

## UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE CLIMATE STUDY REPORT FOR 2019

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# Glossary of Terms

In line with the aims of this climate study and hereinafter, in this report, the following terms shall be used in the survey report:

**Academic staff:** Employees who spend at least 50% of their official time on duty on teaching and/or research activities.

**Change:** Change explains a process of altering or varying a system or phenomenon to create a difference.

**Collegiality:** Collegiality explains the companionship and cooperation between colleagues in an institution who share ideas, knowledge and responsibility in their job roles.

**Computer laboratory:** A physical space which provides students with access to computer services, resources and a variety of software in support of learning.

**Contact student:** A student in a Post-School Education and Training institution who is registered mainly for courses offered in contact mode.

**Course:** A unit of teaching within a programme that is offered for a specific period and specific subject matter.

**Curriculum:** A statement of the training structure and expected methods of learning and teaching that underpin a qualification or part-qualification to facilitate a more general understanding of its implementation in an education system.

**Culture:** Culture refers to the way groups of people live and act within a society. Importantly, culture involves an integrated pattern of knowledge, belief, behaviour and norms that is shared by a group of people.

**Data:** A representation of facts, concepts, or instructions in a formal manner, suitable for communication, interpretation, or processing by humans or by automatic means.

**Disability:** The loss or elimination of opportunities to take part in the life of the community, equitably with others that is encountered by persons having physical, sensory, psychological, developmental, learning, neurological or other impairments, which may be permanent, temporary or episodic in nature; thereby causing activity limitations and participation restriction within the mainstream society.

**Gender:** Social distinction between males and females.

**Innovation:** Innovation refers to a process of translating new knowledge, idea or invention into a good or service that is intended to create value for clients or customers. Importantly innovation aims at providing client satisfaction to value addition.

**Lecturer:** Any person, who teaches, educates or trains other persons, or who provides professional educational services at PSET institutions and who is appointed in a post on any lecturer establishment under this Act.

**LGBTQIA+:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer/Questioning, Asexual and many other terms (+).

**Mission:** Mission refers to the objectives and fundamental purpose of the UFS and the approach stated to reach those objectives.

**Performance appraisal:** Performance appraisal refers to a systematic review of the job performance of employees and their contribution to the institution. Performance evaluation also involves an evaluation of an employee's contribution by way of skills, achievements and growth.

**Qualification:** The formal recognition of the achievement of the required number and range of credits and such other requirements at specific levels of the National Qualifications Framework as may be determined by the relevant bodies registered for such purpose by the South African Qualifications Authority.

**Racial climate:** Racial climate explains the norms, practices and interactions regarding race and diversity within an institutional context that can also be studied from different perspectives.

**Safety:** Safety refers to the condition that are created to protect people and the environment from unlikely danger, risk, or injury.

**Sense of belonging:** A sense of belonging explains how individuals perceive their value, life and, needs in relation to individuals in a group and how they are accepted by members of the groups. A sense of belonging makes individuals us feel part of a community and accepted by other members of the community.

**Sexual orientation:** Sexual orientation refers to the sexual identity (heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual) of a person in relation to the gender to which they are attracted.

**Student experience:** Student experience involves aspects such as teaching and learning, curriculum, student lifestyle, extracurricular activities, academic advising, support and mentoring, and work experiences that enhance students' learning processes.

**Students' Financial Aid:** Funding in a form of bursaries or loans provided by the state or private organisation to students to deal with costs linked directly or indirectly with studies.

**Students' satisfaction:** Students' satisfaction refers to the evaluation of students' acceptance and acknowledgement of the quality of services, facilities and, educational experiences they receive from educational institutions.

**Support staff:** All technical and office staff, as well as executive and professional staff that spend more than 50% of their official time on administrative functions OR staff who render academic support services; student support services; human resource management; financial management; administration; maintenance of the buildings and gardens; catering services; and security services.

**Universal design and access:** Universal Design considers explains how structures and systems are developed to meet the minimum standards of the needs of people. Accessible Design aims at providing structures and systems that supports the needs of people with disabilities,

**Values:** Values refer to the individual beliefs that influence people's behaviour.

# Abbreviations

ITP – Integrated Transformation Plan

UFS – University of the Free State

SART - Sexual Assault Response Team

NASFAS - National Student Financial Aid Scheme

DIRAP - Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning

SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

HRA - Housing and Residence Affairs

HR - Human Resources

ICT - Information and Communication Technology Services

# Executive Summary

## **Background**

This report presents the major findings of the 2019 University of the Free State (UFS) Campus Climate Survey on students and staff experiences. The goal of the climate study is to gather relevant information about staff and students' experiences at the UFS and to inform management of the outcomes of the study to enable them take decision that will enhance the transformation of the UFS in line with the Integrated Transformation Plan. In July 2019 the research team distributed three survey instruments to staff and students of the UFS to gather information about their experiences at the UFS. The academic and support staff climate survey required staff to provide their views on the following aspects: institutional direction; leadership and involvement; job role and characteristics; resources, technology and facilities; recruitment, and retention; appraisal and rewards; teamwork and cooperation; job satisfaction and; employee welfare. Additional sub-themes was developed for academic staff: mentoring and intergenerational relationships and; the academic engagement climate. The student climate survey required students to provide their views the following aspects: institutional characteristics; students' residence and accommodation; students' sense of belonging; resources, students' safety and facilities; racial climate; academic climate; diversity climate; sexual orientation and; multilingualism.

## **Summary of findings**

### ***Staff experiences***

The results from the survey revealed high agreement percentages among staff with respect to their views on the clear articulation of the mission statement and values of the UFS. Additionally, majority of the study participants indicated that they were aware of the historical achievements of the UFS. In relation to the transformation plan of the UFS, less than 50 percent noted that they were satisfied with the transformation agenda of the UFS and, the pace of change in the university. We recommend that the UFS conduct a review of the institutional transformation agenda as part of the ITP midterm Review 2020. Similarly, less than 50 percent of our participants indicated their views are not considered by the university when crafting work process and structures. In order to create a more inclusive work environment at the UFS, this study recommends that, the institutional processes of consultation by management that aims at promoting inclusion should be enhanced. As regards innovation, the majority of participants were of the opinion that they receive the necessary resources and technical support that enhances novelty in work processes at the UFS. Although the survey data points to the fact that majority of the study participants are aware of the transformation agenda of the UFS, evidence from the written comments by staff revealed that improved

communication on the progress of implementation of the transformation plan will be necessary going forward.

Feedback from participants show that internal policies at the departments are clearly designed to elicit staff understanding. Results further revealed that staff regularly receive information regarding impending changes in policies from their leaders. As regards opportunities for professional growth among staff, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that there are opportunities for growth. To this end, this study recommends that the UFS evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies and opportunities for growth among staff including formal departmental succession plans. However, the majority of our participants indicated that their leaders ensured that, there was clarity of job roles and associated responsibilities, clear work procedures and less supervision although majority of academic staff indicated low level of feedback from their heads of department with respect to their work output. This study therefore recommends that engagements between heads of academic departments and academic staff should be improved.

One of the high points of the survey was the positive feedback we received in respect of the provision of appropriate resources for staff and access to information required for work. Additionally, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that, there are frequent update of the technology used by staff, high proficiency among staff in the application of technology and, regular support in the use of technology. Contrastingly, less than 50 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein and South campuses indicated that they received frequent training in technology application in their department. We therefore recommend that the ICT department enhance technology application training for staff. The study also revealed high percentages of agreement in respect of good working relationship among staff and departments/units, support from colleagues and teamwork. The written feedback from some participants however revealed the challenges some lecturers face in obtaining support for teaching and learning especially in the 7am/8am classes and lack of prompt response to queries regarding laboratories, facilities and resources. We therefore recommend that support for lecturers who facilitate morning classes should be enhanced including responses to their queries regarding laboratories, facilities and, resources. Some participant in QwaQwa campus shared their frustration about a lack of frequent updates on their computers and, a lack of adequate space in the Computer laboratories for effective teaching and learning.

We noted that a larger percentage of participants opined that the UFS fulfils its obligations with respect to remuneration and other benefits and that, they were satisfied with the conditions of service. Contrariwise, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that the rewards they received from their work was fair while the same percentage of participants noted that they were not satisfied with the income they received when compared to their colleagues in other universities. We however recommend that management should engage staff on their concerns regarding the low wages, most especially in comparison to other universities



in South Africa. In relation to staff performance management, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that, their job performance is reviewed and evaluated as scheduled, that the evaluation of their performance is fairly conducted and the performance feedback provides clear guidelines on areas for improvement. As regards promotion and salary levels, some of the written comments of participants pointed to staff discontentment with the seeming lack of clear promotion policies and disparities in salary level of staff across departments. We suggest that management should engage with staff regarding their discontentment over the seeming inconsistencies in the application of promotion policies and disparities in salary level of staff across departments and campuses.

The sub-section on personal accomplishment revealed that, staff derive a feeling of personal accomplishment from their work, enjoy the work they do and, are satisfied with their jobs. Similarly, participants indicated high sense of loyalty and commitment to the UFS, willingness to put in extra effort for the UFS and, a sense of belongingness. In relation to staff intention to stay, 66.70 percent of participants noted that they were likely to stay and work at the UFS in the next five years while 51.50 percent noted that they would be working at the UFS in the next 10 years. More than 50 percent of participant indicated that, they could see a future for them at the UFS. However, less than 50 percent of Indians and foreign African nationals indicated that they could see a future for them at the UFS. Additionally, 42 percent of Indians indicated that they could not see their future at the UFS while more than 50 percent of other foreign nationals, Africans, Whites and Coloured staff noted that could see a future for them at the UFS.

The study also revealed that the majority of participants maintain a good balance between their work and other aspects of their life, maintain a social life outside work and, are able to meet their family responsibilities while performing their job roles. What the result suggest is that, most participants maintain a good work-life balance. Additionally, participants indicated that they felt emotionally well at work, kept their stress level low, are aware of the benefits of physical activities and, are aware of a fitness centre on campus. However, less than 40 percent of participants indicated that they regularly participate in physical activities on campus. We therefore recommend that the Human Resource department promote initiatives that encourage staff to lead healthy life styles including the use of sporting facilities on campus.

Results of the study showed that while the majority of participants noted that bullying and abusive behaviours are prevented and discouraged, the comments from some participants revealed pocket of cases that need to be addressed with urgency. Specifically, some participants indicated high levels of victimisation by supervisors. Others also indicated their experiences in relation to discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation and race. Results further showed that, participants who were Indians (42.90%) indicated relatively high experiences of discrimination on the basis of race when compared to Coloureds (28.60%), Whites (26.00%) and Africans (23.40%). The results however showed low levels of harassment

on the basis of sexual orientation, religious affiliation and, gender. Some written comments by participants however showed that some staff experience different forms of victimisation, harassment, bullying and discrimination based on either sex or race. We also noted that staff with disability are well integrated into the university community while staff of different sexual orientations are respected. We recommend that the HR department promote diversity training and continuously evaluate the impact of such training on staff.

### *Students' experiences*

The study revealed that information on the mission, values and overall strategic plan of the university is well disseminated among students in all three campuses of the UFS. A low point under this sub-section was that, less than 40 percent of the participants understood the purpose of the ITP. We therefore suggest that management improve communication of the purpose of the ITP to students. Significantly, more than 50 percent of the participants (students) noted that they identify with the values of the UFS and also believed that the internal policies are aligned with the mission and values of the UFS. Conversely, less than 50 percent of the participants indicated that they were aware of the history of the UFS. The study further revealed low students' perception about their involvement in the decision-making Committees of the UFS. We recommend that management improve student participation in university decision making structures.

Participants who resided on campus indicated strong sense of belonging. Additionally, more than 80 percent of participants on the three campuses opined that there is positive effect of residence life experience on their academic performance and social life. Majority of participants also indicated that residence heads continue to hold meetings with students in the residences in line with the policy of the UFS. One of the challenges we noted from the feedback from students is delayed response from the Housing & Residence Affairs (HRA) department when any of the fixings or fittings in the residencies needed to be fixed. We recommend that continuous feedback on the status of students' request for fixings or fittings in their residences to be fixed should be provided. We further recommend that use of an online reporting and tracking system for students to report issues regarding their fixings and fittings.

Results from our study revealed the challenges faced by students who reside off-campus. Notable among the challenges faced by students who reside off-campus include security and safety concerns, transportation, access to health care and, social cohesion. We recommend that targeted initiatives such as the development of off-campus community projects where students are housed in residential clusters should be explored while security and transportation for off-campus students should be improved.

We noted from the feedback from participants, a strong culture of religious tolerance among students with more than 50 percent of participants indicating that, they felt comfortable expressing their religious beliefs

in class and on campus. Additionally, results revealed that staff of the UFS respect the different religious or spiritual beliefs of students other than Christianity and that, the majority of lecturers respect the different religious beliefs of their students other than Christianity. Our study also revealed that participants maintain a good balance between their studies and other social activities on campus while less than 30 percent of participants opined that they participate in co-curricular activities.

Our study participants indicated that they had access to all the resources (internet, library and lecture halls) on campus, access to all the lecture notes and books required for their studies and, access to all the facilities they needed to use on campus for their studies. We further noted low responses in respect of agreement on the dissemination of information on students' safety and security. We also observed that while the majority of participants noted that they were aware of the role of the Protection Services Office and the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) others indicated that they were not aware of the Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy' of the UFS. We recommend that dissemination of the Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy' of the UFS to students should be improved.

Education funding by students remains a major concern among some students. However, while the majority of our participants indicated that they had no challenges paying their tuition fees, accommodation, buying books and other learning materials and food, some students indicated that they had challenges funding their education. These results reveal that a lack of funding for education portends the development of the knowledge and skills of students who come from less privileged backgrounds and who may also find it difficult to pay their fees and buy food to eat. The study further showed that a number of our participants depend on NASFAS to support their education. In order to identify the faculty with the highest percentage of participants who rely on NASFAS for payment of their school fees, we analysed the data to reveal the differences in responses based on faculty. Results show that, more than 50 percent of participants from the Education (68.60%), Humanities (57.60%), Law (55.60%) and, Theology (54.80%) rely on NASFAS for payment of their school fees. However, less than 15 percent of participants from the Health Science indicated that they rely on NASFAS for the payment of their fees.

Although less than 50 percent of participants indicated that they had not experienced racism on campus, the percentage of participants who noted that that they had experienced racism on campus was quite high (37.70%). Additionally, the percentage of participants who indicated that students are treated differently by the administrative staff based on their race was 36.60 percent. This study therefore recommends that the Student Affairs Department enhance diversity training for students and also evaluate impact of such initiatives.

We observed that, more than 50 percent of participants felt that lecturers were concerned about the academic success of students irrespective of their race. Importantly, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that the UFS learning environment embraces the multiplicity of races and promotes human rights & human dignity. Feedback from participants by way of their written comments revealed subtle and unsubtle forms of racism on campus specifically in lecture rooms, residences and administrative offices. It is important to note these perceived forms of racism cuts across the races and it is important for a collective approach towards deracialising the university space is adopted through academic and social activities.

Results on the academic climate revealed high agreement levels by participants in aspects such as, intellectual engagement, student-lecturer engagement and supportive campus environment. The results revealed that participants in Faculty of Theology perceived the interest by academics in their academic progress to be very high (70.00%), followed by Health Sciences (63.80%), Natural and Agricultural Sciences (63.10%), Education (59.20%), Humanities (57.10%), Economic and Management Sciences (56.70%) and Law (46.20%). Overall, the section on academic climate revealed that the majority of our participants were of the opinion that the UFS environment provides the support students need to succeed academically, they receive the expected quality of academic advising and, the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds good relationships among students

Results from the survey on multilingualism showed that more than 65 percent of participants indicated that they are comfortable with English-only lectures although less than 50 percent of participants also noted that they would like to receive tutorial support (not translation of everything) in languages other than English.

Distance learners constitute a significant percentage of our student population at the UFS. Results from our survey revealed that the flexibility of distance learning has a positive effect on the academic performance of students. However, one of the concerns noted from the survey feedback was a lack of distance learners' representatives at the front of students' leadership. Although most participants at the distance learning centres indicated high levels of sense of belonging, academic engagement and a culture of free and open expression of individual beliefs, there were concerns about the non-availability of medical centres in case of emergencies. The participants also indicated that they had access to all the resources and facilities needed for their academic activities. We recommend that, the Student Affairs Department support Distance students to have representation on the various student leadership structures and also provide Distance students with access to medical assistance in case of emergencies at study centres.

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## 1. Introduction

This report summarizes the major findings of the 2019 University of the Free State (UFS) Campus Climate Survey on students and staff experiences. The UFS conducted a Campus Climate survey among academic staff, support staff and students between May and September 2019 regarding their perception of the university climate in relation to different sub-themes. The academic and support staff climate survey required staff to provide their views on the following aspects: institutional direction; leadership and involvement; job role and characteristics; resources, technology and facilities; recruitment, and retention; appraisal and rewards; teamwork and cooperation and; job satisfaction; employee welfare. Additional sub-themes was developed for academic staff: mentoring and intergenerational relationships and; the academic engagement climate.

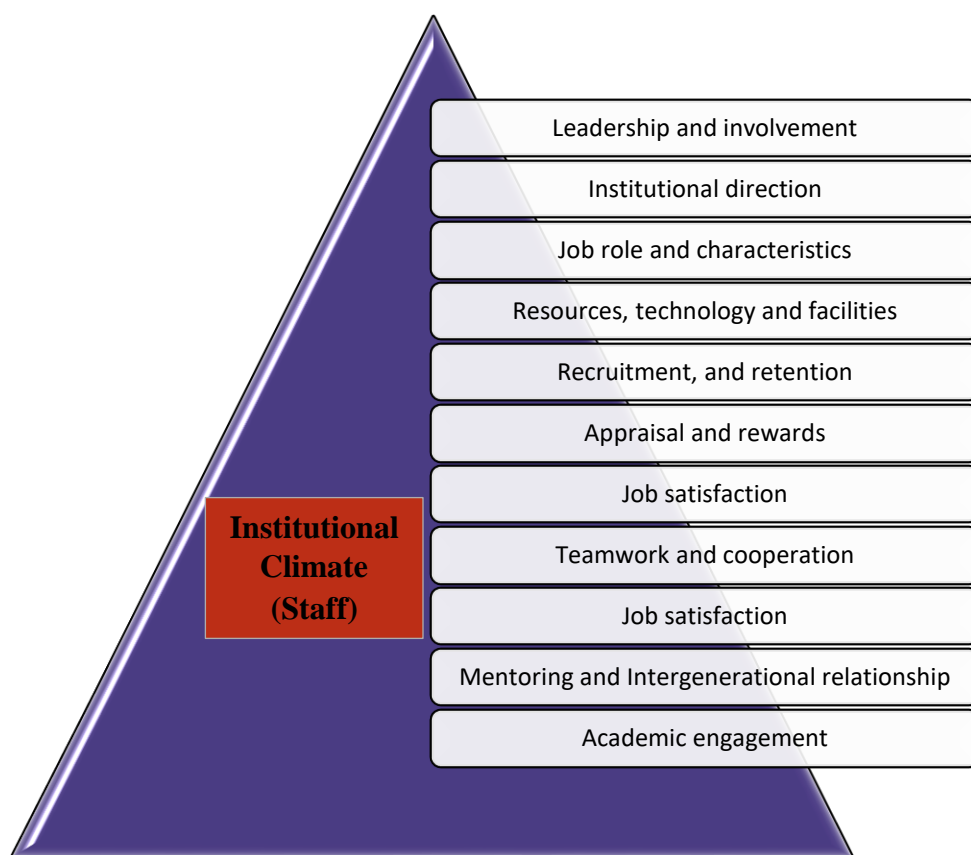


Figure 1: Institutional climate (Academic and support staff)

The student climate survey required students to provide their views on the following aspects: institutional characteristics; students' residence and accommodation; students' sense of belonging; resources, students' safety and facilities; racial climate; academic climate; diversity climate; sexual orientation and; multilingualism.

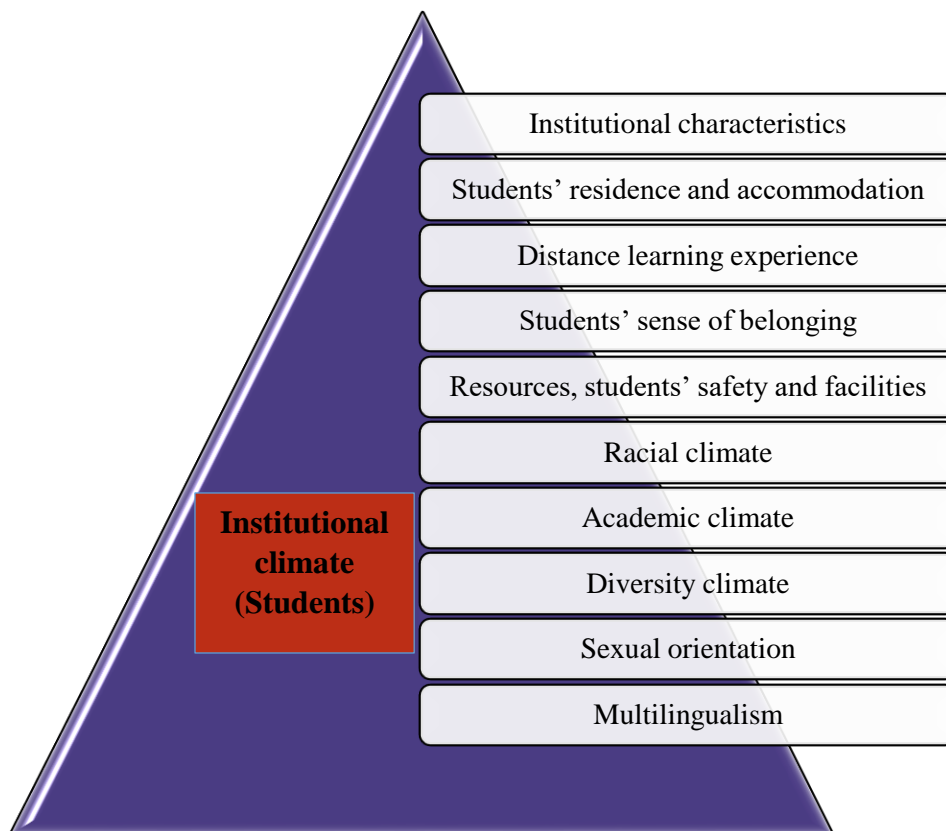


Figure 2 Institutional climate (Students)

Figure 2 shows the sub-themes that was used in constructing the questionnaire for the students' climate survey. This report therefore presents selected results from three major questions in the context of students and staff perception about the climate of the UFS: 1) what is the current institutional climate of the UFS? 2) what is the desired institutional climate of the UFS? and 3) what current staff perception and experiences constitute the UFS climate? Significantly, the overarching aim of the work streams on staff and students experiences at the UFS as articulated in the Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP) document is to "promote university culture that does not exclude or intimidate, but encourages people to experiment with and challenge established conceptions of the world while feeling part of a community" (ITP, 2018:4). In order

to gather the lived experiences of staff and students and to provide a rich source of data, this study include selected comments of participants – staff and students’ voices.

## **2.0 Methodology**

This study forms part of a broad institutional transformation study that is foregrounded in the critical realist philosophy (Archer, 1998; Collier, 1994; Gorski, 2013). Details of the philosophical and theoretical underpinning of the study is discussed in the proposal of this study. For the purpose of this study, we sought to obtain relevant information regarding the perception and experiences of staff by way of a questionnaire. Institutions evolve through structures that shape the behaviour of individuals and groups. These structures exist independently of the knowledge individuals have about it and they also have causal powers and liabilities. Events which refer to situations that arise in entities or organisations are investigated to provide researchers with explanations to correlations and causalities. Therefore issues regarding, negative students and staff experiences, diversity and the challenges regarding space, symbols and names are events that could be investigated through explanatory process to reveal reason for which transformation is required to position the UFS as a leading university in South Africa.

The units of observation in this study are: students (all category of students) and staff (all category of staff). A descriptive research design was employed purposely to investigate staff and students perception and experiences about the institutional climate of the UFS. The use of quantitative methods in any inquiry is based on the choice of researchers to employ objective measurements or numerical analysis of the data gathered by way of surveys, polls or secondary data from other sources. Researchers who gather numerical data often analyse the datasets gathered through computational techniques.

In order to strengthen the accuracy of the measures that was used in the study, different categories of validity namely, construct, criterion and content validity was checked to ensure that the different constructs measure the concepts that the researchers intend them to measure (Cook & Beckman, 2006; Heale & Twycross, 2015; Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). Specifically, content validity was applied to check if the survey instrument adequately covered all the content that was described in the study especially in relation to theories and conceptual framework. Construct validity on the other hand was applied to strengthen the accuracy of the measures by drawing inferences about the results in relation to the theories discussed. Criterion validity was applied to check how a measure is related to an outcome of the study. Reliability explains the consistency of a measure in providing a set of results (Heale & Twycross, 2015) or the consistency of measurement over a defined time (Drost, 2011; Ulin et al., 2002). Detailed information on the reliability test is presented in the discussion section of this study. In studies that adopt a quantitative approach, reliability estimates are applied to evaluate “the stability of measures administered at different times to the same individuals or using the same standard and secondly, the equivalence of sets of items

from the same test or of different observers scoring a behaviour or event using the same instrument” (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008:2277).

## 2.1 Population and sample

The population of this study is defined as: 1) the total number of registered students at UFS and 2) the total number of staff at the UFS (fulltime academic, contract academic, full-time and contract support staff and outsourced staff). Participants for this study were located in the Bloemfontein Campus, Qwaqwa Campus, and South Campus of the UFS. Participants were invited to participate in the study on the ground of being a staff member or student through an email that was sent out by a staff of Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning (DIRAP). The email addresses of participants were obtained from the Institutional Information Systems department. We must however emphasise that, invitation to participants was based on their status and affiliation to the university as either students or staff. A questionnaire was distributed to the entire population of academic and support staff of the UFS in July 2019.

## 2.2 Demographic information (Staff - academic and support)

The total number of academic and support staff who were expected to complete the questionnaire was 2506. The total number of staff who consented to participate in the study was 717 that represented 28.62% of the population.

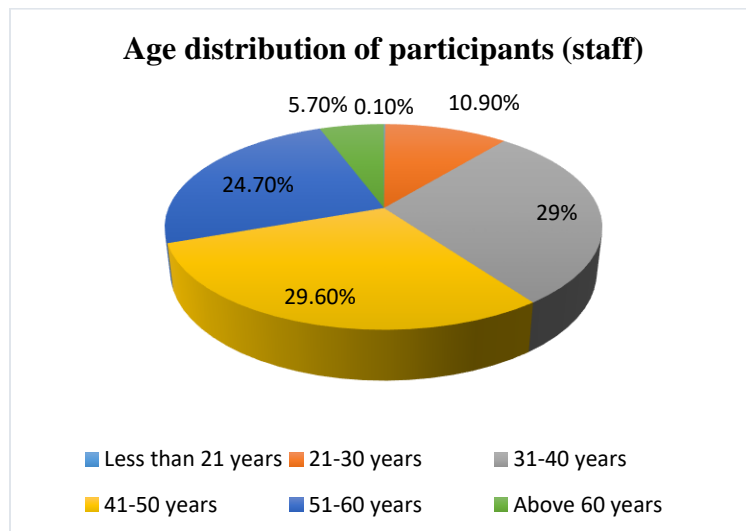


Figure 3: Age distribution of participants (staff)

Male participants constituted 38.6% while female participants represented 61.4% of the total number of participants. As shown in figure 3, the age distribution of participants revealed that the highest age category of participants was those aged between 41 and 50 years who were 29.6% of the total participants.

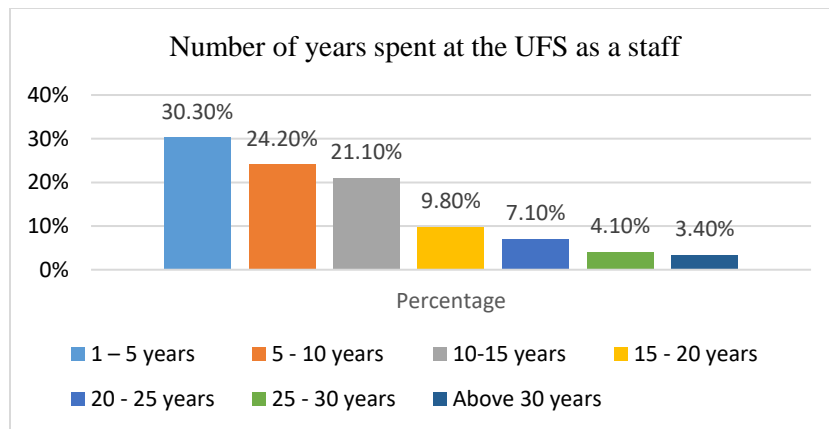


Figure 4: Number of years spent at the UFS as staff

Figure 4 shows the number of years spent at the UFS by staff. The majority of participants (30.30%) reported they had spent between 1 to 5 years working at the UFS while 3.40% of participants indicated that they had spent more than 30 years working at the UFS. The different age ranges provides this study with very important information regarding the perception and experiences of different generations of staff and their views on how changes have occurred in different aspects of the university.

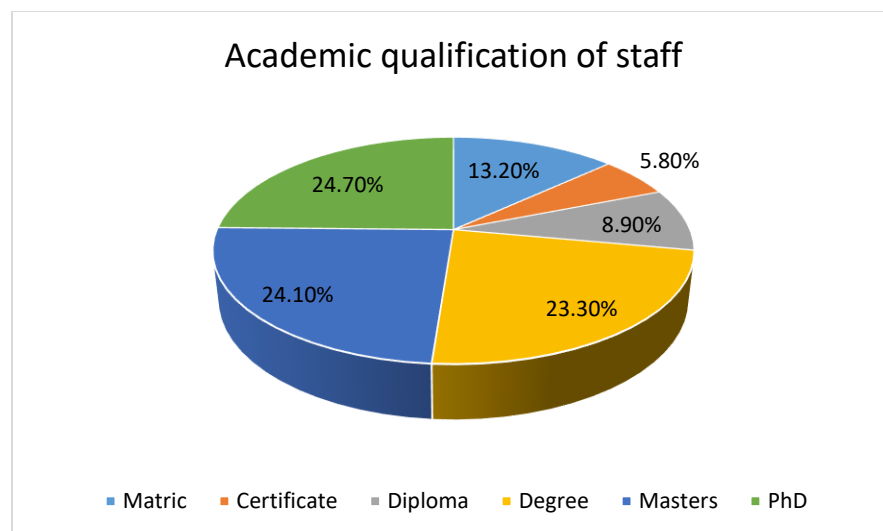


Figure 5: Academic qualification of staff.



Figure 5 shows the academic qualifications of participants based on six categories. Importantly, staff with PhD were the highest category of participants (24.7%) while staff with certificates represented the least category of participants (5.80%).

The race distribution of the participants are as follows: white (58.50%), African (29.40%), Coloured (9.10%), foreign national – African (1.30%), Indian (1%) and, foreign national – other (0.7%). The type employment as indicated by our participants are as follows: full-time - academic (38.60%); contract – academic (0.80%); full-time – support staff (58.10%); contract – support staff (2.4%) and; outsourced staff (0.10%).

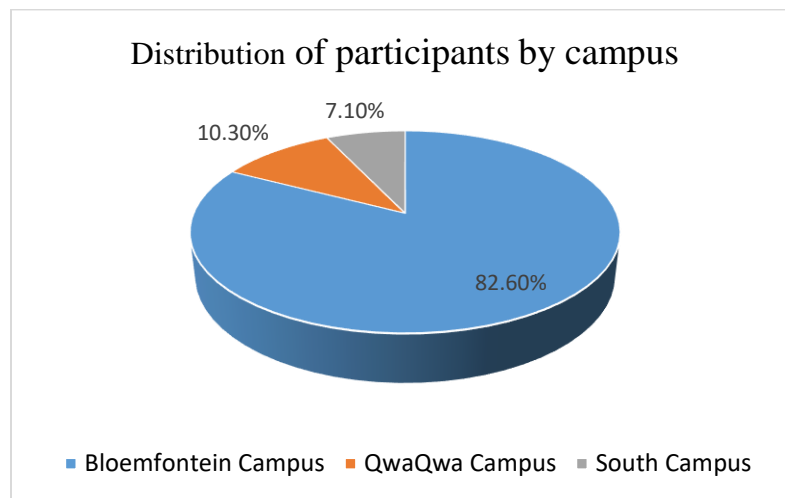


Figure 6: Distribution of participants by campus (staff)

As shown in figure 6, participants in the Bloemfontein campus constituted the highest number of participants (82.60%) with the least being participants in South Campus (7.10%).

### 2.3 Demographic information (contact students)

The total number of contact students who were contacted for information on their perception on the institutional climate study of the UFS was 33,289. Out of the total number of students contacted, 2157 representing 6.48% of the total population of contact students completed the questionnaire.

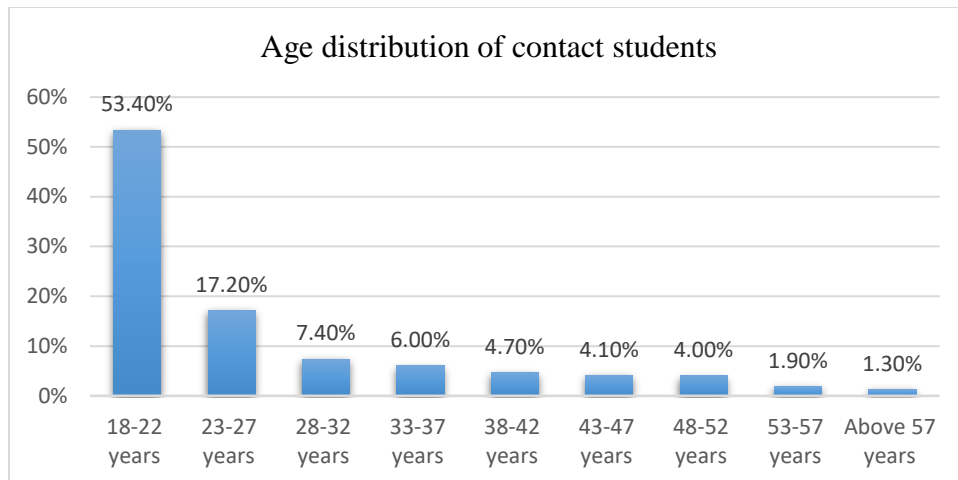


Figure 7: Age distribution of participants (contact student)

Figure 7 shows the age distribution of contact students who participated in the study. Participants who were aged between 18 and 22 years constituted 53.40% while the least category of students who participated in the study was those who were above age 57 representing 1.30% of the total participants. The distribution of participants by campus of study were as follows: Bloemfontein (77.5%); QwaQwa (16.6%) and; South Campus (5.9%).

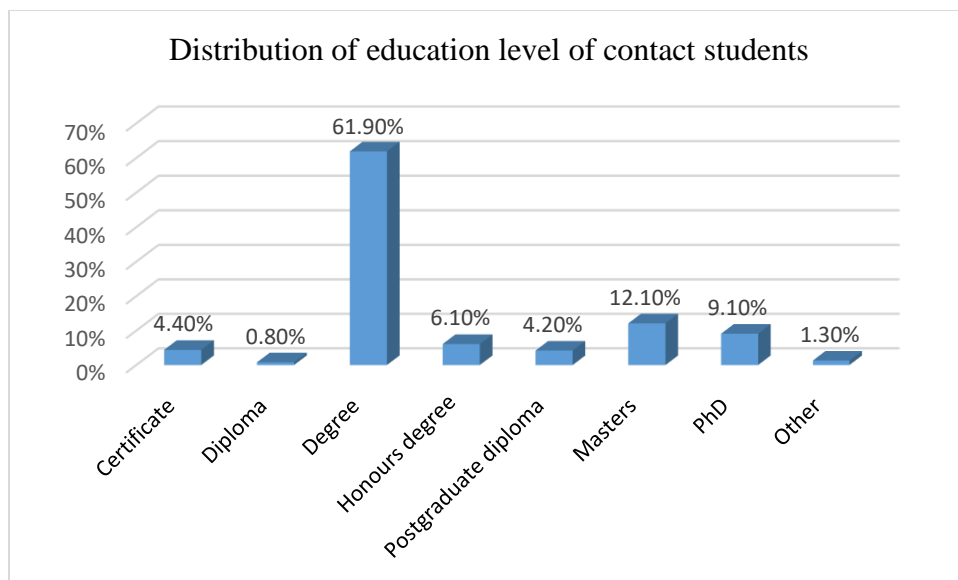


Figure 8: Distribution of education level of contact students.

Figure 8 shows the distribution of contact students by their level of education. Significantly, students who were studying for degree qualifications represented the highest number of participants with 61.9% while diploma students recorded the least number of participants with 0.8% of total participants. The race

distribution of participants are as follows: African (72.1%); Indian (0.9%); Coloured (4.4%); White (17.9%); foreign national - African (3.9%) and; Foreign national - Other (0.8%).

The biographical data required students to provide information regarding their faculty. The data revealed that students who were studying for various degree programmes in the Natural and Agricultural Sciences were 24.8%, Humanities (21.8%), Education (20.3%), Economic and Management Sciences (16.1%), Health Science (8.4%), Law (6.9%) and Theology (1.6%).

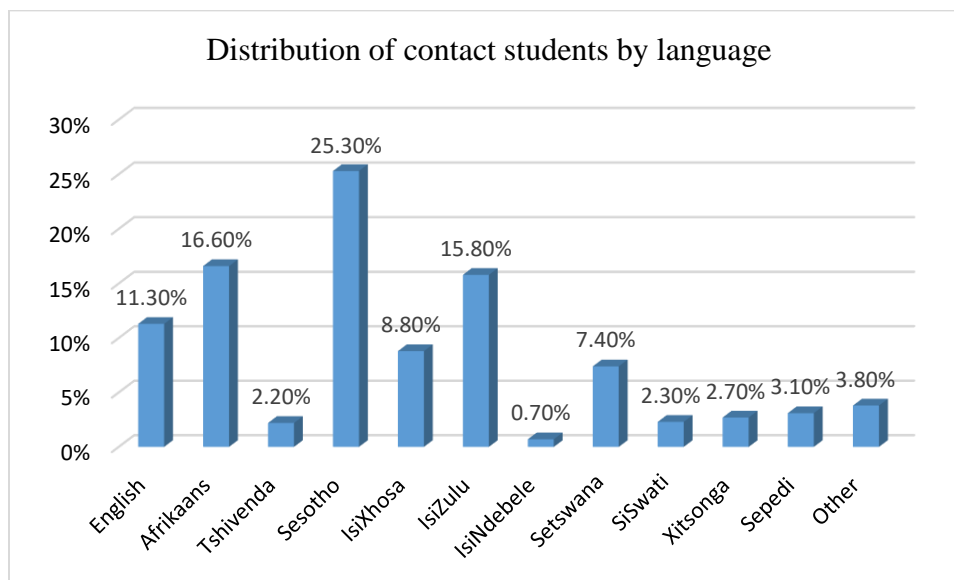


Figure 9: Distribution of contact students by language

Figure 9 shows the distribution of contact students by language. Significantly, the majority of the students indicated that Sotho was their home language (25.30%) while students who noted that IsiNdebele was their home language represented 0.70 percent.

