it comes to students being viewed as customers, Veloutsou., Lewis and Paton (2004) note that “although some raise questions about the ethicality of approaching students as customers, it has been appreciated that, if correctly understood and correctly applied by professionals in education, it can be beneficial rather than harmful.” The HEIs business environment is formed by its relationship with students (customers/buyers), lecturers and trainers (suppliers), the intensity of competition among the institutions that vies for the same value-creating opportunities which affect the ability to generate income, all of which are influenced by government regulations Anand (2012); Martinez and Wolverton, (2009).
Private higher education indicates the growth of new higher education institutions around the world that are wholly owned and operated by the private sector. This sector does not depend on any direct government funding for its growth and expansion as do the public institutions.

According to Ndirangu and Udoto (2011), in most of Africa, the growth of privatization and private higher education has been more a response to the global pressures than tangible internal policy forecasting to embrace private higher education. The pressure of globalization and the inclusion of higher education in the World Trade Organization’s list of tradable goods target to open HE markets in developing countries to strong established providers from the developed countries.

Mutula (2002) identifies that in Kenya, a number of developments have taken place in the HE sector including the establishment of a variety of foreign and local private institutions to offer university level education. The second is multi-nationalization, that is, the linking of academic institutions or programmes of other countries with other institutions in Kenya. A student can be awarded a degree of a university in Australia, through a local institution that does not have a HE ‘status’ but has entered into a twinning arrangement with the foreign university. Thirdly, there has been the investment of private resources often from corporate multinationals to fund and influence the nature of teaching and research both in public and private universities.

Mutula (2002) further points out that in addition to the private universities; the government has encouraged public universities to start income generating projects to supplement government subsidies. This has led to the introduction of parallel (private) degree students in public universities. The parallel students are admitted separately from the regular students; pay fees at market rates and sometimes have lectures separately from the regular students. Their admission criteria are also much more flexible, in terms of previous academic qualifications, than regular students. This scenario has resulted in the semi-privatization of public universities in Kenya. The full private universities and the parallel (private) students in public universities therefore constitute the privatized market system of university education in Kenya.

Sustainability is a long term vision that deals with development of strategy based on ethical and moral principles. White (2009),” According to the 2014-2015 catalogue, the mission of United States International University, Africa, is to “Promote the discovery and application of knowledge, the acquisition of skills and the development of intellect
and character in a manner which prepares students to contribute effectively and ethically as citizens of a changing and increasingly technological world.”

The school aims to achieve this mission through selected high quality undergraduate and graduate academic programs which result in the following outcomes: high order thinking; literacy; global understanding and multicultural perspective; preparedness for career; leadership and ethics; and community service and development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem
Organizations seek to realize long term success and remain relevant in their industries. At the heart of this success is the need to critically evaluate how consumers choose between alternatives with a special focus on the high involvement decision of where to pursue higher education. Crowther and Capaldi (2008) note that such an analysis would enable institutions make strategic decisions aimed at ensuring they remain relevant to their target market and hence retain their competitiveness while still considering their environmental, economic and social sustainability.

The achievement of true customer satisfaction involves; customer oriented culture; an organization that centers on the customer; employee empowerment; process ownership; team building and partnering with customers and suppliers Feciková (2004).

Much of the research conducted on customer satisfaction has been centered on companies and other businesses whose main goal is geared towards making profits. For instance, according to Thomas, Francis, John and Davies (2012),"with the demand profile for products and services changing, companies must now operate in a less secure and more complex manufacturing environment forcing their business and manufacturing strategies to cater for a wider range of consumer requirements.

Feciková (2004), on her part, points out that if companies want to achieve customer satisfaction, they must measure it because “you cannot manage what you cannot measure” This is an important aspect but yet again goes to show that measurement of customer satisfaction has been centered on companies rather and more needs to be covered regarding customer satisfaction in institutions of higher learning.

“The criteria for the measurement of customer satisfaction must be defined by the customer,” ascertains Feciková (2004). She goes on to agree with Hill (1996) who acknowledges that many organizations determine the criteria for measurement internally but they rarely have an accurate understanding of customer priorities. It thus becomes
problematic to measure the performance dimensions that are not critical drivers of value to the customers. The organization needs “to filter out irrelevant information and concentrate on the few dimensions that really matter,” Feciková (2004).

According to Gutman and Miaoulis (2003) when choosing where to pursue higher education, students make choices based on a number of factors including: cost, location, culture, size of the campus, work experience needed, university’s reputation with employers, quality of research done at the institution, provision of skills, and availability of learning material as well as success stories of university alumni.

The weight accorded to each of these factors influences the expectation levels of each student and thus forms the basis of determining the level of satisfaction students have once they are in the system. The more value students attach to their experience in that University, the more likely the university will retain current students and attract new ones.

According to Julin (2015), a university campus refers to land and buildings used for university or university-related functions and having a role in achieving institutional goals. In addition to this, Kumara, Rahmanb, Kazmic and Goyald (2001) affirm that “Sustainability marketing entails building and maintaining sustainable relationships with customers, the social environment and the natural environment.”

According to Mutula (2001), despite the increase in student numbers, governments have continued to reduce budgets. State universities are suffering from increased enrolment, low funding and gender inequality. Brain drain, unemployment among graduates and the rush by students to enroll in universities abroad for courses offered locally at cheaper cost are causes for concern to the local universities and governments.

This research was necessitated by the shifting focus of viewing students as customers and how these customers impact the sustainability of the organization. It was aimed at identifying the factors that draw students to institutions of higher learning, and how their level of satisfaction and retention contributes to the sustainability of the institution. As Whiting (2008) asserts, “It is rightly said that organizations cannot stay for longer in the market if they will not become truly sustainable.”
1.3 Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study was to investigate how the level of satisfaction of an organization’s external consumer impacts the organization’s sustainability, taking USIU-Africa as a point in case.

1.4 Research Questions
The study sought to answer the following questions:
1.4.1 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to study at the institution as opposed to other local universities
1.4.2 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to continue pursuing their education at the university
1.4.3 Mechanisms USIU can put in place to improve customer satisfaction

1.5 Hypotheses

1.5.1 Correlation between purpose of visitation and satisfaction with the admission process
The study sought to investigate whether there was a correlation between the purpose of the student’s visitation to USIU and their level of satisfaction with the admission process.

The null hypothesis in the study was that there was no significant correlation between the purpose of visitation and satisfaction with the admission process. The alternate hypothesis was that there was significant correlation between the purpose of visitation and satisfaction with the admission process

1.5.2 Difference in the part-time and fulltime students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds
The study sought also to investigate whether there was a significant difference in the part-time and fulltime students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds.
The null hypothesis was that there was no significant difference in the part-time and fulltime students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds. The alternate hypothesis was that there was no significant difference in of part-time and fulltime students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1.6.1 USIU Management

This study would be beneficial to the USIU management since it offers insight into the competitive advantage that the institution has over other local and international Universities. This insight would contribute to USIU’s strategy in terms of positioning itself as the University of Choice to its targeted students.

1.6.2 Prospective Customers

This study would also help USIU’s prospective students to identify the fundamentals of service delivery in relation to HE as evidenced by feedback from current students at the institution.

1.6.3 Researchers and Academicians

This study would also be of significant value to researchers and members of the academic fraternity who would want to develop their understanding of the essentials that students factor in to determine their level of satisfaction with an institution of higher learning.

1.6.4 Other private and public universities

This study would be helpful to other universities’ management who wish to understand the key drivers and motivations of student who opt for private institutions of higher learning as opposed to public ones.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The data of the study will be collected through use of a sample population from the 5548 Kenyan USIU students, as recorded in the USIU Registrar’s Office as of November 2015. The sample will incorporate only students who are Kenyan by birth or naturalization.
1.8 Definition of Terms

1.8.1 Customer Satisfaction is a feeling which results from a process of evaluating what was received against that expected (Parker 2001)

1.8.2 Sustainability is the extent to which the current activities of a company, nation or a region are capable of being sustained in the long term Sadler (2004)

1.8.3 Sustainable development is meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It can also be more simply termed as maintaining a positive process of social change (Crowther and Capaldi, 2008)

1.8.4 A Stakeholder is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives (Freeman, 1984, p.46)

1.9 Chapter Summary

Satisfaction can be viewed as an outcome of a consumption activity or experience. It is a feeling which results from a process of evaluating what was received against that expected. Both industry leaders and academics recognize that sustainability is important to the long-term success of both firms and communities in which they operate. Key to this sustainability is the satisfaction of customers who are one of the key stakeholders of any organization

Much of the research conducted on customer satisfaction has been centered on companies and other businesses whose main goal is geared towards making profits. The purpose of this study is to investigate how the level of satisfaction of a not-for-profits organization’s consumers impacts the organization’s sustainability, taking USIU-Africa’s offering of Higher Education as a point in case.

The next chapter outlines the key developments and insight that other researchers have arrived at in regards to customer satisfaction and how they would be relevant to this study. Chapter three then gives details about the steps that will be involved in the research process to gather information aimed at answering the research questions.
Chapter four brings out the results and findings that emerge out of the field research and finally chapter five captures discussions, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings that emerged from the study.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to address the key developments that have emerged from past research on aspects affecting the research areas of this study which are: Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to study at the institution as opposed to other local universities; Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to continue pursuing their education at the university and; mechanisms USIU can put in place to improve customer satisfaction.

2.2 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to study at the institution as opposed to other local universities

According to John Blewitt, (2010) “universities are, and have been, significant drivers of regional economic development. When making the decision as to where to pursue HE, prospective students undertake a number of activities. Ferrall and Hartline (2008) identify that when making a purchase decisions, consumers go through a number of steps as part of their purchase process.

2.2.1 Need recognition

The consumer buying process starts with identification of a need. This occurs when the consumers realize that there is a discrepancy between their existing situation and the desired situation. The need could be triggered by internal or external stimuli. Ferrel and Hartline (2008)

According to Donaldson and McNicholas (2004), the reputation, nature of the courses, location and address, financial considerations, facilities, social climate of the department, programme structure and accreditation factors influence student choice of the institution.

2.2.2 Information Search

After identifying the need, the consumer may look for information about how to satisfy that need. He/she may source this information from sources such as; internal sources this entails recalling from memory if they have satisfied a similar need in the past; group sources which involves consulting other people such as family members, friends and
others; marketing sources- whereby sales people, advertising and packaging offer some information; public sources which include media publicity and reports of research firms; then finally experiential sources where consumers come into contact with or live through the product offering. Ferrel and Hartline (2008)

Ferrel and Hartline (2008) indicate that the amount of time, effort and expense dedicated to the search for information depends on: the degree of risk involved in the purchase; the amount of experience that the consumer has with the product category; and the actual cost of the search in terms of time and money.

A high involvement purchase exists when a consumer has to buy a product or service that is expensive or that poses the risk of significant emotional consequence of a mistake is made. The consumer tends to spend a lot of time researching as buyers want to get the greatest rewards and minimize potential for negative outcomes in a highly involving purchase. Both students and their parents are looking for added value for their money and the HE institutions have to deliver quality that is compatible with the students’ expectations and needs (Smith et al., 2007)

There have been varying views on the capacity of the privatized market system to address the challenges of university education in Kenya. One view holds that private universities are of higher quality than public ones, are better organized, and have played a significant role in offsetting the demand for university education in Kenya Mwiria & Ngoe, (1998); Murunga (2001).