#### 2.4 Demographic information (Distance students)

The total number of students who were enrolled in distance education programmes and who were contacted was 4300. Out of the total number contacted 156 representing 3.63% consented to participate in the study.

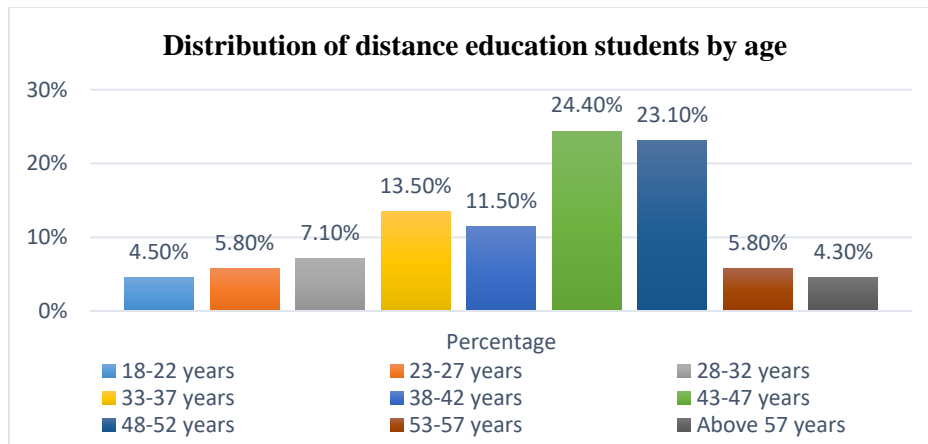


Figure 10: Age distribution of students enrolled in distance learning programmes

As shown in figure 10, the highest age group that participated in the study was those between ages 43 and 47 and this group constituted 24.40% of the total participants. However, participants who were aged between 18 and 22 and those who were above 57 years represented those with the least participation rate with 4.30%. Out of the 156 participants who consented to complete the questionnaire, 30.1% were males while 69.9% constituted female participants. Additionally, 51.6% of the participants indicated Bloemfontein Campus as their campus of study while 48.4% indicated South Campus as their campus of study. The distribution of participants by race were as follows: African (65.4%); Indian (3.8%); Coloured (10.3%); White (19.9%) and; foreign national - African (0.6%). Participants who indicated that they were studying in the Natural and Agricultural Sciences represented 0.7% of the total number of students. The distribution of participants who indicated that they were from the Law faculty were 20.3%; Education faculty 69.3%; Humanities faculty 5.9% and; Economic and Management Sciences 3.9%.

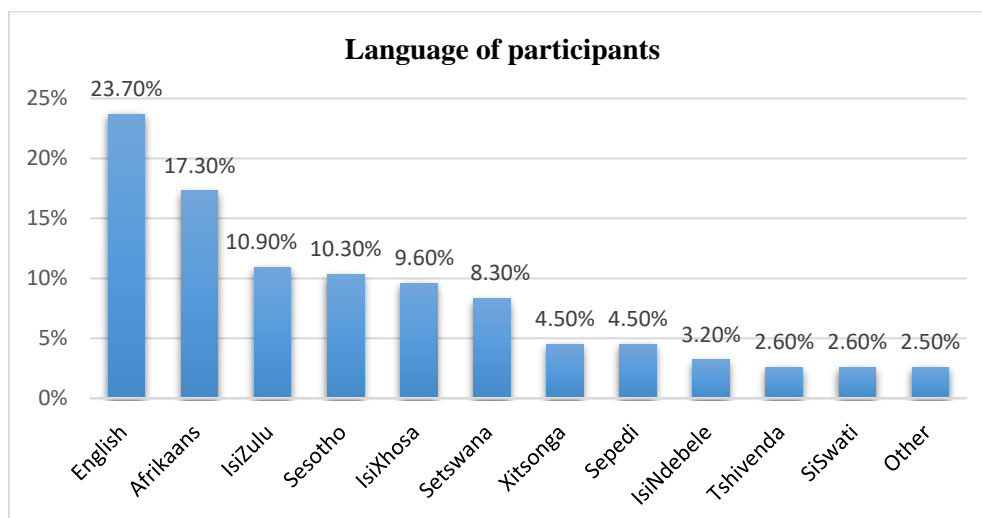


Figure 11: Distribution of participants by language (distance students)

Figure 11 shows the distribution of distance students by language. The majority of participants (23.70%) indicated that English was their language while 2.50% of participants indicated other as their language.

## 2.5 Ethical consideration

The researchers maintained the confidentiality of the responses of all participants in this study as well as anonymity of participants. Significantly, participants were informed about the purpose of the study including other important information: they were notified that participation in the study was not compulsory; they were informed of the fact that they had the option to discontinue the process of providing answers to the questionnaires. The ethics of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity was strictly adhered to during the execution of the study. Seeing that the questionnaire was deployed online, participants were made to consent to their participation in the study before they completed the questionnaire. They were also informed that hard copies of participants' responses will be stored by the researchers for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet while the electronic information would be stored on a password protected computer at the University of the Free State.

## 3. Data analysis

The data gathered from the survey was analysed using statistical methods and software - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Evasys. Quantitative data collection and analysis used in this study was purposely to obtain information about some aspects of the institutional climate of the UFS. The approach sought to achieve the following: gather data from sample of the students' population; gather and analyse data by way of descriptive, inferential and explanatory processes; gather standardised information to make conclusion that could be generalised among the population; ascertain the relationship between different variables (where necessary); and support or refute hypothesis about the population. In relation to the survey instrument and data collection procedure, the anonymity of our participants was protected through the use of codes in recording and storing the survey data. Additionally, there were no form of authentication procedures that was aimed at verifying the participants' position in the university while we avoided seeking information from participants that could provide leads to their identity. The entire section A that contains some biographical information on the participants which shall be stored and analysed separately from the rest of the data at all times. In addition to the quantitative data gathered and analysed, we analysed the written comments of staff and students regarding their perspectives about the climate of the UFS. This additional information (written comments) serves as a rich source of information that provides us with detailed feedback regarding climate aspects that may not be captured by the quantitative data.

## Results – Staff

In this section of the report, the results of the feedback from staff are reported under the following sub-themes: institutional direction; leadership and involvement; job role and characteristics; resources, technology and facilities; recruitment, and retention; appraisal and rewards; teamwork and cooperation and; job satisfaction; employee welfare. In line with the aims of the study, this report does not compare the perceptions and experiences of staff in different faculties, departments and units.

### 3.1.1 Institutional Characteristics

The institutional characteristics section consist of four subsections: institutional direction; mission and values; change and innovation and; staff perception about students' satisfaction.

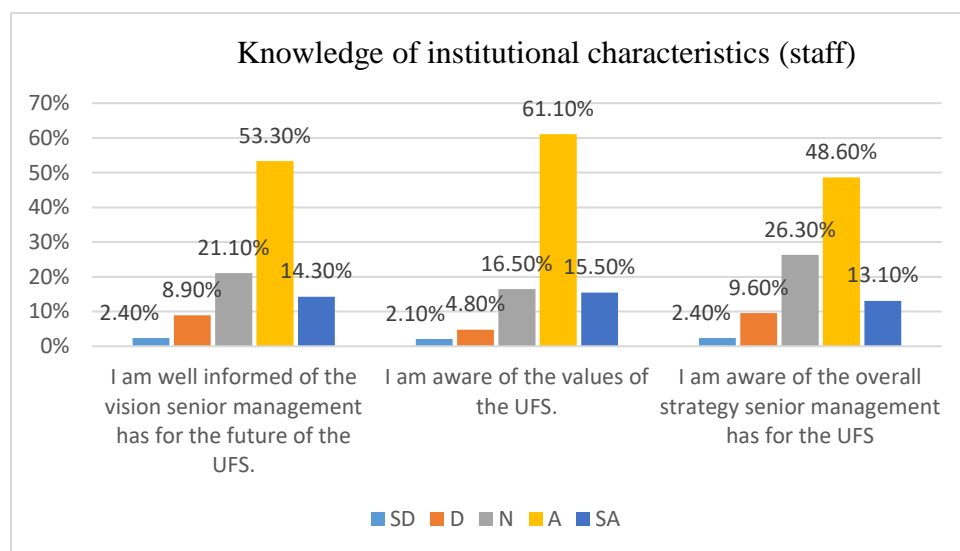


Figure 12: Knowledge of institutional characteristics (staff)

The institutional direction of the UFS represent the overall strategic plan of the university and how members of the university understand the strategic plan of the university. Staff who indicated that they agreed to the statement that they were informed of the vision that senior management had for the UFS represented 67.60% of the participants while 76.60% of participants indicated that they were aware of the values of the UFS. In relation to staff knowledge of the overall strategy of senior management for the UFS, 61.70% of participants noted that they were aware of the overall strategy of the UFS. Although the majority of participants noted that they were aware of the overall strategy of the UFS, other participants indicated that

they were not aware of the strategy of the university. A detailed analysis of the responses of staff by campus revealed that staff at the South Campus indicated high level of awareness of the vision of senior management (78.43%), awareness of the values of the UFS (84.31%) and, awareness of the overall strategy of the of senior management for the UFS (70.59%).

Knowledge of the history, mission and values of institutions are very important to crafting an institutional ethos that support change, transformation and innovation. The second aspect under the institutional direction section sought to gather relevant information on the knowledge of staff about the mission and values of the university.

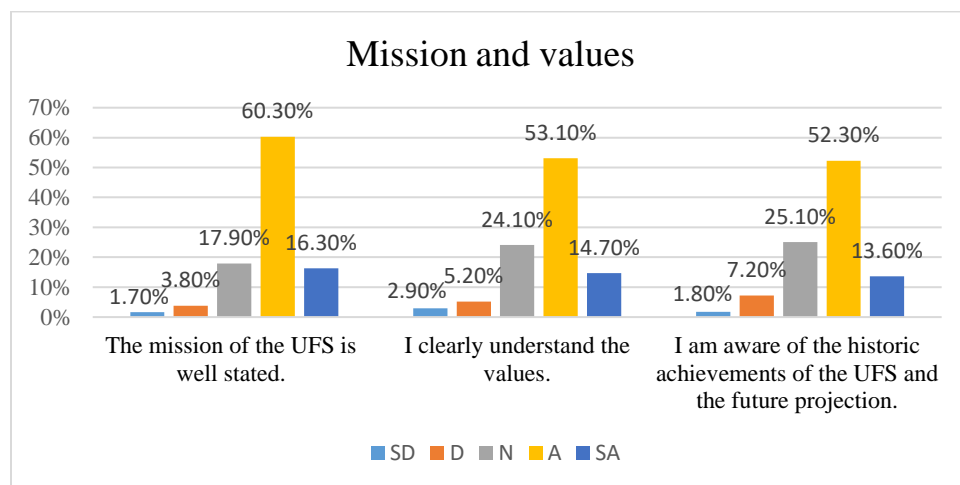


Figure 13: Mission and values (staff)

Figure 13 shows the responses of staff regarding their perception about the mission, values and historic achievement of the UFS. Significantly the majority of participants agreed to the statement that the mission of the UFS is well stated (86.30%). As shown in figure 14, 65.9 percent of participants indicated that they were aware of the historical achievements of the UFS. Similarly majority of participants noted that they believe in the overall purpose of the UFS (77.90%) and the values of the UFS (67.80%). An analysis of the responses by staff on the various issues regarding the mission and values of the UFS based on campus location was performed. We recorded high percentages in the responses of staff at the South campus in relation to their agreement on the following aspects: that, the mission of the UFS was well stated (86.27%), that staff clearly understood the values of the UFS (80.39%) and, that staff were aware of the historic achievements of the UFS (74.51%). The feedback from participants at the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campuses indicated that a higher percentage of staff were aware of the mission, values and history of the UFS.

### 3.1.2 Change and innovation

The last aspect under the institutional characteristics section is change and innovation. Figure 14 shows the response by participants in relation to their opinion on change, innovation and transformation at the UFS. The responses of staff as shown in figure 14 revealed that less than 50 percent of participants were of the opinion that they were happy with the transformation agenda of the UFS and, with the pace of change at the UFS.

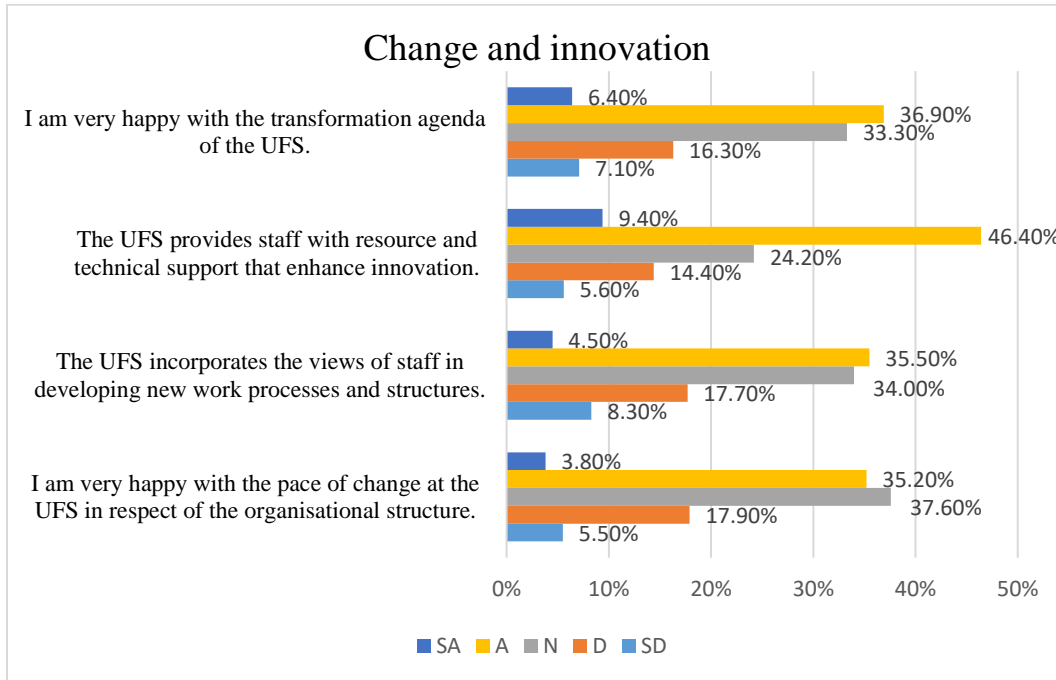


Figure 14: Change and innovation (staff)

Similarly, less than 50 percent of staff noted that the UFS incorporates the views of staff when developing new work processes and structures. The result is however indicative of the perception among majority of participants that their views are not considered when crafting work process in the university. However, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that the UFS provide staff with resources and technical support that enhance innovation in the UFS. A cursory look at the responses of staff with respect to change and innovation and based on campus location revealed that less than 50 percent of staff were very happy with the transformation agenda of the UFS and, the pace of change in relation to the organisational structure. However, while figure 14 showed that less than 50 percent of staff agreed to the statement that the UFS incorporates the views of staff when developing new work processes and structures, more than 50 percent of participants at South Campus indicated otherwise. We present in section 3.1.4 some written comments by participants on transformation and change at the UFS.



#### 3.1.4 Staff voices on change and transformation

*“The pressure of 'transformation' is leading to many problems. It is overwhelming and detrimental to motivation. I believe in meritocracy and that is not a priority at the UFS” (Staff A1).*

*“I am satisfied with the overall effort made by management to enhance the workplace experience of UFS staff” (Staff A2).*

*“Transformation is still only on paper. More needs to be done to make it practical. Statistics of the middle to senior management plus HoDs speaks for itself. UFS is still a good university provided all share that sense of belonging. Truth and justice should be the driving virtues of all at UFS” (Staff A3).*

*“Although I agree with transformation, I do not agree with the UFS stance that even in very specialised jobs, where skill should be taken into account over race, white people are not even allowed to be shortlisted” (Staff A4).*

*“I think the transformation policies at the UFS is at the right path, but adoption seems to be extremely slow” (Staff A5).*

*“It will take long for the institution to transform unless the attitude towards Black people changes fair opportunities for equal qualifications” (Staff A6).*

*“The so-called 'transformation' efforts at the UFS are racist and have made the university, again, an apartheid university” (Staff A7).*

*“..It is very negative to know that your skin colour is the reason of bullying or discrimination against you. Although I am ending my career at the UFS, I have to think about the other colleagues in this department that experience the same treatment (in my line of supervision). Actions must be taken to avoid this treatment based on how Top Management wish staff members to be treated. I believe the word fairness is very important but in my case and my sub-ordinates, we do not receive any fairness, we receive rudeness” (Staff A8).*

*“The institution needs to define what is not transformation in order to move ahead. Much of what happens at the lower levels are window dressing and there always seems to be excuses for why we can't do the right thing. Staff, in general, will work together but collaboration is often low on the priority list” (Staff A9).*

*“Disciplinary processes are far too slow” (Staff A10).*

*“I think the university has gone to great lengths to ensure compatibility with both the human and academic projects. The current rector is an excellent manager of both people and resources, and for the first time in years there is a sense of confidence among academic staff members in top management” (Staff A11).*

*“I have decided not to be concerned about most of the political agendas that are driven at the UFS. I am trying to make a difference in my immediate environment, where I can have a positive impact. I don't fret anymore about things I can't change. I don't have the energy anymore to put in effort on something that will probably not change anyway” (Staff A12).*

*“I don't think the UFS' transformation is authentic. I think it is not developed from the UFS' intrinsic values and identity; but rather developed from the international university ranking criteria. This alienate the staff members, alumni - as well as the students” (Staff A13).*

*“Although I am proudly Kowsie, I think there is more room for improvement” (Staff A14).*

*“I am worried that white people might not be welcome at the university in the future, due to the negative impact that apartheid had in the past. However, I enjoy working with people from all races and I trust that we can find a unity in our diversity” (Staff A15).*

*“Too much focus and effort are put on Transformation, for the sake of Transformation. Things that works well in the current situations are often lost. Excellence is lost due to forced 'reversed discrimination'. The main task of a university - Teaching and Learning - are lost due to abnormal focus on research. Criteria for Excellence in Teaching and Learning does NOT measure excellence in Teaching and Learning, but rather Research efficiency in Teaching and Learning, which is often the reason why staff do not provide good Teaching or Learning to students (they are busy with research). Get back to basics Look at what works, and keep that, develop that further, acknowledge and reward that” (Staff A16).*

*“I think the UFS has a much laid back culture. We are very fortunate in many ways and I think people are too quick to complain about things like remuneration. We have very good benefits at the UFS (a good number of leave days, good pension contribution, life insurance etc.). However, unfortunately, I do not experience the UFS culture in general as a high-performance culture. It seems to me that there are not always sufficient consequences for poor performance and not always sufficient reward for good performance” (Staff A17).*

*“The UFS is a fantastic organisation to work for. It, however, has some people who are difficult to work with and communicate with co-workers in a manner that does not show collegiality. This frustrates any individual who seeks to put in maximum effort to achieve both personal and organisational goals. I wish this situation would change especially when you communicate with colleagues in another campus but same department” (Staff A18).*

*“Due to innovation we are able to take the institution to the highest level” (Staff A19).*

### 3.1.5 Staff perception about students’ satisfaction

Staff perception about students’ satisfaction is important in an institutional climate study because it explains how staff evaluate the services students’ receive. We sought to obtain the views of staff in relation to the quality of services students receive, the university’s response to the psychosocial needs of students and, students’ satisfaction in relation to the teaching and learning processes.

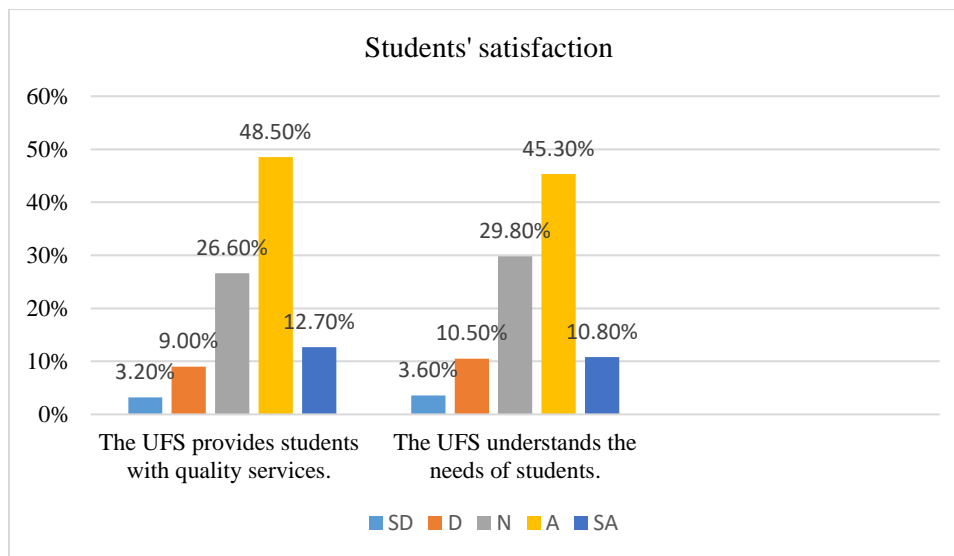


Figure 15: Staff perception about students’ satisfaction in three items

As shown in figure 15, more than 50 percent of staff indicated satisfaction in the quality services the UFS provide students. The responses of staff regarding two main aspects - the UFS provides students with quality services and the UFS understand the needs of students show that, more than 50 percent of participants in the Bloemfontein and South Campuses were satisfied with services provided to students while QwaQwa campus recorded less than 50 percent. What the results suggest is that staff at the QwaQwa campus perceive the services rendered to students to be low.

### 3.1.6 Leadership and involvement

The second section sought to gather information on staff perception about leadership and involvement among support and academic staff of the UFS. Figures 16 and 17 show staff responses on issues regarding

leadership based on two categories – academic staff and support staff. Evidently, the responses from support staff revealed high levels of leadership influence and contribution to their work processes when compared to the responses from academic staff. Two main issues that drew low academic staff agreement were in the areas of leadership planning that aims at achieving group goals and leadership support to faculty to achieve set goals.

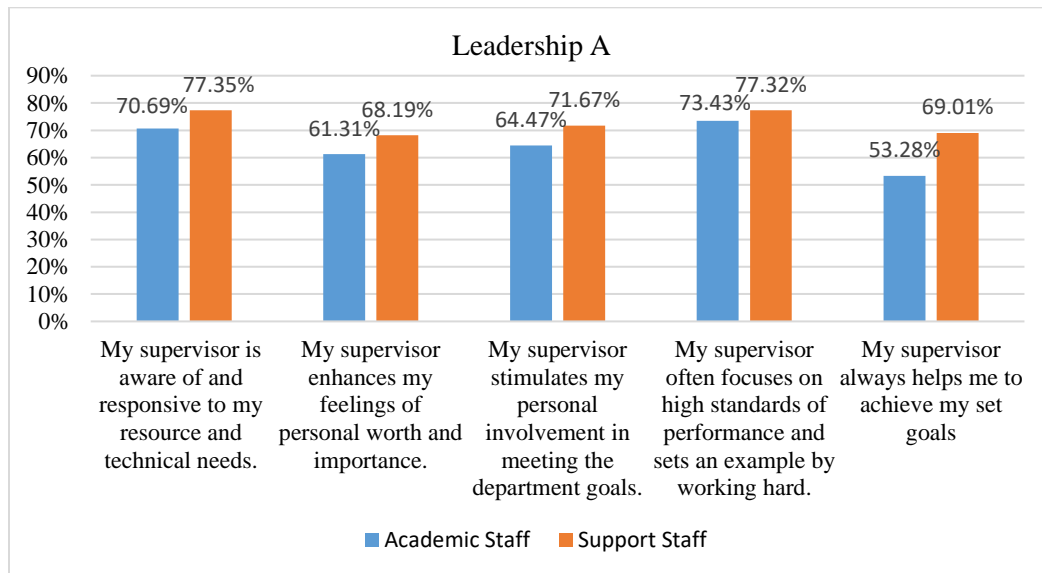


Figure 16: Leadership - Academic and support staff

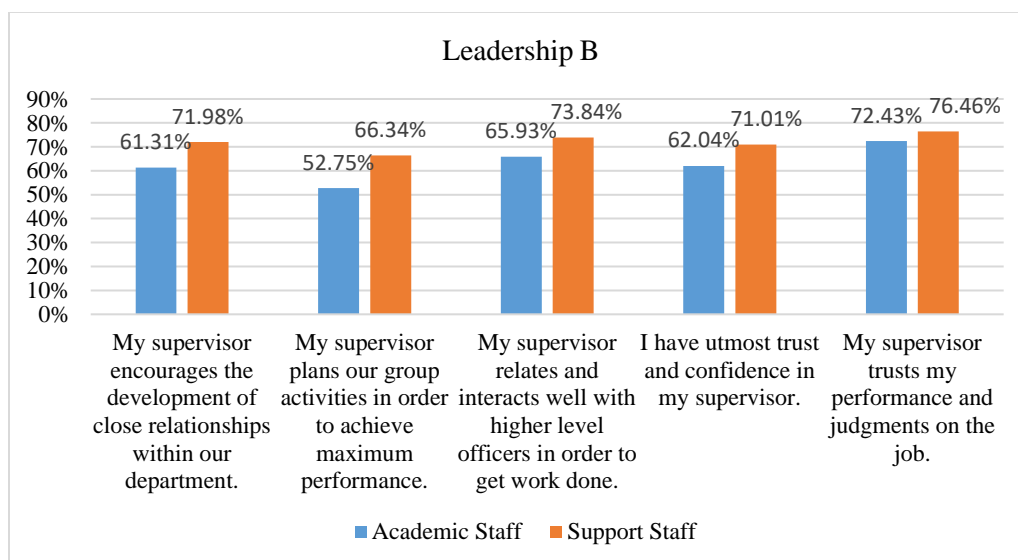


Figure 17: Leadership – Academic and support staff

The results obtained from the survey revealed that most supervisors are aware of and responsive to the resource and technical needs of their staff (74.40%), most supervisors often focus on high standards of

performance and set example by working hard (75.50%) and most supervisors trust the performance and judgement of their staff (74.50%).

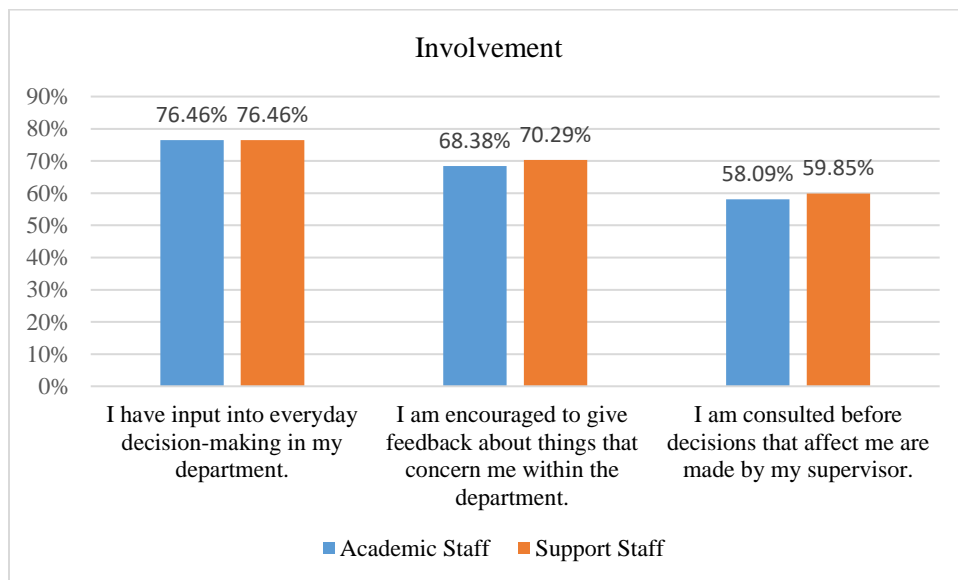


Figure 18: Staff involvement (Academic and support staff)

The results from the involvement sub-section revealed that 76.46 percent of academic and support staff contribute to the decision-making process in their department.

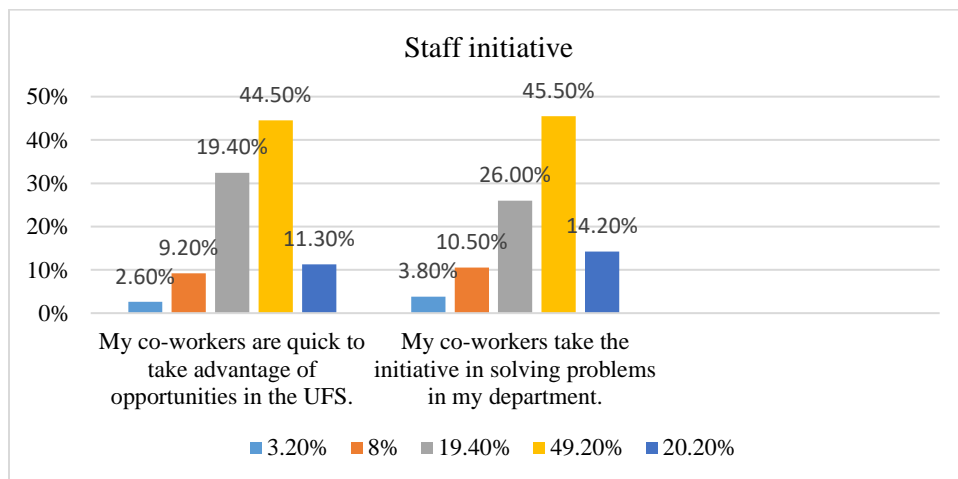


Figure 19: Staff initiative

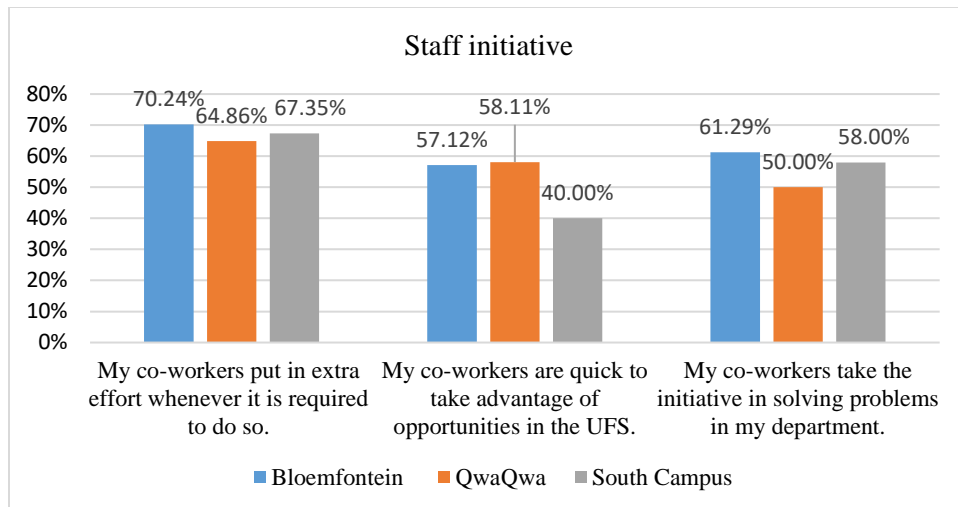


Figure 20: Staff initiative (distribution by campus)

The staff initiative sub-section showed that more than 50 percent of staff agreed to the statement that, “staff put in extra effort whenever they were required to do so”, “staff are quick to take advantage of opportunities” and, “staff take initiative in solving problems”. Figure 20 shows the distribution of participants’ responses regarding staff initiative based on campus location. While more than 50 percent of participants in Bloemfontein and QwaQwa indicated that staff were quick to take advantage of opportunities at the UFS, only 40 percent of participants at South Campus agreed to the statement. We present some written comments by participants in sub-section 3.1.7 regarding leadership and involvement.

### 3.1.7 Staff voices on leadership and involvement

*“No feedback by managers or management regarding our strategic meetings or retreats that are organised on a yearly basis” (Staff B1).*

*“Supervisors should either be assessed on their people skills before they are employed, or get rigorous training in how to manage people and be more emotionally intelligent. It is often the direct supervisors who inadvertently cause hostile working environments” (Staff B2).*

*“I am sorry to say, but I have a very negative attitude towards the management on the QwaQwa campus. They do not look after their staff and I don't feel safe anymore! We are struggling with basic infrastructure issues for MONTHS!” (Staff B3).*

*“Departmental experience and faculty experience across differ widely. The leadership, dean and management, should create a conducive working environment which is not always the case” (Staff B4).*

*“I [have been] at the UFS for 19 years and I enjoy every day at work. I love my job. I would like to encourage management to keep experienced staff members in their employment (disregarding whether they are at retirement age). They can help build the future. Many of the newly appointed staff (administrative) are incapable of doing their job (although they have a degree/s)” (Staff B5).*

*“As a 'middle management' staff, I take much responsibility for the staff whom I supervise, but the senior management responsible for my line management do not take this same responsibility” (Staff B6).*

*“Human Resources Department (HR) need to do a lot more to make staff feel as an important asset to the UFS. I currently do not feel valued while I know that I have a very important job to do at the UFS. HR is wrong if they say that staff of the UFS do not want recognition through remuneration” (Staff B7).*

*“I have experienced direct discrimination, othering, withholding of important information relevant to my work, exclusion from meetings relevant to my work, verbal and emotional abuse and both passive aggressive and aggressive behaviour. When I indicated my grievance to my line head I was dissuaded from going the grievance route and encouraged to allow him the opportunity to mediate” (Staff B8).*

*“Support divisions do not support, rather pass tasks on to academics while decreasing the competence with which they perform remaining tasks” (Staff B9).*

*“I am indeed proudly Kowsies and my department specifically is one of the best departments to work for!” (Staff B10).*

*“Give staff opportunity to move jobs and be considered for their qualifications and experiences in other opportunities. This does not happen. Names are removed from short lists because of their gender and race. This is unfair and discriminating” (Staff B11).*

*“I would like to see that departmental heads are more aware of the integration in marketing, reputation, and brand management. I would like to see that front line services becomes priority in all the activities on campus. I would like to see that Alumni becomes priority to the UFS again” (Staff B12).*

### 3.1.8 Job role and characteristics

The third sub section was designed to gather information regarding staff job roles and characteristics at the UFS. The results is discussed based in five aspects: policies in relation to work processes, job processes, unique opportunities for staff growth, role clarity and ethics.

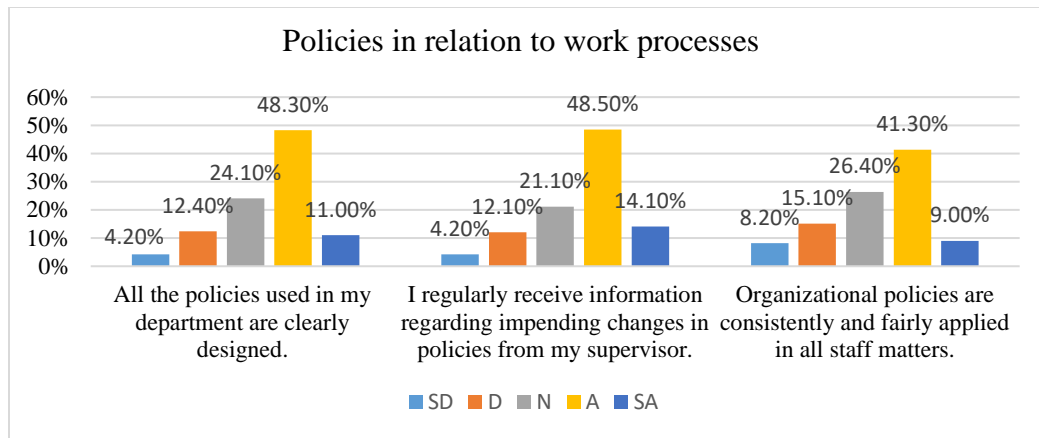


Figure 21: Policies in relation to work processes

The sub-section on policies in relation to work processes revealed that more than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that, the internal policies at the department are clearly designed. Similarly, more than 50 percent of participants noted that they regularly receive information regarding impending changes in policies from their leaders. However it is important to note that, more than 20% of participants opined that the policies of the institution are not consistently and fairly applied in all staff matters. We further analysed the responses of participants based on campus to reveal the differences.

### 3.1.9 Job Processes

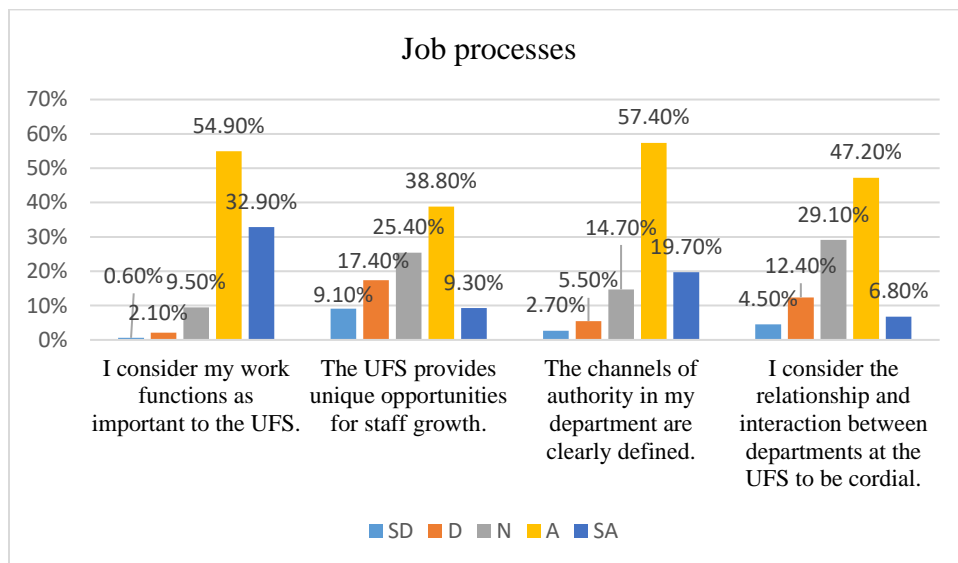


Figure 22: Job processes



Participants indicated that their work functions are important to the overall development of work processes at the UFS (87.80%) and that, the channels of authority in their department were clearly defined (77.1%). However, more than 50 percent of participants noted that the interaction between departments at the UFS were cordial while more than 15 percent disagreed with the statement. The statement that, “UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth” however drew mixed responses with less than 50 percent of participants agreeing to the statement while more than 25 percent disagreed with the statement.

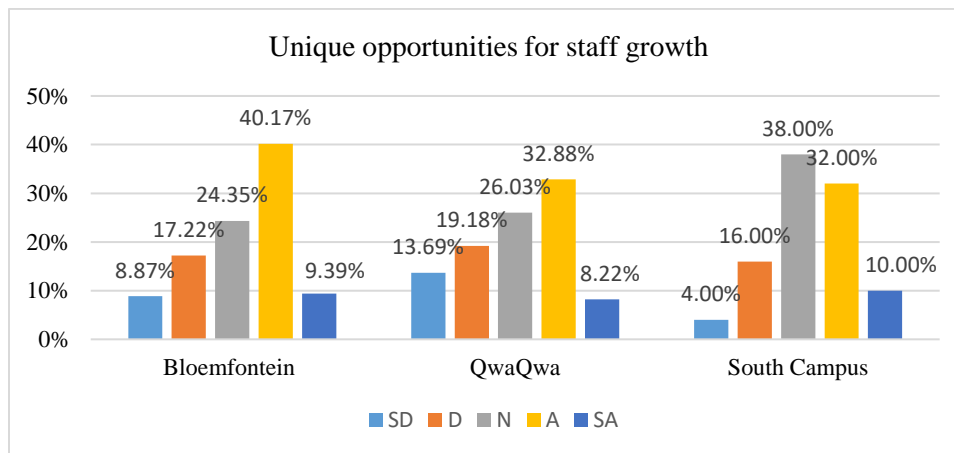


Figure 23: Unique opportunities for staff growth (campus distribution)

Following the mixed responses we gathered from participants as regards the provision of unique opportunities for staff growth, we further analysed the data based on staff campus location. As shown in figure 23, while 50% of participants at the Bloemfontein campus indicated that the UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth, less than 50 percent of participants in QwaQwa and South Campus agreed to the statement. A cursory look at the responses of staff in relation to the unique opportunities the university provides for staff growth revealed high agreement percentage for academic staff (50.37%) when compared to support staff (47.02%).

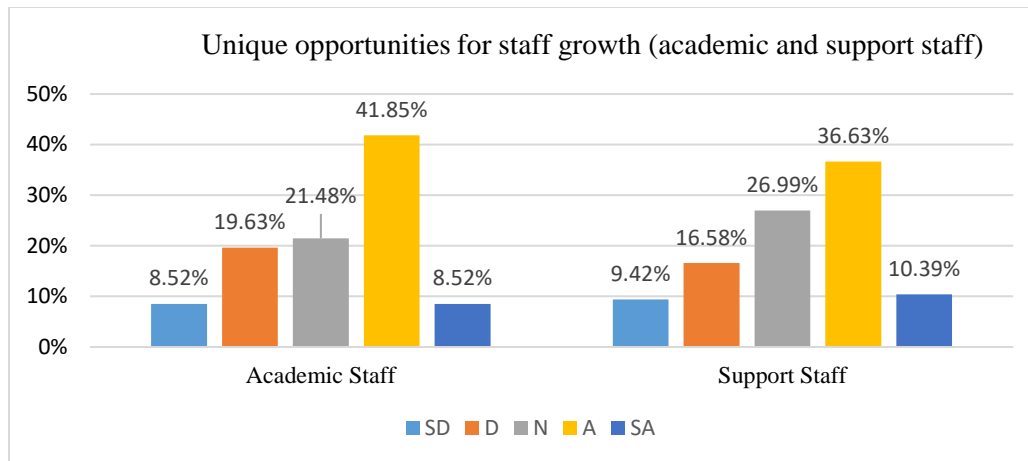


Figure 24: Unique opportunities for staff growth (academic and support staff)

### 3.1.10 Role clarity

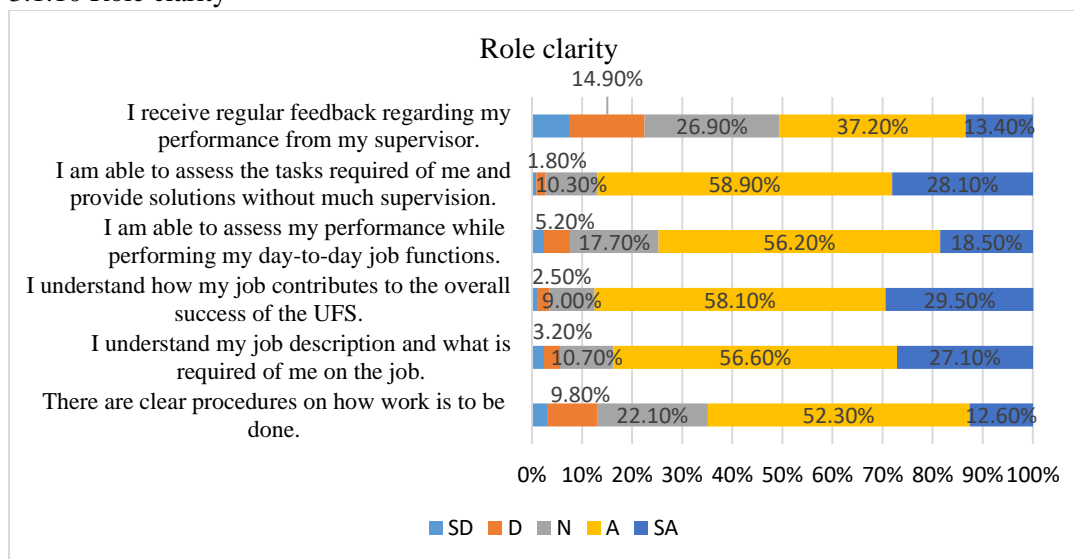


Figure 25: Role clarity

The sub-section on role clarity sought to gather the views of staff regarding the clarity of their job roles and associated responsibilities. Significantly the result showed that a higher percentage of staff indicated clear work procedures, comprehension of their contribution to the success of the UFS, less supervision required from their leaders and, their ability to assess their work output. However, we observed mixed responses in the feedback item where 22.5 percent of participants indicated that they did not receive regular feedback from their leaders. We further analysed the data based on the categories of staff to identify the differences in the responses. As shown in figure 25, while 57.35 percent of support staff indicated that they received regular feedback from their leaders, 42.18 percent of academic staff indicated that they regularly received feedback from their leaders.

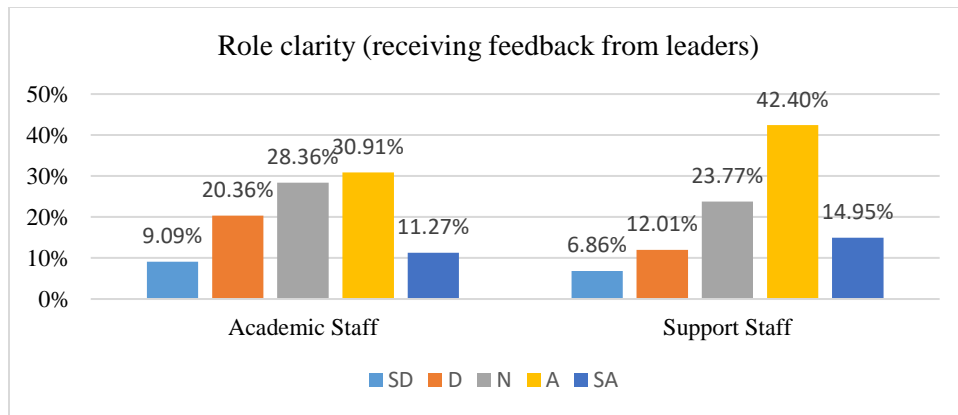


Figure 26: Role clarity (feedback from leaders academic and support staff)

### 3.1.11 Ethics

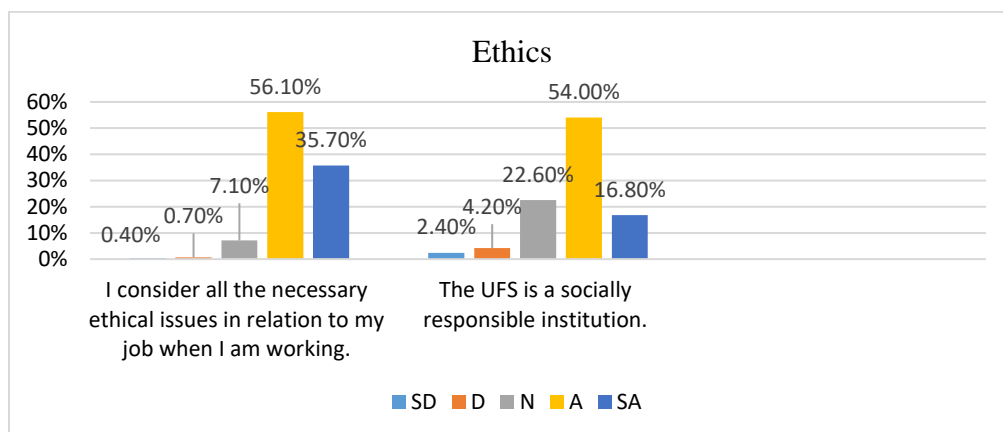


Figure 27: Ethics

As shown in figure 27, staff indicated that they observed appropriate ethical practices when performing their jobs while they also noted that, the UFS is a socially responsible institution.

### 3.1.12 Staff voices on job role and characteristics

*“Administrative processes are unclear and frustrating” (Staff C1).*

*“I find it extremely difficult identifying and contacting people at the different admin/support departments. It would help a lot if the different people responsible for different tasks at admin are clearly available on the university webpage. In addition, the different policies of the UFS are not easily obtainable” (Staff C2).*

*“I think the University was not ready for changing into English as most of the internal reports from Peoplesoft are still in Afrikaans. It was just a publicity stunt for the outside world” (Staff C3).*

*“It appears that the UFS support structures (Finances, HR, Facilities, and SAS) has effectively delegated and positioned their work down to be done by departmental administration personnel. Most HoDs report that their admin personnel spend much more time to enter data into the current financial system, and the HoDs writing additional motivations for many of the transactions, than ever before” (Staff C4).*

*“Too many meetings and too many new systems are rolled out” (Staff C5).*

*“Ineffective colleagues present to be a problem. Effective working staff get to do the work of non-efficient personnel and therefore have a very high work load (without much time for research). Possibly revise the effectiveness of each academic within the department. Some academics are on a more senior level (receiving a senior salary), but basically do little to nothing” (Staff C6).*

*“In QwaQwa per se: I humbly request the University to hire more staff members. For example since the implementation of Foundation Phase (2011), there have been only 3 permanent staff members. The rest are Ad Hoc. So, if one gets post somewhere, students will be without a lecturer for a long time” (Staff C7).*

*“Senior academic staff should be granted better access to funding so that they enrol more postgraduate students and postdoctoral research fellows. There is too much bureaucracy where research funds are involved. DRD should understand that it is the performance of academic staff that makes the university what it is or what it should be. They should motivate staff by being more receptive to suggestions from academics” (Staff C8).*

*“All admin tasks passed on from Admin, Finances, Student Services, Library, HR, etc. to staff in faculties, but staff numbers stay the same. In our Faculty, support staff are totally overwhelmed with all that needs to be done. Every day the workload gets bigger and the demands from Admin gets more” (Staff C9).*

*“Have been completing these surveys and always mention 'better internal communication' but do not see any changes?” (Staff C10).*

*“My biggest complaint is that the UFS is unjust and there is no consistency. Human Resource policies in particular, are enforced on some people while others get preferential treatment. I find the whole idea of preferential treatment sickening, and the UFS Performance Management System is based purely on whether your line manager/supervisor likes you or not. Hard work and dedication is not recognised or rewarded, it depends solely on whether you are one of the 'lucky few” (Staff C11).*

### 3.1.13 Resources, technology and facilities

The fourth sub section was developed to collect information on staff perception about the resources, technology and facilities at the UFS.

#### Resources

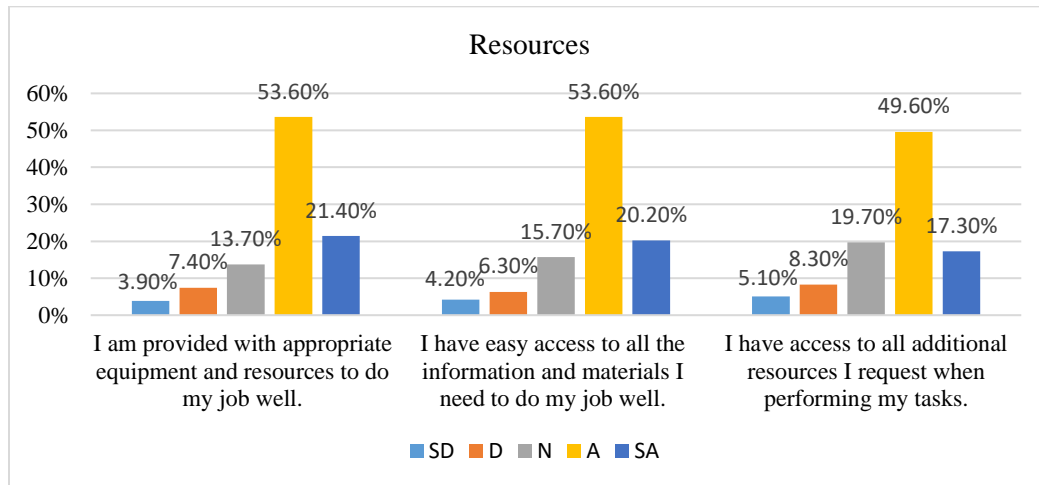


Figure 28: Resources

The sub-section on resources sought to gather the views of staff on access to resources (information and materials) at the workplace. Markedly, more than 65 percent of staff indicated that, they were provided with appropriate resources (75%) and had easy access to information and working materials (73.80%).

#### Technology

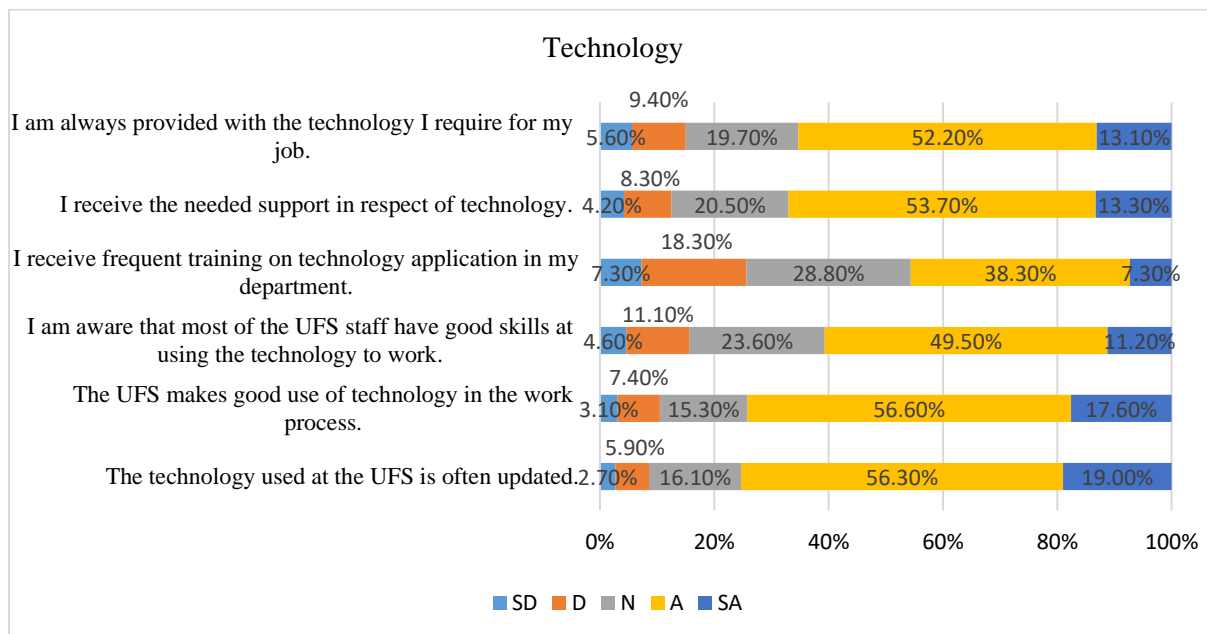


Figure 29: Technology

Feedback from participants revealed that, more 50 percent were provided with the technology they required for their work. Additionally, average to high percentages were recorded with respect to the frequent update of the technology used by staff (75.3%), high proficiency in the application of technology by staff (60.70%) and, regular support in the use of technology (67.00%). However, with regard to training in the application of technology, the results revealed that, less than 50 percent of participants received training. Further analysis (see figure 30) showed that less than 50 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein and South campuses indicated that they receive frequent training in technology application in their department.

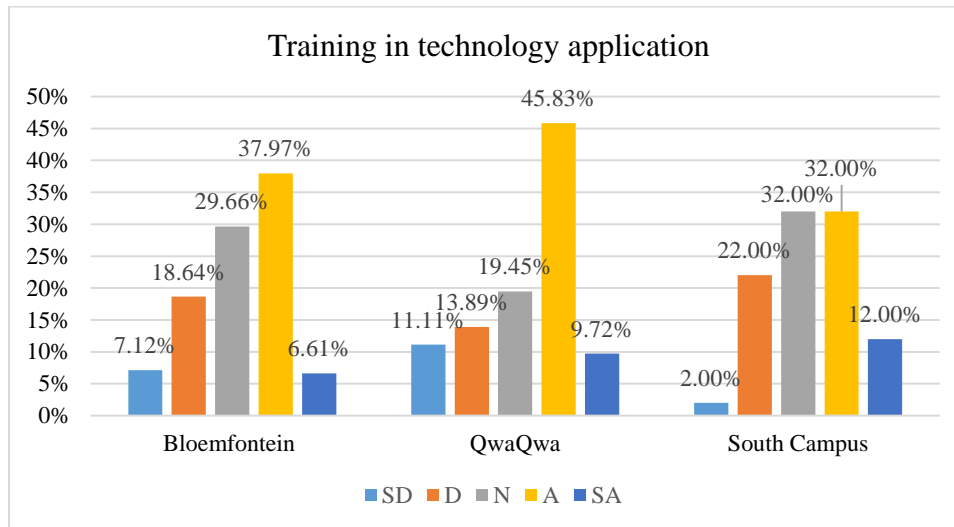


Figure 30: Technology (Training in technology application)

#### Facilities

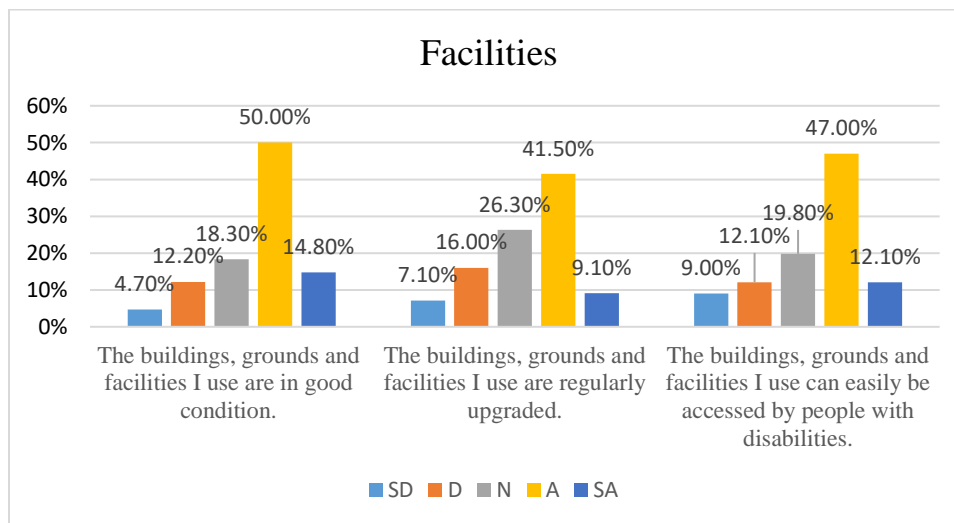


Figure 31: facilities

Responses from staff in relation to facilities on the three campuses show that above 60 percent of participants opined that the facilities on campus were in good condition while 59 percent of staff indicated that the buildings and grounds were accessible by persons living with disability. In relation to the views of participants regarding regular upgrade of facilities on campus, figure 31 shows that, less than 50 percent of staff indicated that the facilities are regularly upgraded. Section 3.1.14 show the written comments of participants and their opinion on the state of facilities on campus.

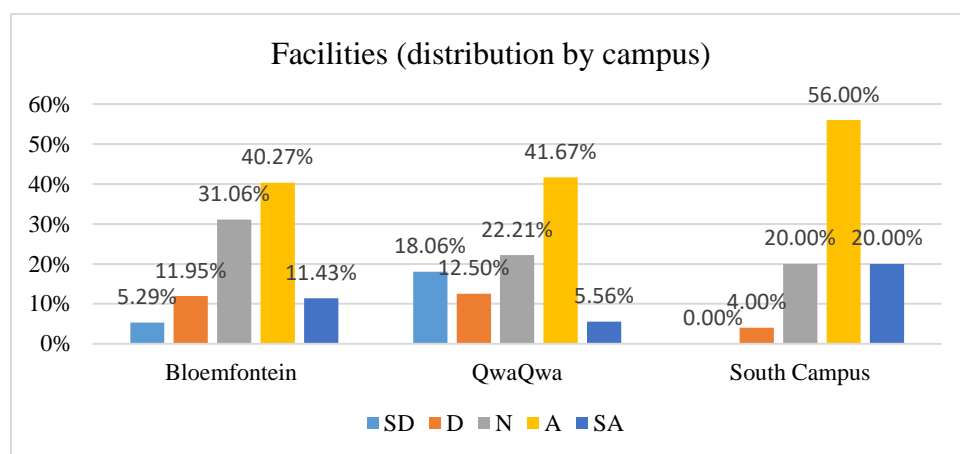


Figure 32: facilities (distribution based on campus)

A cursory look at figure 32 show that while more than 50 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein and South campuses indicated that facilities on campus were frequently upgraded, less than 50 percent of participants at the QwaQwa campus agreed with the statement. What the results suggest is that staff at QwaQwa campus perceive that the facilities at the campus are not frequently upgraded as expected.

### 3.1.14 Staff voices on resources, technology and facilities

*“I would suggest that all the staff members should be provided with all the necessary resources required for their job immediately they are employed” (Staff D1).*

*“Lack of technical support... I have to setup my own practicals and order chemicals for my lab, make my own bookings (car, flights, etc.). It takes way more time than it should. Things are moving in the right direction nonetheless” (Staff D2).*

*“We have the resources, but they are being poorly managed. For example, nearly 60% of the financial resources are going to vendors who do not deserve them. Check for instance what travel agents are charging for air tickets and accommodation compared to the actual costs of flights and accommodation that they book. Yet, we only approve them because they are listed among the so-called 'service providers'.*

*We need to correct this because it is a huge leakage and loss of money that should be given to academics to do their work or to keep them motivated. We talk a lot about corruption but we are doing nothing to address it. Many of the buildings that have cropped up at our campuses during the past five years are substandard structures, with an untold number of defects, yet we carry on as if this is the normal thing to do. This is what is wrong with our institution” (Staff D3).*

*“QwaQwa campus needs a lot of upgrading technology wise and construction wise” (Staff D4).*

*“Student Administration Systems (now that is a proper disaster) with student applications not being answered, student queries on the internet not being answered, I personally experienced where a group of learners from a school within 2 km of UFS decided to give up trying to register at the UFS, and several went to other Universities that deemed it important to answer them - due to the UFS not communicating! I followed up and was told by UFS staff that the system has been non-functional for 6 weeks! I also followed up with the then Registrar to alert her of the possible losing of good candidates (in this case 4 of them in the top 50 in the Free State Province) due to the UFS system not working, and received a rebuke and quite a cuff on the ear that I could alert them to such a possibility, I was told there is nothing wrong with the UFS Student Application System, regardless of the staff telling me the opposite and the applicants experiencing the opposite. Who is lying? and for what reason?” (Staff D5).*

*“Some of the staff members do not see any importance of using their access cards when entering or leaving the QwaQwa campus” (Staff D6).*

*“ICT and Human Resource need to work hand in hand on this one. Workshop need to be held for all New Employees were they will be given a training or some sort for technology they will be using before they even use that technology” (Staff D7).*

*“Currently UFS is moving towards online learning, yet other campuses are not yet fully equipped in terms of Technology. A good example is QwaQwa Campus that has few computer Labs. You will find a long queue outside computer labs” (Staff D8).*

*“Technology is a concern. IT acts a blockage in the broader UFS culture. The library needs better resources. I often have to look outside of the UFS library database if I want to find journals and articles that speak directly to my research” (Staff D9).*

*“On QwaQwa campus we have severe challenges with regard to teaching localities and venues. The venues that we do have are not properly maintained and often, the computers etc. simply do not work or have been stolen. When faults are reported, we have to wait for whole semesters for venues to be fit for teaching. We are forced into venues such as the recreation hall to teach over lunchtime in a venue that was not meant for teaching because are student numbers are too high for existing venues” (Staff D10).*



*“The maintenance of buildings has been deteriorating rapidly over the past three years. Please visit the toilets in the Equitas building - it is a disgrace! Look at the stairs of the building - it's falling apart, yet money was made available to retile only the top parts of the stairs - things like this just don't make sense. We don't feel safe on campus, especially after hours” (Staff D11).*

*“IT Classroom support in my experience needs improvement, especially in 7am/8am classes” (Staff D12).*

*“Some say to me that they hear the physical supporting structure with regards to buildings and labs and equipment required for an academic enabling environment has collapsed at the UFS, and they see the collapse in the maintenance of the buildings and gardens, therefore they don't consider joining the UFS. One even asked me how long will it take to get a parking spot for his new car, and I had to confess that we have a waiting list for shade for our cars of more than 2 years, for some of my personnel more than 2 years, some highly placed personnel in finances says they have yet be to receive this” (Staff – Bloemfontein).*

*“The support structures at the UFS is under pressure and does not deliver the required support. Letters and queries to departments take up to 3 months to answer, and is only answered when frequent queries are sent. The UFS Facilities section is a complete and utter disaster and does not even attempt to deliver any service or to communicate. Examples: Virtually all communication is not answered ever, even after repeated follow-up, even after sending requests to the Head of the relevant department to follow up....and if answered it is plain rude.....service requests takes sometimes 8 months, sometimes 11 months, sometimes even years to receive feedback on communication, and then still is not completed” (Staff D13).*

*“Frustration with the ineffective administrative support and more administration being continuously diverted to academic staff. Frustration with the exorbitant prices charged by UFS vendors - the same item or service usually costs substantially more when purchasing through the UFS vendor system than when purchasing as a private citizen. This is especially true of IT equipment. There are many examples of this and it is unacceptable. More competitive prices should be negotiated with vendors since the UFS is a bulk consumer of many of these products. We work with public funding and paying these exorbitant prices is not socially responsible” (Staff D14).*

*“Please use existing knowledge regarding the use of grey water for campus gardens - the few that still exist” (Staff D15).*

### 3.1.15 Safety

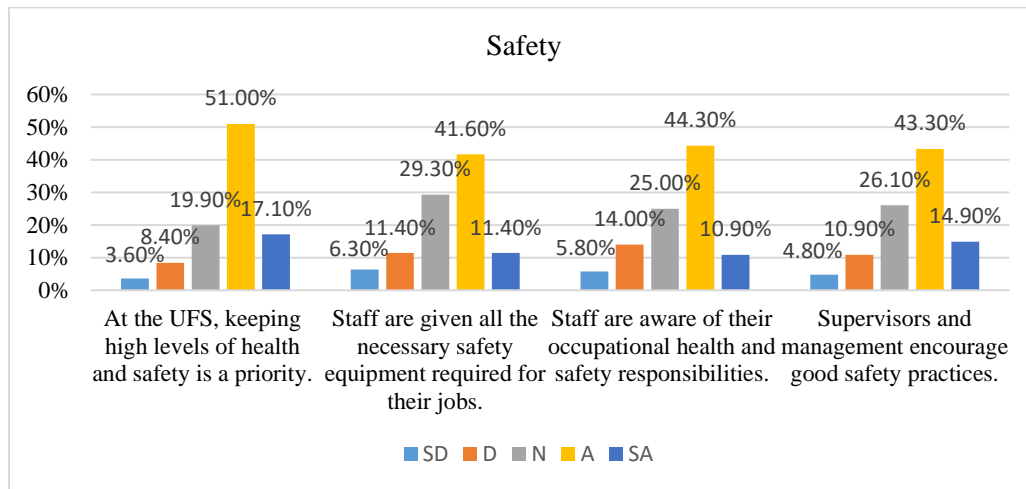


Figure 33: Safety

More than 65 percent of participants agreed to the statement that, “at the UFS, keeping high levels of health and safety is a priority”. The results also revealed that more than 50 percent of participants are aware of their occupational health and safety responsibilities (55.20%) and that, management encourage good safety practices (58.20%). Comparatively, the item regarding the provision of safety equipment recorded low agreement percentage. A cursory look at the responses based on the location of staff (figure 34) revealed that less than 50 percent of participants in QwaQwa indicated that they were provided with safety equipment required for their jobs.

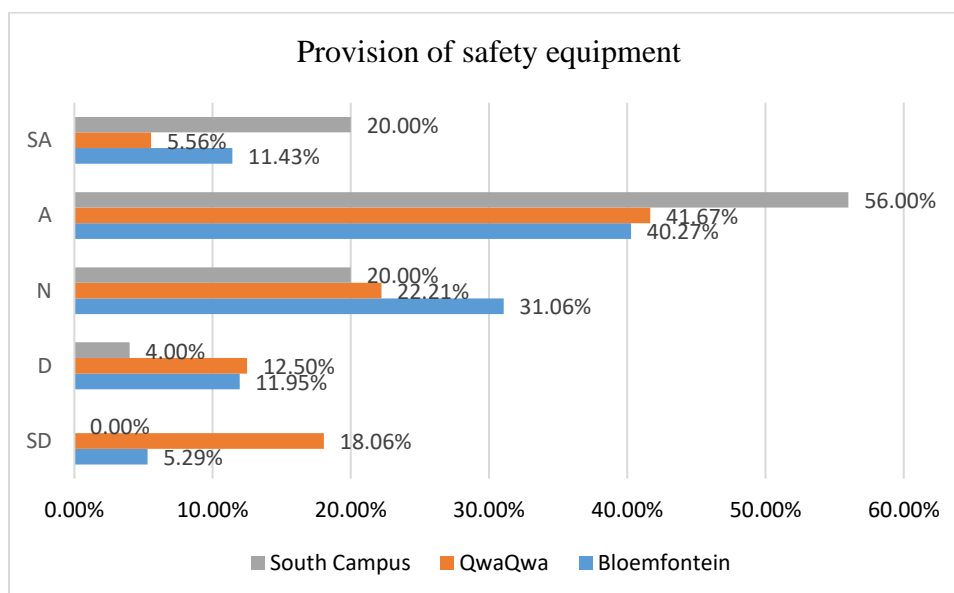


Figure 34: provision of safety equipment

### 3.1.16 Staff voices on safety

*“I feel we do not have proper communication concerning our safety. Nobody will inform us about protests and we might get an email the afternoon to say we must come to campus” (Staff E1).*

*“Security on campus and on the exits of campus are in a horrific state. People drive like they want to - without any consequences” (Staff E2).*

*“The safety of staff during student protests has not been well handled up to this point. There are no set guidelines regarding such events and what actions staff members should take to be safe. I do not feel safe on campus, especially as a female, during violent protests” (Staff E3).*

*“The UFS management does not consider the majority of students during student protests.....when protests becomes violent and disrupting, Top management do not address the issue by acting proactively - damage control and crisis management are mostly applied” (Staff E4).*

### 3.1.17 Learning and development

The fifth subsection focused on staff perception about learning and development at the UFS. The subsection contained aspects such as training for new employees, career opportunities and learning and development.

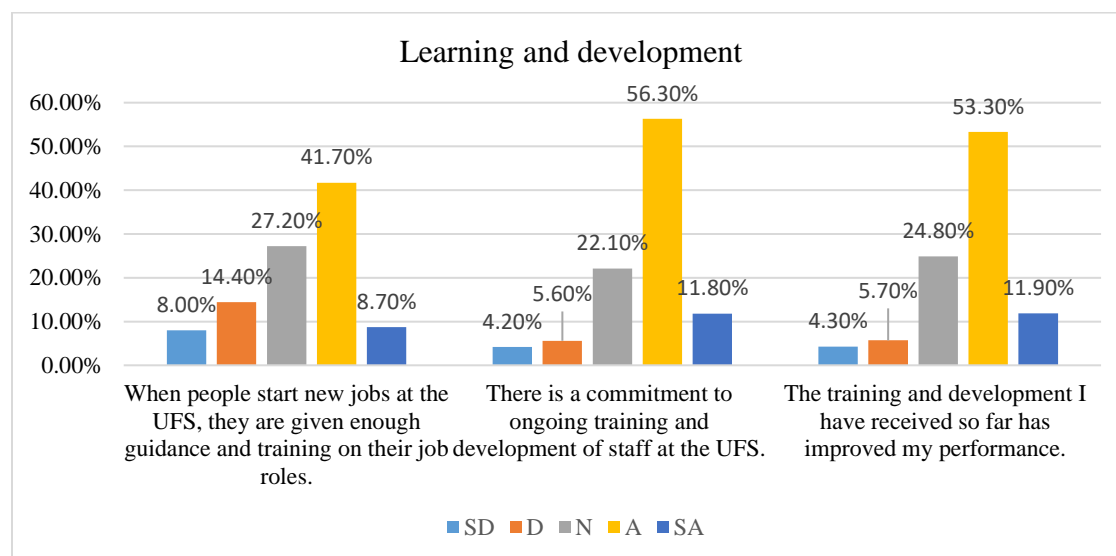


Figure 35: Learning and development

Figure 35 shows the responses of staff based on their opinion on items under the learning and development sub-section. Significantly, the feedback from participants showed that more than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that, there is commitment by management to ongoing training and development of

staff (68.10%) and that, the training given to staff improves staff performance (65.20%). However, a little over 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that new employees are given adequate guidance and training on their jobs when they start work.

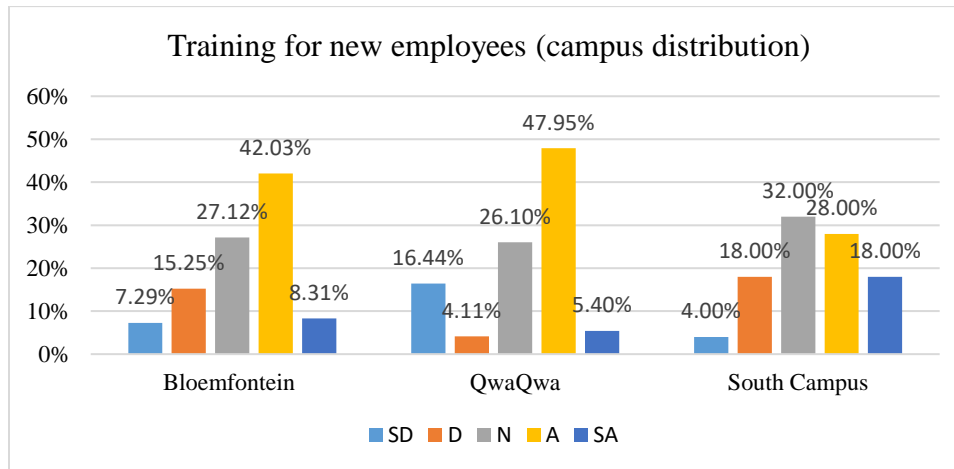


Figure 36: Training for new employees (distribution by campus)

A detailed analysis of the responses of staff revealed that while more than 50 percent of participants at the QwaQwa and Bloemfontein campuses indicated that they received adequate training when they were employed, less than 50 percent of staff at the South Campus indicated same. What the result suggest is that, participants at the South Campus perceive that the HR department provides minimal training when they are employed.

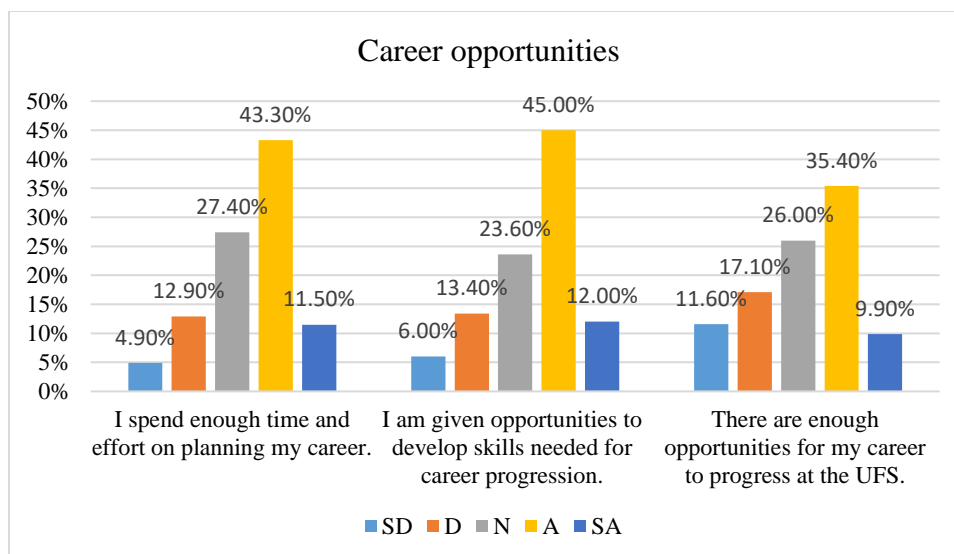


Figure 37: Career opportunities

The sub-section on career opportunities showed that, more than 50 percent of staff spent more time and effort in planning their career (54.80%) and were also offered opportunities to develop the skills required for their career progression (57%). However, less than 50 percent of staff indicated that there are enough opportunities for career progression at the UFS.

#### 3.1.18 Staff voices on learning and development

*“I am based at QwaQwa campus. QwaQwa community (staff) would like to further their studies at QwaQwa campus but there are no short courses or certain postgraduate degrees. Introduction of short courses will boost the university with third stream income and will empower local communities without travelling long distance” (Staff F1).*

*“Within the support staff space, there are support staff who present at conferences, engage in scholarship (either through graduate studies, article publications or conference proceedings leading to collaborations) that are not recognized academically, and not incentivized by the department” (Staff F2)*

*“Junior staff members need to be given just as much research support as senior staff. So that we can also complete our PhDs and publish in journals” (Staff F3).*

*“There are really very limited opportunities for growth at UFS. The only way to grow is to move to another University or apply for other positions” (Staff F4).*

*“Some university staff are paid additional for the offering of short learning programmes and others are not” (Staff F5).*

#### 3.1.19 Rewards, recognition and appraisal

The section on results and appraisal was developed to gather relevant data from staff with respect to their opinion and experiences with regard to rewards, recognition and benefits.

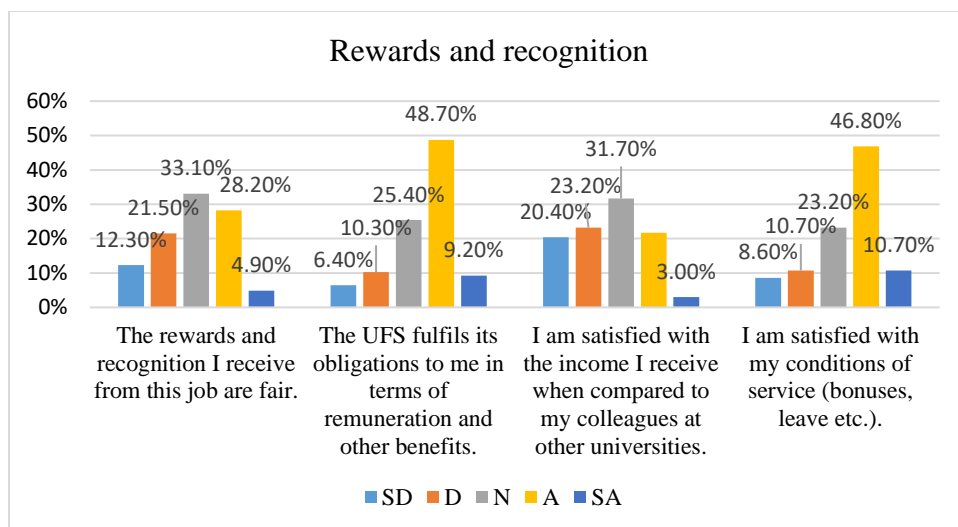


Figure 38: Rewards and recognition

As shown in figure 38, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that the UFS fulfils its obligations with respect to remuneration and other benefits (57.90%) and that, they were satisfied with the conditions of service (57.50%). Conversely, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that the rewards they received from their work was fair (33.10%) and were satisfied with the income they received when compared to their colleagues in other universities (24.70%). A detailed analysis of the data based on staff category revealed that, 30.10 percent of academic staff and 33.80 percent of support staff indicated that the rewards they received from their job was fair.