Other studies note tendencies towards social exclusion of those who are unable to pay, stratification of the scholarly community, demeaning of academic freedom and deterioration in quality Chacha (2002); Zeleza (2003). Other views have been dismissive, seeing private universities as offering narrow and irrelevant curricula and having fewer beneficial implications for the socioeconomic development of the country. These views have not been conclusively interrogated.

Prospective students seeking to apply to USIU need to meet a number of entrance requirements. Local and international applicants are considered for admission on the same basis. The university has three schools that offer various undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The schools include: The Chandaria School of Business, The School of Humanities & Social Sciences and The School of Science & Technology.
2.2.3 Listing of Alternative Brands

The consumer analyzes the information available with them to select the right product or brand. The consumer considers: Features, price, model, after-sale services, and warranty. Ferrel and Hartline (2008) indicate that consumers narrow down their potential choices to an evoked set of suitable alternatives that may meet their needs.

According to Gutman and Miaoulis (2003) a positive brand image can be a powerful influence in the decision to attend a college or university. A brand image is a cluster of attributes and associations that consumers connect to a brand name Biel (1992). These associations come from the consumer’s experience with the brand and from the marketer’s efforts to manage brand image Gutman and Miaoulis (2003).

Gutman and Miaoulis (2003) go on to note that marketers can focus on three aspects in creating brand images: the image of the provider of the product or service (corporate image; the image of the user; and the image of the product or service itself Biel (1992).

According to Mutula (2001), public universities have introduced parallel degree programmes (part-time programmes) for those who could not secure admissions to the universities in the first instance. Students admitted on these programmes are charged fees twice those of regular students. These programmes are popular because they also cater for working people who cannot undertake studies on a full time basis.

Private and public universities in Kenya offer vocational and academic professional training. The level of training also ranges from certificate to postgraduate qualifications. Private universities have focused on offering courses that require less financial investment to establish. Most of the private universities, therefore, have avoided critical programmes such as Medicine and Engineering.

According to Mutula (2001), in Kenya non-university institutions that include polytechnics, short-cycle professional and technical institutions, village/community colleges, and distance education have been established. They provide low cost programmes that make them both attractive to students and easier for private providers to set up. “Twinning programmes” have also emerged as where students take courses partly at home and partly abroad, but both parts are an integral part of the official curriculum, which means that even the parts taken abroad are regarded as part of the home curriculum.
2.2.4 Evaluation of alternatives
A consumer translates their need into wants for specific products or brands, Ferrel and Hartline (2008). He/she identifies the products or brands that effectively satisfy their needs and then evaluate each brand against certain criteria such as price or reputation of the organizations. Ferrel and Hartline (2008) continue to explain that consumers evaluate products as bundles of attributes that have varying abilities to satisfy their needs and that marketers must ensure that their product is in the evoked set of potential alternatives. Yamamoto (2006) notes that the criteria students use to evaluate the universities that constitute their evoked sets (a list of brand name universities, which they plan to select) usually expressed in terms of important product/service attributes. For higher education, these criteria are generally affected by marketing communication tools such as advertisements, public relations concerning the reputation and ranking of the school. Odhiambo (2008) notes that the high entry costs into engineering and technology-based courses seem to keep private universities from venturing into these academic fields. However, Private universities have been able to respond to skills in two areas, that is commerce and business administration. In the 2004-2005 academic calendars, for example, USIU registered 1800 undergraduates, in this programme, Strathmore had 550 undergraduates, UON registered 2514 undergraduates.

2.2.5 Purchase decision
Ferrel and Hartline (2008) highlight that a consumer’s purchase intention and the actual act of buying are distinct concepts as several factors may prevent the actual purchase from taking place. Once the consumer has narrowed down the possible alternatives to just a few, they may make a decision to purchase. The consumer will decide whether to buy and if so then what, where and when to buy. Consumers may also postpone or forgo purchase decision if none of the shortlisted alternatives meet their needs. According to McLaughlin and Faulkner (2012), Fundamentals that focus upon problem-based learning, student centered learning, flexible learning and authentic learning experiences are becoming universally agreed educational practice and impacting upon how knowledge is transmitted in universities, Jamieso and Dane (2005).
2.2.6 Post-purchase evaluation
After purchasing and consumption, the customer will experience delight, satisfaction, dissatisfaction or cognitive dissonance, Ferrel and Hartline (2008). If the product meets the expectations of the consumers, then the consumer will be satisfied. If the performance of the product exceeds customers’ expectations then they will be delighted, and if it falls below the expectations, then they will be dissatisfied. Marketers must closely follow consumers’ responses to monitor the product’s performance and its ability to meet customer’s expectations Ferrel and Hartline (2008)

2.3 Factors that Influence Kenyan USIU Students to Continue Pursuing Their Education at the University
According to Galpin (2015) firms today need systematic approaches to sustainability if they are to be competitive over the long term. Moshe Sharabi, (2013) points out that in services, because of the inseparability between production and consumption of the service, quality consists not only of the result but also of the process Sureshchander et al., (2002). Hence, even if the result is favorable (an academic degree), if the process is flawed, the quality is considered low since quality is meeting customer expectations in service characteristics, Srikanthan and Dalrymple (2005)
Brand loyalty is a fundamental concept of strategic marketing and is generally recognized as an intangible asset Wernerfelt (1991, p.229). Brand loyalty discourages brand switching to competing brands. Russekk (2005) supports this, identifying that competition for qualified students has increased contemporarily with the student awareness about the programmes and services offered by most universities. As a result, student retention has become an area of critical concern.
Parasuraman et al., (1985) concluded that consumers evaluated service quality by comparing expectations with perception on the following dimensions:

2.3.1 Tangibles
Tangibility refers to the physical environment in the service organization; Tangibles are measured by four items: the appearance of the physical facilities, equipment and personnel.
According to Berkley & Gupta (1995) “to set service standards, one must assess customer expectations. Management may think the company’s service is fine; but if customers disagree, the company has a problem.”

Rytkonen and Nenonen, (2013) identify that university learning environments include physical, social and virtual spaces and places. According to McLaughlin and Faulkner (2012), developments in learning and space have emphasized the ways university rooms convey non-verbal messages-welcoming or not, encouraging or discouraging discussion, valuing or not valuing input, trusting and supportive or not-that can be powerful learning enablers.

According to Julin (2015) facility management services such as lighting systems, heating ventilating and air conditioning/visual information (HVAC) systems; acoustic systems; the design of classrooms; audiovisual/information technology (IT) equipment, cleaning and maintenance have a direct and major effect on the educational outcome. He explains that in the university context, the aim of Facilities Management (FM) is to manage facilities and facility services in an effort to support core functions and goals related to research and education.

Technological developments have had a direct impact on universities ranging from full-fledged distance learning, through a mixture of online and campus-based courses or courses which embrace both elements to fully campus-based courses.

Kargbo (2002), explains that new technologies play an increasingly important role not only in teaching itself but also in all the accompanying communication and data retrieval processes such as library use, internet searches, the downloading of e-publications and website presentations-not to mention the role of these information technologies for all the research-related activities of university staff. In most high-standard universities, all course information and course materials are made available, or at least are documents through electronic networks.

According to Mutula (2001), the rapid expansion of higher education has contributed to a decline in standards as resources are overstretched. He notes that ironically although public universities generate a lot of money through parallel programmes, the money is not used to improve facilities but is directed towards paying the instructors.

Mutula (2001), goes on to note that the East African region is making good progress in the availability of Internet connectivity in almost all universities of the region and increasing automation of libraries. He further adds that the use of technology in instructional delivery and information provision is gaining momentum in the region.
However, the major concern that many countries of the region are facing today is rapid development of information technology and the cost of infrastructure. Mutula (2001) agrees with Koontz et al, (2000) identifying that despite the availability of the internet, most of the universities in the region have very limited access to modern computing and communications technology. The universities face other problems such as unavailability of working equipment, unanticipated hardware failure such as, incompatible interfaces, broken parts, different electrical plug arrangements, support staff problems due to inexperience and technology access problems. McLaughlin and Faulkner (2012) observe that learning takes place also in socially peer-to-peer oriented settings and this is quickly becoming an enabler of change on university campuses.

2.3.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. It is the company’s ability to fulfill its commitments. According to Berkley and Gupta (1995) service quality standards are customer expectations stated in a way that it’s meaningful to employees. For instance having a standard that customers should queue for more than two minutes is more appropriate than the standard of “giving prompt service.” They further indicate that research has shown that service employees treat customers similarly to the way in which they, as employees are treated by management.

According to Lozano (2001) an increasing number of higher education institutions (HEIs) have been engaged in incorporation and institutionalizing sustainability into their curricula, research, operations, outreach, and assessment and reporting. Sustainability reporting is a voluntary activity with two general purposes: to assess the current state of an organization’s economic, environmental a stand social dimensions; and; to communicate a company’s efforts and sustainability progress to their stakeholders.

According to Mutula (2001), due to reduction in subsidies from governments to universities and increased numbers, students are poorly catered for and this has provoked student activism which often leads to frequent closure of universities. The other effects of budget cuts to universities have been poor facilities and erosion of staff privileges such as housing loans. According to Mutula (2001), these changes have been felt at the public universities in Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Zambia.
According to Zebal and Goodwin (2012) while universities were historically funded by government, other capital sources had to be used if private universities were to be established. This introduced the possibility that universities could financially fail. With this risk, private universities are more motivated to adopt market related strategies such as a market orientation focus. Thus should a private university not be market oriented, performance will be lower therefore increasing the risk of failure or putting student completion at risk.

2.3.3 Responsiveness

Responsiveness is the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service. It entails carrying out the service punctually and quickly, being there for the customer and being available when he needs assistance;

According to Berkley and Gupta (1995), the longer it takes for service delivery to be completed, the more likely it is that customers will require information on work-in-progress (such as estimated completion times and projected costs).

Carr and Littman (1997) note that while a satisfied client shares his feelings with one or two people; a dissatisfied client shares his negative feelings with nine to ten people. Customer complaints provide valuable information regarding service quality problems. A problem resolution situation should be viewed as an opportunity to learn how to improve the service. The greatest risk is that customers will not bother to complain, but will simply generate negative word-of mouth advertising and shift service providers. Service forms should provide adequate avenues for customers to launch complaints and the closer to the point of service delivery that a complaint can be made, the better.

According to Mutula (2001), study and accommodation facilities for students are inadequate leading to serious overcrowding. Students in most of the universities are expected to look after themselves and live in overcrowded accommodation as they no longer can afford the expensive modest hostels.

In addition, Mutula (2001) agrees with Oketch (2001) noting that many of the universities have bureaucratic systems that keep students out of touch with the authorities whenever they wish to resolve issues about their studies. This provokes frequent strikes from time to time.
2.3.4 Assurance

Assurance refers to the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence. It can also be termed as employees’ knowledge and competence and their ability to inspire reliance and trust. According to Berkley and Gupta (1995) service providers must possess the required skills and knowledge to perform the service.” Greater knowledge enables frontline service workers to help their customers and facilitates their capability to make key judgments on issues that would previously have been handled by managers. “Effective customer participation can increase the likelihood that needs are met and that the benefits the customer is seeking are actually attained,” Bitner et. al Zeithaml (1997). They identify that this is particularly apparent for services such as health care, education, personal fitness, weight loss and others where the service outcome is highly dependent on customer participation.” In these cases, the customer is an integral part of the service and unless he/she performs his/her role effectively, the desires service outcome is not possible.

2.3.5 Empathy

Empathy refers to the level of caring and individualized attention the firm provides to its customers. Total customer experience entails: anticipating and fulfilling customer needs and wants better than competitors; providing real consumer experiences and providing real emotional experience.

Services experiences are the outcomes of interactions between organizations, related systems/processes, service employees and customers Bitner, et. al Zeithaml (1997) in many services, customers themselves have vital roles to play in creating service outcomes and ultimately enhancing or detracting from their own satisfaction and the value received”.

2.4 Mechanisms USIU can put in place to improve customer satisfaction.

According to E. Joseph Torres Kristina L. Guo, (2004) quality improvement is essentially an organization’s attempts at improving its products and processes in terms of meeting the expectations of its customers. “One facet of quality improvement initiatives involves customer satisfaction,” she acknowledges.
Feciková (2004) elaborates that the result of customer satisfaction measurement provides significant information for modern management processes and a warning signal about future business results. “This enables an understanding of how customers perceive the organization, whether the performance meets their expectation, identifies priorities for improvement, benchmarks the performance of the organization against other organizations and increases profits through improved customer loyalty,” she explains. According to Duffy (2003) the development of customer loyalty is a strategic objective for most companies. He notes that, “New customer acquisition alone will not ensure long-term success. Acquisition must be balanced with customer retention and customer development to optimize performance and shareholder value in the long run.”

2.4.1 Understanding consumers’ needs

To deliver superior service, a company must monitor customer expectations and customer response to the services it offers Wilderom (1991). He further recognizes that while market research can be used to determine customer expectations, often the required information can be obtained at a significantly lower cost by listening to customers and employees. Edvardsson (1998), recognizes that “customers have different values and different grounds for assessment; they may perceive one and the same service in different ways.” However, Berkley and Gupta (1995), note that research suggests that customers associate risk more with the purchase of services than with goods. They observe that “Service firms may be able to reduce customer fear and improve perceived service quality by providing customers with a complete service specification before the service commences.”

2.4.2 Defining quality Dimensions

Brand loyalty is a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby, causing repetitive same brand set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior” Oliver (1999, p.34).

Brand loyalty gives sellers some protection from competition and greater control in planning marketing programs Kotler (2003). Yamamoto G. T., (2006) points out that brands today are defined by the experiences they create for customers. Years ago brands were created with advertising slogans. Today customers demand genuine value
Rampersad (2001) identifies that organizations need to “define the most important product or service as concretely as possible. The more specific the definition, the better the customer’s needs can be met. Accurate information about customers enables organizations to provide products or services which match their needs Feciková (2004).

Ndirangu M and Udoto M. O (2011), for instance, note that the quality and quantity of equipment and facilities such as workshops, laboratories, libraries, computers and information systems play a key role in learning and teaching process. Support facilities such as accommodation, sports centres, restaurants and the general environment are also included in this tangible service quality dimension. An easily accessible and visually appealing environment is also important.

**I-S Model.**

Yang (2003a) developed a model known as the I-S Model. In using this model, important scores ("high" or "low") and satisfaction scores ("high" or "low") enable each quality attribute to be placed in its appropriate quadrant in the matrix. These quadrants are designated as “excellent” (high importance; high satisfaction) “to be improved” (high importance; low satisfaction); surplus (low importance; high satisfaction) and “careless” (low importance; low satisfaction). Improvement strategies can then be based on the area in which each quality attribute is placed.

**I-S MODEL**

![I-S Model Diagram](source: Yang, 2003)
In taking action to improve service quality, service providers should prioritize quality attributes that have higher importance levels and lower satisfaction levels. For instance, Ko et al. (2011) argue that the more facility services directly affect the educational process, the higher their potential contribution to educational achievement will be. Hence, University management could prioritize on adequate relevant facilities management.

2.4.3 Re-shaping or re-affirming the organization culture
Galpin (2015) identifies that the process of fostering sustainability decisions and behaviors at all levels of the organization begins by incorporating sustainability into the organization’s management process. Along with performance benefits, strategic management enables forms to have a clearer direction, sharper focus on what is important and an improved understanding of a rapidly changing environment Andersen (2000). Duffy (2003) notes that sustainability marketing entails building and maintaining sustainable relationships with customers, the social environment and the natural environment”. Companies that do not encourage loyalty have a series of mixed messages that drift through the company to employees, customers and suppliers. Consequently, nobody is clear about the brand’s purpose.
USIU’s core values are: life-long learning, integrity, innovativeness, social responsibility and academic freedom. According to White (2009) if integrated into the rhythm of a business, sustainability presents the opportunity to meet new consumer needs, build top-line business, reduce costs, build employees morale and deliver greater value to both society in general and shareholders in particular. The key is to build sustainability into the business, rather than present it as an additional activity; to have it owned by the business rather than by a corporate “CSR group.”

2.4.4 Countering competition
The prime role of marketing strategy is to achieve competitive advantage Slater and Olson, (2001); Ansary (2006) According to Gillespie Finney and Zachary Finney (2010) University administrators count increased competition for students as one the most important drivers of organizational change at their institutions Kemelgor et al., (2000). To the extent that universities see their students as paying customers, they are accountable for eliciting student opinions and for sharing improvements that have been made as a result of student opinions Williams and Cappuccini-Ansfield (2007)
Mathooko and Ogutu, (2015) point out that the higher education industry, like any other industry is highly competitive and, therefore, has to operate like a business enterprise to sustain the competition Anand (2012); Mathooko and Ogutu (2013). In higher education industry three key factors of sustainable competitive advantage have been identified, namely, branding and image, the physical aspect of higher education including location and facilities and the mode of delivery Hua (2011).

Porter’s five forces model pays particular attention to five forces that influence any industry: threat of new entrants, intensity of rivalry, threat of substitutes, bargaining power of buyers and bargaining power of suppliers Porter (1985). Colleges and universities compete for students, research support, faculty numbers and financial contributions, and this competition is becoming both increasingly aggressive and global Dill (2003).

Peattie and Belz (2010) gave the concept of 4C’s and tried to mould traditional 4p’s (product, price, place and promotion) into 4C’s, that is, customer solution, customer cost, convenience and communication. The 4P’s are converted to 4C’s to include sustainability criteria into marketing strategy. Obermiller et al., (2008) affirm that the goal of sustainability marketing strategy is changed to attain competitive advantage through a position that is desirable, different and defensible.

Yeo (2008) explains that the benefits of loyalty include: cost savings. Customers loyal to a brand are more efficient in terms of the way they use the org resources. Referrals: Customers loyal to the brand mention it to their friends and acquaintances. Complain rather than defect. Loyal customers are more likely to buy through alternative channels hence increasing their total consumption and reducing the firm’s cost of doing business.

Kenyatta University, integrates a few ‘parallel’ full-time students with regular students. The university also has an institute of open learning for distance education programmes. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) accredits other diploma level institutions spread across the country to offer its programmes. This arrangement compensates for the lack of physical facilities at the institution to concentrate all the students. Egerton, Moi and Maseno universities that are located in relatively rural parts of the country have bought buildings in nearby urban centres to attract the same cadre of students. All these arrangements influence the access of different groups of students to the institutions.

Provisions for disabled students in terms of academic programmes and extra-curricular activities are also key. Using IT systems to benefit the hearing and visually impaired
students who aspire to higher education. Kenyatta University runs a special education programme that trains teachers for students with various disabilities. However, the students do not qualify for government sponsorship and this has tended to limit their numbers.

Private Universities don’t offer professional courses in the fields of engineering, computer science, medicine and law. This leaves a huge unmet dead that the private universities are not responding due to lack of programme diversification.

2.5 Chapter Summary
With calls to public universities to innovate strategies that would enable more Kenyans to acquire university education, the challenge to university managers in Kenya in the twenty-first century is how to provide quality higher education in the face of spiraling demand and declining government funding. This needs to be done with the consideration that the best judges of whether service delivery actually is meeting or exceeding customer expectations are customers.

The next chapter gives details of the research process that will be undertaken with the aim of finding answers to the three research questions of the study.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction
This chapter outlines the research methodology that was employed in the study in order to achieve the objective of seeking answers to the three research questions. The chapter covers the research design, population, sampling procedure and sample size, instruments, validity of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, procedure for data collection, and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design
According to Kothari (2004) a research design is the arrangement of conations for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. He goes further to explain that the research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. Singh (2006) explains that a good research design provides information concerning the selection of the sample population, treatments and controls to be imposed. It should be free from bias and should eliminate or minimize confounding of variables. More so, there should be enough scope to impose control over the situation through; randomization; holding conditions or factors constant; building conditions or factors into the design as independent variables; or through statistical adjustment. This study adopted a descriptive research survey design which according to Kothari (2004) is used to obtain information concerning the current status of phenomena with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. It found answers to questions by analyzing specific variable relationships which in this case are related to the impact of satisfaction of external customers on an organization’s sustainability.

3.3 Population and Sampling Design

3.3.1 Population
Population refers to the object of the research and consists among others of individuals, groups, organizations, human products and events or the conditions to which they were exposed, Fox and Bayat (2007). Kothari (2004) notes that all items in any field of inquiry constitute a population.
The population for this study consisted of Kenyan Masters and Undergraduate students at USIU who totaled to 5,439 students.

**Table 4.1: Population Distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strata</th>
<th>Population size</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USIU Kenyan Master’s Students</td>
<td>1,183</td>
<td>21.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU Kenyan Undergraduate Students</td>
<td>4,256</td>
<td>78.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,439</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: USIU (2015)*

### 3.3.2 Sampling Design

#### 3.3.2.1 Sampling Frame

Kothari 2004 notes that a sampling frame is a list from which a sample is to be drawn. It contains the names of all items of the population. It needs to be comprehensive, correct, reliable and appropriate. He notes that the sampling frame should be appropriate to avoid a biased representation of the population.

The sampling frame in the study comprised of male and female Kenyan USIU Undergraduate and Master’s students. The list was obtained from USIU’s Registrar’s Office with figures dated 12th December-15.

#### 3.3.2.2 Sampling Technique

According to Singh (2006) to obtain a representative sample, we use stratified sampling technique which involved dividing the population in strata on the basis of some characteristics and form each of these smaller homogeneous groups (strata) I drew at random a predetermined number of units. I incorporated proportionate sampling which refers to the selection from each sampling unit of a small sample that is proportionate to the size of the unit. This presented the advantage that there was representativeness with respect to variables used as the basis of classifying categories and increased chances of being able to make comparisons between strata.

The study adopted a stratified sampling technique. The strata consisted of Kenyan USIU Undergraduate and Master’s students. The strata were formed based on the members’
shared attributes or characteristics which for this study are based on the level of program they students are pursuing.

Simple random sampling was used to pick respondents from each stratum. A random sample from each stratum was taken in a number proportion to the stratum’s size when compared to the population, which in this case was 0.011% of the population. The advantage of stratified sampling is that it ensures the presence of the key subgroups within the sample.