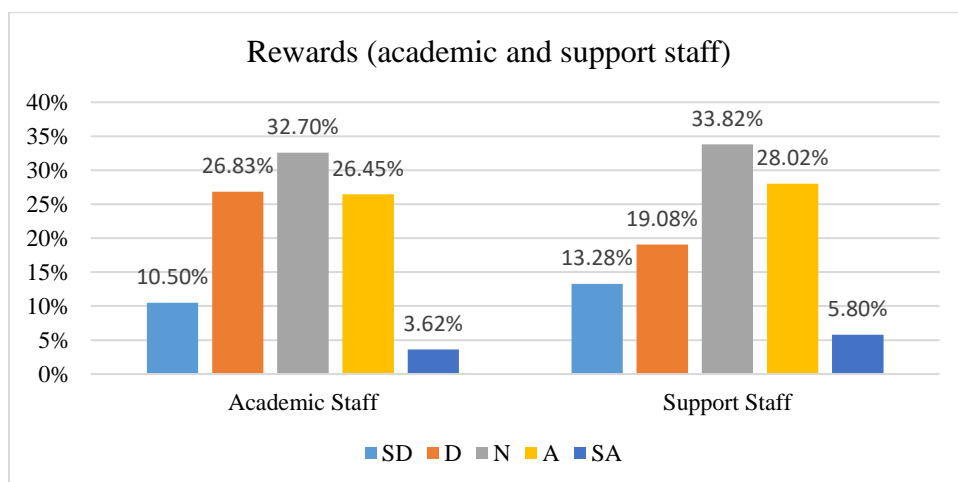


Figure 39: Rewards (academic and support staff)

### 3.1.20 Performance management

The second sub-section sought to gather information from staff regarding evaluation of their performance at the UFS.

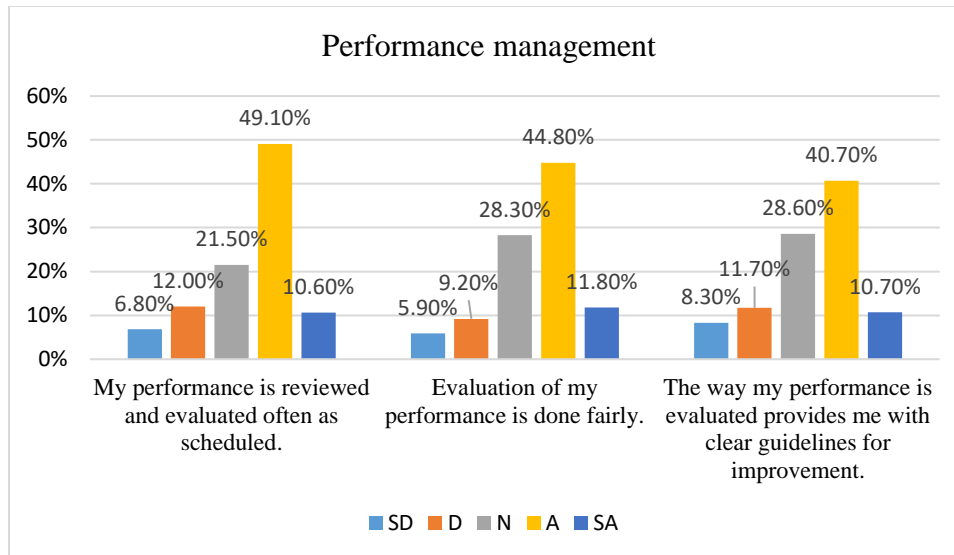


Figure 40: Performance appraisal

In relation to staff performance management, more than 50 percent of staff indicated that their job performance is reviewed and evaluated as scheduled (59.70%), the evaluation of their performance is fairly conducted (56.60%) and, the feedback provides clear guidelines on areas for improvement (51.40%).

### 3.1.21 Staff voices on rewards, recognition and appraisal

*“Performance Management system does not work. Support services cannot be measured”* (Staff G1).

*“The performance management system is skewed for both academia and support services. People will most likely rate themselves at a 3 because no supporting documents are required for a 3 but it is required for a 1-2 and 4+. I feel my performance is 4+ but it would be too much of an effort to gather all the supporting documents again (I would rather get to my actual work), so I would rather rate myself at a 3”* (Staff G2).

*“There is too much administrative expectations placed on, and too little systematic support for middle management (HoDs) from HR regarding recruitment and appointment of new staff members. There is also inconsistency from HR in the appointment of people in acting positions for years on end, without a rightful/subsequent appointment or adaptation to remuneration The following points of gratitude: - Mostly to have access to resources needed to do our jobs”* (Staff G3).

*“It is very nice to work for this institution. The only problem is salary disparity between QwaQwa staff members and Bloemfontein’s. For example, we are doing the same job with my colleague in Bloemfontein, she started 2 years after me, she is earning higher than me and her position is higher than mine just because she is in Bloemfontein. I am more qualified than her but that does not count. I will really much appreciate if they can match our salaries and take into account experience and qualifications” (Staff G4).*

*“Benefits and same salary for same qualification and the same work done for all races. If another race have a higher qualification than a white race, why is the salary still more for whites than other races? Why can white people be in a job with any qualification but other races not, and then the white person still earn more than the other race” (Staff G5).*

*“Do not make financial rewards part of performance assessment, it ruins the whole objective of the exercise. Start making plans to make the pay grade difference between lower post levels and higher post levels less” (Staff G6).*

*“I believe that the University has been unfair to the employees on stripping off the automatic notches (and this was not done in a right way- as we were promised higher notches that goes along with performance in a 3year cycle), but suddenly nobody knows anything regarding this - not HR nor Unions can give clarity. People stay in one position for a long period of years, meaning that being employed by the University for longer periods takes one backwards financially. We are getting poorer by the years” (Staff G7).*

*“The remuneration process is very confusing. I am not sure how this works. There are people with degrees (Like myself) who are earning less than people without in some instances. It is still not clear to me how this process works. More clarity needs to be communicated. I also feel I am extremely underpaid” (Staff G8).*

*“Conditions on the different campuses is extremely different yet we are evaluated on same criteria for promotion, and in most cases we can only apply for promotion when there is SLE available (In ten years of working here we never had the correct SLEs). In Bloemfontein most lecturers have to give a single subject in a year. I have given four to nine in a single year (no bonuses nor have I ever gotten a promotion)” (Staff G9).*

*“The University makes it almost impossible for an academic to be promoted; the criteria are unrealistic” (Staff G10).*

*“Support staff does not get any promotion - they only get considered when there is a senior post which they contest with other external users. No policy for promotion of support staff. The university salaries for support staff is too small / very little compared to other Universities” (Staff G11).*



*“The use of terms like Officer, Chief Officer, to describe everyone on campus does not make sense. If I am an accountant, Labour officer, the same title should be used by HR. It is also high time that we do not rely on the so called system when evaluating posts. Do a bench-marking with two or three sister-institutions of the same size to ensure our remuneration package is on par with the rest of the country” (Staff G12).*

*“The promotion policies of the UFS, especially in terms of promotion from senior lecturer to associate professor, are extremely unfair. Nothing has yet come from promises made by the UFS to rectify the situation” (Staff G13).*

*“All staff members need to be treated equally and giving equal opportunity and deserving award. Higher positions are being held by certain race and gender this does not show any sense of belonging. Other races are being included only to pretend that there's equality. We all need to be in position because of our qualifications not because we been working at certain department for longer than others” (Staff G14).*

### 3.1.22 Teamwork and cooperation

The section on teamwork and cooperation served to provide information on the level of teamwork and cooperation among staff in the UFS.

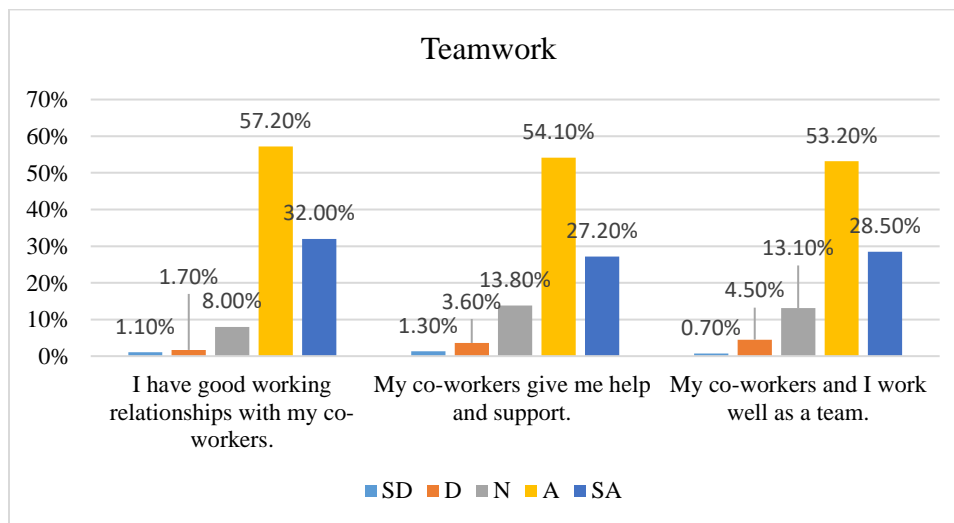


Figure 41: Teamwork

Results from the study showed very high percentages by way of staff agreement to the statement that there is good working relationship among colleagues (89.2%), support from colleagues (81.30%) and, team work (81.70%).

## Cross unit/campus cooperation

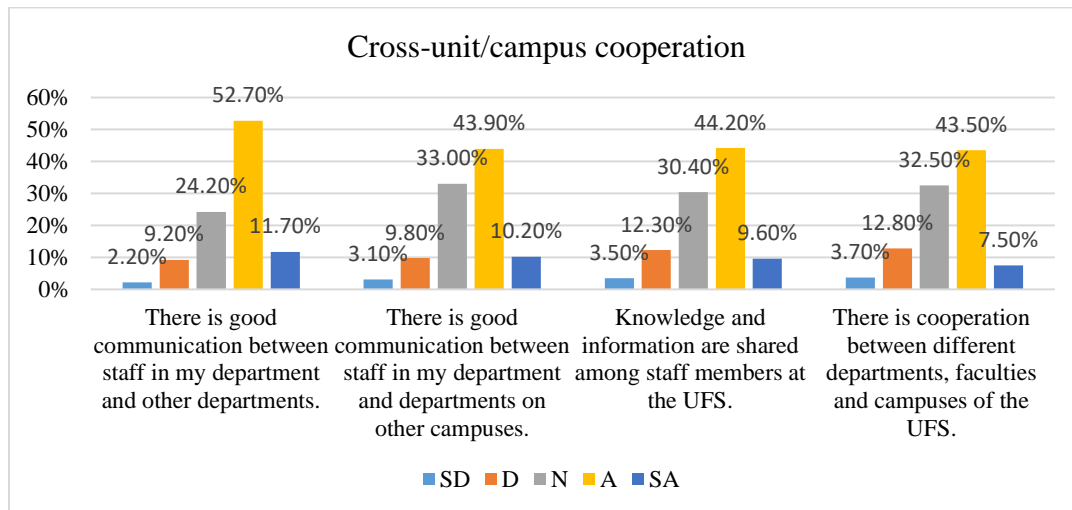


Figure 42: Cross-unit/campus cooperation

Results from the study regarding the relationship and level of cooperation between staff in different units and campuses in the university revealed the existence of good communication between staff in different departments (64.40%) and sharing of knowledge and information among staff in different campuses (53.80%).

### 3.1.23 Staff voices on teamwork and cooperation

*“The support services, particularly ICT, HR, facilities management, and finances, often are hostile towards academics and create an environment that is antithetical to accomplishing research and educational goals. These services need to understand that the purpose of their existence is to aid academics in their work, not to burden academics with additional difficulties” (Staff H1).*

*“UFS is a fantastic organisation to work for. It, however, has some people who are difficult to work with and communicate with co-workers in a manner that does not show collegiality. This frustrates any individual who seeks to put maximum effort to achieve both personal and organisational goals. I wish this situation would change especially when you communicate with colleagues in another campus but same department” (Staff H2).*

### 3.1.24 Job satisfaction

The section on job satisfaction discusses the experiences of staff in relation to personal accomplishment, intention to stay and staff commitment to the UFS.

## Personal accomplishment

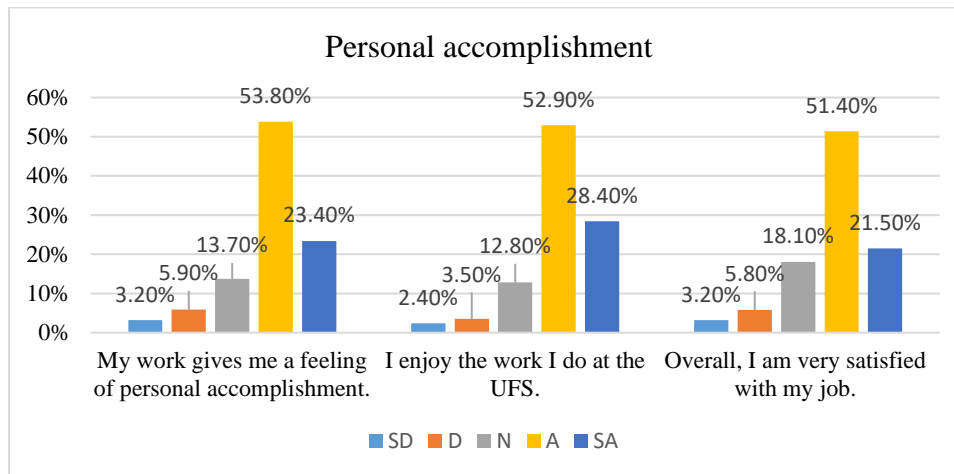


Figure 43: Personal accomplishment

The sub-section on personal accomplishment revealed that more than 70 percent of participants agreed to the statement that, staff derive a feeling of personal accomplishment from their work (77.20%), enjoy the work they do (81.30%) and are satisfied with their jobs (72.90%).

## Staff intention to stay

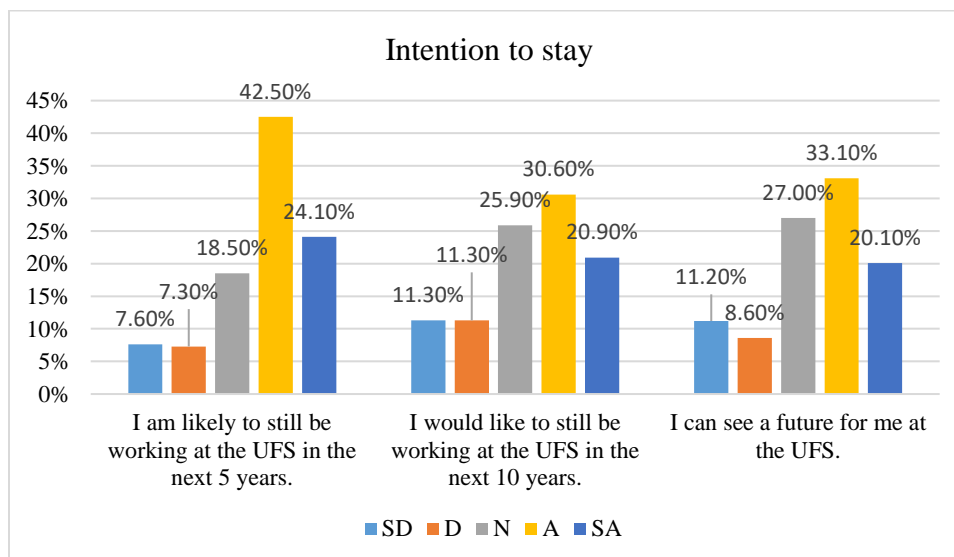


Figure 44: Intention to stay

We considered the intention of staff to stay at the UFS as an essential aspect of job satisfaction. Significantly, 66.70 percent of participants noted that they were likely to stay and work at the UFS in the

next five years while 51.50 percent noted that they will be working at the UFS in the next 10 years. More than 50 percent of staff indicated that, they could see a future for them at the UFS.

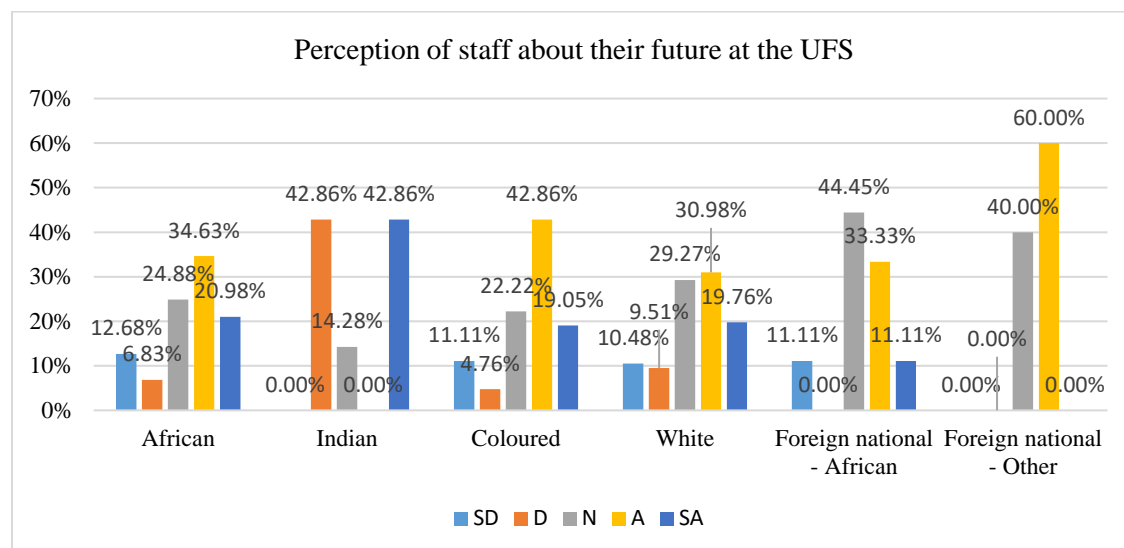


Figure 45: Perception of staff about their future at the UFS (distribution by race)

In order to examine the differences in the responses of staff about their views on their future at the UFS, the data was analysed using race distribution of the responses. As shown in figure 45, less than 50 percent of Indians and foreign African nationals indicated that they could see a future for them at the UFS. However, 42 percent of Indians indicated that they could not see their future at the UFS while more than 50 percent of other foreign nationals, Africans, Whites and Coloured staff noted that could see a future for them at the UFS.

#### Staff commitment to the UFS

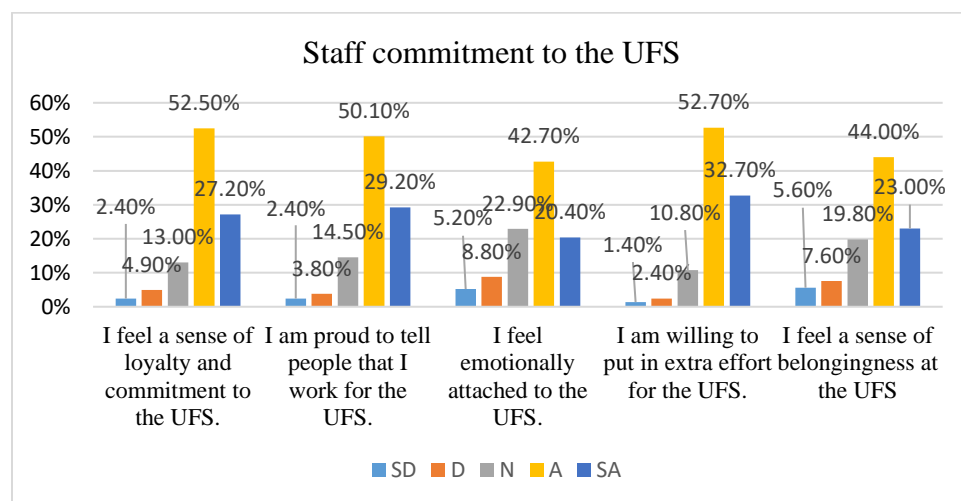


Figure 46: Staff commitment to the UFS

The responses of staff revealed a high sense of loyalty and commitment to the UFS (79.70%), a sense of pride to work for the UFS (79.30%), willingness of staff to put in extra effort for the UFS (85.40%) and a sense of belongingness (67%). We presents the written comments of some participants under the subsection - personal accomplishment, intention to stay and staff commitment in section 3.1.25.

### 3.1.25 Personal accomplishment, Intention to stay and staff commitment

*“The University of the Free State is the only University in the country with a retirement age of 60years. I am turning 60 in December and I have to retire. I feel that it is kind of discrimination because I gained so much knowledge during the years and now it is all come to an end. I am active, healthy and offers a high standard of work, but the University decided that I am too old to continue working”* (Staff I1).

*“Keeping certain people on contract while promoting others and providing full time opportunities with clear developmental paths for them is called discrimination. One does not create a culture of commitment and belonging by keeping the bulk of your staff on FTC's. Our Department Head has been bullying people since 2016, we lodged a complaint with HR, but nothing is done. So, the message is clear: shut up and do your work”* (Staff I2).

*“I love my work, but I would leave the UFS as soon as I get another opportunity, which I might not”* (Staff I3).

### 3.1.26 Staff welfare

The section on welfare sought to gather relevant information on staff wellness, physical activities and work/life balance.

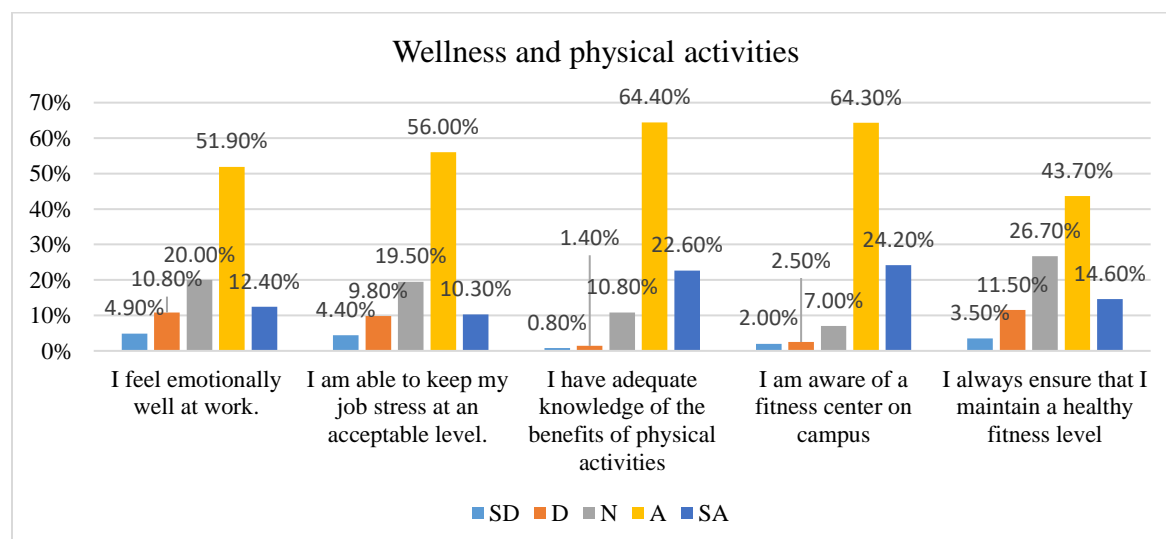


Figure 47: Wellness and physical activities

The sub-section on wellness and physical activities revealed that more than 60 percent of staff feel emotionally well at work (64.30%), keep their stress level low (66.00%), are aware of the benefits of physical activities (87.00%) and are aware of a fitness centre on campus (88.50%). However, less than 40 percent of participants indicated that they regularly participate in physical activities on campus.

### 3.1.27 Work-life balance

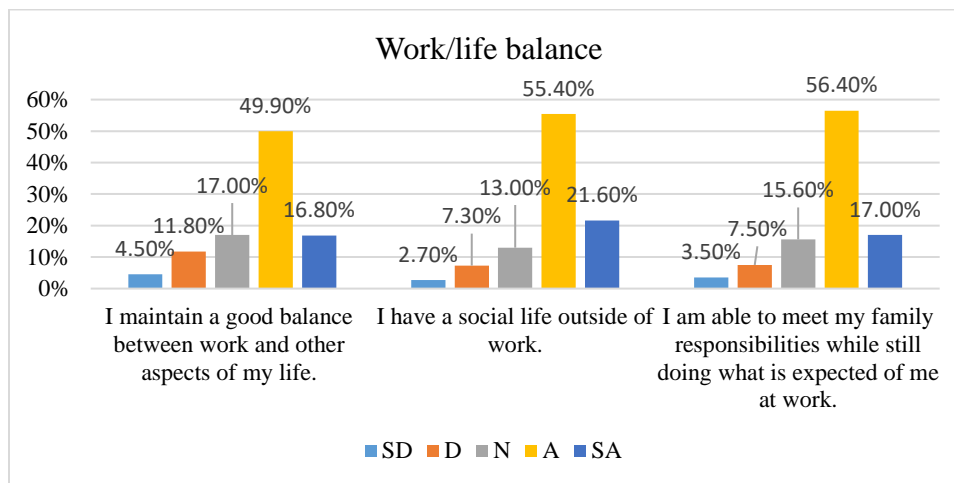


Figure 48: Work-life balance

Results for the work-life balance sub-section showed that staff maintain a good balance between work and other aspects of their life (66.70%), maintain a social life outside work (77.00%) and are able to meet their family responsibilities while still doing what is expected of them at work (73.40%). What the result suggest is that, most participants maintain a good work-life balance.

### 3.1.28 Staff voices on staff welfare and work-life balance

*“More should be done to support women academic and administrative staff, particularly those with children. Many women are lost to academia as a result of the failure of academic institutions to consider the unique pressures that parenthood places on women, and to consult with these women about the best possible forms of support that will enable them to thrive” (Staff J1).*

*“I feel it is unfair for staff of the UFS to be put on one year probation when we apply for other post in other department, fact remain that it is still the same company just different department. I feel that an old*

employee who start a new position in other department should not be seen as a new employee, in terms of performance and salary” (Staff J2).

“I love working at the UFS. There is so many great Health and Wellness workshops/lunch gatherings, but we on the South Campus feels a bit left out....Can't some of those also be presented on our Campus, please? If there is enough attendance of course! We also want to be able to participate in certain workshops, etc.” (Staff J3).

“Staff feel replaceable. Staff are sometimes reluctant to take sick leave when they are really sick, out of fear that they will fall behind on their work and out of fear that the manager will respond negatively to the illness. Some staff are heavily overworked and cannot meet their family responsibilities due to the workload” (Staff J4).

“The current UFS support structures are not delivering what is needed. Examples include: I spoke to several HoDs and all of them are on anti-depressant medication, one plans to take early retirement as he cannot handle the frustration of the support structures at the UFS not functioning.” (Staff J5).

### 3.1.29 Diversity

The subsection on diversity was developed to gather information on staff perception about the unique and differences between staff in relation to different social aspects.

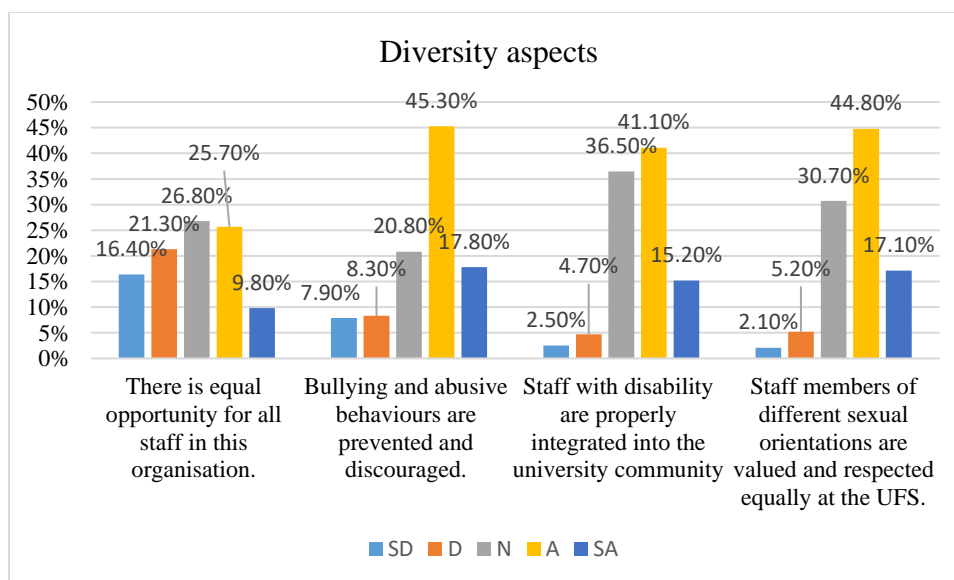


Figure 49: Diversity aspects

Results for the diversity climate section revealed that more than 50 percent of participants indicated that bullying and abusive behaviours are prevented and discouraged (63.10%), staff with disability are well integrated into the university community (56.30%) and, staff of different sexual orientations are respected (61.90%). However, less than 40% of participants indicated that there is equal opportunity for all staff. Further analysis of the data based on race as shown in figure 50 revealed that less than 50 percent of participants in all the race categories indicated that there is equal opportunity for staff at the UFS.

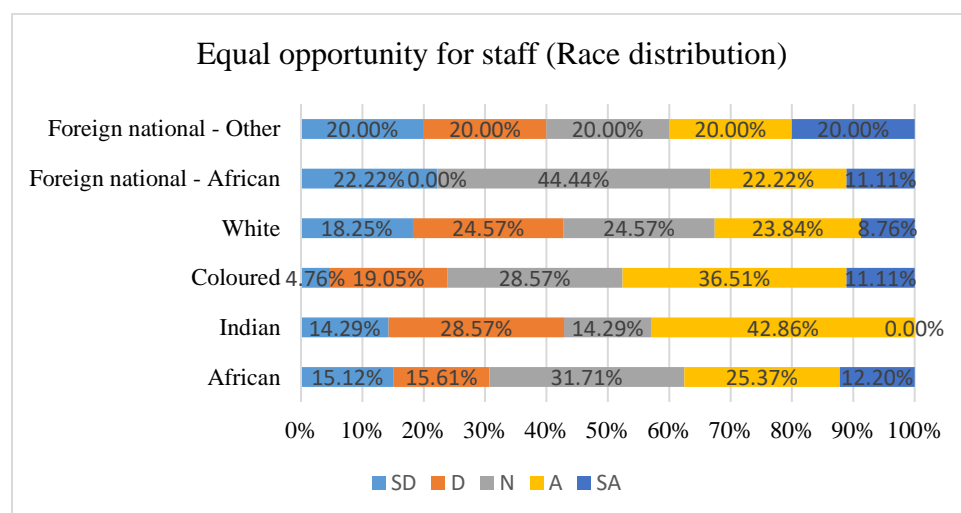


Figure 50: Equal opportunity for staff (distribution by race)

The perception of participants regarding equal opportunity for all staff based on their campus location revealed that less than 50 percent of participants in all three campuses agreed with the statement that there is equal opportunity for staff (see figure 51).

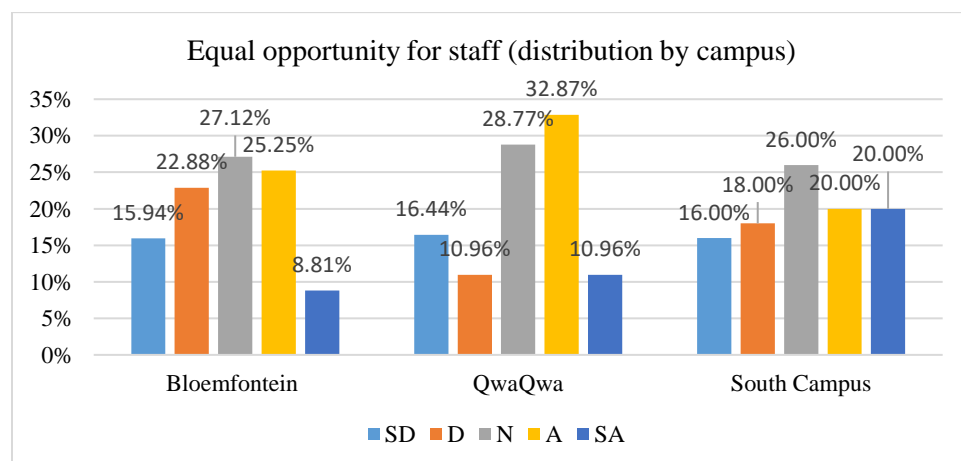




Figure 51: Equal opportunity for staff (distribution by campus)

The results however demonstrate the low perception staff have with regard to their right to be treated without discrimination on the basis of race or gender.

### 3.1.30 other climate aspects

The section on other climate sought to gather relevant information from participants regarding aspects such as victimisation, discrimination and harassment. The responses of the participants were measured using a five point Likert scale where 1 represented very low and 5 represented very high.

#### Victimisation

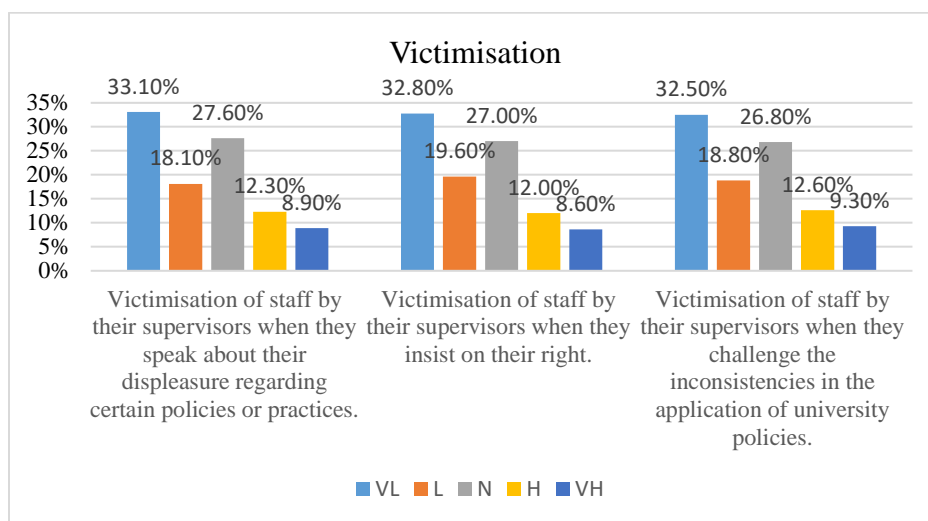


Figure 52: Victimisation

In relation to victimisation of staff by their leaders, more than 50 percent of staff indicated that there were low levels of victimisation of staff regarding their insistence on either their rights or when they voice out their displeasure. An analysis of the responses based on sex revealed that 21.80 percent of females reported high levels of victimisation by supervisors when they speak about their displeasure regarding certain work practices as compared to 19.90 percent by male participants.

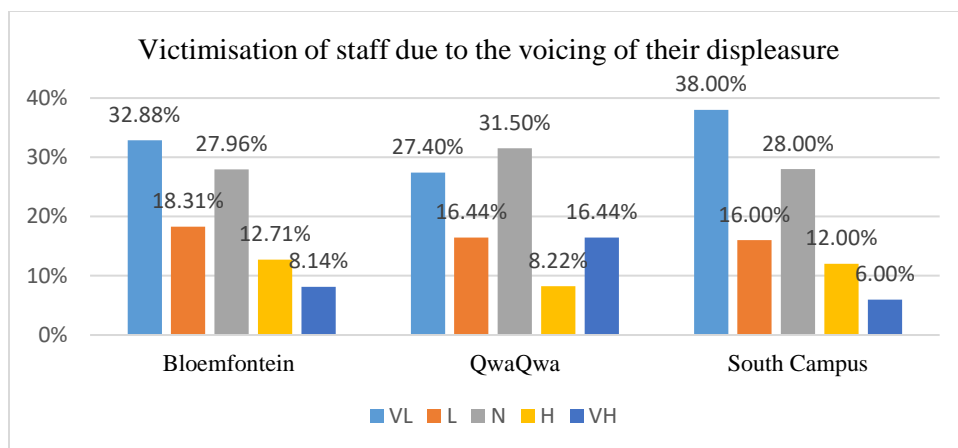


Figure 53: Victimisation of staff due to the voicing of their displeasure (distribution by campus)

Figure 53 shows the responses of staff on their experiences with victimisation in relation to them voicing their displeasure about the application of policies or practices. Significantly, 24.70 percent of participants at the QwaQwa campus indicated some form of victimisation compared to those in Bloemfontein (20.80%) and South Campus (18.00%).