3.3.2.3 Sample Size

According to Saunders et al (2009) a sample size is a small section of subjects drawn from the larger population. Kothari (2004) identifies that sample size refers to the number of items to be selected from the population to constitute a sample. He goes on to point out that the sample size should fulfil the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility.

Singh (2006) the size of the sample depends upon the precision the researcher desires in estimating the population parameter at a particular confidence level. Kothari (2004) agrees, noting that while deciding the size of the sample, the researcher must determine the desires precision as also an acceptable confidence level for the estimate. The size of the population must be kept in view for this also limits the sample size. The parameters of interest in the research must be kept in view, while deciding the size of the sample. Costs, too, dictate the size of sample that the researcher can draw as the budgetary constraints need to be considered.

Singh (2006) notes that sample observations provide only an estimate of the population characteristics.

No matter the population size, in small scale social research studies, a minimum sample of 30 respondents is considered adequate for a quantitative research study Saunders et al., (2009)

The study used a sample population of 60 of the 5439 Kenyan USIU students recorded in the USIU Registrar’s Office as of December 2015. The study interviewed both only Kenyan male and female students. Table 3.1 gives a summary of the sample size used in the study.
### Table 4.2: Sample size distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strata</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USIU Kenyan Master’s Students</td>
<td>1,183</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU Kenyan Undergraduate</td>
<td>4,256</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.011%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,439</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.4 Data Collection Methods

Singh (2006) notes that method is a style of conducting research work which is determined by the nature of the problem. Data means observation or evidences and it can be qualitative or quantitative in nature. Quantitative data or variables refer to characteristics or traits for which numerical value can be assigned. Qualitative data or attributes refer to characteristics or traits for which numerical value cannot be assigned. Singh (2006) goes on to explain that data collection is the accumulation of specific evidence that will enable the researcher to properly analyse the results of all activities by his research design and procedures. The main purpose of data collection is to verify the research hypotheses.

This study research method entailed collection of primary data using questionnaire survey to collect data on the impact of customer satisfaction on organizational sustainability. The scientific method is a general set of procedures or steps through which the systematic approach is developed. The survey method is concerned with the present and attempts to determine the status of the phenomena under investigation, Kothari (2004).

Singh (2006) notes that research tools are administered on the sample subjects for collecting evidence or data. The researcher must ensure that the types of data obtainable from the selected instruments will be usable in the statistical model that will later be used to bring out the significance of the study. He notes that a questionnaire is a form which is prepared and distributed for the purpose of securing responses about certain conditions or practices of which the recipient is presumed to have knowledge. Respondents have adequate time to give well thought out answers Kothari (2004). Questionnaires permit wide coverage at a minimum expense. It makes for greater validity in the results through promoting the selection of a large and more representative sample.

Questionnaires were developed and used to collect primary data from the Kenyan students. The questionnaires consisted of questions which participants were asked to
respond to and were distributed to and left with the respondents after which the researcher collect them after 10 minutes per respondent. The questionnaires were easy to understand and administer and contained closed ended and free choice items to allow respondents to choose one or more alternatives. Questionnaires were useful in obtaining objective data because the participants were not manipulated in any way by the researcher in filling a questionnaire. The questionnaire also offered considerable advantage in administration, providing the investigation with an easy accumulation of data. The questionnaires were advantageous to this study because of the large amount of information than needed to be collected from a large number of people in a very short period of time and in a relatively cost effective way. The researcher's own opinion did not influence the respondent to answer questions in a certain manner.

The questionnaires comprised of four sections: Background Information; University Selection; Satisfaction Elements and Service Enhancement areas. A five point Likert scale that ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree was used. This is a method of assigning quantitative value to qualitative data by assigning a number to each potential choice. A mean figure for all responses was then computed at the end of the evaluation (Kothari, 2004). The study also used the scale to gauge student satisfaction in the range of very dissatisfied to extremely satisfied.

3.5 Research Procedures

The research process entailed obtaining permission from the researcher’s university to the management to use USIU as the case study. The researcher got authorization for an introductory letter from the university which facilitated the speedy acceptance by the intended respondents.

The questionnaires were then pilot-tested in order to ascertain the suitability of the research tool. The purpose of pilot-testing the instrument is to ensure that terms in the instruments are stated clearly and have the same meaning to all respondents Mugenda and Mugenda (2003).

The instruments were evaluated for content validity, that is, the extent to which the questionnaire contents which include the use of appropriate vocabulary, sentence structure and whether the questions are suitable for the intended respondents. The relevance, appropriateness and adequacy of the instrument vis-à-vis the research questions were checked. Based on their comments, adjustments were made before final copies were produced and distributed to the respondents. Even though it is impossible to
calculate reliability exactly, the study reliability was assessed by having two independent scholars weigh the items of the research instruments used to determine consistency. Ethical considerations were pertinent to this study. Participants were informed of the nature of the study and were allowed to choose whether to participate or not. In addition, the researcher aimed to maintain a good rapport with the respondents. The researcher assured the respondents that all the information given by them will be treated as private and confidential.

3.6 Data Analysis methods
According to Healey (2011) data analysis refers to the process of organizing and summarizing a mass of raw data into meaningful form. Singh (2006) looks at it as studying the tabulated material in order to determine inherent facts or meaning. It involves breaking down existing complex factors into simpler parts and putting the parts together in new arrangements for the purpose of interpretation. Quantitative techniques were used for this purpose. Descriptive statistical techniques and correlation were used. The descriptive statistical technique entailed the determination of the mean and frequency distribution of the datasets. Relationships between the variables were determined using Spearman’s Rank Correlation Coefficient Technique. Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were coded and entered in the computer using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) program then analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies and presented in tables and figures.

3.7 Chapter Summary
The research process for this study was planned out to ensure all the most crucial elements were covered. This study adopted a descriptive research survey design. The sampling frame in the study comprised of male and female Kenyan USIU Undergraduate and Master’s students. The study adopted a stratified sampling technique. Questionnaires were developed and used to collect primary data from the Kenyan students. Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were coded and entered in the computer using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) program then analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies and presented in tables and figures.

The next chapter brings out the results and findings that emerge out of the field research.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the research findings. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data; presented in frequency tables, charts and graphs. Correlation and regression analysis was done to determine the relationships among the variables. The study sought the impact of satisfaction of customers on an organization’s sustainability.

4.2 General Information

The study had 60 respondents which was the sample population used in the study to represent the 5439 Kenyan USIU students recorded in the USIU Registrar’s Office as of December 2015. There were 13 USIU Kenyan Master’s Student respondents and 47 USIU Kenyan Undergraduate Students. They each filled in a hardcopy questionnaire which took about 10 minutes per respondent.

4.2.1 Gender

The study consisted of a sample of 29 male respondents and 31 female respondents totaling to 60 respondents. This indicates that 48.3% of the respondents were male and the other 51.7% of the respondents were female.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2 Age bracket

The study sought to investigate the age of the respondents. Majority of the respondents (46.67%) were aged between 17-23 years. 33.3% were aged between 24-30 years; 13.3% were aged between 31-37 years while 6.67% of the respondents were aged between 38-44 years of age.
4.2.3 Program Level

The study consisted of a sample of 47 undergraduate students and 13 Masters’ students totaling to 60 students. This indicates that 78.3% of the respondents were Undergraduates and the remaining 21.7% of the students were Masters students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.4 Undergraduate program

The study sought to investigate which programs the undergraduate respondents had enrolled for. Majority of the respondents 28.3% had enrolled for International Business Administration followed by International Relations students at 10.0% of the respondents. 8.3% of the students samples took Business Administration, while 6.7% of the students
took Information Systems And Technology. The rest of the courses in terms of the number of respondents were as follows: Accounting 5.0%, Finance (5.0%), Criminal Justice (5.0%), Applied Computer Technology (3.3%), Tourism Management 3.3%, Hotel and Restaurant Management 3.3%.

**Table 4.5: Undergraduate Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Computer Technology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel And Restaurant Management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Systems And Technology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Business Administration</td>
<td>17</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
<td><strong>78.3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.5 Masters program

The study sought to investigate which programs the Masters Students respondents had enrolled for. Majority of the respondents 15.0% had enrolled for Business Administration followed by Global Executive MBA at 3.3%. 1.7% of the respondents were enrolled for Counseling Psychology and another 1.7% for Clinical Psychology. The study had no respondents who had been enrolled for Global Executive MBA in Health, International Relations, Masters in communication or Masters in Information Systems.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Psychology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Executive MBA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Development</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Psychology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Executive MBA in Health</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters in Communication</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters in Information Systems</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>21.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.6 Part-time of full-time student

The study sought to investigate the number of respondents who were full-time students and those that were part-time students. 63.3% of the respondents were full-time students and 36.7% of the respondents were part-time students.

![Figure 4:2 Part-time or full-time students](image)
4.2.7 Employment status

The study sought to investigate the employment status of the respondents. At 41.67%, majority of the respondents were unemployed. 33.33% were employed and 25% of the respondents were entrepreneurs.

![Employment Statuses](image)

**Figure 4.3 Employment Statuses**

4.3 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to study at the institution as opposed to other local universities

4.3.1 First-time or returning student

The study sought to investigate whether each of the respondents was a first-time student at USIU or was a returning student. The findings were that the majority, 68.3% of the respondents were first-time students and the remaining 31.67% were returning students.
4.3.2 Source of information

The study sought to investigate the sources from which the respondents got information about USIU. Majority (31.7%) sourced their information from parents/guardians; 23.3% from a friend; 18.3% from online research; 15.0% from alumni of USIU. 3.3% was the percentage of respondents who sourced their information from each of the following sources: work mate/collleague; USIU staff; and newspaper advertisements. Finally, 1.7% of the respondents indicated sourcing their information from a TV advertisement.

### Table 4.7: Source of information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Research</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/Guardian</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Mate/Collleague</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU Staff</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Advertisements</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV Advertisement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni Of USIU</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.3 Whether the source was informative

The study sought to investigate if the respondents felt that the sources of the information were informative. Of the 60 respondents, the majority, 35.0% agreed that the sources were informative; 28.3% strongly agreed; 23.3% were neutral; 8.3% disagreed and 5.0% strongly disagreed.

Table 4.8: Whether the source was informative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.4. Preference for public or private university

The study sought to investigate whether the respondents initially preferred a public or private university before enrolling to USIU. The findings were that the majority, 83.33% initially preferred a private university and the minority 16.67% preferred a public university.

Figure 4:5 University preferences
4.3.5 University visits

The study sought to investigate how many times the respondents had visited USIU before they enrolled for any program at the university. The findings were that the majority (41.7%) had visited the university once; 31.7% had never visited the university before; 15.0% had visited the university twice and only 11.7% of the respondents had visited more than twice.

Table 4.9: University visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Than Twice</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.6 Purpose of university visits

The study sought to investigate the purpose for which the respondents had visited USIU even before enrolling for a program. It emerged that the majority 65% had visited to make an inquiry; 15% to participate in a school social activity; 10% to attend a formal event and another 10% to visit a friend.