## Discrimination

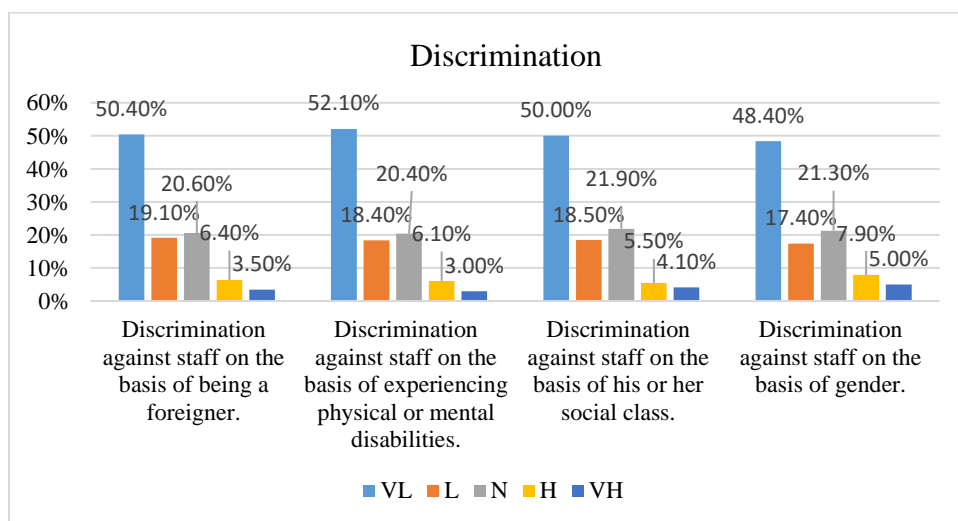


Figure 53A: Discrimination

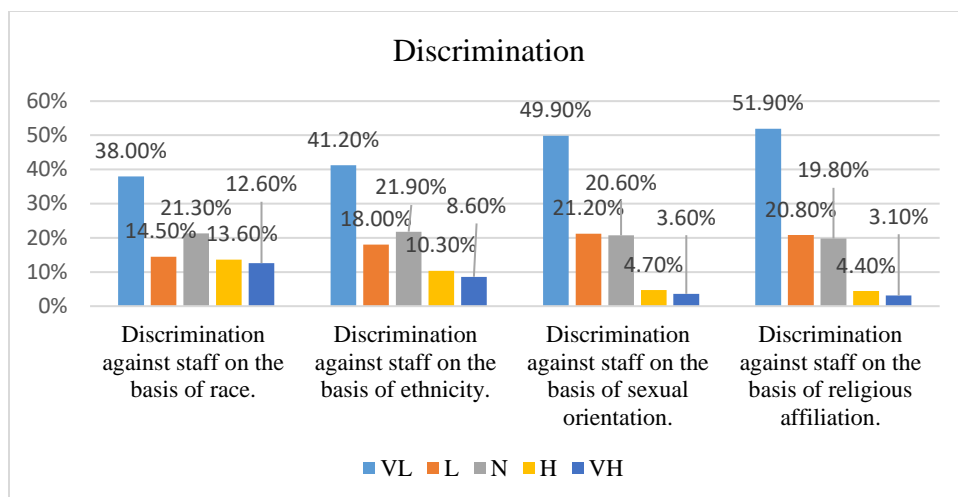


Figure 53B: Discrimination

Figures 53 A and 53 B shows the distribution of responses by discrimination. The results show that, more than 60 percent of participants indicated low levels of discrimination based on physical or mental disabilities (70.50%), staff social class (69.00%), gender (65.80%), sexual orientation (71.10%), status as a foreigner (69.50%) and, religious affiliation (72.70%). Seeing that the responses of staff in respect of discrimination based on race and ethnicity were below 60 percent, the data was further analysed to reveal the differences based on race and campus distribution.

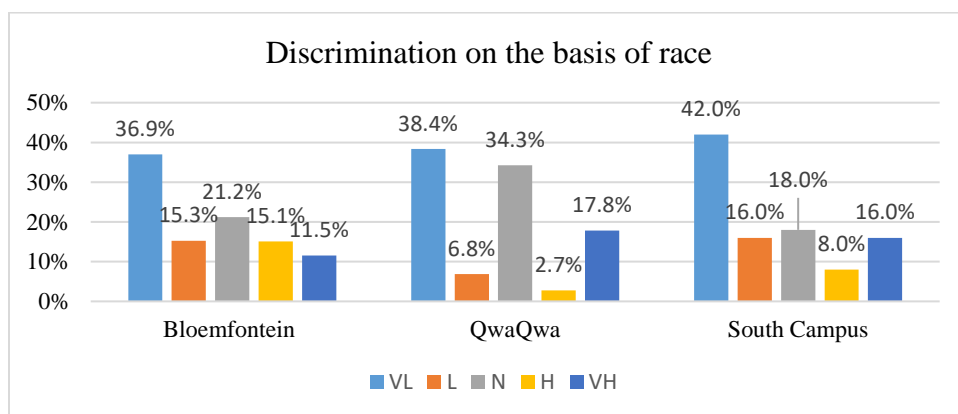


Figure 54: Discrimination on the basis of race (distribution based on campus)

As shown in figure 54, the feedback from participants in relation to discrimination on the basis of race revealed that 26.60 percent of staff at the Bloemfontein and 24.00 percent of participants at the South campus indicated high levels of discrimination on the basis of race when compared to those at the QwaQwa Campus (20.50%).

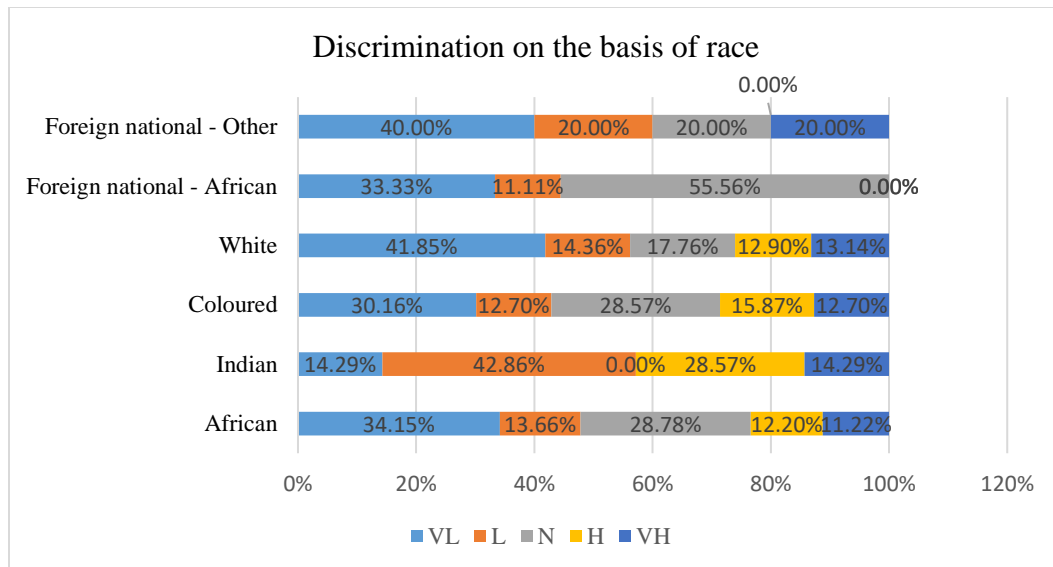


Figure 55: Discrimination on the basis of race (distribution based on race)

Following the analysis of the feedback from participants based on race distribution, results revealed that Indians (42.90%) indicated relatively high experiences of discrimination on the basis of race when compared to Coloureds (28.60%), Whites (26.00%) and Africans (23.40%).

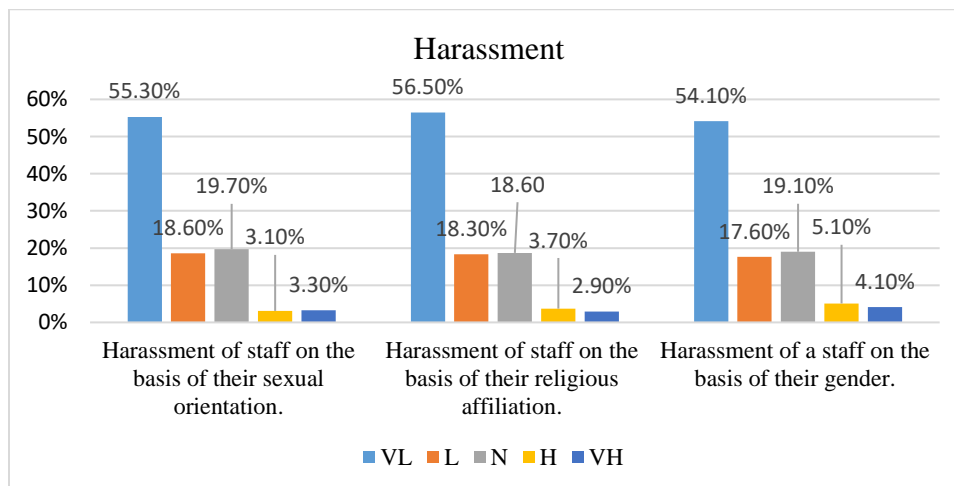


Figure 56: Harassment

The feedback from participants in relation to Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation (73.90%), religious affiliation (74.80%) and gender (71.70%) revealed low levels of harassment among participants.

### 3.1.31 Staff voices on victimisation, discrimination and harassment

*“Females feel sexually harassed by male colleagues. Unfortunately, the environment is not conducive to speak out on it, especially if the male colleague is in a senior position” (Staff K1).*

*“Everything that happens on campus is made out..... some, normally the loudest to be a racial injustice. Sometimes it feels like the students are in complete control of what is happening on campus. It sometimes feel that students’ views and opinions weighs far more than those of staff” (Staff K2).*

*“Black Academics don’t feel at home. They don't see a committed future at UFS because the institution does not have a diverse culture, the working staff are still one sided race and language which is exclusive. Possibilities of growth at UFS for me as Black academia look slim” (Staff K3).*

*“As an Afrikaans-speaking male, I feel my culture and my language is bullied out of this institution. An institution that my forefathers built with their own hands. Not those that claim it is now theirs. One day the bullies will answer to their deeds when God Almighty question your motives” (Staff K4).*

*“I would like UFS to actively encourage uncomfortable discussions about race issue that still persists even after transformation agenda is strongly pursued. We still experience favouritism based on colour of your skin, where certain race is given more resource to further their careers. And lastly, the use of language to exclude certain races during work related discussions” (Staff K5).*

*“The majority of the staff that have attended the Diversity and Inclusivity training have seen the benefit of this workshop and consistently say that they would recommend attendance to all at the people in the university. The uptake of the opportunity to attend this workshop among the middle and senior management of the university is however minimal. I think that having this level of management attend the workshop would contribute to changing the way in which departments communicate internally to the benefit of the university as a whole” (Staff K6).*

## Results – Contact students

The second part of this report presents results on the climate survey that was conducted among contact students of the University of the Free State. The student climate survey required students to provide their views on the following aspects: institutional characteristics; students' residence and accommodation; students' sense of belonging; resources, students' safety and facilities; racial climate; academic climate; diversity climate; sexual orientation and; multilingualism. For the purpose of the cross campus comparisons, we resorted to analysing the written responses of participants in the study.

### 3.2.1 Institutional Characteristics

The first part of the survey required students to provide their feedback on what we termed as institutional characteristics. The section consisted of three subsections: institutional direction; mission and values and; student involvement and; students' satisfaction.

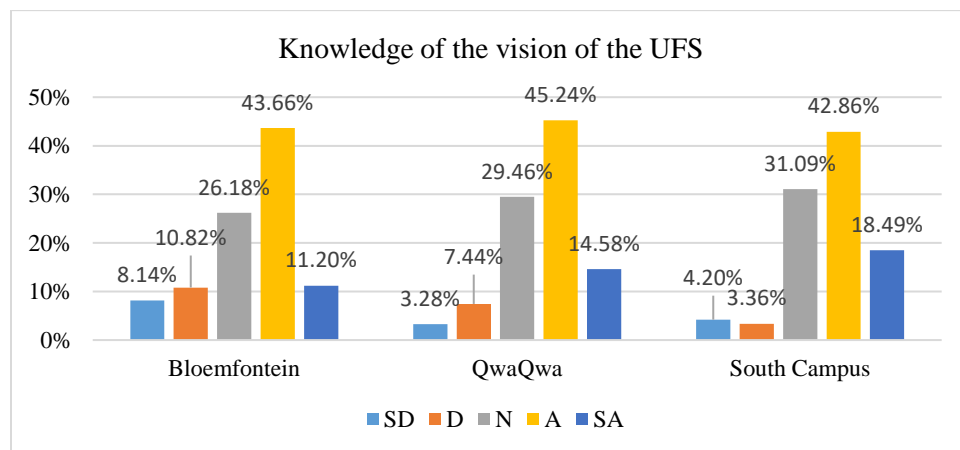


Figure 57: Students' knowledge of the vision of the UFS

The institutional direction of the UFS explains the overall strategic plan of the university and how members of the university including students understand the strategic plan of the university. The first question sought to obtain information from students about their knowledge of the vision of the UFS. The result showed that 56.10 percent of the participants had read the vision statement of the UFS while 16.90 percent indicated that they had not read the vision statement. As shown in figure 57, we analysed the data to reveal the differences in the responses of students based on their campus location. The results revealed that more than 55 percent of students are aware of the vision of the UFS. Significantly, 61.30 percent of participants at the South Campus agreed to the statement that they had read the vision statement of the UFS. What the results suggest is that a high percentage of students are aware of the vision statement of the UFS. The second

question sought to gather relevant information on students' understanding of the purpose of the Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP) of the UFS.

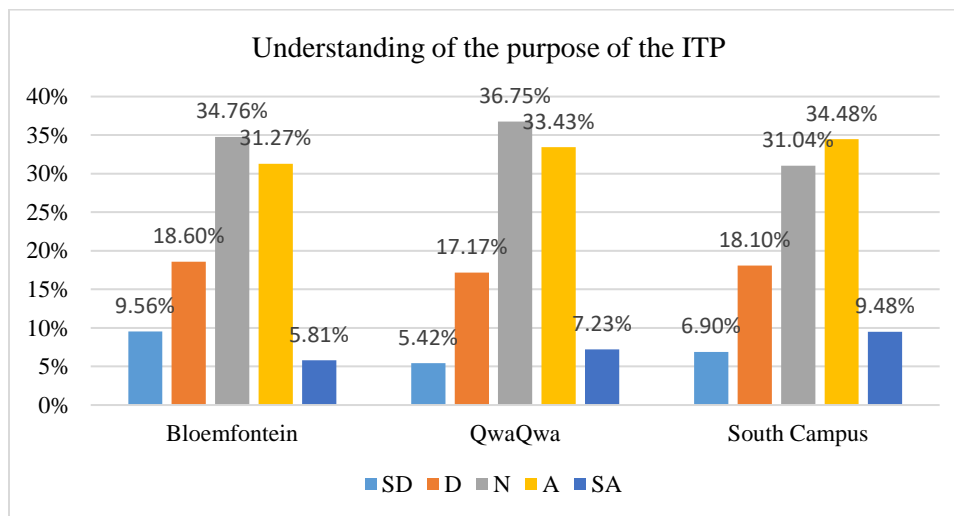


Figure 58: Students' understanding of the purpose of the ITP

In contrast to the results obtained in the question regarding students' understanding of the vision statement, results show that less than 40 percent of the participants understood the purpose of the ITP. An analysis of the results based on the campus location as shown in figure 58 revealed that a little above 40 percent of participants at South Campus (44.00%) and Bloemfontein Campus (40.70%) understood the ITP while less than 40 percent of participants at QwaQwa campus indicated that they did not understand the ITP.

### 3.2.2 Mission and values

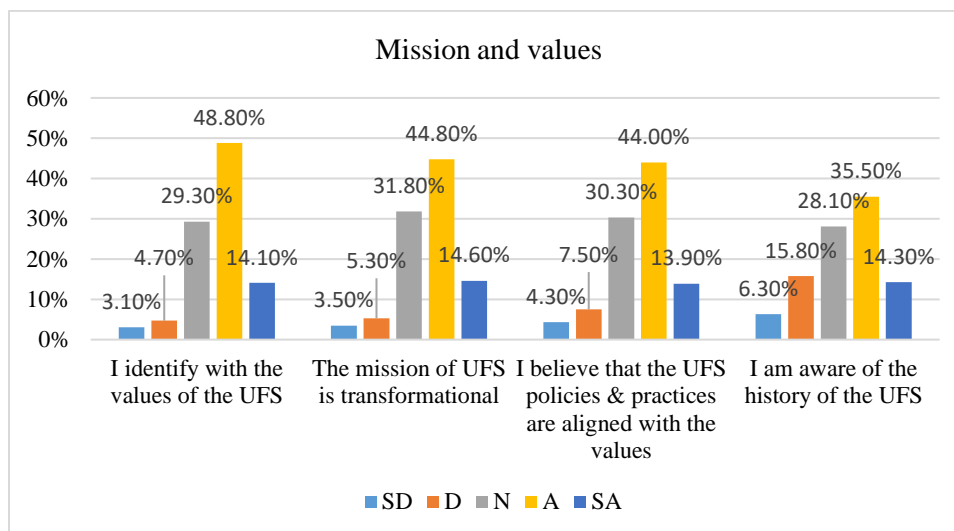


Figure 59: Mission and values of the UFS

Information on the mission, values and history of institutions are very important to the development of the UFS. Figure 59 shows the responses of students regarding the mission, values and history of the UFS. Significantly a higher percentage of students agreed to the statement that the mission of the UFS is well stated (70.60%) while 16.30% strongly agreed to the statement. As shown in figure 59, more than 50 percent of the participants noted that they identify with the values of the UFS (62.90%), believed that the UFS policies were aligned with the values of the UFS (57.90%) and, that the mission of the UFS is transformational (59.40%). However, less than 50 percent of the participants indicated that they were aware of the history of the UFS.

### 3.2.3 Student involvement

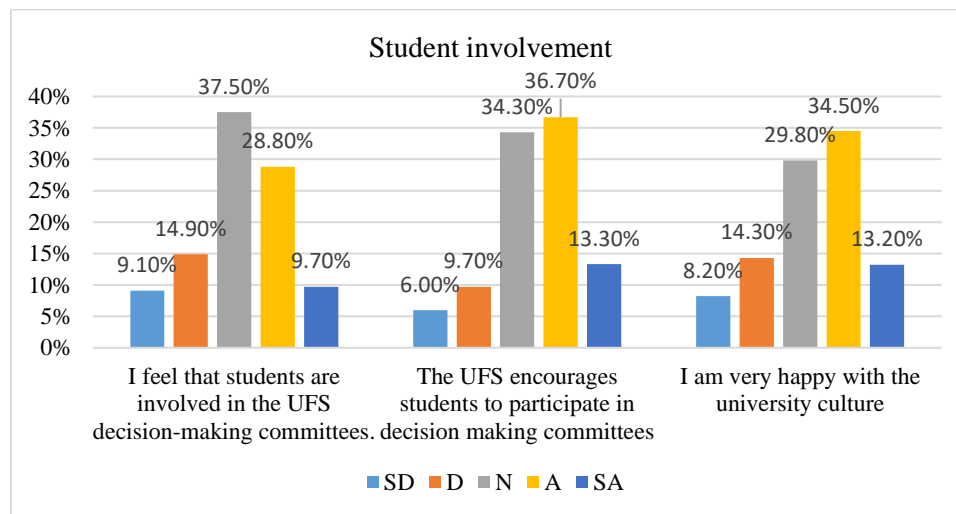


Figure 60: Student involvement

The sub-section on student involvement sought to gather relevant information on the perception of students in relation to their involvement in the governance system of the UFS. The results revealed that, 50 percent of participants were of the opinion that UFS encourage students to participate in decision-making Committees. Conversely, less than 50 percent indicated that students are involved in the decision-making committees (38.50%) and that, students are very happy with the university culture (47.70%). The written comments of students on institutional characteristics are presented in section 3.2.4.

### 3.2.4 Students' voices on institutional characteristics

*“Staff members should wear badges (with staff names) so they are easily identified instead of asking for names and surnames”* (Student – Bloemfontein).



*“Transformation is a necessity and the institution can drive the diversity and integration program further for social cohesion. The research should be used to build... ..the institute should guard against the use of this survey to drive divisions in the institution” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“I would like the UFS to have a culture of unity where all department have the same culture as the university as a whole, not for department to have different cultures” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“I am happy at the moment with the way things are. In this world, we cannot all be accommodated, in some cases we all have to accept the fact that we are made differently and as such we have to embrace our differences, learn to forgive and forget and live on. We have a superb campus with a rich culture and experience. We should all aim at improving on what others did and stop criticising each other when we are the ones to blame. I am totally happy with the Campus Mission and Goals” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“Students should also be involved in the making of some of the University policies. Our voices and opinions should be taken into account so that no student will clash with the policies” (Student QwaQwa campus).*

*“Faculty-specific student committees need to be established to give students a voice. I would love to see student representatives at high-stakes committee meetings like appeal and exam committees” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“You cannot force diversity on people who feel there is no need to understand the history of the country and the university. You also can't explain the damage and hurt to those who never experienced it. Basically you cannot explain how Chocolate cake tastes to someone who has not tasted or seen it” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“Including students in decision making about what happens to their campus is of utmost importance, this also helps students to feel included and to have great studying experience and the university. And to also offer these students full academic support” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“I have appreciated how the UFS has maintained high standards while creating programmes to uplift the disadvantaged and to allow for everyone to feel included; supporting human rights but not at the expense of broader long-term social injustice” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“The environment should allow students to be part of decision making, and also SRC should not be given priority over everything not all of us are SRC hungry but we are agents of change and transformation, in that case, it should be an integration of social cohesion within the university campuses” (Student QwaQwa).*

*“I have experienced that there are students on campus that do not belong there. Not because of race or religion or any other discriminating factor, but purely because I feel that the standards of Kowsies are*

*decreasing at a steep rate and allowing people to come and study with too much leeway and 3rd and 4th chances. We must think about the quality of the graduates that leave university. How is it fair that someone who worked blood sweat and tears to achieve high marks and distinctions to have the same degree/NQF level/acknowledgement at the person who failed a module/s twice or barely passed? And these are the people you are competing with for jobs... Also by allowing unfit students, cause the classes to be filled to the brim, causing chaos and discomfort. Another problem which can be solved if the university increased their standards” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“The UFS should open platforms to students of the UFS community in aspects of social and institutional change, as well as curriculum activities” (Student QwaQwa).*

*“There should be proper training of staff in order to help students. In my experience, I was sent around to a lot of different staff members before finding where I was supposed to be” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“I would like to see that the Alumni of the UFS are more involved in supporting and mentoring and not only in donating” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“The university has a strong culture of silence, as an institution of higher learning there should be many more spaces for debate and discussion. People should not be mistreated or marginalised because of their beliefs...Communication about available opportunities and services for students is exceptionally poor. Social support initiatives like No Student Hungry need to be advertised more aggressively. Cafeterias and restaurants outside of Thakaneng bridge (e.g. Vishuis and residences) need to be advertised because the bridge is much too small for everyone.” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

### 3.2.5 Residential experience (on-campus and off campus)

The section on residential experience focused on the perception of students about their experiences in the residences on and off campus. In order to provide the responses based on students experiences at the different campuses, the data was analysed to reflect the views of students on the three campuses. The first item sought to gather information on how the experiences of students living on campus makes them feel that they belong.

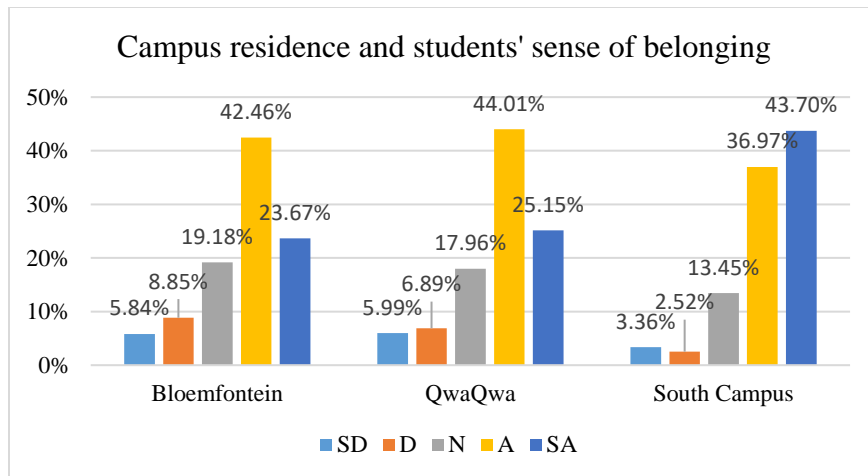


Figure 61: Campus residence and students' sense of belonging

Feedback from the participants revealed that, students who reside on campus indicated strong sense of belonging. As shown in figure 61, more than 60 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein Campus (62.60%), QwaQwa Campus (68.8%) and South Campus (73.20%) indicated that their experience living in a residence on campus made them feel that they belonged. The second question sought to gather information regarding the effect of students' residence life experiences on their academic performance. As shown in figure 62, more than 80 percent of participants on the three campuses opined that there is positive effect of residence life experience on their academic performance.

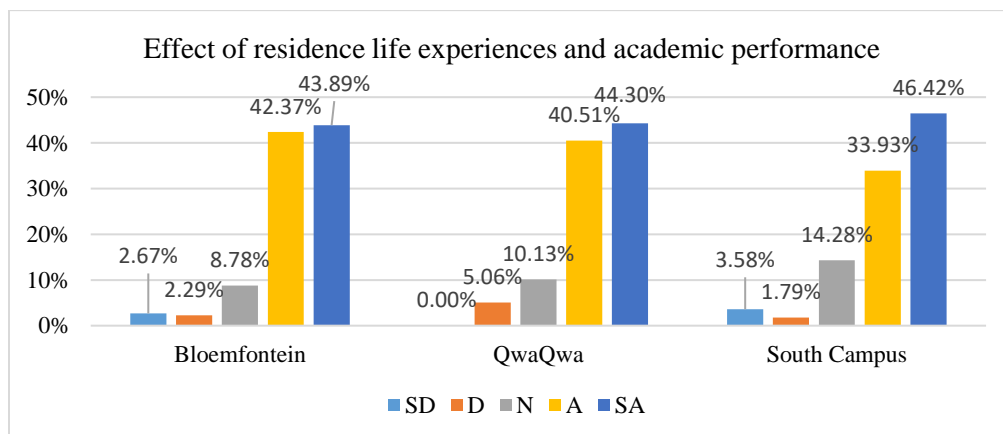


Figure 62: Effect of residence life experience on students' academic performance

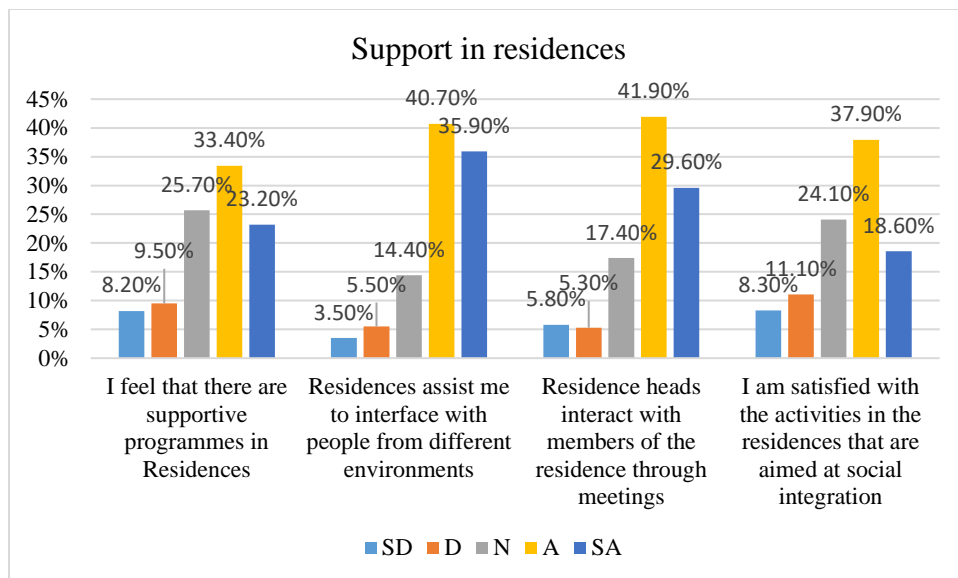


Figure 63: Students' residence life experiences

Figure 63 presents other aspects in relation to the residence (on-campus) life experiences of participants. The result revealed that more than 60 percent of the participants indicated that, they interface with people from different environments at the residences (76.60%), residence heads interact with students through meetings (71.50%), they voluntarily participate in the activities and traditions of their residences (65.90%) and that, they had been informed of the steps to take when they needed help from the residence heads in case of emergency (66.20%). Additionally, more than 50 percent of participants noted that there are supportive programmes in residences (56.60%) and that, they were satisfied with the activities in the residences that are aimed at social integration (56.50%). Contrastingly, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that they received prompt feedback from Housing & Residence Affairs (HRA) when any of the fixings or fittings in their room needed to be fixed.

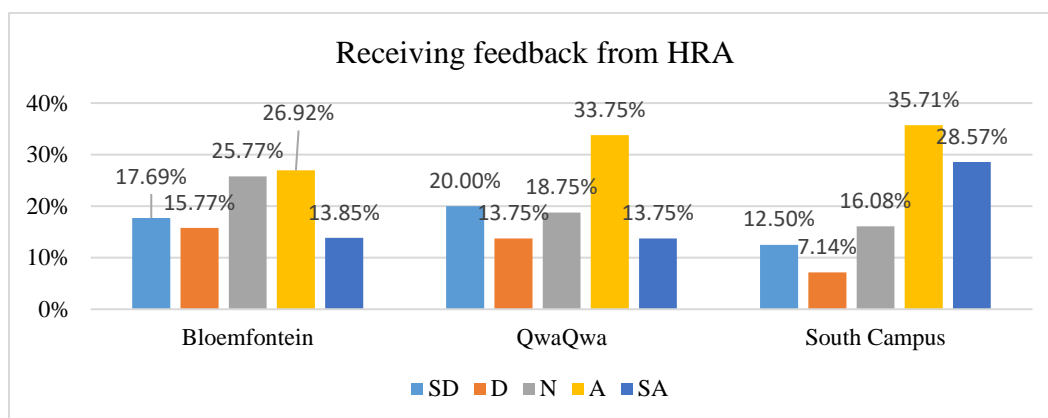


Figure 64: Receiving feedback from HRA

However, as shown in figure 64, an analysis of the results based on campus location revealed that less than 50 percent of participants at Bloemfontein Campus (40.80%) and QwaQwa Campus (47.50%) agreed to the statement that students receive prompt feedback from Housing & Residence Affairs (HRA) department when any of the fixings or fittings in their room needed to be fixed. However, 64.30 percent of participants from South Campus agreed to the statement that, they receive prompt feedback from Housing & Residence Affairs (HRA) when any of the fixings or fittings in their room needed to be fixed. Written comments by participants on on-campus residence is presented in section 3.2.6.

### 3.2.6 Students' voices on on-campus residence

*"I was in residence last year and it was horribly maintained. There has been protests this year so I won't comment on it, but attention really needs to be given to those issues. It does not help UFS is building a new residence when students in the old residences are complaining about broken showers, filthy kitchens and water shortages"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Please respect the privacy of students in residence. It is unsettling to know that at any given moment a strange man can be in my bedroom without me knowing. I don't know how you're going to improve this... But find a way. Also when a student reports a break in ... Don't just pretend to investigate... It's insulting"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I have a concern about the current placement policies at the Housing and Residence Department. It would seem to me, from my own personal experiences and the experiences of some of my peers, that students receive placement in residences on campus based on very prejudicial terms. Students who have personal connections with the staff at the department are favoured above those who may have only their academic merits to depend on. There was also a very troubling incident earlier this year where my personal confidential medical information pertaining to my disability was disclosed to my roommate through her close affiliations with the staff at the department (she also works there part-time). She chose to use this knowledge during a fit of rage to launch a personal attack on me during which I was lambasted as one who is 'abnormal'. I reported the incident to the department, yet no reprimand of any kind followed"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"With regards to the residence, Our Residence Assistants should actually assist us rather than saying they will and actually not helping us. It's so sad when you need help or have a problem regarding residence and you're not taken seriously"* (Student – South campus).

*"Make sure that the Residence Assistants are multilingual and can be able to accommodate people who cannot express themselves in English"* (Student – South campus).

*“All residences must be inclusive and not racially segregated; e.g; why are there so many white Afrikaans people at residences like Vishuis, Armentum and Karee but you are less likely to find any white person in residences like Khayalami. The placement system should be taken into consideration and remodelled”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“As a student living on campus, I constantly feel disrespected by the manner in which HRA deals with reported issues in the residences. HRA drag their feet when students live in unacceptable conditions. The students are treated as if they do not pay fees for accommodation and it is appalling. The infrastructure at residences also needs some improvement and renovations”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“The transformation is a good thing for the university but having unequal proportions of seniors and first years in junior residences will bring many unforeseen problems and I am against that adopted residence policy. It appears as if the University is more interested in first years and seniors become UFS rejects and this will not encourage first years to be part of residence life because once they reach the senior stage, they will also be thrown out to off-campus space. I suggest that the university should make use of the space between varsity kids and outenique residence and build more residence for seniors if they really care about seniors. The construction and upgrading of building is good and I appreciate it, including the new residence that is currently under construction near Khayalami Residence. However, it came to my attention that the residence is for the medical students only and I feel like the decision to do such thing is discriminatory in nature. I believe that we all need each other and everyone should be treated equally in all aspects, be it academically, racially etc.”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“On campus Residence policies or rather the regulations concerning it should be improved, many students mainly Black are rejected because the residence would be apparently full yet we receive different information from students living within. The UFS financial aid is ripping off students and students aren't given a promised full amount of what they're promised”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“The department of Housing and Residence affairs is extremely unwelcoming and very inhumane”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Since day one, I have seen HRA and Management as this political machine, exerting its progressive aims onto all the students from above. This Boogeyman lurking in the shadows”* (Student- Bloemfontein campus).

*“I believe that the university should reintroduce a culture of pre-station using merit and not equality when residences are competing in the fields of culture and sports, if a residence is the best at sêr they deserve to win and not to be told they should give other residences a fair chance and that they may not win again. I also believe that this culture should also be introduced in academic instances, if a test is hard and everybody*

*does bad take the hit like a man and continue to try and get a better mark next time”* (Student - Bloemfontein campus).

*“I believe there is unfairness in the acceptance of on-campus accommodation since we do not truly know the requirements of being reaccepted”* (Student – South campus).

### 3.2.7 Residential experience (off-campus)

The sub-section on students residential experience (off-campus) required students to provide their feedback on four aspects – students’ safety, transportation, access to health care and, social cohesion.

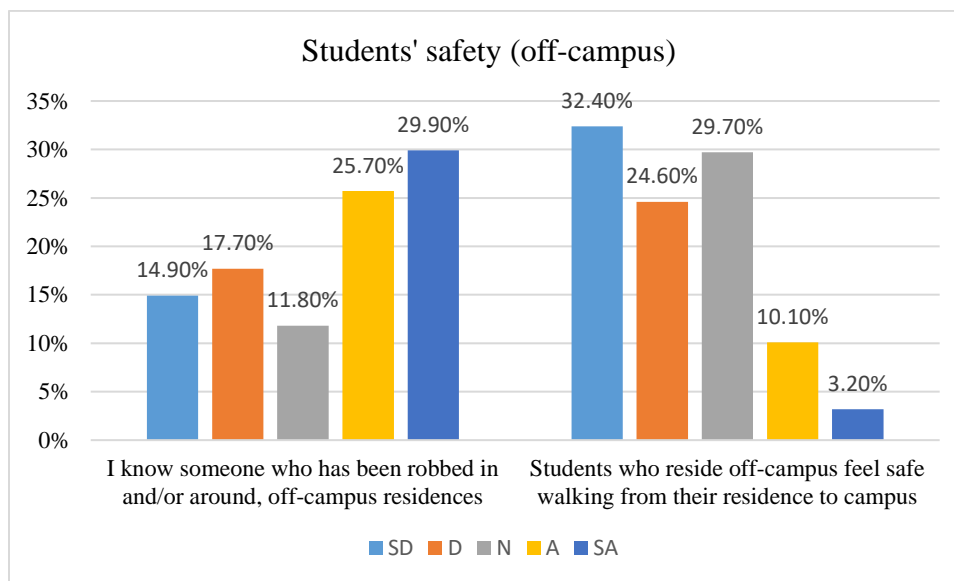


Figure 65: Students’ safety (off-campus)

As shown in figure 65, more than 55 percent of the participants indicated that they knew a colleague who had been robbed in and/or around off-campus residences. Additionally, less than 15 percent of participants (13.30%) of participants noted that they felt safe walking from their residence to campus. The results reveals students perception about off-campus residence safety issues.

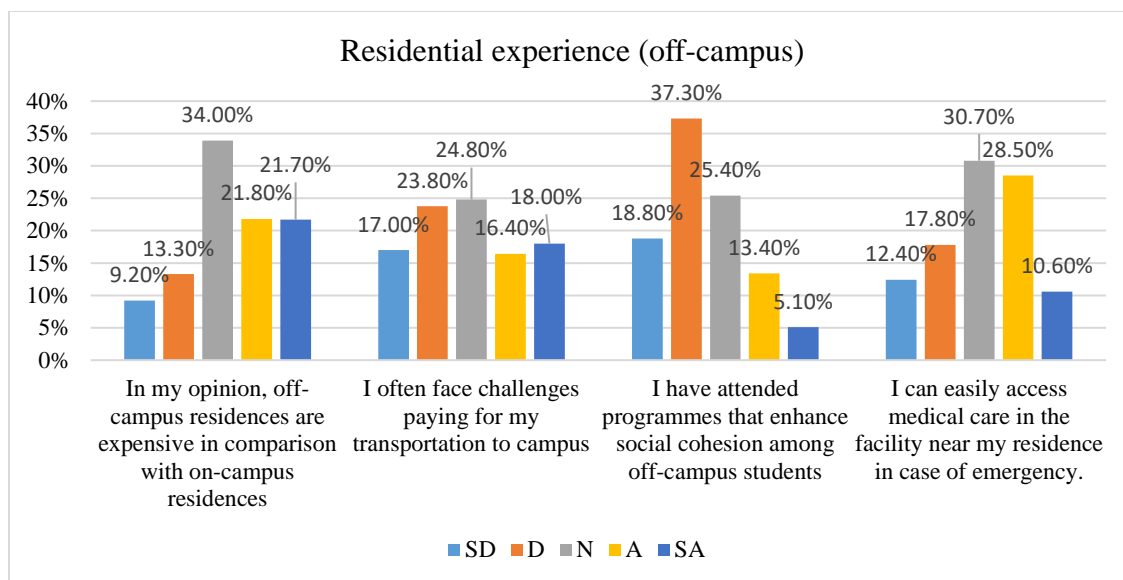


Figure 66: Students' residential experience (off-campus)

The feedback from students who reside off-campus showed that 44 percent of participants were of the opinion that off-campus residences are expensive in comparison with on-campus residences. A bigger percentage of participants (40.80%) disagreed with the statement that, they faced challenges paying for their transportation to campus as compared to those who indicated that they faced financial challenges in paying for transportation to campus (34.40%). Less than 40 percent of the participants agreed to the statement that, they had attended programmes that enhance social cohesion among off-campus students (18.50%) and that, they could easily access medical care in a facility near their residence in case of emergency (39.10%). Some written comments by participants with regard to off-campus residence experience are presented in section 3.2.8.

### 3.2.8 Students' voices on off-campus residence experience

*"I believe that the UFS should place an emphasis on creating policies that are specific to how a city residence is run because most of the information regarding residence life is focused on on-campus residences"* (Student Bloemfontein campus).

*"Be considerate of the off campus students on issues such as safety and health. Safety is highly important"* (Student QwaQwa campus).

*"Provide equal services to students living off-campus as those living on-campus such as security and ensuring that off-campus residences are student friendly. The university can lease those properties for the*



*convenience of students and place students equally and fairly irrespective of race. Also amend the placement policy on residences” (Student - Bloemfontein).*

*“It is too cold sometimes to go to class at 5 pm when you stay off campus” (Student - QwaQwa campus).*

*“The safety issues should be addressed especially for off campus students. Having late classes will require us to walk at night it's not safe. On the other hand, textbooks are very expensive therefore something should be done to deal with such matters. Lastly, private accommodation [fees] should not be reduced. As students we have to receive the whole amount we are expected to receive from NSFAS. We have many needs as students and the food allowance is not enough to cover all those needs. If the maximum amount from NSFAS accommodation allowance is 32 000 then we should receive the whole amount. The institution should not keep the remaining for themselves” (Student Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Increasing the transportation fee was a very low blow to some of us without any funding. The management should have made different amount packages for different students” (Student QwaQwa campus).*

*“Off-campus students have been demanding a campus shuttle for years now. The safety tips given by protection services or campus security are rendered useless if students, particularly woman [female] are expected to walk home, especially after 18:00. Sometimes the 'walk in groups' tip is just impractical. We need a shuttle, urgently” (Student - Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The issue of transportation of students, I think it makes no sense when Taxis return empty from our campus just because 12 o'clock of starting transport, to transport students from campus to their residences. I think students should use transport at any time to and from the campus” (Student QwaQwa campus).*

*“The UFS needs to find a way to engage with the majority of students who happen to live off campus. Currently the UFS student life is targets on residence students only, which is not fair as most students live off campus, but their interests are not really represented by the student structures put in place” (Student Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Foreigners or international students should be given accommodation inside the campus, especially honours degree students who are studying full time” (Student Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Increasing the transportation fee was a very low blow to some of us without any funding. The management should have made different amount packages for different students” (Student - QwaQwa campus).*

*“Concerning residences, I would like UFS to stick to 50%/50% senior and first years as it has always been” (Student - Bloemfontein campus).*

*“As an off-campus resident student, I feel like the UFS does not care about the safety and security of the off-campus students because there are no safe residence where students can stay safely” (Student QwaQwa campus).*

*“Students from Gauteng should be met halfway in lecture halls e.g. at Kroonstad. Bloemfontein is far away and petrol is expensive. After class you either have to sleep over in a guest house, which means more money or drive through the night after class. Fatigue sets in and sleeping on the roadside is very dangerous in crime riddled SA” (Student Bloemfontein campus).*

### 3.2.9 Students’ sense of belonging

The sub-section on students’ sense of belonging required students to provide their responses based on their experiences with their colleagues and staff. As shown in figure 67, more than 50 percent of participants felt valued as students (56.60%) and that the university recognises their humanity (53.70%). Additionally, more than 50 percent of participants agreed with the statement that, their interaction with staff and students provided them with a sense of belonging (61.80%) and that, the UFS culture allow for free and open expression of individual beliefs (55.70%).

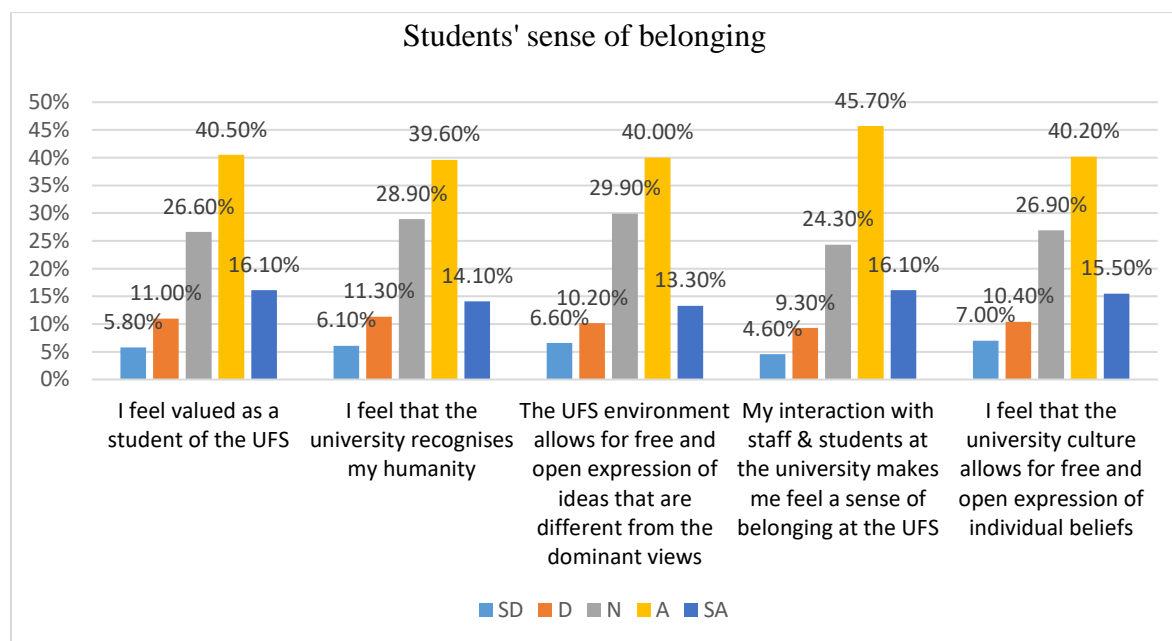


Figure 67: Students’ sense of belonging

Written comments by students on their sense of belonging and politics on campus are presented in sections 3.2.10 and 3.2.11.

### 3.2.10 Students' voices on sense of belonging

*"I will like to share that the UFS doesn't care of students' needs.....most of us go to campus with empty stomach like me.....they don't care about our poor background. They also do not release our funding early so we often lag in our studies"* (Student - QwaQwa campus).

*"I would like the UFS to first have an Orientation that is inclusive of ALL first years..... I speak as a first year who attended orientation this year only to have no sense of belonging whatsoever. Being shown around campus and in my casual T-shirt, the only thing I could do was turn back because all the on-campus students got along as a group and found belonging to the new place (UFS). The only way I could be part of the new family and belong was if I joined a day residence at a fee of R850+ but this still wasn't enough because UFS doesn't take into consideration [the fact that], we don't all come from privileged backgrounds"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I believe students should be admitted to university based on performance. I am white (almost 'unfortunately') and I also struggled financially like many previously disadvantaged students. But because I am white I am currently disadvantaged based solely on the colour of my skin. And that is not fair in any country, and because of the past, which was not fair. I feel white students are currently paying the price of something we were not even a part of"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I am disappointed that people still need to ask 'Does everyone understand Afrikaans here?' at meetings and events. I am sad that some students still tell me that lecturers teach in Afrikaans even when there are non-Afrikaans speakers in attendance. The university must not market events in English if speakers will be presenting in Afrikaans, it's misleading and frustrating. This insistence on speaking Afrikaans is creating so much animosity among non-Afrikaans speakers, it is divisive"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I am Afrikaans, but I feel that it does not make sense for sign posts and notices to be in English and Afrikaans. To truly be inclusive, things must either be in at least Sesotho as well. I do sometimes feel like the emphasis on native languages and experiences dismisses Afrikaans as a native language, and while I respect that historically Afrikaans has had more rights, I feel that we should remember that English is the common enemy, the language slowly taking over our country because we cannot find a way to harmonize our diverse languages"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"UFS has been one of the best and warm place I've ever been to and I really appreciate the support I've received from the institution"* (Student – South Campus).

*"In general, the staff at the Business School is awesome. Most importantly, the admin staff"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Policies of the UFS are not friendly to International students. They are almost designed to make their experience at the University a terrible one. Some administrators especially at the residence department on QwaQwa campus are xenophobic in their treatment to international students”* (Student - QwaQwa campus).

*“Religion, safety and health issues should a priority at QwaQwa campus to allow every student to feel welcome and accommodated”* (Student - QwaQwa campus).

*“I feel more welcome at UFS and so far I've had the best experience”* (Student – South campus).

*“Give all students a chance to work on campus not to repeat the same students again and again....allow others to work”* (Student - QwaQwa campus).

*“In most of my, if not all experiences, I have realized that the UFS is an autocratic and capitalistic institution. The UFS should see that the students are fighting the institution because they can see the injustices within the institution. This university has the potential of becoming one of the best institutions in Africa, if not the best. But if they continue taking the direction that they are taking right now, nothing great will ever be achieved here. Either than that, I cannot wait to leave this institution”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“I would like the UFS to create more sports activities whereby students will compete with their colleagues in other campuses”* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*“South Campus miss out on almost all of the activities done at Bloemfontein campus, we are isolated and always have nothing interesting to participate in”* (Student – South Campus).

*“Staff members at administration are always keen to help and I feel comfortable talking to them. However, I had this bad experience whereby a white lady talked rudely to homosexual individual and never helped that person”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“There is exclusion of people who are not Sotho or Zulu. International students can not feel a sense of belonging at all”* (Student - QwaQwa campus).

*“I feel less belonging with the differences of payment deadlines between South African and international students. I felt like I was not valued when I got de-registered due to unpaid fees that were even less than a sixth of what I had paid. It was too much and it affected my performance because I was stressed all the time thinking of ways of getting money so I could submit my assignments”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus)

*“Dissemination of information and event(s) planning could be improved”* (Student – South Campus).

*“I would like the University to treat us equal, Zulu and Sotho must be given same attention”* (Student - QwaQwa campus).

*“Please let the staff understand that student protests are never pleasant even for the students who have no other way of fighting to get an education. Black poor students are not animals trying to deface the UFS..... We merely want an equal chance because face it if we don't fight for it we won't get it.....We are all here to better ourselves. Sometimes some of us just have to get drastic to be heard”* (Student).

*Create arts and culture spaces....and acknowledge the First Nation's culture (Khoi and San)”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“I would suggest that the institution should first consult the students and engage with them more before they could finalize policies”* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*“UFS is a good learning environment for learners all over the world and international students receive very good care and as Lesotho students, workshops are held to help us in our studies”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“There are many challenges but just to mention few....nepotism, favouritism, biasness, racism, unequal superiority between campuses, lack of representation - assistant deans, directors, head of departments, officers on QwaQwa campus”* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*“Being UFS student is fascinating, it develops the sense of belonging while equipping us with needed experience for the workplace. I myself enjoy and proud to be a Kowsie”* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

### 3.2.11 Students' voices on politics

*“The influence of the different political parties on campus cause the country's political problems to become more apparent on campus with individuals to use the UFS for political purposes not for academic advancement”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Political correctness is drowning creativity. I am not advocating irresponsible and destructive speech, but there is not a sense of freedom of expression”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Remove politics from campus SRC elections because that is the elephant in the room that causes conflict. It causes conflict because the political parties only push their agenda and not what is mutually beneficial to all students from different backgrounds”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“I have personally seen so many attacks from a certain political party, and it honestly scares me how much they can get away with and nothing happens to them, instead of enforcing a university where they can have a calm and quiet protest that is controlled rather than malicious, so I am honestly scared for my safety whenever I even hear that the party is on campus and I am scared to go to class lately because of it. There*

*is no repercussions, there is no control, and no feeling of safety for students” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I understand the need for political expression in universities, but it shouldn't be used to drive an outside political agenda or alienate certain races” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I find it very disturbing when I see students using political parties when [students'] council members are to be chosen. In my view, politics should not be part of the university and it is VERY disturbing” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I believe political preferences should not be allowed to infiltrate the UFS environment, as in student council, as since the last elections for student council, there has been a great divide between students and doesn't allow for the UFS idea of diversity, inclusivity and acceptance. I've seen friends fight due to different views of political parties and believe this causes more division and less peace and respect for those of different standing” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The protesting on campus due to invalid reasons are really scary and I do not feel safe with the EFF and SASCO members competing against each other and then end up protesting to get a say” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“There is one race that seems to belong here. Coloured, Indian, Asian students are left out. Politicians run the student activities in order to boost their own political career and we bear the brunt of it. Can these political leaders not be limited to a certain scope of activities? We are here to get our degrees, not to ride a social rollercoaster. I feel like the management team cares about money, not the quality of our education or the students. Here, we are numbers, who pay our accounts, but the structure is built for something else than a learning experience it seems” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“There is too much Politics on campus. What is the purpose of having the EFF/ANC present all the time... both parties inspire racism. Get the politics off the campus. Having a student representative council is good but it should have nothing to do with a political party. Politics has no place on campus, our current political party inspires racism. Politics makes it unpleasant to even walk on the Takaneng Bridge” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

### 3.2.12 Religion

The sub-section on religion was developed to gather relevant information regarding students' experiences in relation to religious tolerance on UFS campus. Figure 68 presents the responses of students in relation to four aspects on religion. The results revealed a strong culture of religious tolerance with more than 50

percent of participants indicating that, they felt comfortable expressing their religious beliefs in class (52.60%) and on campus (58.70%). More than 60 percent of participants noted that staff of the UFS respect the different religious or spiritual beliefs of students other than Christianity (66.00%) and that, lecturers respect the different religious beliefs of their students other than Christianity (70.00%).

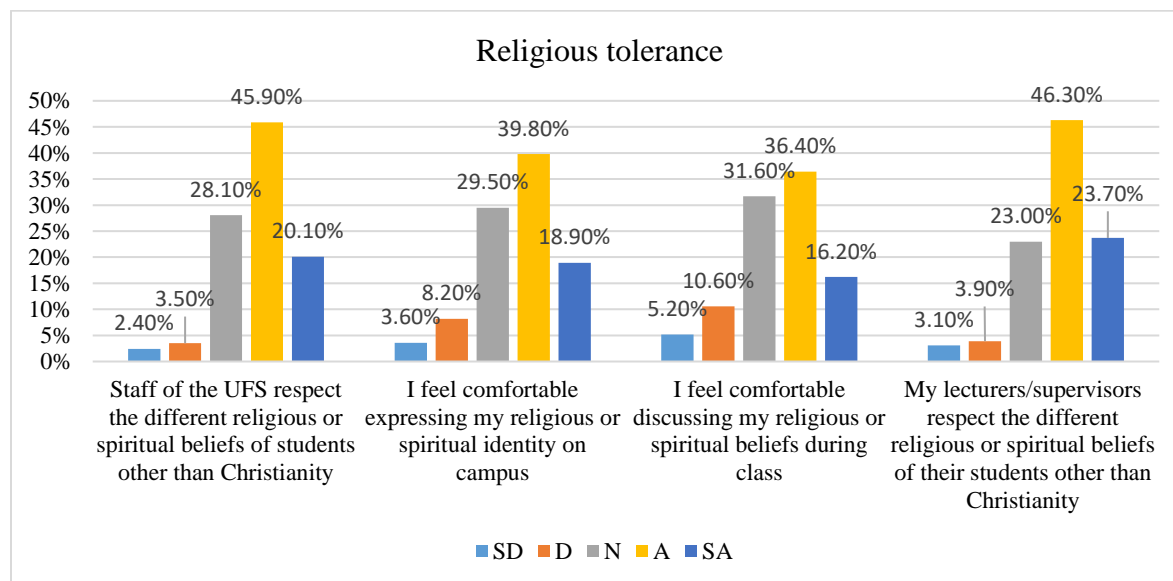


Figure 68: Religious tolerance

### 3.2.13 Students' voices on religion

*"Allow all religions the adequate space to practice their religious beliefs. Rastafarism isn't recognized as a religion at the university and therefore practices of this religion are prohibited"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I think that in terms of religions everybody should feel free to express as well as practicing their own beliefs"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I feel that the Christian community is being alienated in the name of being inclusive of everyone when in the first place they do not impose themselves on anyone....HRA must consult all the students, not by way of an online survey but by actually visiting the residences and holding a house meeting and asking for input from the students. Then they can do a survey for accountability sake and take it from there. "* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I think there should be an improvement with the religion...yes there is a church for Christians but what about other religions like Islam for instance...."* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Religious groups should be given more attention. More Academic buildings need to be added at the campus to avoid clashes"* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*“As a straight, Christian student with many friends from different religious-, racial- and LBTQI+ backgrounds, I find that Christians sometimes have to live 'hush-hush' on Campus. Straight students also experience that students should rather all be treated equally, rather than to place so much emphasis on students who are 'different' - it is 2019 and we all get along, without being forced to acknowledge differences. We do not need to learn about it through study-material, we will all get along as we participate in activities” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

### 3.2.14 Resources, facilities and health

The section on resources, facilities and health was developed to gather relevant information on students’ perception on the climate of the UFS with respect to students’ expectation under these themes.

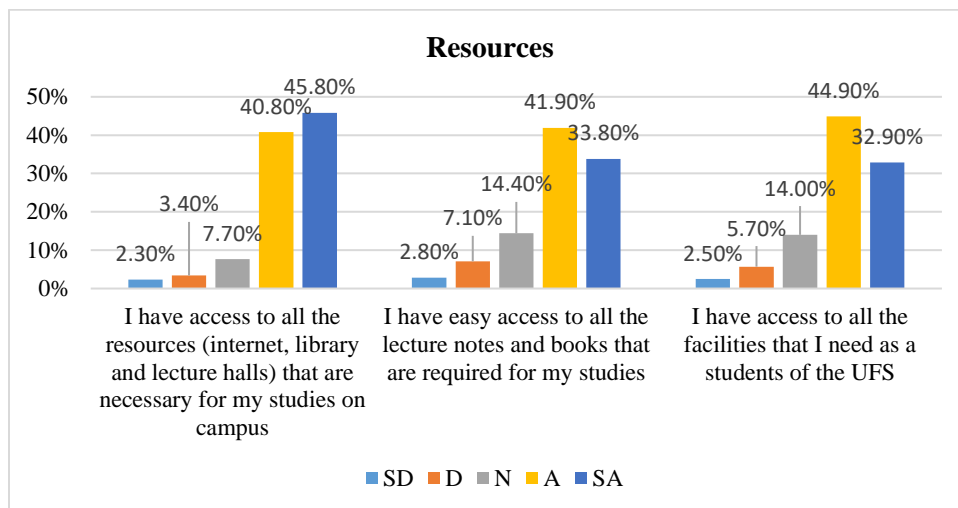


Figure 69: Resources

First, participants were required to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement on the provision of learning resources in the UFS. As shown in figure 69, more than 70 percent of participants indicated that, they have access to all the resources (internet, library and lecture halls) on campus (86.60%), have access to all the lecture notes and books required for their studies (75.70%) and have access to all the facilities they needed to use on campus for their studies (77.80%). Section 3.2.15 present the written comments of students on resources at the UFS.

### 3.2.15 Students’ voices on resources

*“It's strange that the SCD (Student Counselling and Development) and the Psychology department does not communicate and collaborate, especially in terms of resources available to post-graduate students and workshops presented by both entities” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*



*“If administrative officials can be understanding that Blackboard is sometimes very...During registration period, the university [should] employ people who are friendly and willing to help other people” (Student – South Campus).*

*“I would be happy to see sign language interpreters in all graduation ceremonies because now we can watch the ceremonies online but still, Deaf people cannot access the motivational speeches rendered in those ceremonies due to the language barrier. I think it will be fair to provide an interpreter just for the beginning of each graduation and the closing part where there are motivational and encouraging words for the aspiring graduates” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Your website, specially the student resources is absolutely pathetic....ATLA (Religious database, e-resources) have been down for most part of the year. The website is not user friendly and it changes every now and then, but then it is worse than before. Blackboard works at times, but totally user unfriendly. Online registrations was a total mess. It is embarrassing to have a university with such as [...] website. I also had problem with my ethical clearance with RIMS through the website - Hesma van Tonder, floor 5 of the library) was excellent at helping me when the [...] website was letting me down. The personnel at RIMS were also great, again, after frustrations with the website. Your staff are great, fix the website!” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The UFS must improve the library.....to accommodate a large number of students and there is a lack of food shops in the campus” (Student – QwaQwa Campus).*

*“Improve Wi-Fi connection.....Hire best qualified staff especially, nurses” (Student – QwaQwa Campus).*

*“At the South campus students are strolling in terms if accessing their money for basic needs because there are no ATM's and we have to travel far in order to have hard cash also it's dangerous to walk around with money it would be better to have ATM's on campus” (Student – South Campus).*

*“The computer labs are not readily accessible. There are too many students. I always have to wait in line 30 to 45min and wait for the computer to start up and log in which can take an additional 20 to 30 min” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“There should be a post on social media if there are shows being performed at the theatre on campus by the drama students! Saw one once, was amazing. Would love to see more and take friends but we don't know when what is happening....? Only the big things of campus are in the news and social media. Please mention the smaller things as well. Can kowsie gear maybe get cooler stuff? Like have you seen Stellenbosch's stuff? They have bikinis, gym clothes and many more. I am aware of the kowsie designer of the year competition. But I'm not talking other logos and designs... more options to choose from would be cool!!! :) But good job. Love UFS so much” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I would appreciate if e-mail inquiries were answered”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Service from the University has been terrible, especially around admin related functions like registration and deregistration of modules, and from a blackboard support perspective. Also, certain lecturers have failed to properly teach, guide and provide advice over the years that I have been at the University”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“There need to be more areas (not just the bridge) where students can meet and socialise, the bridge is overcrowded and small”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“There are limited study areas which get crowded during test weeks. All faculties should have test week. Off campus students need to be catered more for on campus. UFS financial aid should be more of use to students. Rude staff members should be fired”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Please, could the heaters in the library be switched on during winter? It's extremely cold in level six, and most postgraduate students can barely focus in the library because of the cold. Many people are avoiding using that area for studies”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

The sub-section on health was designed to gather information from students regarding their perception on health and safety issues on campus.

### 3.2.16 Health

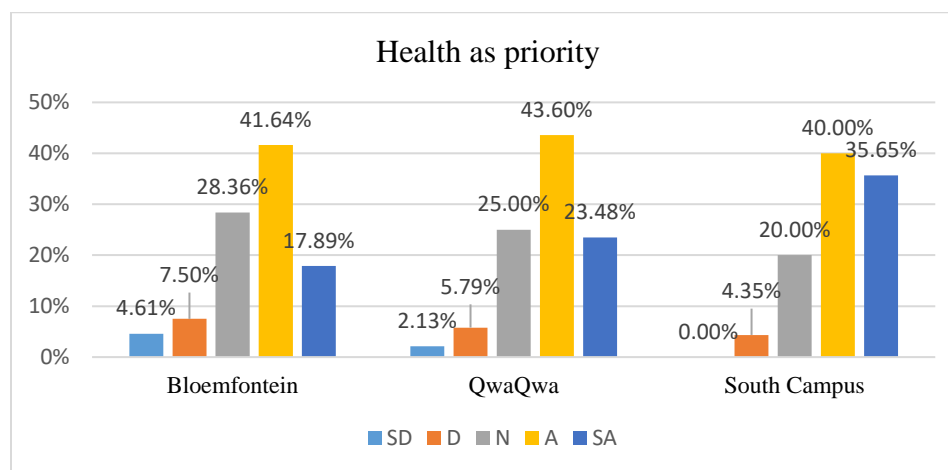


Figure 70: Health as a priority

As shown in figure 70, more than 50 percent of participants in all three campuses were of the opinion that, at the UFS, keeping high levels of health and safety is a priority. The written comments of students on health is presented in Section 3.2.17.

### 3.2.17 Students' voices on Health

*"Mental health support is lacking in the Allied Health department. Many of my fellow students experience burnout during our 3rd and 4th year. And we are under a lot of pressure from course work. We have unnecessary assignments and quite frankly we are overworked"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"The school clinic must not be closed on Sundays because we suffer only to find that the clinic is closed and we are forced to travel where sometimes we don't have any money"* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*"I am a vegetarian. I only recently discovered the bridge actually caters for vegetarians. My fellow vegetarian friends also didn't know thus we never go there! Maybe a post now and then to say something about that would be nice"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"None of the food outlets on the bridge is halal so I had a very bad experience in that regard and my first year I suffered severe headaches because of constant hunger and poor nutrition"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Try and stop the amount of codeine and drugs that students take. Also enforce leadership participation among students"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I think students need an indoors gym that is open throughout the day and in a bigger area"* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*"The experience at UFS helped me to grow mentally and emotionally as a person. I have learnt so much for the past three years"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Students still experience more problem to accessing doctors. I'd like to see that issue addressed"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"There should be more health promotion drives/initiatives on campus like mobile HIV testing sites and health screening"* (Student - Bloemfontein).

*"The health and safety of off-campus students should be addressed on a higher scale as to what to do when their health and safety is threatened"* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*"What I will advise to put more consideration on is the academic year and its consequences, more students face emotional exhaustion and UFS ignores that"* (Student - Bloemfontein).

*“In relation to health, I would be happy if they [UFS] can improve their service. It is hard to ask help but they give you an appointment to come after 3 days. We really need help.....People’s health must be a priority” (Student - Bloemfontein).*

*“Access to health facilities is limited. We are expected to book as [if] we plan our sickness....that makes no sense at all” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“We need a medical hospital that is not private to charge students affordable consultation. Some of us are getting ARVs why should we go off campus? Without medical aid you can’t afford health on campus” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“The university has no regard for the mental health of its students. The facilities provided are not enough and the operators thereof are not helpful leading to the question of their competency to assist the students” (Student - Bloemfontein).*

*“The smoking of dagga should not be a public spectacle. The noise levels at the library and computer labs must be strictly monitored” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“There must be more psychologists on campus at Kopsie Health, when one books it takes time to get assistance” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

### 3.2.18 Safety and security

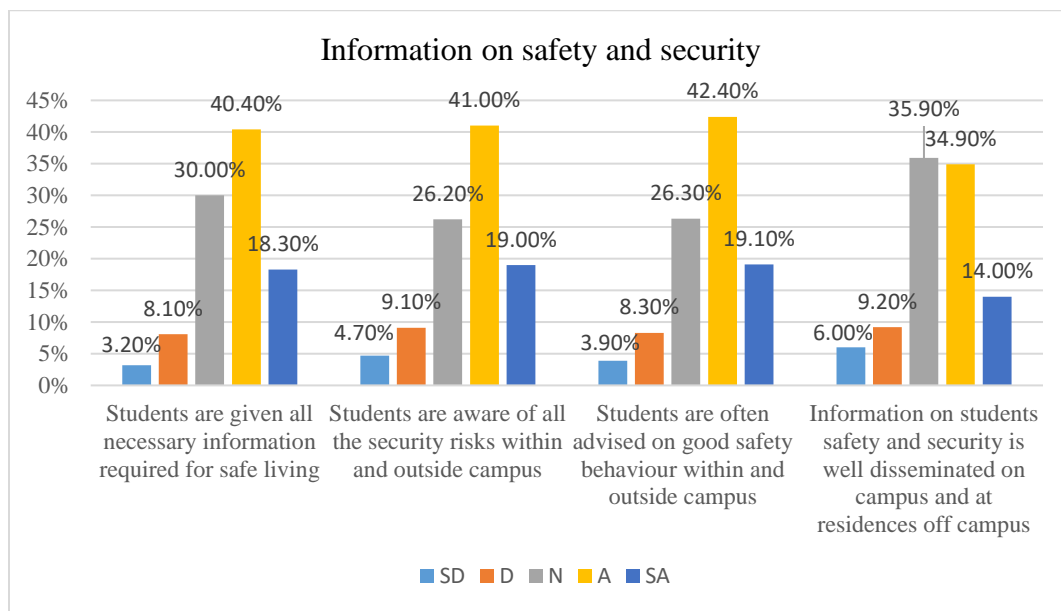


Figure 71: Information on safety and security

Information on safety and security on campus is necessary for students because it serves to provide students with guidelines on whom to contact in cases of emergency and what is expected of students in order to keep safe. As shown in figure 72, more than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they were provided with all the necessary information for safe living (58.70%), they were aware of the security risks on campus (60.00%) and, they are often advised on good safety behaviour within and outside campus (61.50%). However, less than 50 percent of participants opined that, information on students' safety and security is well disseminated on campus and at residences off campus (48.90%).

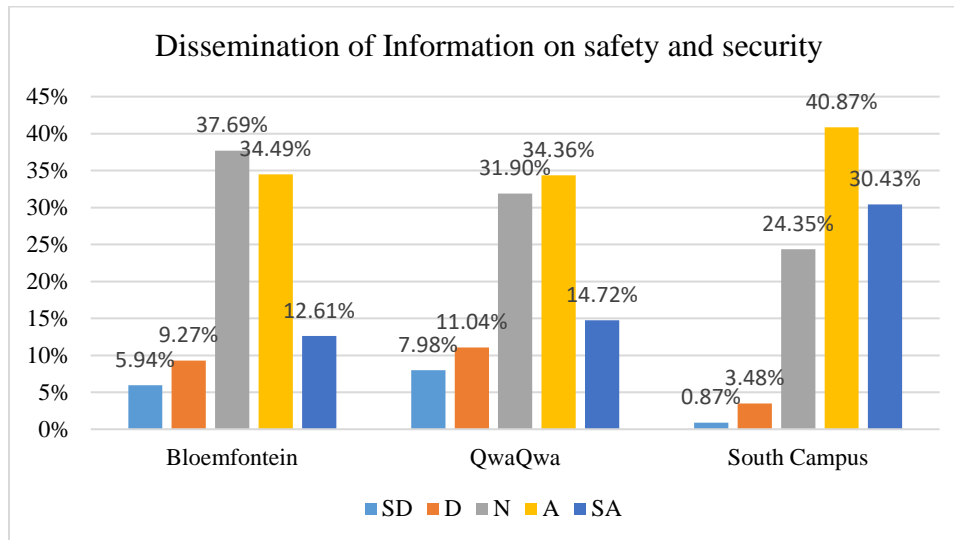


Figure 72: Dissemination of information on safety and security (distribution by campus)

A detailed analysis of the responses on the extent to which information on students' safety and security is disseminated on campus and at residences off campus revealed that participants at South Campus were of the opinion that, adequate information is disseminated (71.30%). However, less than 50 percent of participants at Bloemfontein (47.10%) and QwaQwa (49.08%) campuses were of the opinion that information on students' safety and security is well disseminated on campus and at residences off campus.

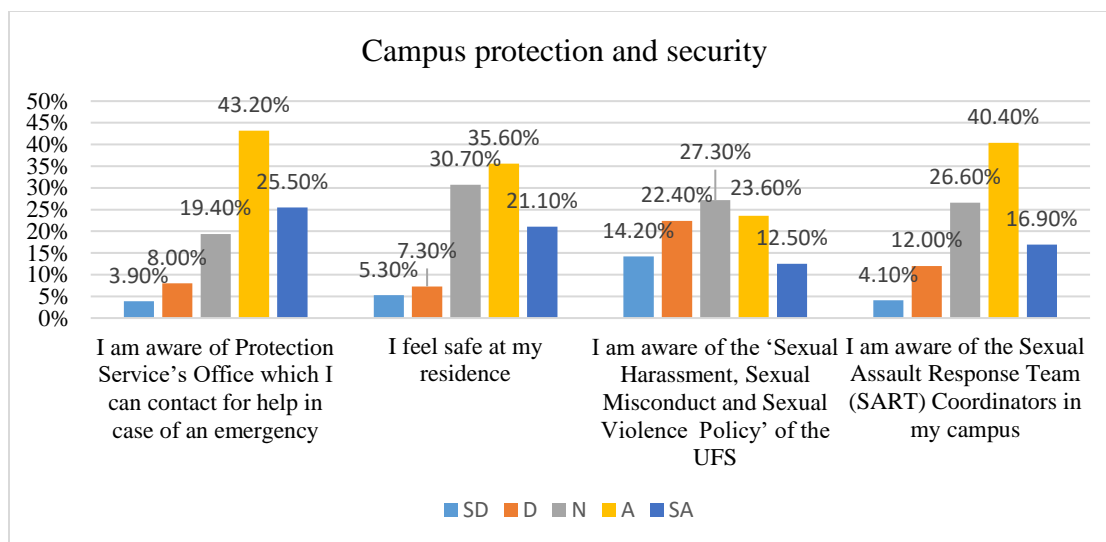


Figure 73: Campus protection and security

The last sub-section on safety and security sought to gather relevant information on the feedback of participants in relation to students' awareness of the role of the Protection Services Office, the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) and the 'Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy of the UFS. As shown in figure 73, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that they were aware of the role of Protection Services Office (68.70%) and the Sexual Assault Response Team (57.30%). However, while 36.10 percent of participants indicated that they were aware of the 'Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy' of the UFS, 36.60 percent indicated that they were not aware of the policy.

### 3.2.19 Students' voices on safety and security

*"Can speed bumps be erected at the QwaQwa main gate, before someone gets knocked down by a car?"* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*"Students who walk on streets on campus (from the entry gate onwards) should take their earphones off. I have seen many students who walked blindly in front of a car just because they could not hear it, not even looking left or right. And in a case of a hit, it's always 'the driver's fault', never the student who was preoccupied with their music not hearing what's going on around them"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Security should be [improved].....a friend of mine got her wallet stolen and apparently there are no cameras in the cafeteria at south campus"* (Student – South campus).

*“I do not feel entirely safe on campus because I have seen the security at the gate just open the booms for persons claiming to have forgotten their cards. Protocol is not enforced” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Students are not safe off-campus, so I would suggest that the university takes the matter seriously and be able to provide security for the off campus students and start to take them more seriously as they are part of the university. And also include them in all the programs done at school which only accommodate on campus students that should change because it is not fair” (Student – QwaQwa campus).*

*“When there are incidents of students disrupting classes, the university must prioritize the safety of the student that attend the class and wish to carry on with their work. The disruptive students must be taken away and disciplinary steps taken against them because they are vandalizing university property and taking other students right to study away. It is ridiculous that campus security just stand and watch when incidents like this happen!!!!” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The university has to do a better job of ensuring that campus is safe. I have heard many stories about the security services arriving far past the time they are needed” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I would like if the University focused a bit more on the safety of especially female students. Living off-campus and commuting or walking means there are a lot of times you are alone in an area. Perhaps make pepper spray/rape whistles available to students etc.” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“[The] UFS needs to prioritise women’s safety and rights” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Campus security needs to respond quickly when there are incidents and they need to increase visibility and be identifiable on and around campus. Shuttle systems need to be in place to help students get to and from campus safely” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The safety [of students] has to be managed well.....even the securities [officers] who stay at residence have to be well trained and be physically fit” (Student – QwaQwa campus).*

*“The UFS should re-consider this thing of having late classes there shouldn't be classes ending at 8pm the latest classes should end at least 6pm” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Securities (officers) at the gate are not strict enough.....they still give in favours, anyone can still walk in with a gun pretending to be students” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I feel like the safety of off-campus students is not being taken serious, looking at the fact that most students get mugged, stabbed and killed on their way from or to campus. The University only does talk but nothing is being implemented. How many time did students request free shuttles/buses? How many lives do we have*

to lose until action is taken? I feel safe as a residence student but feel for those who have to walk in those late or early hours just so they can access study facilities” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

“I feel the university should be more transparent with students. Especially about sexual abuse and violent incidents. The university does not inform us of all these issues. They should also stop “sugar coating” information. They should tell students the truth and not answer every single question with... 'Refer to the policy'. This leads students to find out that the policy is flawed and irrelevant to the question or non-existent” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

### 3.2.20 Facilities

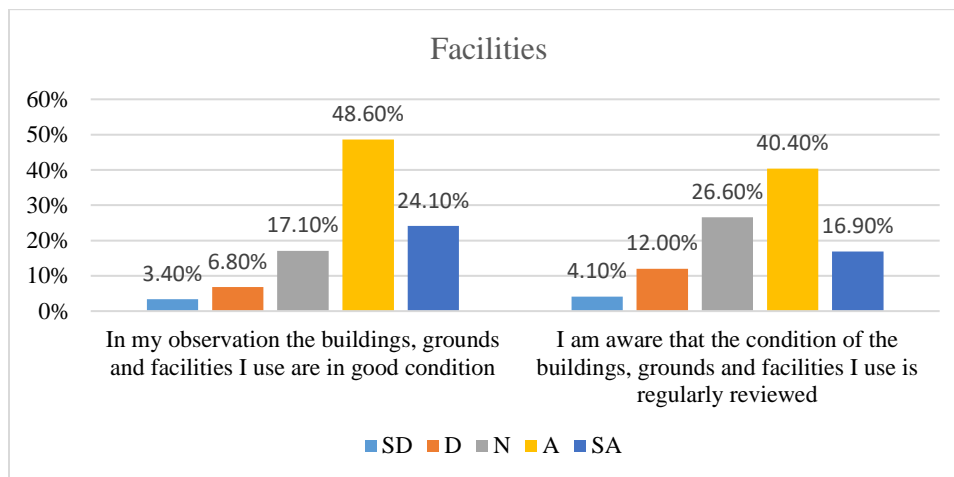


Figure 74: Facilities

The sub-section on facilities required participants to provide their responses on questions that relate to the maintenance and conditions of the facilities at UFS. As shown in figure 74, 72.70 percent of participants agreed with the statement that, the buildings, grounds and facilities they use are in good condition while 57.30 percent noted that, the buildings, grounds and facilities they use are regularly reviewed.

### 3.2.21 Students’ voices on facilities

Although the survey results revealed high agreement percentages with respect to the items under the facilities domain, the open-ended section revealed students concerns in other aspects of management of facilities and the campus environment.

“I am impressed with the infrastructural developments underway at QwaQwa campus and feel that it is a move in the right direction for improving service delivery” (Student - QwaQwa campus).



*“The seats in all the lecture rooms in Genmin Lectorium (Next to the computer labs) are all horribly broken, which makes the venue near useless. Even our lecturer has become agitated about it, because it means that a class of 40 students needs to spread out to nearly the back of the 100+ seat venue in order to find workable seats. I think everyone would be thankful if they could be fixed, replaced, even just sawed off and replaced with ordinary plastic chairs” (Student– Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I feel like the South Campus is underdeveloped, I would like to see it more emphasis put on developing its infrastructure and more developed facilities, for example Braai areas, restaurants, ATMs , an indoor gym and etc.” (Student– South campus).*

*“UFS QwaQwa campus is the best and it supports its students from the start of the academic activities throughout the year but QwaQwa campus does not have bursaries like sport bursaries and staff like that” (Student – QwaQwa campus).*

*“A map should be made indicating all the buildings on campus as well as what faculty/department/service that is available to students there as well as contact information and descriptions of what is offered. After orientation week (which almost half of the students don’t attend due to late registration or being off campus) there is no other mention of what is offered on campus (kowsie health, counselling, student wellness, student affairs, CTL) and most students are not even aware that these things exist. More awareness - students will cope better and have the necessary support to do so” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I am not happy with some of the study classes because the space is too tight and the study rooms are not enough” (Student – QwaQwa campus).*

*“One aspect that the university should work in, not mentioned above, is becoming more environmentally friendly. I believe that the UFS has the potential to become one of the country’s leading universities to be environmentally friendly. By implementing small changes, such as recycling dustbins, we could make a small change. I would love if UFS could somehow place larger recycling bins around campus so students can put their recyclables somewhere” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“At QwaQwa we don't have enough shops for on-campus students [there is] only a dining hall which sells food which are not healthy...we also like to have small restaurant [similar to those on] main campus. We need more shops inside our campus” (Student - QwaQwa).*

*“Some of the lecture halls, the EMS Auditorium for example, is very dirty. It is very unpleasant. The UFS should clean it, but I think they should also implement policies that prohibit students from littering and being disrespectful towards buildings” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Management of the campus should check the venues because sometimes they [allocate] small venue where we need a big one....in short they have to check the timetable before they [allocate] venues”* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*“I really do appreciate the university's upkeep of the grounds and I cannot wait to see how pretty it will look when construction has finished”* (Student W – Bloemfontein campus).

*“[There] is too little parking for the amount of students and staff on campus* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Please notify students of any and all construction or renovation that will be taking place, it disrupts learning due to noise pollution as well as the locking of major walkways. If we knew it was happening, we would be less annoyed”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“I think that the UFS must have buildings where off-campus student can use as waiting area for other lectures and, where they can relax and feel comfortable”* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*“Very often the bathrooms are in a mess especially the one that was at the bridge”* (Student - Bloemfontein campus).