![Figure 4:6 Purpose of visitation](image-url)
4.3.7 Reasons for choosing to study at USIU
The study sought to investigate the top 5 reasons why each respondent chose to study at USIU. The findings were that the majority (86.7%) chose USIU due to the programs available followed by 65% of who were motivated by the schedule of classes. 45% of the respondents preferred the study duration to graduation and another 45% were motivated by the school reputation in the job market. In descending order the other factors in terms of respondents’ preference were as follows:
Convenient location 36.7%; Availability of lecturers 30.0%; Library facilities 30.0%; A USIU alumnus recommended it 23.3%; Student capacity per class 21.7%; School fees affordability 18.3%; the campus’ appearance 16.7%; to study in the same school as a relative or friend 15.0%; My parent/guardian/sponsor chose USIU for me 13.3%; Dress code 13.3%; and Extra-curricular activities 11.7%; On the lower side, the minority of the respondents 3.3% were motivated by the school’s religious stand.

Table 5.02: Reasons for choosing to study at USIU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs available</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenient location</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School fees affordability</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule of classes</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of lecturers</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study duration to graduation</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library facilities</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parent/guardian/sponsor chose USIU for me</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress code</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-curricular activities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student capacity per class</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School reputation in the job market</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school’s religious stand</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I liked the campus’ appearance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to study in the same school as a relative or friend</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A USIU alumnus recommended it</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to Continue Pursuing Their Education at the University

4.4.1 Rating of USIU on the following USIU processes and technology use based on your level of satisfaction

The study sought to investigate the level of satisfaction of USIU respondents with the processes and technology being utilized in the university. The findings were that majority of the students were extremely satisfied with the following: The maximum number of students allowed per class semester seating (56.7%); the use of the Biometric system at the USIU library (41.7%); the number of electricity ports/sockets within campus (30.0%)

The other findings were that the majority of students were satisfied with the following: admissions process to USIU 43.3%; Fees payment processes at USIU (48.3%); The requirement for school identification at the USIU gate entrance (43.3%); The use of OPAC system at the USIU library (46.7%); The internet connectivity at USIU campus grounds (30.0%); The technology services available in the USIU computer labs (36.7%); and User-friendliness of the USIU website (40.0%);

It also emerged that 45% of the respondents were extremely satisfied with the USIU course registration process and another 45% was satisfied with the same. The other key findings were that the minority of students registered levels of dissatisfaction ranging from 0% to 20% of the respondents.
Table 5.1: Satisfaction with USIU processes and technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Extremely satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The admissions process to USIU                                        | 21 (35.0%)          | 29 (48.3%)  | 10 (16.7%) | 0 (0%)       | 0 (0%)           | 60 (100%)
| The USIU course registration process                                  | 27 (45%)            | 27 (45%)    | 5 (8.3%)  | 1 (1.7%)      | 0 (0%)           | 60 (100%)
| The maximum number of students allowed per class semester seating     | 34 (56.7%)          | 21 (35.0%)  | 5 (8.3%)  | 0 (0%)       | 0 (0%)           | 60 (100%)
| Fees payment processes at USIU                                        | 10 (16.7%)          | 29 (48.3%)  | 14 (23.3%)| 5 (8.3%)      | 2 (3.3%)         | 60 (100%)
| The requirement for school identification at the USIU gate entrance     | 8 (13.3%)           | 26 (43.3%)  | 19 (31.7%)| 6 (10.0%)     | 1 (1.7%)         | 60 (100%)
| The use of OPAC system at the USIU library                             | 18 (30.0%)          | 28 (46.7%)  | 13 (21.7%)| 1 (1.7%)      | 0 (0%)           | 60 (100%)
| The use of the Biometric system at the USIU library                    | 25 (41.7%)          | 24 (40.0%)  | 11 (18.3%)| 0 (0%)       | 0 (0%)           | 60 (100%)
| The internet connectivity at USIU campus grounds                       | 16 (26.7%)          | 18 (30.0%)  | 9 (15.0%) | 12 (20.0%)    | 5 (8.3%)         | 60 (100%)
| The technology services available in the USIU computer labs            | 21 (35.0%)          | 22 (36.7%)  | 10 (16.7%)| 6 (10.0%)     | 1 (1.7%)         | 60 (100%)
| User-friendliness of the USIU website                                  | 21 (35.0%)          | 24 (40.0%)  | 9 (15.0%) | 6 (10.0%)     | 0 (0%)           | 60 (100%)
| The number of electricity ports/sockets within campus                  | 18 (30.0%)          | 14 (23.3%)  | 13 (21.7%)| 10 (16.7%)    | 5 (8.3%)         | 60 (100%) |
4.4.2. Rating of USIU on the following facilities based on your level of satisfaction

The study sought to investigate the level of satisfaction of USIU respondents with the facilities available at the institution. The findings were that majority of the students were extremely satisfied with the following: The USIU library reading material (51.7%); The USIU lighting systems in rooms (65.0%); and The cleanliness status at the university (58.3%).

The other findings were that the majority of students were satisfied with the following: The comfort of USIU furniture for studying purposes (41.7%) and The USIU vehicle parking arrangements (45.0%).

It also emerged that the majority of the student respondents were neutral on; The USIU buses seating capacity (58.3%) and the size of accommodation rooms (hostels) in USIU (61.7%). The other key findings were that the minority of students registered levels of dissatisfaction ranging from 0% to 13.3% of the respondents

Table 5.2: Satisfaction with USIU facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Extremely satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The USIU library reading material</td>
<td>31 (51.7%)</td>
<td>27 (45.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The USIU lighting systems in rooms</td>
<td>29 (65.0%)</td>
<td>19 (31.7%)</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The comfort of USIU furniture for studying purposes</td>
<td>21 (35.0%)</td>
<td>25 (41.7%)</td>
<td>13 (21.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The USIU vehicle parking arrangements</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>27 (45.0%)</td>
<td>19 (31.7%)</td>
<td>6 (10.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The USIU buses seating capacity</td>
<td>3 (5.0%)</td>
<td>15 (25.0%)</td>
<td>35 (58.3%)</td>
<td>4 (6.7%)</td>
<td>3 (5.0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The size of accommodation rooms (hostels) in USIU</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>11 (18.3%)</td>
<td>37 (61.7%)</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cleanliness status at the university</td>
<td>35 (58.3%)</td>
<td>22 (36.7%)</td>
<td>3 (5.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4.3. Rating the extent to which you approve of the statements regarding USIU staff in their service delivery

The study sought to investigate the level of satisfaction of USIU student respondents with how the USIU staff conducted their duties. The findings were that majority of the students agreed with the following: The USIU lecturers are available for consultation (45.0%); The staff at the cafeteria are hospitable (46.7%); The staff at the USIU library are reliable (50.0%); The course advisors offer beneficial information on school programs (46.7%); The career office staff provide valuable career growth information (45.0%); The university management is responsive to students’ concerns (45.0%); The USIU security personnel are dependable (53.3%); and The USIU clinic staff are empathetic (41.7%).

The other findings were that the majority of students were neutral on the following: IT staff at USIU resolve technological problems adequately (35.0%); The staff at the counseling centre are supportive (45.0%); The staff at the counseling centre are supportive (45.0%); The SAC representatives are in touch with students’ needs (46.7%); The sports instructors offer valuable training (55.0%) and The USIU transport services are timely (48.3%)

The other key findings were that 30% of the students strongly disagreed that the library fees penalty charges are fair and another 30% disagreed that the library fees penalty charges are fair. Also noted was that the minority of students registered levels of dissatisfaction ranging from 0% to 15.0% of the respondents for all the other statements posed regarding how USIU staff conducted their duties.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers are available for consultation</td>
<td>21 (35.0%)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT staff resolve technological problems adequately</td>
<td>12 (20.0%)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria staff are hospitable</td>
<td>14 (23.3%)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff at the USIU library are reliable</td>
<td>20 (33.3%)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course advisors offer beneficial information on school programs</td>
<td>15 (25.0%)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library penalty charges are fair</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff at the counseling centre are supportive</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The career office staff provide valuable career growth information</td>
<td>9 (15.0%)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The SAC representatives are in touch with students’ needs</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management is responsive to students’ concerns</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sports instructors offer valuable training</td>
<td>7 (11.7%)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security personnel are dependable</td>
<td>12 (20.0%)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport services are timely</td>
<td>5 (8.3%)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clinic staff are empathetic</td>
<td>15 (25.0%)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 Mechanisms USIU can put in place to improve customer satisfaction.

4.5.1 Rating the level of importance you attach to the following academic affairs and social engagement activities at USIU

The study sought to investigate the level of importance that the USIU student respondents attached to some key academic affairs and social engagement activities at USIU. The findings were that majority of the students felt that the following was extremely important: Timely communication of changes in academic programs (55.0%); Lecturers accounting for grades awarded to students 53.3%; Scholarship opportunities (51.7%); and work study opportunities (45.0%). The other findings were that the majority of students found the following to be very important: Sporting activities at USIU (36.7%); Career fair events (45.0%); Cultural events (33.3%); and Community service by engagements (40.0%). Other key findings were that the minority of students found the academic affairs and social engagement activities at USIU to be important, less important or not important, with statistics ranging from 0% to 13.3% of the respondents.

Table 5.4: Importance levels of academic affairs and social engagement activities at USIU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Less important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timely communication of changes in academic programs</td>
<td>33 (55.0%)</td>
<td>24 (40.0%)</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers accounting for grades</td>
<td>32 (53.3%)</td>
<td>21 (35.0%)</td>
<td>6 (10.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship opportunities</td>
<td>31 (51.7%)</td>
<td>22 (36.7%)</td>
<td>4 (6.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work study opportunities</td>
<td>27 (45.0%)</td>
<td>19 (31.7%)</td>
<td>9 (15.0%)</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>3 (5.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting activities at USIU</td>
<td>12 (20.0%)</td>
<td>22 (36.7%)</td>
<td>15 (25.0%)</td>
<td>6 (10.0%)</td>
<td>4 (6.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career fair events</td>
<td>24 (40.0%)</td>
<td>27 (45.0%)</td>
<td>7 (11.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural events</td>
<td>14 (23.3%)</td>
<td>20 (33.3%)</td>
<td>18 (30.0%)</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service by engagements</td>
<td>22 (36.7%)</td>
<td>24 (40.0%)</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>5 (8.3%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.2 Rating the extent to which students approve of the proposed changes

The study sought to investigate the extent to which the student respondents agreed with proposed changes to key services offered by USIU. The findings were that majority of the respondents strongly agree with the following: USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds (50.0%); USIU should help increase links between students and potential employers (70.0%).

The other findings were that the majority of students agreed with the following: USIU should extend transport services to other parts of Nairobi (41.7%); USIU should include more social engagement events between lecturers and students (41.7%); USIU clubs should organize more social events to foster student interactions (51.7%); USIU should introduce a greater variety of academic programs (50.0%); USIU should increase the number of lecturers for concentration courses (43.3%); and USIU should increase the cafeteria’s menu options (41.7%).

The other key findings were that the majority of students had a neutral stand on the following: USIU should decrease fees requirements to allow more students to join the university (36.7%); and USIU should increase the library sitting capacity (33.3%).

In addition a majority of the students (30.0%) disagreed that USIU should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya and another 21.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed that USIU should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya.

Also noted was that of the 10 proposals statements regarding service enhancement areas made in this section, in 9 of them, the level of disagreement was noted from the minority of the respondents ranging from 0% to 18.3% of the students sampled.
Table 5.5: Areas of service improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USIU should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya</td>
<td>11 (18.3%)</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>10 (16.7%)</td>
<td>18 (30.0%)</td>
<td>13 (21.7%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU should decrease fees requirements to allow more students to join the university</td>
<td>9 (15.0%)</td>
<td>16 (26.7%)</td>
<td>22 (36.7%)</td>
<td>9 (15.0%)</td>
<td>4 (6.7%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU should extend transport services to other parts of Nairobi</td>
<td>19 (31.7%)</td>
<td>25 (41.7%)</td>
<td>14 (23.3%)</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU should include more social engagement events between lecturers and students</td>
<td>19 (31.7%)</td>
<td>25 (41.7%)</td>
<td>16 (26.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU clubs should organize more social events to foster student interactions</td>
<td>18 (30.0%)</td>
<td>31 (51.7%)</td>
<td>11 (18.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU should introduce a greater variety of academic programs</td>
<td>26 (43.3%)</td>
<td>30 (50.0%)</td>
<td>3 (5.0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU should increase the number of lecturers for concentration courses</td>
<td>23 (38.3%)</td>
<td>26 (43.3%)</td>
<td>11 (18.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds</td>
<td>30 (50.0%)</td>
<td>22 (36.7%)</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU should increase the library sitting capacity</td>
<td>15 (25.0%)</td>
<td>14 (23.3%)</td>
<td>20 (33.3%)</td>
<td>11 (18.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU should increase the cafeteria’s menu options</td>
<td>23 (38.3%)</td>
<td>25 (41.7%)</td>
<td>11 (18.3%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIU should help increase links between students and potential employers</td>
<td>42 (70.0%)</td>
<td>17 (28.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6 Correlation between the purpose of visitation and satisfaction with the admission process

**Relationship being tested:** Is there a correlation between the purpose of visitation and satisfaction with the admission process?

**Hypothesis:**

Ho: There is no significant correlation between the purpose of visitation and satisfaction with the admission process
H1: There is significant correlation between the purpose of visitation and satisfaction with the admission process

This is represented as:
Ho: \( r = 0 \)
H1: \( r \neq 0 \)

**Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admissions process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purpose of visitation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the p. value (0.042) is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant negative correlation between the purpose of visitation and satisfaction with the admission process.

**Coefficient of determination (R-square)**

\[ r = -0.264 \]

\[ r^2 = 0.0697 \text{ (4 d.p)} \]

\[ 0.0697 \times 100 \]

\[ = 6.97\% \]

This means that 6.97% of the variation in the satisfaction with the admission process can be explained by the variation in the purpose of visitation.

### 4.7 Two-independent t-test

**Relationship being tested:** Is there a significant difference in the part-time and fulltime students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds?

**Hypothesis:**

\[ H_0: \text{There is no significant difference in the part-time and fulltime students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds} \]

\[ H_1: \text{There is no significant difference in of part-time and fulltime students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds} \]

This is represented as:

\[ H_0: \bar{x}_1 = \bar{x}_2 \]

\[ H_1: \bar{x}_1 \neq \bar{x}_2 \]

Let \( \bar{x}_1 \) be the mean of part-time students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds.

Let \( \bar{x}_2 \) be the mean of full-time students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds.

**The Findings**

The sample had 38 full-time students and 22 part-time students.
The fulltime students were distributed with a mean of 4.5526 and a standard deviation of 0.60168 while the part-time students were distributed with a mean of 4.0455 and a standard deviation of 0.78542.

### Group Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>full-time student</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4.5526</td>
<td>.60168</td>
<td>.09761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part-time student</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.0455</td>
<td>.78542</td>
<td>.16745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Levene’s Test

Through the Levene’s Test, the study tested whether the variance between the means of part-time and full-time students who agreed that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds was the same.

**Hypothesis:**

- H0: Variances are equal
- H1: Variances are not equal

The results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usiu should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds</td>
<td>.49 <strong>5</strong></td>
<td>.485</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Equal variances assumed

Equal variances not assumed
USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds were found to be the same with the mean difference being 0.50718.

Hence, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference in the part-time and full-time students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds.

4.8 Chapter Summary

The study had 60 respondents which was the sample population used in the study to represent the 5439 Kenyan USIU students recorded in the USIU Registrar’s Office as of December 2015. They each filled in a hardcopy questionnaire which took about 10 minutes per respondent. There were 13 USIU Kenyan Master’s Student respondents and 47 USIU Kenyan Undergraduate Students. There were 29 male respondents and 31 female respondents.

It emerged that majority of the respondents (31.7%) sourced their information from parents/guardians and that 35.0% of the total 60 respondents agreed that the sources were informative; 63.3% of the respondents were full-time students and 36.7% of the respondents were part-time students. At 41.67%, majority of the respondents were unemployed.

The findings other findings were that the majority, 83.33% initially preferred a private university and the minority 16.67% preferred a public university. Majority (86.7%) chose USIU due to the programs available followed by 65% of who were motivated by the schedule of classes.

It also emerged that majority of the students were extremely satisfied with the following: The maximum number of students allowed per class semester seating (56.7%); the use of the Biometric system at the USIU library (41.7%); the number of electricity ports/sockets within campus (30.0%). The other findings were that the majority of students were satisfied with the following: The comfort of USIU furniture for studying purposes (41.7%) and The USIU vehicle parking arrangements (45.0%).
In reference to satisfaction with staff members, the majority of students were neutral on the following: IT staff at USIU resolve technological problems adequately (35.0%); The staff at the counseling centre are supportive (45.0%); The SAC representatives are in touch with students’ needs (46.7%); The sports instructors offer valuable training (55.0%) and The USIU transport services are timely (48.3%)

In terms of areas of improvement, majority of students agreed with the following: USIU should extend transport services to other parts of Nairobi (41.7%); USIU should include more social engagement events between lecturers and students (41.7%); USIU clubs should organize more social events to foster student interactions (51.7%); USIU should introduce a greater variety of academic programs (50.0%); USIU should increase the number of lecturers for concentration courses (43.3%); and USIU should increase the cafeteria’s menu options (41.7%).

Finally, there was a significant negative correlation between the purpose of visitation and satisfaction with the admission process. However, there was no significant difference in the part-time and fulltime students who agree that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds.

The next chapter captures discussions, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings that emerged from the study.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction
This chapter presents the summary, discussions, conclusions and recommendations of the study in that order. The summary includes the objectives of the study, the methodology and the findings of the study. The discussions section presents a discussion of the findings of the study as guided by the study’s specific objectives and informed by the findings of the study. The recommendations section presents both the recommendations for improvement and for further research.

5.2 Summary
The study investigated the impact of external customers satisfaction of on an organization’s sustainability: A case study of United States International University. The research questions were: Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to study at the institution as opposed to other local universities; Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to continue pursuing their education at the university; and mechanisms USIU can put in place to improve customer satisfaction.

The study adopted descriptive research survey design. The population for this study will consist of Kenyan Maters and Undergraduate students at USIU who total to 5,439 students.

The study will use a sample population of 70 of the 5439 Kenyan USIU students recorded in the USIU Registrar’s Office as of October 2015. The study will interview both local and international male and female students. Table 3.1 gives a summary of the sample size to be used in the study.

This study research method will entail collection of primary data using questionnaire survey to collect data on the impact of customer satisfaction on organizational sustainability.

Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were coded and entered in the computer using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) program then analyzed.
using descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies and presented in tables and figures.

5.3 Discussions

5.3.1 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to study at the institution as opposed to other local universities

From the study, it emerged that, the number of first-time students was higher than that of returning students. This indicated that some of the respondents were having their first time experience with USIU and others had returned to the University for another Program presumably having had a positive experience the first time. Ferrel and Hartline (2008) indicate that the amount of experience that the consumer has with the product category has an influence on the purchase decision and that if the product meets the expectations of the consumers, then the consumer will be satisfied. Thus though the number of returning students in the study was lower than the number of first-time students the students, it can be used as a basis for acknowledging that these students saw some value in their past USIU experience.

Further key information that came out from the study was in support of what Ferrel and Hartline (2008) observed when they pointed out that after identifying the need, the consumer may look for information about how to satisfy that need. Most of the respondents in this study sourced their information about USIU from a parent/guardian and those who sourced information from a friend came in second in terms of numbers. The least numbers were recorded from respondents who sourced information from a workmate/colleague, USIU staff or newspaper advertisements. Regarding how informative their source of information was, most respondents strongly agreed that the source was informative and the least number strongly disagreed. This information ascertains that prospective students are influenced by different sources when choosing where to study.

In reference to their preference for a public or private university, it emerged that a very significant majority of the respondents preferred a private university to a public one and this implies that there were specific similarities and/or differences between a public and private university that the respondents compared. This supports the observation by Ferrel and Hartline (2008) who point out that consumers narrow down their potential choices to
an evoked set of suitable alternatives that may meet their needs and those consumers evaluate products as bundles of attributes that have varying abilities to satisfy their needs.

Concerning how many times the respondents had visited USIU before having enrolled for a program, it emerged that the majority had visited once and the least numbers had visited more than twice. It also came out that the purpose for the university visits was primarily to make an inquiry as indicated by the numbers registered. The fewest numbers indicated the purpose of their study as being to visit a friend and others to attend a formal event. This implies that some students do have actual deliberate contact with a university before enrolling for a program with or without the intention of enrolling for a program in future. This information to a great extent supports Ferrel and Hartline (2008) who indicate that the amount of time, effort and expense dedicated to the search for information depends on: the degree of risk involved in the purchase; the amount of experience that the consumer has with the product category; and the actual cost of the search in terms of time and money. Being a high involvement purchase, enrolling for a university programs entails a great deal of expense and poses the risk of significant emotional consequence of a mistake is made.

Very key in answering this research question was the finding that the majority of respondents chose USIU due to the programs available followed by those who were motivated by the schedule of classes. A tie in figures was recorded for the next two most popular reasons which were the study duration to graduation and the school reputation in the job market. Extra-curricular activities and the school’s religious stand were the two factors that received the least numbers of respondents picked out as having motivated their decision to study at USIU. This supports an observation by Donaldson and McNicholas (2004) that among others, nature of the courses and the program structure influence student choice of the institution. These results are also in line with an observation by McLaughlin and Faulkner (2012) who note that fundamentals that focus upon student centered learning, flexible learning and authentic learning experiences are becoming universally agreed educational practice.
5.3.2 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to continue pursuing their education at the university

The study revealed that in terms of the level of satisfaction of USIU respondents with the processes and technology being utilized in the university; the majority of the students were extremely satisfied with aspects such as the use of the Biometric system at the USIU library and the number of electricity ports/sockets within campus.

The other findings were that the majority of students were satisfied with the following: admissions process to USIU; Fees payment processes at USIU; The requirement for school identification at the USIU gate entrance; The use of OPAC system at the USIU library; The internet connectivity at USIU campus grounds; The technology services available in the USIU computer labs; and User-friendliness of the USIU website. It also emerged that there was a tie in the number of the respondents who were extremely satisfied with the USIU course registration process and those satisfied with the same. The other key findings were that the minority of students registered levels of dissatisfaction. These findings are in line with the observation by Kargbo (2002) who identifies that new technologies play an increasingly important role in communication and data retrieval processes such as library use, internet searches, downloading of e-publications and website presentations.