*“The lack of student parking and trees on campus is also shocking”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“The desks in the library are dirty. There is a lack of computers in the library and at the PC labs especially when the top labs are closed at 20:00. The air conditioners in some of the classes and PC labs at the bridge are set on high heat which causes great discomfort because it is too stuffy”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Improve on more student parking, and lower ticket rates to have to pay. The parking tickets are too expensive and unnecessary”* (Student Bloemfontein campus).

*“The cafeteria gives student a calm environment where they can rest and regain their stress through the meals and the activities provided”* (Student-South Campus).

*“As a student living on campus, I constantly feel disrespected by the manner in which HRA deals with reported issues in the residences. HRA drags their feet when students are living in unacceptable conditions. The students are treated as if they do not pay fees for accommodation and it is appalling. The infrastructure at residences also needs some improvement and renovations”* (Student Bloemfontein campus).

*“The campus is not inclusive, it is only accessible to able bodied students, but unfortunate for the disabled”* (Student - Bloemfontein campus).

*“Inclusive toilets make things awkward between different sexes. It just feels uncomfortable coming from the bathroom as a male and buckling up your pants and a female is sees you doing that in an inclusive toilet. ....reference to the inclusive toilets in FGG building” (Student - Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Please write all signs and instructions on campus in at least two languages. This refers to the ones outside the Sports Centre near Mabaleng Auditorium. They are only written in Afrikaans and is disadvantages us because we are not that fluent in the language” (Student - Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The computer labs and library at QwaQwa campus are too small to accommodate all students and it is frustrating to stand in line to access this facilities. We need bigger library and computer laboratory and discussion rooms in QwaQwa campus please. Add more computer labs and build bigger library on QwaQwa campus will be helpful” (Student – QwaQwa campus).*

### 3.2.22 Students’ finance

The section on students’ finance had two main sections - tuition and other expenses and, financial aid.

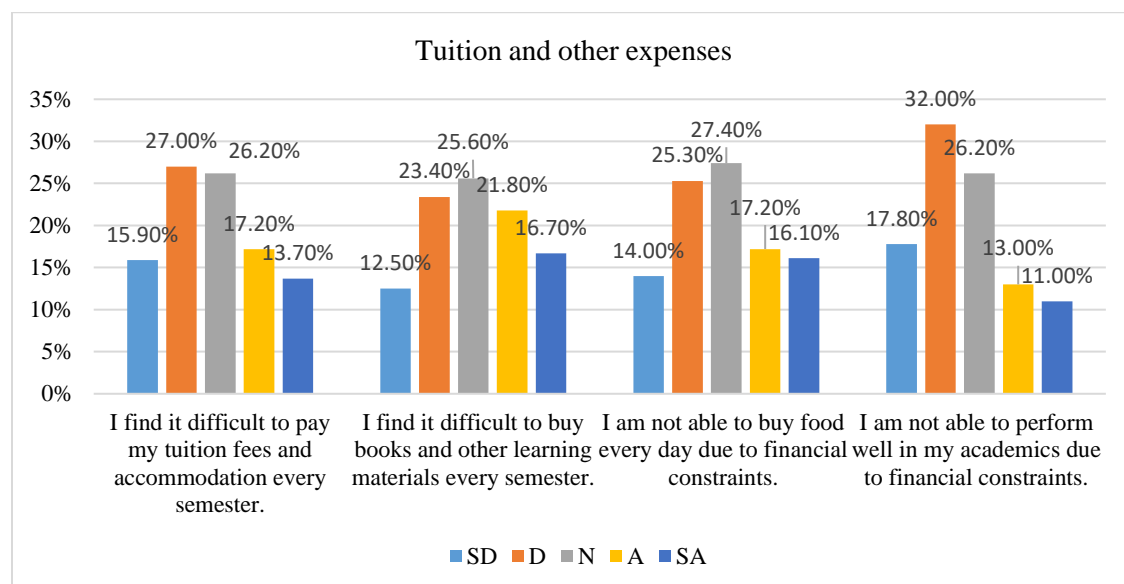


Figure 75: Tuition and other expenses

Figure 75 shows the distribution of the responses of participants on four items. Less than 40 percent of the participants opined that: they found it difficult to pay their tuition fees and accommodation every semester (30.90%); had challenges buying books and other learning materials every semester (38.50%); are not able to buy food every day due to financial constraints (24.00%) and; are not able to perform well in their academics due to financial constraints (24.00%). What the results suggest is that although a bigger

percentage of students do not face financial constraints on campus, a sizeable percentage require financial assistance.

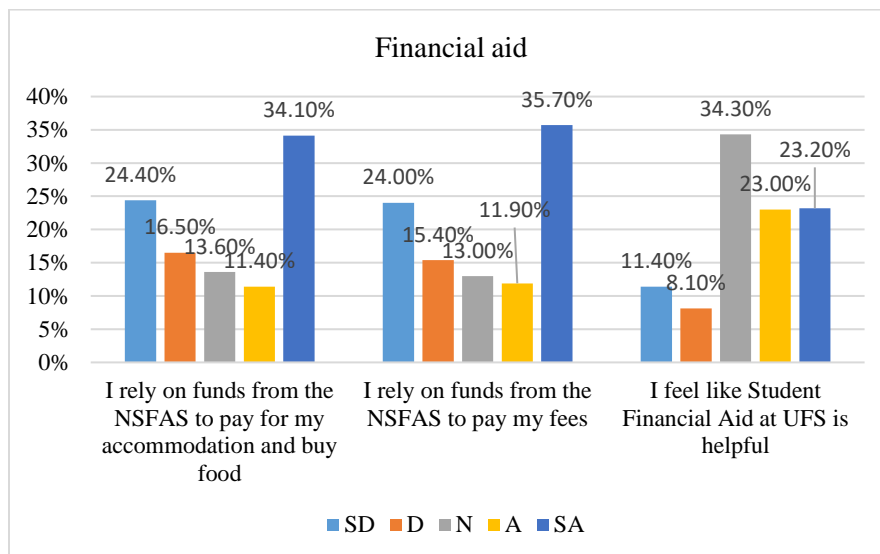


Figure 76: Financial aid

The results on students' opinion on the importance of financial aid to their study and stay on campus revealed that 45.50 percent of participants rely on funds from the NSFAS to pay for their accommodation and buy food while 47.60 percent of participants relied on funds from the NSFAS to pay their fees. However, 46.20 percent of students noted that students' financial aid is helpful.

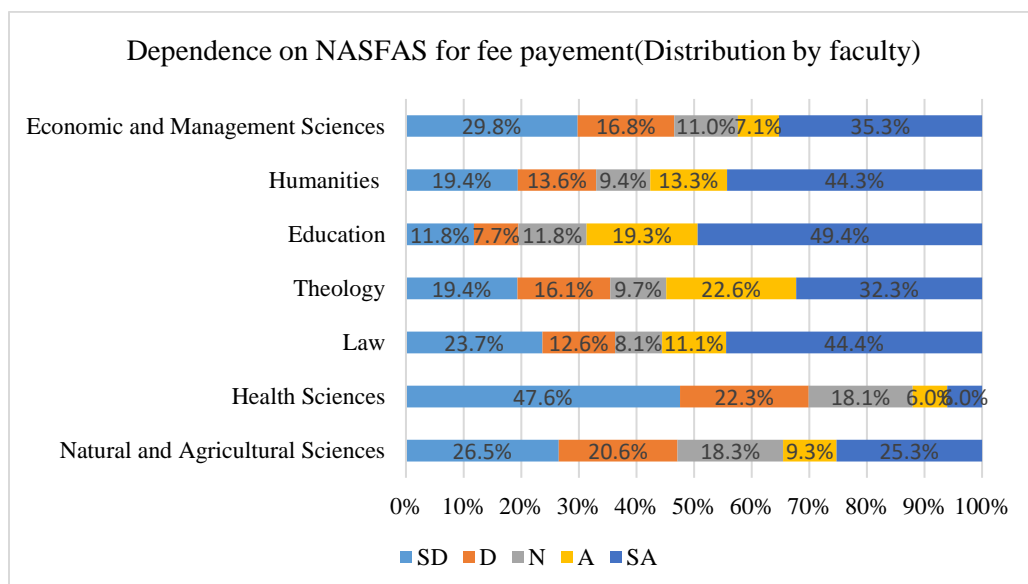


Figure 77: Students' dependence on NASFAS for payment of school fees

In order to identify the faculty with the highest percentage of students who rely on NASFAS for payment of their school fees, we analysed the data to reveal the differences in responses based on faculty. As shown in figure 77, more than 50 percent of participants from the Education (68.60%), Humanities (57.60%), Law (55.60%) and, Theology faculties (54.80%) indicated that they relied on NASFAS for payment of their school fees. However, less than 15 percent of participants from the Health Science indicated that they relied on NASFAS for the payment of their fees.

### 3.2.22 Students' voices on finance

*"It would be nice if the main payment system was linked with the library fine system. Instead of having to get a specific form from the library, take it to Finance to pay the fine and then go back to the library to show the receipt before the payment of fines is registered and one can loan books again"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"The UFS should decrease residence fees, international student fees and provide bursaries for international students as well"* (Student – South campus).

*"The admin staff at the tuition fees are very rude and not willing to help. They rather show you the door"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"UFS management to take students seriously and NSFAS allowances to be early and always in full as some of us rely on it"* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*"The Academic merit should also be transferable to the student's meal account because for students funded by NSFAS OR bursaries students do not have the privilege to enjoy the fruits of their hard work"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Not all of us are from rich families.....the amount of money given to us by the university is way too small. R941 can't even last for a whole month as we depend on it for both food, transport and toiletries"* (Student – South campus).

*"Accessing tax invoices for paying fees is a nightmare. The Finance Department tells you there is one person who does tax invoices. When you send an email requesting an invoice you get no response but rather keep getting emails saying the account is outstanding"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"The financial aid should pay out the NSFAS money on the 1st so that our landlords won't bother us because it affects our studying"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“There are more than three students in QwaQwa campus that I know of who haven't received their meal allowance since the beginning of the year. However, when they consult the UFS financial aid, they are always told to wait for the SMS from or consult their funders. Their funders also tell them that they are still waiting for the relevant documents from the university”* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*“My concern is that we don't get our allowances on time.....some of us are kicked out of our rooms because we [are not able to] pay our rent while some sleep with empty stomachs because there is no food. Our allowances has to be paid in time and the date has to be fixed”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Please try working on speeding up the NSFAS applications process on the university's part”* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*“I don't understand why NSFAS had to cut our allowance down to R941 until our private accommodation was approved. I know many students who dropped out because they could not afford their accommodation anymore and were unable to get food for the whole month because of the allowance cut. I think that next year NSFAS should (should is a strong word, considering that nothing should happen and everything should happen simultaneously), continue giving out R1500 allowance regardless of whether or not your private accommodation has been approved or not, because I don't see the strong connection between allowance money and accommodation money”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Finance logistics are a nightmare at UFS. It would help to improve the way finance deals with students. Build more residential areas instead of build parking space for the privileged. Residential fees are too expensive only can be afforded by students with bursaries”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“The UFS staff in the financial aid do not know how to talk to people. Also, the financial aid should respond to the needs of the students as expected”* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*“I struggle a lot with my mining qualification Authority bursary here e.g. According to the signed contract with the bursary I should get a food allowance of R1500 per month, but I am getting R1000. I am really not happy”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“The difference in financial struggles and classes within the university should be emphasized more as I believe lecturers and staff aren't fully aware of the impact such situations have on the average student”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

### 3.2.23 Academic - social life balance

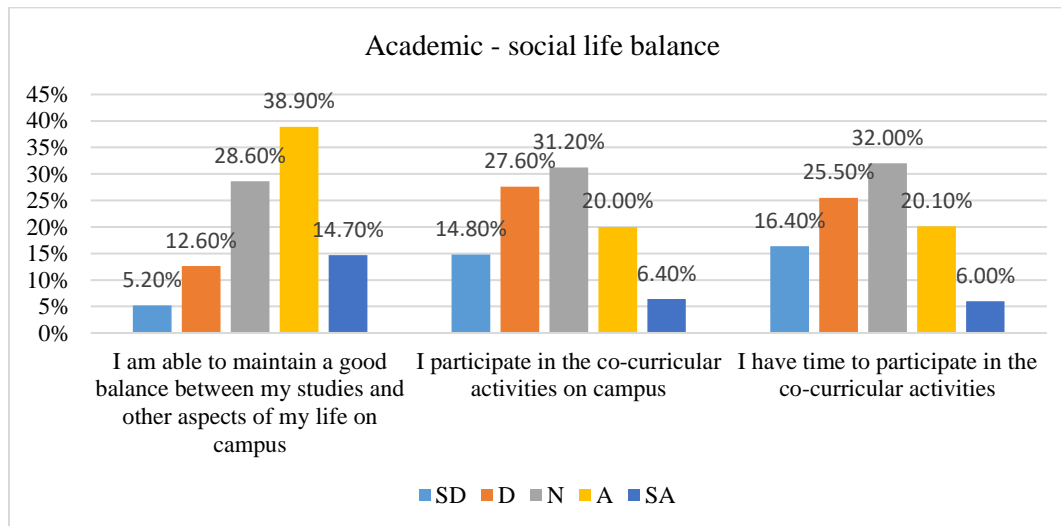


Figure 78: Academic - social life balance

The academic and social life balance sub-section provides relevant information on the perception of students regarding the management of their academic and work life on campus. Significantly, 53.60 percent of participants indicated that they maintain a good balance between their studies and other social activities on campus. Despondently, less than 30 percent of students opined that they participate in co-curricular activities (26.40%).

### 3.2.24 Racial climate

The racial climate sought to gather information regarding the perception of students about their experiences on campus in relation to race. The section had two main sections: students' racial experiences at the UFS and racial climate. As shown in figure 78, 37.7 percent of participants indicated that they had experienced racism on campus. The percentage of participants who indicated that students are treated differently by the administrative staff based on their race was 36.60 percent while 37.60 percent disagreed with the statement.

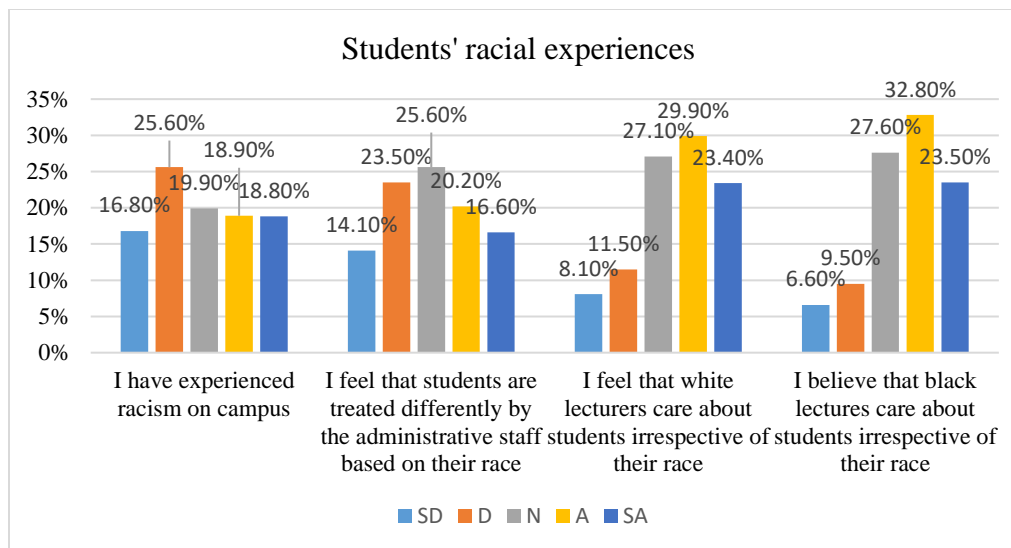


Figure 78: Students' racial experiences

However, more than 50 percent of participants opined that, they felt white lecturers cared about students irrespective of their race (53.30%) and that, black lectures care about students irrespective of their race (56.30%). What the results suggest is that majority of the participants felt that most lecturers cared about students irrespective of students' race.

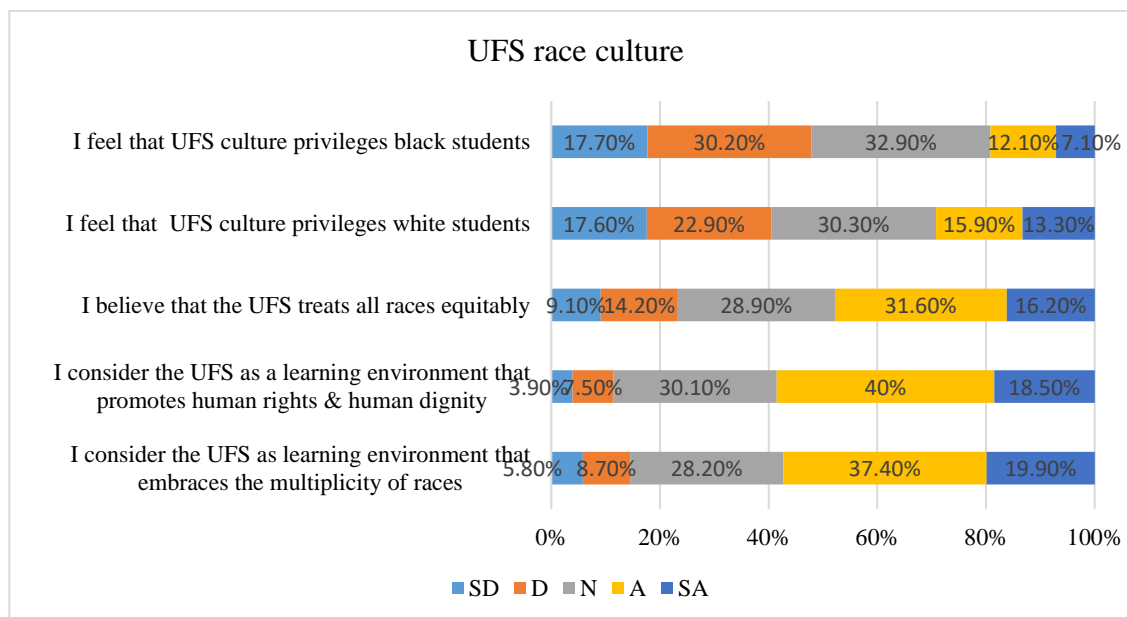


Figure 79: UFS race culture

The responses of students as regards race culture at the UFS is presented in figure 79. Significantly, less than 30 percent of participants opined that the UFS culture privileges white students (29.20%) and black students (19.20%). Additionally more than 50 percent of participants indicated that the UFS learning



environment embraces the multiplicity of races (57.30%) and, promotes human rights & human dignity (59.00%). However, less than 50 percent of participants were of the opinion that UFS treats all races equitably. In order to gather detailed information on the responses of students regarding their race and programme of study we further analysed the data by race and students' faculty.

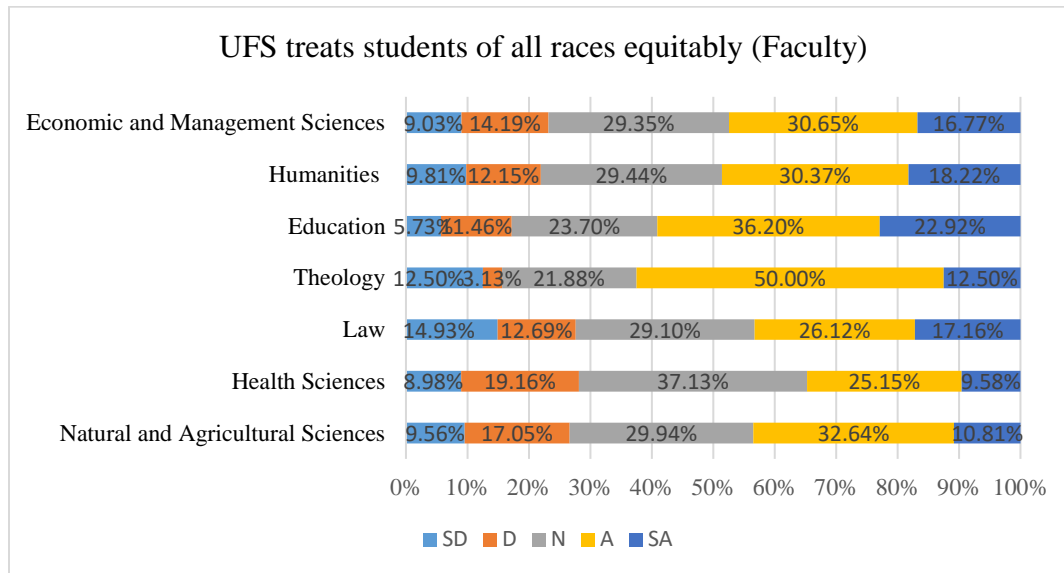


Figure 80: UFS treats students of all races equitably (distribution by faculty)

Figure 80 shows the responses of students in relation to the question on how the UFS treats students of all races. The results revealed that more than 50 percent of participants in the faculties of Theology (62.50%) and Education (59.10%) opined that UFS treats students of all races equitably. However, less than 50 percent of participants in the faculties of Humanities (48.60%), Economic and Management Sciences (47.40%), Natural and Agricultural Sciences (43.50%), Law (43.3%) and Health Sciences (34.70%) indicated that UFS treats students of all races equitably. We proceeded to analyse the data by way of the race distribution of the participants as shown in figure 81.

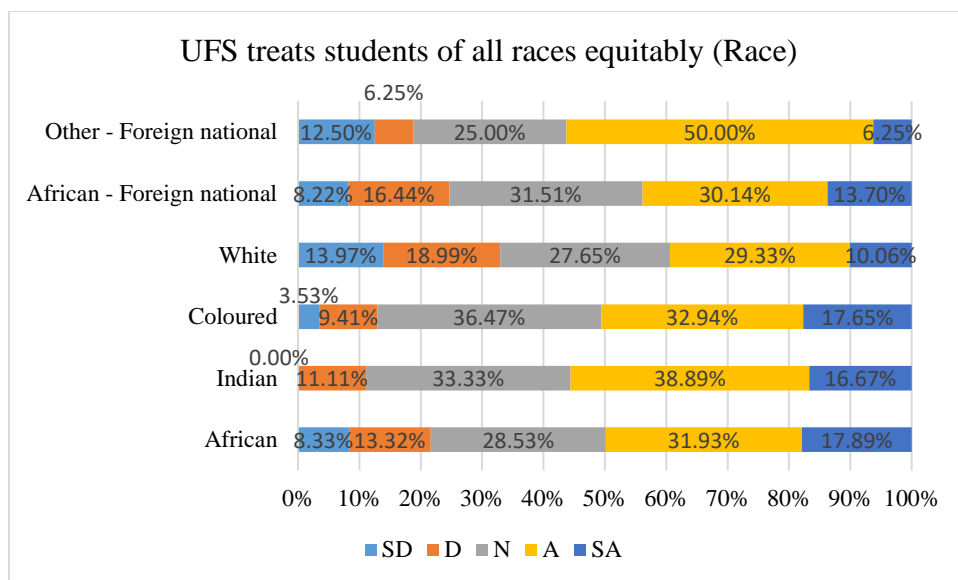


Figure 81: UFS treats students of all races equitably (distribution by race)

The results revealed that more than 50 percent of participants of Indian origin (55.60%), Coloured (50.60%) and foreign national – others (56.30%) opined that the UFS treats students of all races equitably. As shown in figure 81, less than 50 percent of participants who were Black (49.8%), foreign national – Black (43.80%) and White (39.40%) indicated that the UFS treats students of all races equitably.

### 3.2.25 Students' voices on race

*“I believe the UFS should become the first University that does not include racial preferences in the application of enrolment. I believe it should only be based on your academic performances, sport, leadership roles, roles in the community.....race and gender should not be a factor in the acceptance of becoming a University student”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“I feel threatened as a white student walking around on campus. I feel unwanted being white”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“There are still few white officials and students who are racist to the extent that they will always want to prove your minority should you interact with the in any manner. University of the Free State appears to me appears to be made to privilege white minority”* (Student – Bloemfontein).

*“Focus on the need to keep the balance between white and other colour students. Indirectly, you are chasing the white students away from the residences”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“I believe UFS is in the right direction in acknowledging that racial and gender diversity is an issue that needs to be looked into”* (Student – Bloemfontein).

*“The university has made white students, especially Afrikaners feel unwelcome on the campus, by ignoring our culture and not defending us or our heritage. Although transformation is necessary, the university has failed us by throwing away the heritage and values of one group completely to accommodate another group. Just because we are the minority doesn't mean we don't matter. You have taken our voice away, and it is your duty to give it back. You have failed us”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“It is very uncomfortable to have Afrikaans students being addressed in Afrikaans in an English lecture; it does not accommodate everyone which makes it unfair..... There is already special Afrikaans lessons so why now bother the rest of us during our English lectures again and waste our time?”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Make the attraction to UFS more appealing to white students in other provinces. Pietermaritzburg is privileged to have many private and good government schools in the area: approach these schools and have an information talk to both staff, students and parents”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“I am aware of situations where lectures, especially white lectures, favour people of their race more than they do other races.....so the issue of diversity, sensitizing people to other races and inclusion really needs to be hammered on”* (Student Bloemfontein).

*“Racism is real and it is becoming worse!”* (Student Bloemfontein).

*“Good experience so far, welcoming reception by University personnel. I had previously seen UFS students on TV protesting against racism but I have personally not experienced such since I started studying at the University”* (Student Bloemfontein).

*“There is absolutely no equality on campus and white students experience racism on campus almost every day....the classrooms are too big and too much students get accepted in the law faculty, with no understanding of what university is like”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“At this point in time, I'm happy with how things are done at the university. An improvement from some of the lectures on race relations and privileges are handled and understood by the lectures and the university as a whole”* (Student Bloemfontein).

*“As a white student I experience racism on a daily basis. Black students are highly aggressive towards white students which makes me rethink my continued study at the UFS”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“I don't like it on registration day.....whites just pass the [queue] .....they don't follow the [queue] like us. When they see a staff member that is white as them or Afrikaner they go to her and jump us....I don't like this. I feel like.....privilege is real”* (Student Bloemfontein).

*“Black and white people are very racist and black people will only help black people and white people will only help white people” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“UFS is placing too much emphasis on race which in turn causes unnecessary friction. Students are open to change but forcing it will not make it happen faster” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I feel that white students are more and more excluded in the experience at the UFS. According to everyone the campus was too white and now there is nothing left. Honestly if I had a do-over I would choose a different university. The UFS only focus on the student experience of other races” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Too much racism, separation, segregation and discrimination, also nepotism amongst white lecturers” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I really enjoy student and campus life, I just do not appreciate being pointed out in certain classes because of my race” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Black people are made to feel like they do not belong in this institution, more especially in the Natural & Agricultural Sciences and Health Sciences Faculties. It is sad that all these surveys are done and nothing is done about it. Moreover, black students do not see the need of responding to such activities because our cries fall on deaf ears (not disrespecting people of different abilities)” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“UFS should stop spreading anti-white propaganda and should stop discriminating against white students” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“In my experience the university would be a more harmonious place if racial integration and cross-culture is not so forced, slowly but surely we will all start to get along and understand each other without being forced by the institution. My opinion let things happen naturally, but have a policy that states if a student feels excluded they must be able to make themselves heard, but only with logical and valid reasoning. Most of us are born frees (born after 1994) that means we can't logically and validly use 'apartheid' as an excuse. However, I believe it might still have minor emotional effects on our parents across all races” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Forcing different races or groups to interact is only stirring anger, if the reason WHY is not emphasised. Not everybody understands the heart of reaching out to another, and assumptions or force just make disputes worse” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“UFS has a problem regarding 'political' interfering by NEHAWU (QwaQwa), under the name of EE, appointment stats, etc. HEHAWU does not understand competency based interviews. Enrol less, but more*

capable students. Enrol staff based on experience and quality, and forget about EE on the academic side. Black or white; the best must be appointed” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

“White privilege is something that still exists inside UFS, which is sad really. This survey will rub most people the wrong way, especially on the white privilege part. The moment we stop looking at people by the colour of their skin, but based on their character/personality, it's the moment things will be much better and white/black privilege will stop existing. At the end of the day, it seems like you've also forgotten that there's also Coloureds in this school, also a few Indians. This survey will also rub them the wrong way on the privilege part and might make them feel somewhat discriminated or excluded” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

“I feel that UFS has provided a safe and peaceful environment for many students of any race to feel free to express themselves and study” (Student – South campus).

### 3.2.25 Cross-cultural relationship

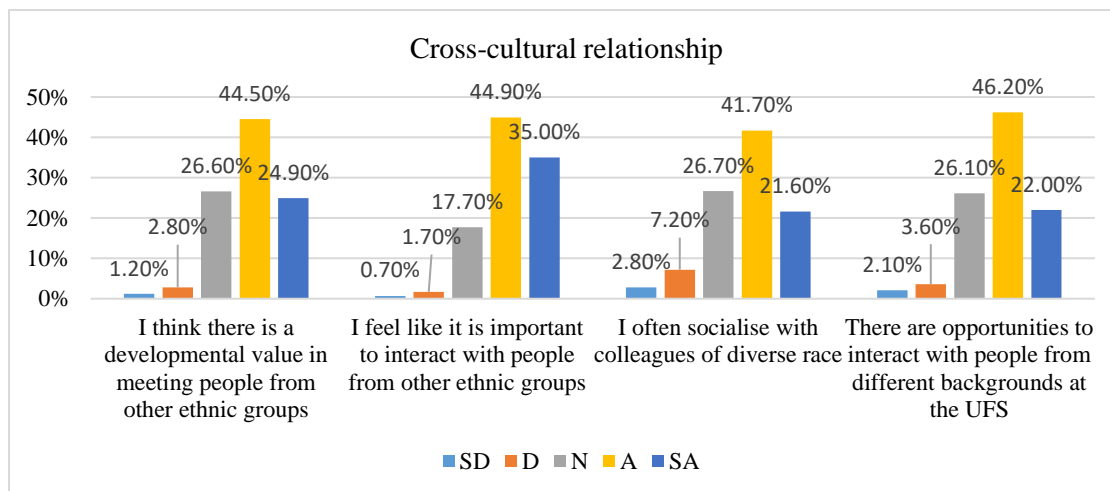


Figure 82: Cross-cultural interaction

Figure 82 shows the data on the responses of students in relation to their experiences on cross-cultural interaction. Significantly, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that: there is a developmental value in meeting people from other ethnic groups (69.40%); they often socialise with colleagues of diverse race (63.30%); there are opportunities to interact with people from different backgrounds at the UFS (68.20%) and; it is important to interact with people from other ethnic groups (79.90%). However, less than 40 percent of participants indicated that their culture is showcased at the UFS (34.20%) and that, they had participated in cultural activities where their cultural practices were included (23.30%).

### 3.3.27 Students' voices on cross-cultural interaction

*"Social engagements within the university are helpful and should be kept"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Due to tribalism at the UFS I felt discriminated against my home language"* (Student – QwaQwa).

*"If you are not a Sotho or Zulu speaking students some people undermine you"* (Student – South campus).

*"The UFS (QwaQwa campus) does not have a race issue like other institutions but there is tribalism and it is not funny. The treatment I as a Zulu speaking person [receive] is not fair because even though I am a first year student, I am expected to express myself in Sesotho by most of the admin staff. There is no professionalism in that because we all know that English is the acceptable language of instruction"* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

*"I feel like there should be more areas where students get to meet other students and they find out about each other. There must be events that give other students information about other people's religion, cultural practices and their race as some students discriminate others because of their race and their religions"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"It has been the best time of my life as I have grown in all aspects of my life. Firstly, I meet different people every day, I meet people who have the same ambitions as me and that is good because at home no one thinks like me. Secondly, I get to understand the world and what it demands, how to respect time"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I would like dancing (local styles too) to be included as part of the extracurricular activities on campus"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"The practice of different cultural practices should be encouraged"* (Student – QwaQwa campus).

### 3.2.28 Academic climate

Analysis of students' experiences of the academic climate were performed under three main categories: intellectual engagement, students-lecturers engagement and supportive campus environment

#### Intellectual engagement

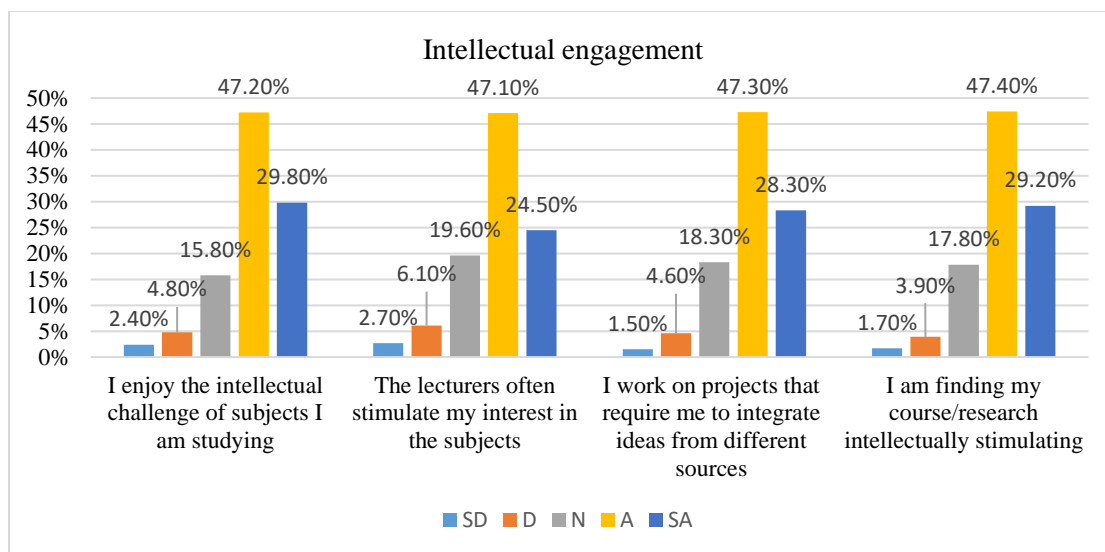


Figure 83: Intellectual engagement

The sub-section on intellectual engagement revealed that more than 70 percent of students enjoy the intellectual challenge that comes with the courses they study (77.00%), lecturers' ability to stimulate their interest in the courses (71.60%), incorporate ideas from different sources (75.60%) and, find the courses intellectually stimulating (76.60%).

### 3.2.29 Students-lecturers engagement

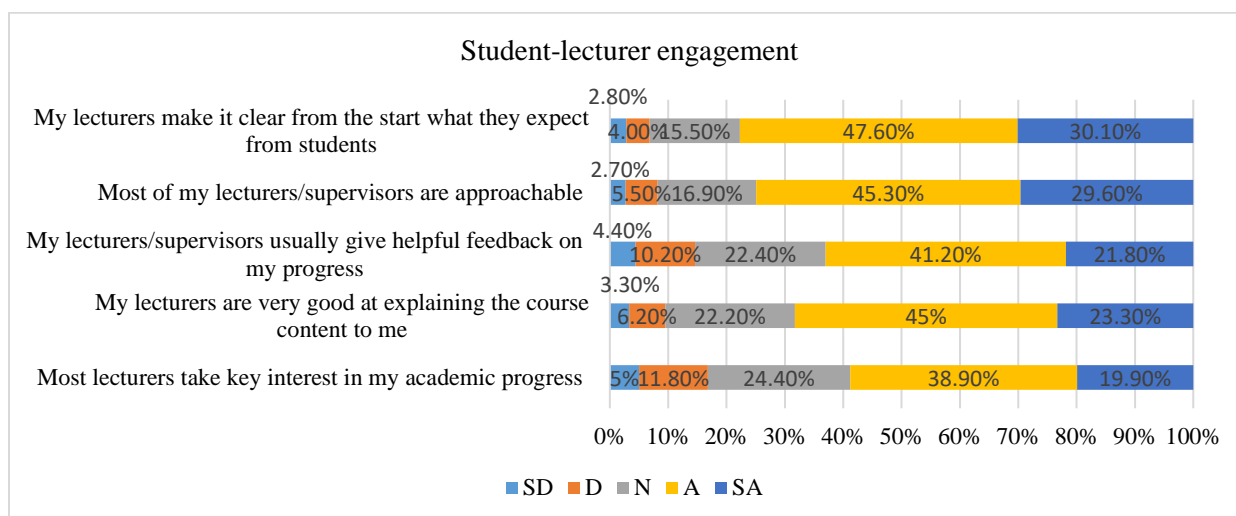


Figure 84: Student-lecturer engagement

The sub-section on student-lecturer engagement revealed high level of engagement students and lecturers. Significantly, more than 70 percent of students indicated that, most of their lecturers/supervisors are approachable (74.90%) and, their lecturers make it clear from the start of their courses or modules what they expect from students (77.70%). Additionally, more than 60 percent of students indicated that, their

lecturers are very good at explaining the course content to them (68.30%) and, their lecturers/supervisors usually gave helpful feedback on their academic progress (63.00%). However 58.80 percent of participants indicated that most lecturers took keen interest in their academic progress (58.80%).

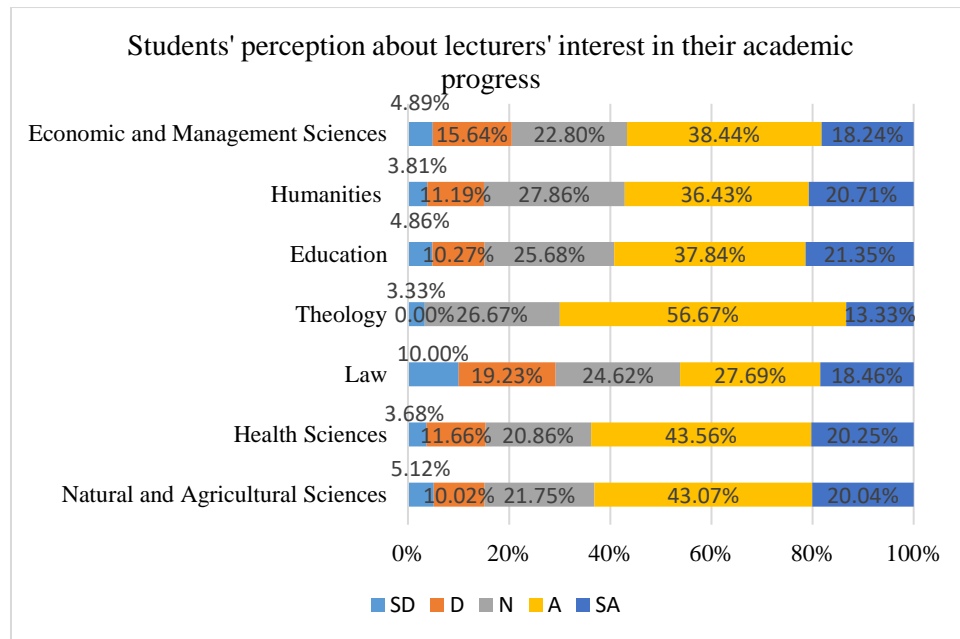


Figure 85: Students' perception about lecturers' interest in their academic progress

In order to obtain the responses of students in relation to the question on their perception about lecturers' interest in their academic progress, we analysed the data based on faculty as shown in figure 85. The results revealed that students' in Faculty of Theology perceived the interest by academics in their academic progress to be very high (70.00%), then followed by Health Sciences (63.80%), Natural and Agricultural Sciences (63.10%), Education (59.20%), Humanities (57.10%), Economic and Management Sciences (56.70%) and Law (46.20%).