The study also revealed that in regard to the level of satisfaction of USIU respondents with the facilities available at the institution, the majority of the students were extremely satisfied with the following: The USIU library reading material; The USIU lighting systems in rooms); and The cleanliness status at the university. The other findings were that the majority of students were satisfied with the following: The comfort of USIU furniture for studying purposes and The USIU vehicle parking arrangements; It also emerged that the majority of the student respondents were neutral on; The USIU buses seating capacity and the size of accommodation rooms (hostels) in USIU. The other key findings were that the minority of students registered levels of dissatisfaction. These findings imply that the students do factor in the standards and performance of school facilities and assess their relevance. These findings are in support of an observation by Julin (2015) who identifies that facility management services such as lighting systems as
well as cleaning and maintenance have a direct and major effect on the educational outcome.

The study brought to light that in reference to the level of satisfaction of USIU student respondents with how the USIU staff conducted their duties, the majority of the students agreed with the following: The USIU lecturers are available for consultation; The staff at the cafeteria are hospitable; The staff at the USIU library are reliable; The course advisors offer beneficial information on school programs; The career office staff provide valuable career growth information; The university management is responsive to students’ concerns; The USIU security personnel are dependable; and The USIU clinic staff are empathetic. The other findings were that the majority of students were neutral on the following: IT staff at USIU resolve technological problems adequately; The staff at the counseling centre are supportive; The SAC representatives are in touch with students’ needs; The sports instructors offer valuable training and The USIU transport services are timely. In addition, there was a tie in the number of students who strongly disagreed that the library fees penalty charges are fair and another set of respondents that disagreed that the library fees penalty charges are fair. Also noted was that the minority of students registered levels of dissatisfaction for all the other statements posed regarding how USIU staff conducted their duties. These findings imply that the students do factor in how university staff perform their duties and how the staff handle them. These findings support the observation by Berkley and Gupta (1995) that service providers must possess the required skills and knowledge to perform the service.

5.3.3 Mechanisms USIU can put in place to improve customer satisfaction

The study revealed that in regard to the level of importance that the USIU student respondents attached to some key academic affairs and social engagement activities at USIU, the majority of the students felt that the following was extremely important: Timely communication of changes in academic programs; Lecturers accounting for grades awarded to students; Scholarship opportunities; and work study opportunities. It also emerged that the majority of students found the following to be very important: Sporting activities at USIU; Career fair events; Cultural events; and Community service by engagements. The findings were that the minority of students found the academic
affairs and social engagement activities at USIU to be important, less important or not important, with as indicated by the number of respondents who classified them as such.

These results indicate that students do gauge how relevance of the opportunities and procedures related to their university experience and attach different levels of importance to specific areas. These findings are in line with an observation by Edvardsson (1998) who recognizes that “customers have different values and different grounds for assessment; they may perceive one and the same service in different ways. They are also in support of an observation by Yang (2003a) who notes that in taking action to improve service quality, service providers should prioritize quality attributes that have higher importance levels and lower satisfaction levels

The study also revealed that in reference to the extent to which the student respondents agreed with proposed changes to key services offered by USIU; the majority of the respondents strongly agree with the following: USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds; and USIU should help increase links between students and potential employers. In addition, the majority of students agreed with the following: USIU should extend transport services to other parts of Nairobi; USIU should include more social engagement events between lecturers and students; USIU clubs should organize more social events to foster student interactions; USIU should introduce a greater variety of academic programs; USIU should increase the number of lecturers for concentration courses; and USIU should increase the cafeteria’s menu options. It also emerged that the majority of students had a neutral stand on the following: USIU should decrease fees requirements to allow more students to join the university; and USIU should increase the library sitting capacity. In addition, a majority of the students disagreed that USIU should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya and the second highest number of the respondents strongly disagreed that USIU should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya.

Also noted was that of the 10 proposals statements regarding service enhancement areas made in this section, in 9 of them, the level of disagreement was noted from the minority of the respondents These results suggests that there are aspects that the USIU needs to cater to more in order to enhance customer experience for long term sustainability which is what Yamamoto G. T., (2006) advocates for when points out that brands today are
defined by the experiences they create for customers. Years ago brands were created with advertising slogans but today customers demand genuine value.

These findings are in line with an observation by Feciková (2004) who elaborates that the result of customer satisfaction measurement enables an understanding of how customers perceive the organization, whether the performance meets their expectation, identifies priorities for improvement, benchmarks the performance of the organization against other organizations and increases profits through improved customer loyalty. These findings pose a challenge to university management who need to factor an observation by Williams and Cappuccini-Ansfield (2007) who point out that to the extent that universities see their students as paying customers, they are accountable for eliciting student opinions and for sharing improvements that have been made as a result of student opinions.

5.4 Conclusions

5.4.1 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to study at the institution as opposed to other local universities

Based on the information captured and analyzed, the study concluded that indeed different prospective students have varying sources of information about a university. In this case a parent/guardian emerged as being a key source of information regarding where to pursue a university education. Friends are also seen to being a significant source of information and these points to the power of referrals. How informative their source of information is also has impact on the students as shown by the varying numbers in number of respondents who strongly agreed that the source was informative and the number that strongly disagreed.

The study also concluded that indeed prospective students make an assessment between joining a public or private university and it is not a guarantee that all students prefer private universities since though a very significant majority of the respondents in this study preferred a private university, some had considered attending a public one.

In addition the study arrived at the conclusion that prospective students often visit a university once or more for different reasons and this could influence their decisions. It
also came out that making an inquiry was a very key purpose for the university visits by students before enrolling for a program and this suggests their need for clarification or initial search of information.

In conclusion, the study drew the conclusion that indeed different students prioritize different factors about a university before enrolling and this presents universities with the opportunity to attract prospective students based on sustainably offering what appeals most to students. In this case for instance the programs available and the schedule of classes had the highest numbers respectively in terms of the respondents who considered them.

5.4.2 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to continue pursuing their education at the university

Based on the information captured and analyzed, the study concluded that students do factor their experiences in a university and have varying levels of satisfaction with the processes and technology being utilized in a university. There are some areas with which the majority of students could be extremely satisfied with and others that they could be extremely dissatisfied with. Other areas may fall in between mere satisfaction and actual positive experiences that render satisfaction. For instance, the majority of the students were extremely satisfied with the use of the Biometric system at the USIU library; and another majority was satisfied with the internet connectivity at USIU campus grounds.

The study also revealed that in regard to the level of satisfaction of students with the facilities available at the institution, varying levels of satisfaction will be registered and need to be assessed per university. In USIU, as based on this case, the majority of the students were extremely satisfied with the USIU library reading material and another majority were satisfied with the USIU vehicle parking arrangements; It also emerged that the majority of the student respondents were neutral on; The USIU buses seating capacity and the size of accommodation rooms (hostels) in USIU.

The study brought to light that in reference to the level of satisfaction of USIU student respondents with how the USIU staff conducted their duties, the majority of the students agreed with the following: The USIU lecturers are available for consultation; The staff at the cafeteria are hospitable; The staff at the USIU library are reliable; The course advisors offer beneficial information on school programs; The career office staff provide valuable
career growth information; The university management is responsive to students’ concerns; The USIU security personnel are dependable; and The USIU clinic staff are empathetic.

The other findings were that the majority of students were neutral on the following: IT staff at USIU resolve technological problems adequately; the staff at the counseling centre are supportive; The SAC representatives are in touch with students’ needs; the sports instructors offer valuable training and The USIU transport services are timely.

The other key findings were that there was a tie in the number of respondents who students strongly disagreed that the library fees penalty charges are fair and another set of respondents that disagreed that the library fees penalty charges are fair. Also noted was that the minority of students registered levels of dissatisfaction for all the other statements posed regarding how USIU staff conducted their duties.

5.4.3 Mechanisms USIU can put in place to improve customer satisfaction

Based on the information captured and analyzed, the study concluded that students do factor their experiences in a university and attach varying levels of importance to services provided by the universities. This implies that a university has to consider what is important to its students and not simply introduce something that the students don’t find relevant. More so, due to the varying levels of importance, the university has to keep assessing their performance in these areas so as to keep up with the expectations of students.

In this study for instance, it emerged that in regard to the level of importance that the USIU student respondents attached to some key academic affairs and social engagement activities at USIU, the majority of the students felt that timely communication of changes in academic programs was extremely important.

The study also revealed that student have areas in which they would like service to be improved but may not directly communicate them to the school management even though they play a crucial role in determining their level of satisfaction. In this study for instance, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds and another majority of students agreed that USIU clubs should organize more social events to foster student interactions. In addition a majority of the students disagreed that USIU should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya and the second highest number of the respondents strongly disagreed that USIU
should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya. All these are areas that sometimes a university may overlook but have significance to students.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Recommendations for Improvement

5.5.1.1 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to study at the institution as opposed to other local universities

Key information that came out was that most of the respondents sourced their information about universities from a parent/guardian and those who sourced information from a friend came in second in terms of numbers. It would be plausible for universities to focus their marketing on encouraging more referrals through parents/guardians or friends. This would entail a more personalized marketing message to parents and encouraging current and outgoing university students to share their experiences with their friends.

Findings regarding how informative their source of information was indicate that it would be prudent for universities to offer as much information about the institution at various different points of contact where prospective students are likely to seek information. This would entail educating parents and current students on opportunities available as well as communicating clearly and conveniently through other platforms such as the school website and social media sites.

The study identified that some students initially preferred a public university to a public one and based on this, it would be beneficial for universities to tailor their message and services towards drawing students who seek other opportunities at different institutions.

From the study, it also emerged that many students do indeed make deliberate contact with the university through a visit and the purpose of these visits was seen primarily to be making an inquiry. It thus indicates that the universities should be keen on making sure that the prospective students are well attended to with utmost courtesy and having relevant, detailed and clear information availed in good time conveniently.

The study also revealed that the respondents were driven by different needs when deciding to study at a specific university. The programs available, the schedule of classes,
the study duration to graduation and the school reputation in the job market were identified as some of the key factors that drove students to pick USIU as their university of choice. It would thus be extremely important for universities to capitalize on ensuring the student’s expectations in regards to interest areas are adequately addressed and standards remain very high.

5.5.1.2 Factors that influence Kenyan USIU students to continue pursuing their education at the university

The study revealed that in terms of the level of satisfaction of USIU respondents with the processes and technology being utilized in the university, students registered very high levels of satisfaction in most of the areas covered in the study. For instance the majority of the students were extremely satisfied with the maximum number of students allowed per class semester seating and another majority of students were satisfied with the technology services available in the USIU computer labs. This suggests that universities need to maintain high quality services in such areas and upgrade their systems. The universities should not relax in their efforts to sustain effective and efficient services in their processes and technology and should aim to meet the changing needs of customers by keeping up with industry trends.

The study also revealed that in regard to the level of satisfaction of USIU respondents with the facilities available at the institution, the majority of the students registered high levels of satisfaction. For instance, the majority were extremely satisfied with the USIU lighting systems in rooms; and the cleanliness status at the university while the majority of others were satisfied with the comfort of USIU furniture for studying purposes. However, it also emerged that the majority of the student respondents were neutral on; The USIU buses seating capacity and the size of accommodation rooms (hostels) in USIU. These findings indicate that at present, the majority of students are reasonably pleased with the facilities available at the institution. However, it implies that universities must not ignore the minority who are not satisfied with school facilities and should invest effort towards benchmarking in other institutions or industries to identify and possibly implement best practices towards availing necessary items or material towards improving the university experience.
In regards to the satisfaction of USIU student respondents with how the USIU staff conducted their duties, it emerged that the majority of the students were pleased with the staff members. For instance, the majority agreed that the USIU lecturers are available for consultation; and that the course advisors offer beneficial information on school programs. However, a number majority of students were neutral on the following: IT staff at USIU resolve technological problems adequately; the staff at the counseling centre are supportive; The SAC representatives are in touch with students’ needs; the sports instructors offer valuable training and The USIU transport services are timely. The other key findings were that there was a tie in the number of respondents who students strongly disagreed that the library fees penalty charges are fair and another set of respondents that disagreed that the library fees penalty charges are fair.

This information denotes that although most students are satisfied with the specific staff performance areas covered in this study and that the minority of students registered levels of dissatisfaction, there is a great need for the universities to further encourage the staff members to offer great service to students. The management could offer monetary incentives or rewards for excellent performance which would serve to motivate the staff members to demonstrate concern, empathy and adequate assistance to students in a timely fashion.

5.5.1.3 Mechanisms USIU can put in place to improve customer satisfaction

The study revealed that in regard to the level of importance that the USIU student respondents attached to some key academic affairs and social engagement activities at USIU, many students attached a great deal of importance to the areas covered in the study. For instance, the majority of the students felt that lecturers’ accounting for grades awarded to students was extremely important and another majority of students found sporting activities and career fair events to be very important. This suggests that although a university, at present, may be engaging students in activities that the students find relevant in their university experience, it would be prudent for the institution to further seek students’ opinions on which other activities could be introduced, added or modified to enhance their experience. This could be done through introducing suggestion boxes in different parts of the school and encouraging freedom of expression through the suggestions.
The study also revealed that in reference to the extent to which the student respondents agreed with proposed changes to key services offered by USIU; the findings were that majority of the respondents were in favour of most of the proposed changes. For instance, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds and another majority of students agreed that USIU should increase the number of lecturers for concentration courses as well as increase the cafeteria’s menu options. This suggests that the university students have some needs which often they may not verbalize directly to the administration. Hence it would be prudent for a university’s management to make deliberate steps towards seeking and capturing student opinions either manually or electronically for different service areas or points of contact on perhaps a quarterly depending on the intensity of the activities.

However there was a majority of students that had a neutral stand on whether USIU should decrease fees requirements to allow more students to join the university; and whether USIU should increase the library sitting capacity. In addition a majority of the students disagreed that USIU should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya and the second highest number of the respondents strongly disagreed that USIU should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya. This suggests that in future, the actions or decisions that the administration of a university takes may or may not be in agreement with the student’s wishes and could have an impact on the sustainability of the organization. Therefore, even if the competition has taken certain steps, it would be prudent for a specific university to position itself based on what its target customers find most relevant.

5.5.2 Recommendations for further studies
Studies should be carried out to explore why some students initially have preference for a public or private university and opt for one they had not originally preferred. Further study should be conducted to identify how members of staff in a university can be inspired to appreciate students’ role as customers in universities. Similar studies could be carried out in other universities in the country to validate the results of this study.
REFERENCES


USIU Catalogue.


APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

KAIRU SUSAN MUTONI,
P.O.BOX 2379,
THIKA.
MOBILE +254 714018922.
13TH-DECEMBER-15.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION


The purpose of this study will be to investigate how the level of satisfaction of an organization’s external consumer impacts the organization’s sustainability, taking USIU-Africa’s as a point in case. The reason for this letter is to request for your permission and assistance towards the completion of the study allowing me to conduct the study within the institution, among the university’s Undergraduate and Master’s students. I declare to abide by the university rules and guidelines concerning research undertaking. I will also observe utmost ethical standards in the process of conducting research.

The study will be beneficial to the respondents in that it will present their concerns and suggestions to the University’s management, which may lead to service enhancement and service expansion. These are possible changes, which the customers may find particularly rewarding.

Yours sincerely,

Kairu Susan
APPENDIX II: STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this study is to determine how the level of satisfaction of an organization’s external consumer impacts the organization’s sustainability, taking USIU-Africa’s as a point in case.

This questionnaire is made up of four sections which will take a few minutes of your time. Please read each question carefully and answer it to the best of your ability. Where necessary check [✓] the boxes provided. There are no correct or incorrect responses and your answers are crucial to this study. Please note: your participation in this study is anonymous and as such the confidentiality of the information you provide is guaranteed. You are kindly requested to fill the questionnaire as completely and as accurately as possible.

**Thank you for your participation in this study.**

**SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1. Please indicate your gender
   - Male [ ]
   - Female [ ]

2. Please indicate the **age** bracket in which you currently belong
   - 17-23 [ ] 24-30 [ ] 31-37 [ ] 38-44 [ ] 45 and over [ ]

3. Please indicate the **program level** you are currently enrolled in
   - Undergraduate [ ]
   - Masters [ ]

4. If **undergraduate** please indicate the program your are pursuing
   - Accounting [ ]
   - Applied Computer Technology [ ]
   - Business Administration [ ]
   - Criminal Justice [ ]
   - Finance [ ]
   - Hotel and restaurant Management [ ]
   - Information systems and technology [ ]
   - International Business Administration [ ]
   - International Relations [ ]
   - Journalism [ ]
   - Pharmacy [ ]
   - Psychology [ ]
   - Tourism Management [ ]
   - Undecided [ ]
5. If Masters please indicate the program your are pursuing

- Business Administration
- Clinical Psychology
- Counseling psychology
- Global Executive MBA in Health
- Global Executive MBA

6. Please indicate if you are a part-time or full-time student

- Full-time student
- Part-time student

7. What is your employment status

- Unemployed
- Employed
- Entrepreneur

SECTION 2: UNIVERSITY SELECTION

1. Are you a first time USIU student or a returning student?

- First time student
- Returning student

2. How did you find out about USIU for the very first time?

- Online search
- Parent/Guardian
- Friend
- Work mate/colleague
- USIU staff
- Newspaper advertisements
- TV advertisement
- Alumni of USIU

3. My sources of information about USIU were very informative:

- Strongly agree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly disagree

4. Before enrolling to USIU, did you initially prefer a private university or a public university?

- Private
- Public
5. How **many times** had you visited the USIU campus before enrolling for the university program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Once</th>
<th>Twice</th>
<th>More than twice</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6. If you had visited USIU before enrolling, for **what purpose** had you arrived at the school?

- To make an inquiry
- To participate in a school social activity
- To attend a formal event
- To visit a friend

7. What are your **5 main** reasons for choosing to study at USIU?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs available</th>
<th>Dress code</th>
<th>Convenient Location</th>
<th>Extra-curricular activities</th>
<th>School fees affordability</th>
<th>Student capacity per class</th>
<th>Schedule of classes</th>
<th>School reputation in the job</th>
<th>Availability of lecturers</th>
<th>The school’s religious stand</th>
<th>Study duration to graduation</th>
<th>I liked the campus’ appearance</th>
<th>Library facilities</th>
<th>I wanted to study in the same school as a relative or friend</th>
<th>My parent/guardian/sponsor chose USIU for me</th>
<th>A USIU alumnus recommended it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
SECTION 3: SATISFACTION ELEMENTS

1. By ticking (√) Please rate USIU on the following USIU processes and technology use based on your level of satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Extremely satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
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<tr>
<td>The admissions process to USIU</td>
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<td>The USIU course registration process</td>
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<td>The maximum number of students allowed per class semester seating</td>
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<td>Fees payment processes at USIU</td>
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<td>The requirement for school identification at the USIU gate entrance</td>
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<td>The use of OPAC system at the USIU library</td>
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<td>The use of the Biometric system at the USIU library</td>
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<td>The internet connectivity at USIU campus grounds</td>
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<td>The technology services available in the USIU computer labs</td>
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<td>User-friendliness of the USIU website</td>
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<td>The number of electricity ports/sockets within campus</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. **By ticking (√) [Please rate USIU on the following facilities based on your level of satisfaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Extremely satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The USIU library reading material</td>
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<tr>
<td>The USIU lighting systems in rooms</td>
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<td>The comfort of USIU furniture for studying purposes</td>
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<td>The USIU vehicle parking arrangements</td>
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<td>The USIU buses seating capacity</td>
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<td>The size of accommodation rooms (hostels) in USIU</td>
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<td>The cleanliness status at the university</td>
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3. **In the following section, please rate extent to which you approve of the statements regarding USIU staff in their service delivery [Please tick (√)]**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tr>
<td>The USIU lecturers are available for consultation</td>
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<td>IT staff at USIU resolve technological problems adequately</td>
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<td>The staff at the cafeteria are hospitable</td>
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<td>Elements</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
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<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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<td>The staff at the USIU library are reliable</td>
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<td>The course advisors offer beneficial information on school programs</td>
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<td>The library fees penalty charges are fair</td>
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<td>The staff at the counseling centre are supportive</td>
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<td>The career office staff provide valuable career growth information</td>
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<td>The SAC representatives are in touch with students’ needs</td>
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<td>The university management is responsive to students’ concerns</td>
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<td>The sports instructors offer valuable training</td>
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<td>The USIU security personnel are dependable</td>
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<td>The USIU transport services are timely</td>
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<td>The USIU clinic staff are empathetic</td>
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SECTION 4: SERVICE ENHANCEMENT AREAS

1. In the following section, please rate the level of importance you attach to the following academic affairs and social engagement activities at USIU [Please tick (√)]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Less important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
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<tr>
<td>Timely communication of changes in academic programs</td>
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<td>Lecturers accounting for grades awarded to students</td>
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<td>Scholarship opportunities</td>
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<td>Work study opportunities</td>
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<td>Sporting activities at USIU</td>
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<td>Career fair events</td>
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<td>Cultural events</td>
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<td>Community service by engagements</td>
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2. *In the following section, please rate extent to which you approve of the statements regarding USIU [Please tick (√)]*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tr>
<td>USIU should introduce new campus branches in different parts of Kenya</td>
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<td>USIU should decrease fees requirements to allow more students to join the university</td>
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<td>USIU should extend transport services to other parts of Nairobi</td>
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<td>USIU should include more social engagement events between lecturers and students</td>
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<td>USIU clubs should organize more social events to foster student interactions</td>
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<td>USIU should introduce a greater variety of academic programs</td>
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<td>USIU should increase the number of lecturers for concentration courses</td>
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<td>USIU should introduce outdoor reading areas within the campus grounds</td>
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<td>USIU should increase the library sitting capacity</td>
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<td>USIU should increase the cafeteria’s menu options</td>
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<td>USIU should help increase links between students and potential employers</td>
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Thank you very much for your participation