### 3.2.30 Students' voice on academic climate

*"The lecturers, in general, are so kind and approachable, makes me motivated to study harder, talk to them and ask for advice and be a better me. I feel encouraged if a lecturer wants you to improve. That is the best aspect of the varsity, the lecturers really do care"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"I am a Masters student and not quite happy about relationships between research supervisors and the students. The interaction is almost non-existence except when the student is trying to make contact from*



*his/her side with the supervisor. Supervisors often do not responds to students' academic needs on time and this can really become a frustrating point for most of us” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I would like to the thank UFS by giving us this opportunity to upgrade our diploma” (Student - QwaQwa).*

*“Many lecturers are completely incompetent - please only employ those who know what they're doing? I don't care what race or culture they are, as long as they don't discriminate and as long as they do not have hidden agendas. Just as an example: Many lecturers are seen as 'absolutely amazing' by the majority of a certain race, whilst other races feel shut out and picked on..... I apologise for my lengthy comments, and I also don't apologise, because these things had to be brought to light. Even if my name was recorded (or not), the same things would have been said” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Resolve the issues around the lack of studying areas because the library is always full” (Student – QwaQwa Campus).*

*“It doesn't help to study without clear direction and guidance. Certain standards and criteria should be put in place to curb the loss student from wafting around campus aimlessly and goalless after wasting valuable resources and funding” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“In terms of exams [the UFS] should allow our lecturers to set the exam papers for us not to wait for the exam to come from Bloemfontein campus because they have all the necessary resources to help us understand the content” (Student – QwaQwa Campus).*

*“I feel that there are too many lecturers bullying students emotionally, with comments that are NOT uplifting (like e.g. you are stupid, and are one of those who are put through...) and breaks students down. I am also aware of nepotism” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The Education Faculty has been in [.....]Since my first-year on the Bloemfontein campus. This is accredited to many problems but the largest is the acceptance of far too many students. There are far too many students in the faculty that don't have a passion for teaching, and this is the fault of the low standards employed to vet students” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“One of my courses is presented by a lecturer that is from a different country - it is impossible to understand him, even if he speaks English and I believe there has to be a lecturer from our own country that has the ability, qualification and experience to present/teach that course. It is impossible to achieve in that subject and it is all because of the language barrier, I feel that we are being negatively affected by the decision of the university to employ some one that is not fluent in English or any of the other languages. I do not have the boldness to complain as this will only be seen as a racial issue, but it has nothing to do with race, but everything to do with language barrier!! ” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I am a happy student at the UFS, but small things makes me worry if I will be getting my degree when I am supposed to. Small things like lecturers not being effective in class time, or not communicating what is expected of us” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Make use of the Fine Art students to your benefit, as art is subjective and inclusive. Also the UFS should focus on not limiting skills and education to what is needed in South Africa, but to develop students that can fit into the rest of the world ( due to the large unemployment rate on South Africa, many students will look for international jobs, which to an extent we are not skilled for properly). Also allowing for more students who study a 4 year degree/honours to become junior lecturers. Investing in your students will encourage a larger pass rate and encourage more students to finish there degree when they know that there is a possibility of a job after they study. Also having a post-degree program which allows graduates to gain the work experience needed (sort of an assistant to help guide students to which jobs will be beneficial to their CV)” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“More funding should be given for more lecturers, as lecturers are too overworked to give class and do research simultaneously” (Student - Bloemfontein).*

*“Supervisors at the Master's and PhD level are not prepared to provide the required support that is needed of them. They are allowed to take on too many students and thus have many students that do not finish on time or are left with minimal support. A maximum number of students should be allocated to these supervisors based on previous performance. The procedures that are followed to discipline and provide support to these lecturers are lacking greatly. I have previously reported my supervisor for failure to provide support or necessary services and this has resulted in nothing, he did not receive a warning and the courses that he was supposed to attend he never did but this was never checked up on my HR” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I really enjoyed UFS 101 in first year! The sign language was my favourite. Big thumbs up on that. Also love the 24/7 study logs. Thank you for making UFS the best” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“UFS101 is a complete waste of time especially to students of Health Sciences and Architecture faculty and it takes up unnecessary time that could rather have been used to study. It creates a negative mind set towards UFS amongst students. Students with an LO mark in matric of above 70% should not have to take this as a module” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I am a TA for UFS101 and I truly believe that the Centre for Teaching and Learning should look into incorporating a unit on gender, GBV, and consent. The difficulty with creating a gender inclusive environment is that the basis of gender and the violence associated to it is not necessarily engaged with. I*

*believe that shifting gender training from didactic seminars/lectures, to a more integrative learning approach would be valuable” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“We are treated as domkops in south campus and at first UFS does not make everything clear to us, like when we fail we don't carry modules we repeat. We are fine with the rules but UFS has to inform and emphasise us before classes commence” (Student – South campus).*

*“The Business Management and Economics Faculty is the best. The service granted makes it easy for students. Unlike the mainstream application process which makes you want to give up due to the difficulty and unfriendliness of the staff. I believe from a colleague that she battled to get her assignments back in the Labour Law studies and she complained everyday about the availability and assistance of the staff” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The German department should be more inter racial and more welcoming to students of other colour” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The UFS should revisit the curriculum and align it with the mission of producing graduates that will be progressive rather than produces employees for life” (Student – QwaQwa Campus).*

*“[There should be] training for lecturers on how to deal with students, to ensure students feel respected and that their opinions matter” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“All lectures must set the consultation hours and they must make the use of them because sometimes at class you can never understand what the lecture saying” (Student – QwaQwa Campus).*

*“Lecturers should give work considering that there are other modules we focus on and that also need to have a life outside of our academics Lecturers should take student emails seriously. Peer evaluations of assessments should not be allowed because students are not equipped with proper marking skills. And lecturers should take such issues seriously when addressed” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Review of exam marks should be extended and have fairness in marking. Marks should be given as due not based on race. Practical assessment should be realistic and practical hours realistic to allow us to study, after all we are students. Urgent look on the nursing practical modules and expectations and be reviewed now” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The UFS is an amazing university.....I feel free. Education and learning processes are on point I love UFS” (Student – QwaQwa Campus).*

*“Majors should be treated differently from other modules. More periods must be allocated to them and the lecturers should not rush to finish the work programme, but structure it in such a way that it is spread over*

*a longer period of time to enable students to grasp fundamental concepts and also have more time to study the work done in lectures” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“My lectures are helpful to a point where I still feel like I am in High school. There is no pressure, you can be who you are without being judged” (Student - South campus).*

*“Workshop organized by the university should be conducted via Skype to accommodate distant students” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The UFS should revisit the curriculum and align it with the mission of producing graduates that will be progressive rather than produces employees for life” (Student – QwaQwa Campus).*

*“Your staff members bash us very often in the Natural & Agricultural Sciences Faculty so much so, there is a culture of fear when it comes to addressing issues affecting us as students. Very often, academic lecturers' and Faculty Officers' first response to students questioning their ways of assessing us and what we feel are unfair practices, they often seek to discredit our cries and vilify the issues we bring to them. This place is truly not a safe space for a black student. We have adopted the culture of trying to get our degrees (that's if we even make it through) and get out of this place” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I feel no sense of belonging especially when I try to consult an academic adviser I don't get answers that satisfy me” (Student – QwaQwa Campus).*

*“There should be a space on campus where artistic students can share and showcase their talent. The music, drama and art departments of Humanities should have at least an annual show where they collaborate” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I feel like the curriculum is more theocratic than practical. Students should be equipped with practical before they graduate so that they know what to expect in the real world” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

### 3.2.31 Supportive campus environment

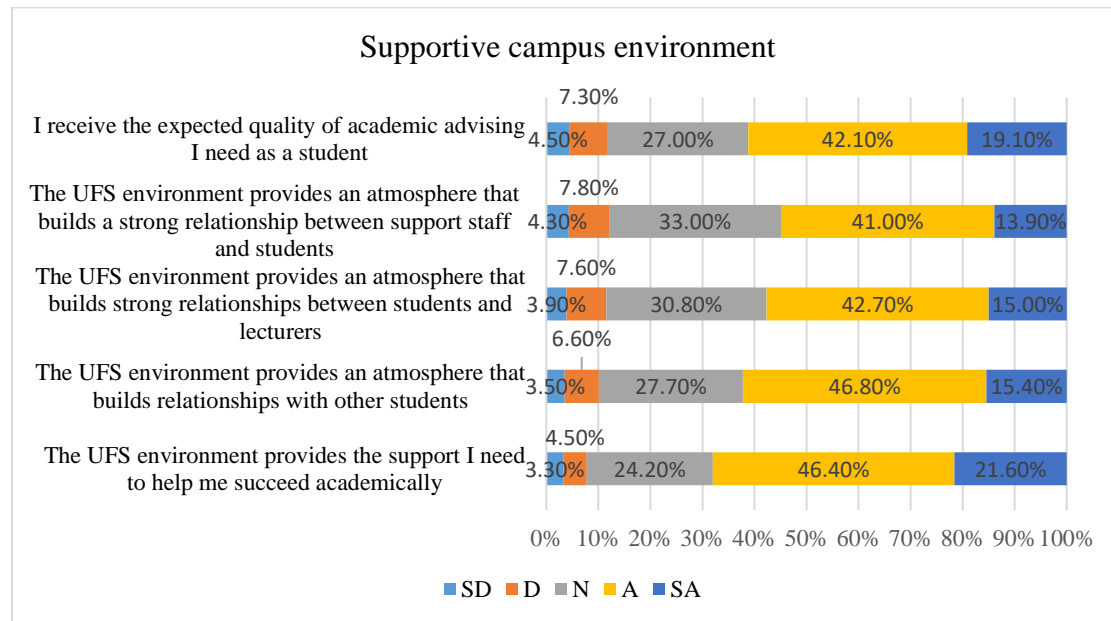


Figure 86: Supportive campus environment

Figure 85 shows the distribution of students' perception on the supportive campus environment at the UFS. The results showed that more than 60 percent of students opined that, the UFS environment provides the support they need to succeed academically (68.00%), they receive the expected quality of academic advising they need as students (61.20%) and, the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds relationships with other students (62.20%). However, more than 55 percent of participants opined that, the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds strong relationships between students and lecturers (57.70%) and, the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds a strong relationship between support staff and students (55.00%).

### 3.2.32 Students' voices on supportive campus environment

*"I would like to applaud the University for the Culture of inclusion that they have already managed to establish. I am comfortable with the fact that most engagement on campus take place in English and are acutely aware of the cost constraints of having to accommodate students in their mother tongue or home languages. As a first generation University student with learning disabilities ( 3 types of dyslexia ) and ADHD who restarted my academic path at 49 . I am externally grateful for the support I have received from the university. I entered my studies through the (RPL) program. With the assistance of the Student support my Dyslexia and ADHD was identified after a lifetime of struggling academically. I completed my Postgrad*

*diploma with excellent grades and should complete my Master studies at the end of the year. I hope to continue on to my PHD studies. This would have never been possible without the support of the CUADS and RPL. I will be eternally grateful for UFS and your excellent policies and accommodations. I belong to an International group of ADHD students and they are constantly surprised at the extra mile UFS walk for students like myself” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The transport system in my residence is not favourable. There are few drivers who collect students around Bluegumbosch where I reside and with the exception of ours. Last week, we waited for an hour at the bus stop and it was really hot. One of the students ended up fainting and she was rushed to hospital” (Student – QwaQwa campus].*

*“The process of getting study guides and registration is just ridiculous. Honestly this institution is very well established and quite capable of running these basic things better. I mean why do you insist on a skeleton staff at the busiest time? ..... Print study guides year round so that I only go once to get all of them.... I mean it's not like you don't know how many students to anticipate... Over print and recycle” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Staff are slow and show no effort to help you. Staff do not sympathize with you” (Student - Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I think co-curriculum activities should be advertised more rather than through word of mouth. I would have loved to participate in sports and such but I don't know what is offered, where or when anything happens. Yet, social events are plastered everywhere. Focusing again on a different aspect to deal with issues that shouldn't be a priority. Sports can help many people with mental issues, self-esteem issues... Etc.” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The lack of practical experience before Honours is a point that is sorely lacking at UFS. At Stellenbosch University, students are required and assisted in getting holiday internships in their respective fields in order to get practical experience” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Please have a clear policy whereby South Africans are given highest priority to be employed by the university. Help our country to reduce the high rate of unemployment, for better and stable society. Remember most students are coming from these local poor communities, so, to employ someone from such communities helps to understand the needs of poor students and help to find solutions to the problems of unemployment and poverty. Please let the university help and support (by ploughing back) its community, it must not be an island, but be active participant in the development of our poor community” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“UFS student climate is very good. The staff are very supportive. Keep it up”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“The admission process needs to improve a lot as I had to take an extra year because someone on admission missed one of my modules and I could not prove that I had registered for it. I tried to get assistance up to the level of the dean but could not be assisted”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Enrichment courses and workshops aimed at assisting students from far should also provide accommodation, even if it's for a night. Access to library materials from outside the campus and far areas can be improved”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

### 3.2.33 Diversity climate

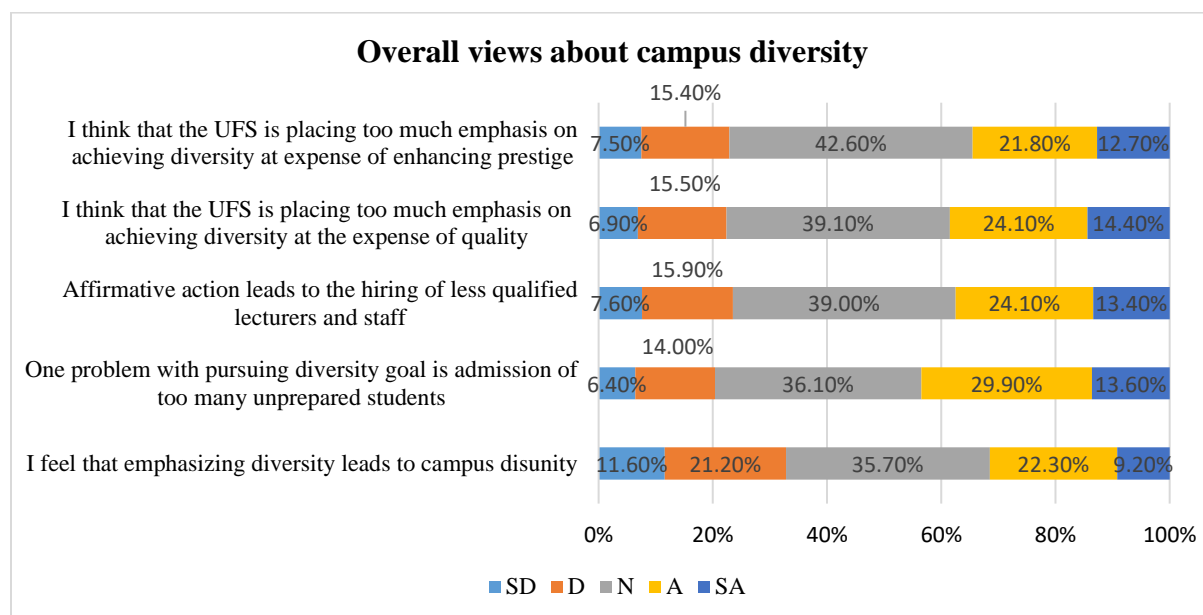


Figure 87: Students’ overall views about campus diversity

The sub-section on overall views about campus diversity revealed that less than 50 percent of participants agreed to all the questions in the sub-section. Significantly, the results show that less than 50 percent of participants agreed that, emphasizing diversity leads to campus disunity, that affirmative action leads to the hiring of less qualified lecturers and staff, that the UFS is placing too much emphasis on achieving diversity at the expense of quality and, that the UFS is placing too much emphasis on achieving diversity at expense of enhancing prestige.

## Student perceptions of institutional commitment to diversity

The sub-section on student perceptions of the UFS commitment to diversity was developed to gather the views of participants regarding the university's commitment to diversity.

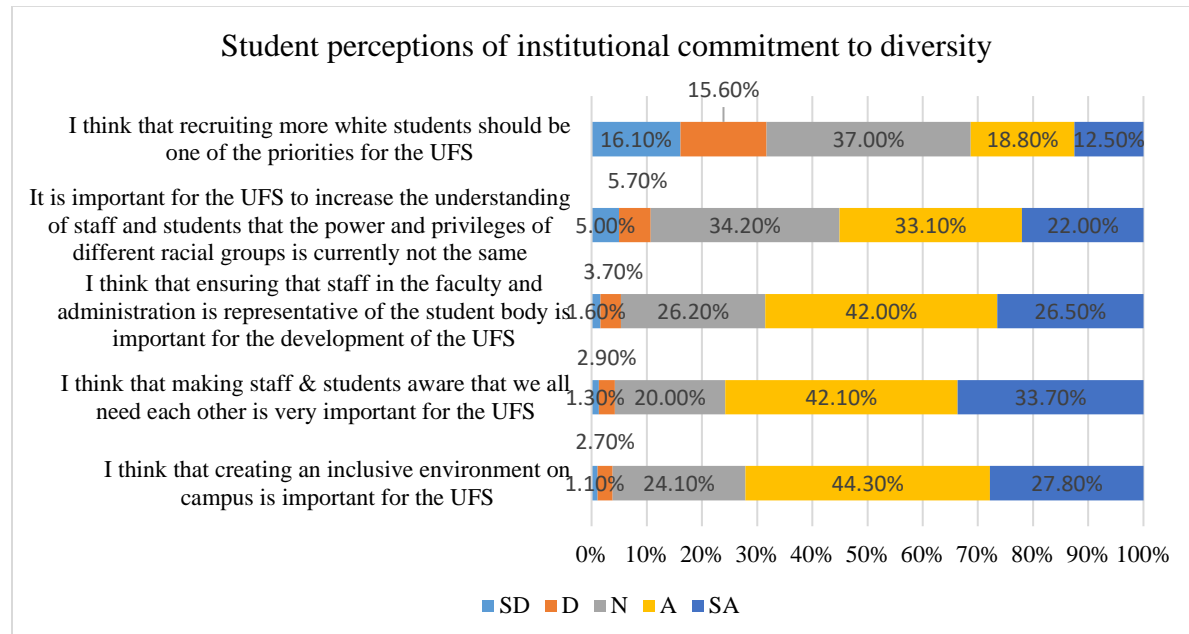


Figure 88: Students' perception of institutional commitment to diversity

As shown in figure 88, more than 70 percent of participants were of the opinion that, creating an inclusive environment on campus is important for the UFS (72.10%) and, making staff & students aware that we all need each other is very important for the UFS (75.80%). A little above 55 percent of participants indicated that, it is important for the UFS to increase the understanding of staff and students that the power and privileges of different racial groups is currently not the same (55.10%). However, less than 35 percent of participants opined that recruiting more white students should be one of the priorities for the UFS.



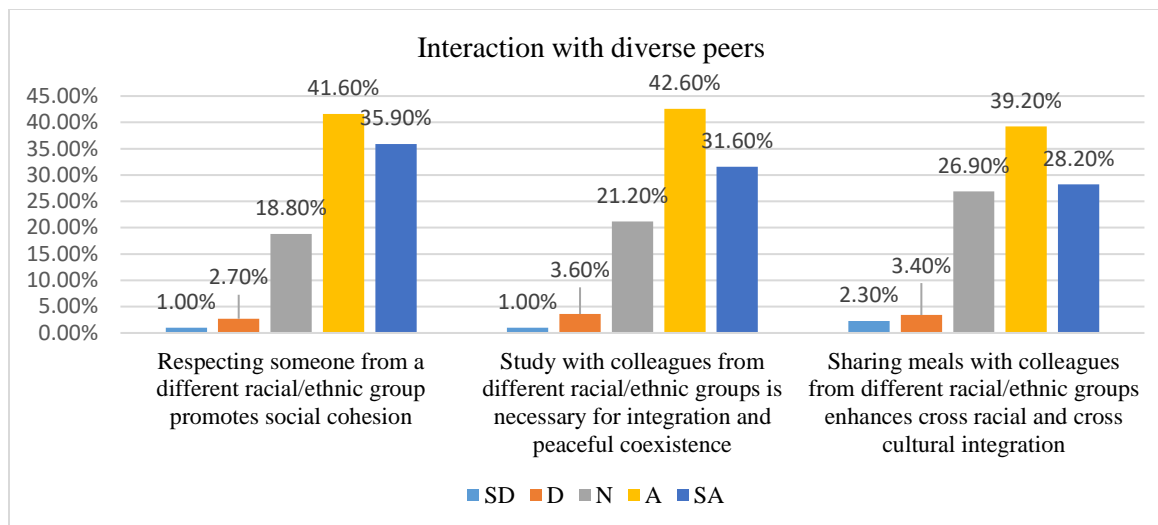


Figure 89: Interaction with diverse peers

The sub-section on interaction with diverse peers revealed high percentages in all the three statements. Markedly, participants agreed to the statement that, respecting someone from a different racial/ethnic group promotes social cohesion (77.50%), Studying with colleagues from different racial/ethnic groups is necessary for integration and peaceful coexistence (74.20%) and, sharing meals with colleagues from different racial/ethnic groups enhances cross racial and cross cultural integration (67.40%).

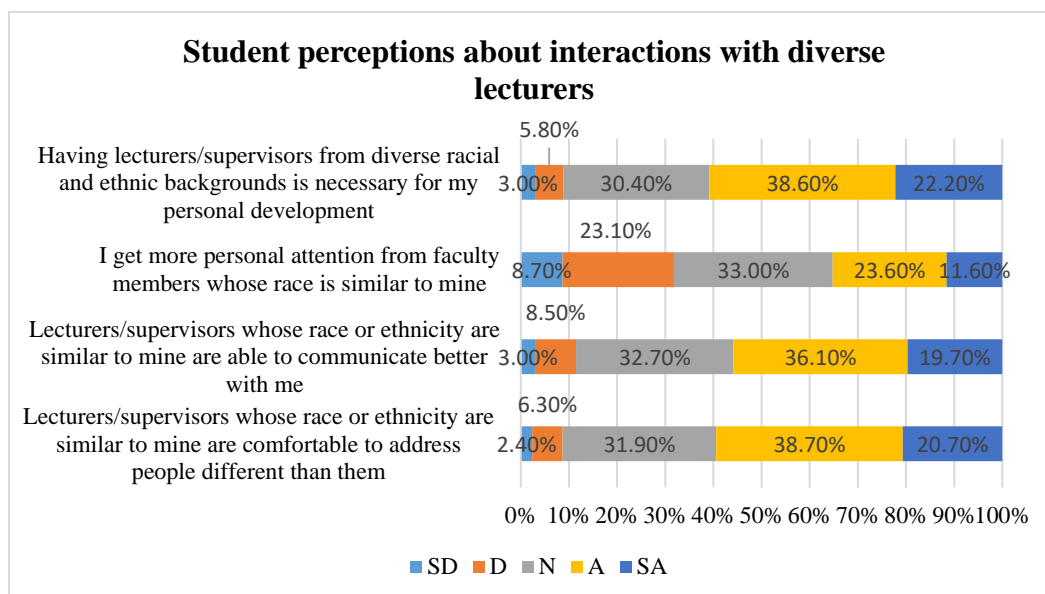


Figure 90: Students' perception about interaction with diverse lecturers

Results from the sub-section on students' perceptions about interactions with diverse lecturers revealed that students viewed their interaction with lecturers from diverse backgrounds (race/ethnic) as good.

Importantly, more than 50 percent of participants opined that, lecturers whose race or ethnicity were similar to theirs are comfortable to address people different than them (59.40%), lecturers whose race or ethnicity were similar to theirs are able to communicate better with them and, having lecturers from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds is necessary for their personal development (60.80%). However, less than 40 percent of participants opined that they obtained more personal attention from faculty members whose race is similar to theirs (35.20%).

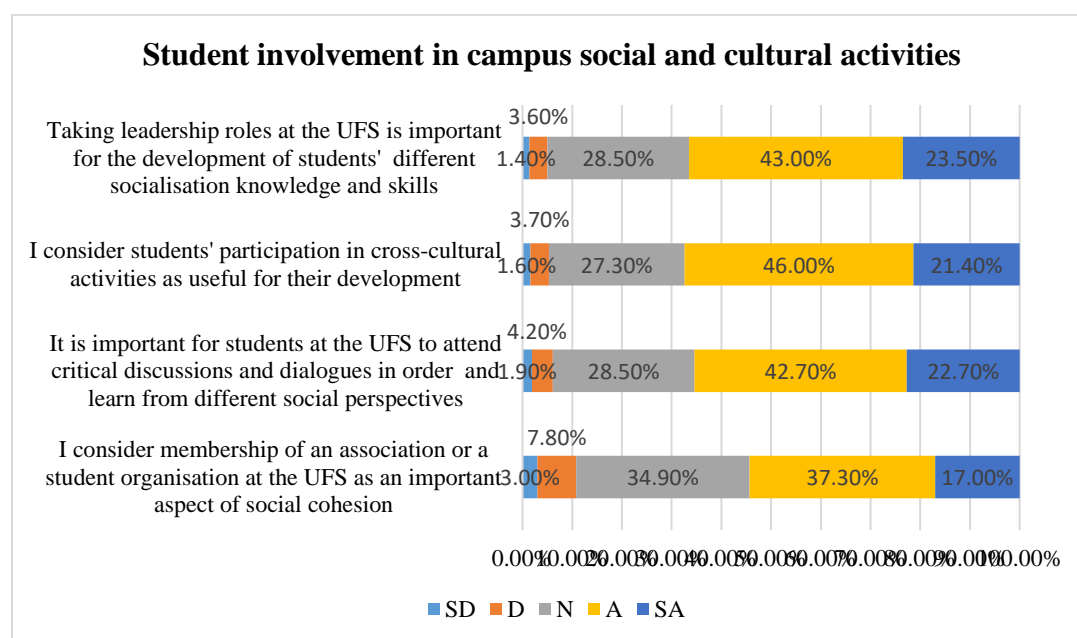


Figure 91: Students' involvement in campus social and cultural activities

Results from the response of students in relation to their involvement in campus social and cultural activities showed high agreement percentage. More than 50 percent of participants opined that they considered membership of an association at the UFS as an important aspect of social cohesion (54.30%), considered students' participation in cross-cultural activities as useful for their development (67.40%) and, taking leadership roles at the UFS is important for the development of students' different socialisation knowledge and skills (67.00%).

The responses of the participants on the sub-section regarding the importance of diversity-related course learning revealed mixed responses. More than 50 percent of participants indicated that, it is important for students to take a course related to diversity & human rights at the UFS (54.20%) and diversity-related courses are effective to foster deep understanding among students and staff from different social backgrounds (56.70%).

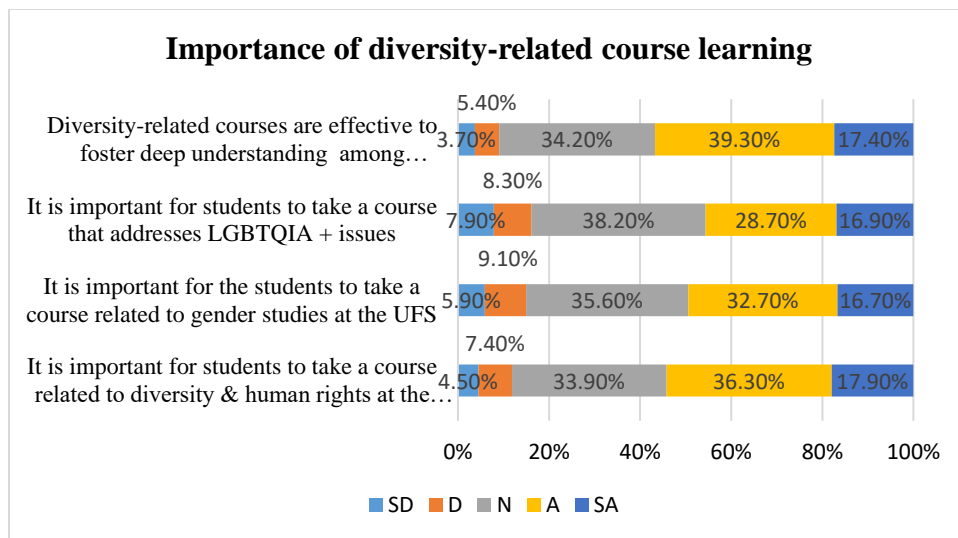


Figure 92: Importance of diversity-related course learning

However, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that, it is important for the students to take a course related to gender studies at the UFS (49.40%) and, it is important for students to take a course that addresses LGBTQIA + issues (45.60%).

### 3.2.34 Sexual orientation climate

This sub-section discusses the LGBTQIA+ climate at the UFS and the responses of students under the different aspects.

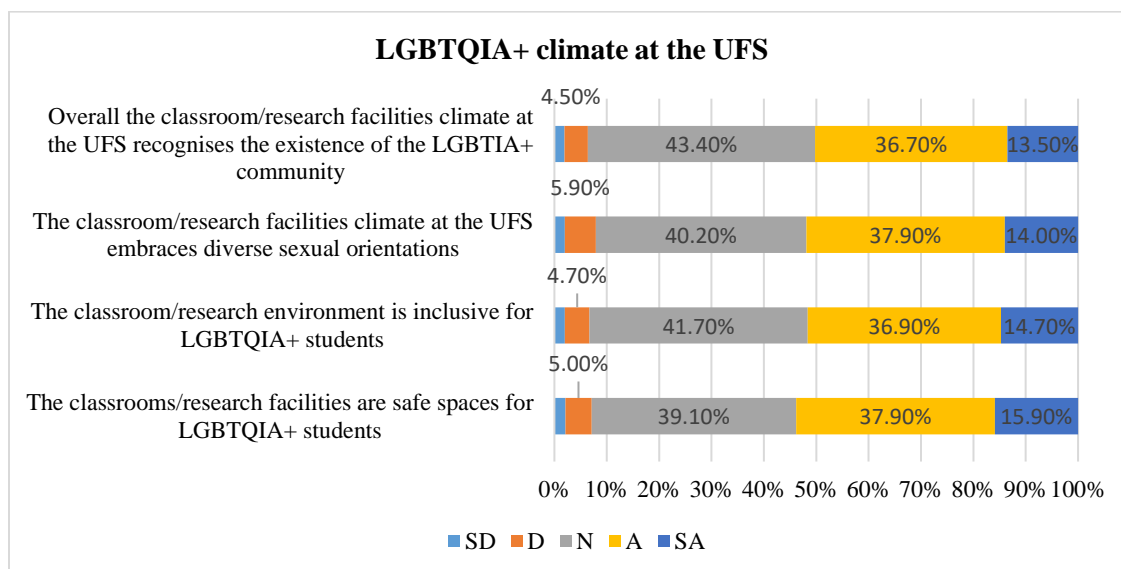


Figure 93: LGBTQIA+ climate at the UFS

The sub-section on LGBTQIA+ climate and inclusive Curriculum revealed that majority of participants perceived the current UFS climate as inclusive for LGBTQIA+. Significantly, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that, the classrooms/research facilities are safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ students (53.80%), the classroom environment is inclusive for LGBTQIA+ students (51.60%) and, the classroom/research facilities climate at the UFS embraces diverse sexual orientations (51.90%).

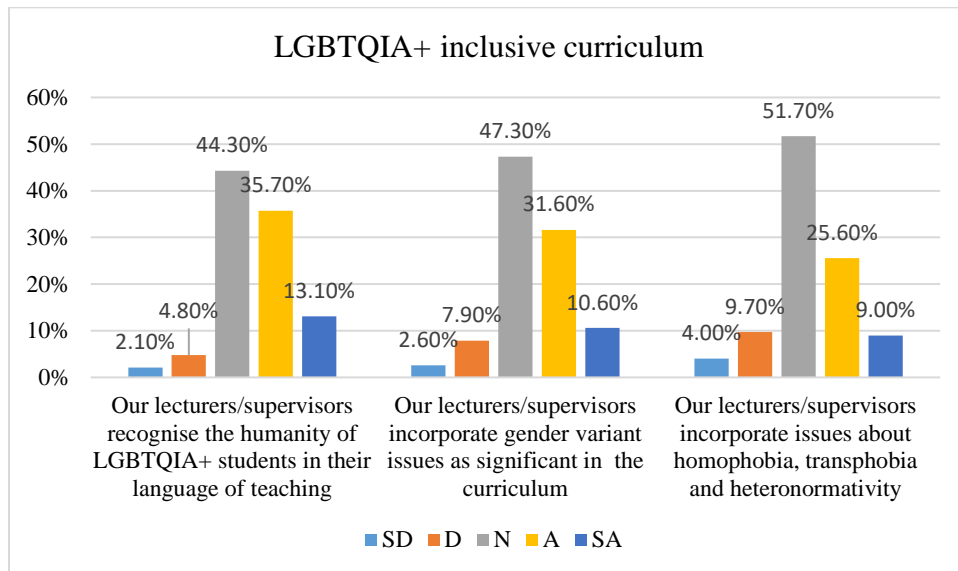


Figure 94: LGBTQIA+ inclusive curriculum

The result from the sub-section on LGBTQIA+ inclusive curriculum revealed that less than 50 percent of participants opined that lecturers recognise the humanity of LGBTQIA+ students in their language of teaching (48.80%), lecturers incorporate gender variant issues as significant in the curriculum (42.20%) and, lecturers/supervisors incorporate issues about homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity (34.60%).

### 3.2.35 Institutional Support

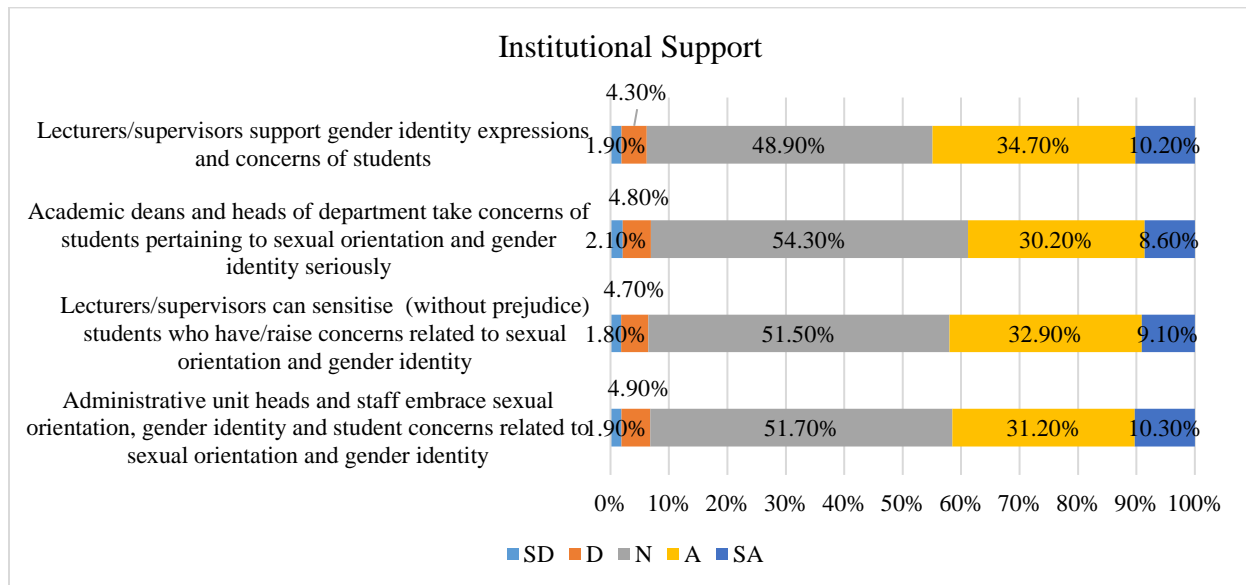


Figure 95: Institutional Support for LGBTQIA+

The sub-section on the perception of participants on institutional support for LGBTQIA+ however showed that majority of participants indicated neutral as their answer to the questions. However, the percentage of participants who indicated either agree or strongly agree to the answers far exceeded those who indicated either strongly disagree or disagree. Importantly more than 40 percent of participants indicated that administrative unit heads and staff embrace sexual orientation, gender identity and student concerns related to sexual orientation and gender identity (41.50%). Similarly, more than 40 percent of the students noted that lecturers/supervisors can sensitise (without prejudice) students who have/raise concerns related to sexual orientation and gender identity (42.00%). However, less than 40 percent of participants noted that academic deans and heads of department take concerns of students pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity seriously (38.80%).

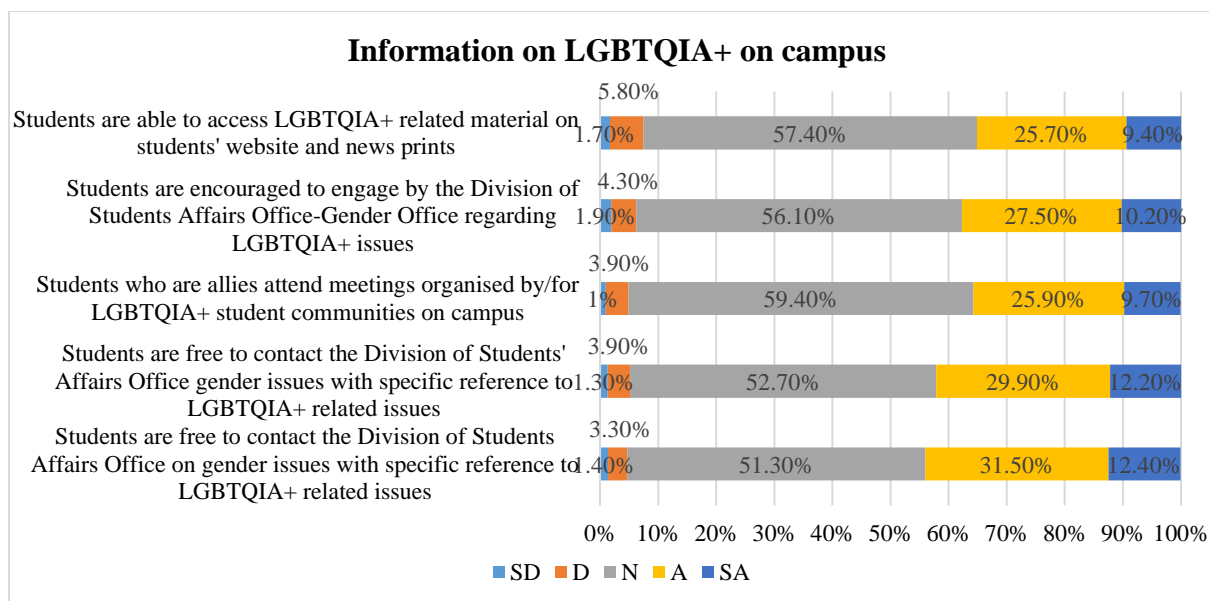


Figure 96: Information on LGBTQIA+ on campus

The section on the perception of participants on information on LGBTQIA+ on UFS campus showed that majority of participants provided neutral as their answer to the questions. However, more than 30 percent of the participants opined that, students are free to contact the Division of Students Affairs Office on gender issues with specific reference to LGBTQIA+ related issues (43.90%) while 37.70 percent of participants noted that, students are encouraged to engage by the Division of Students Affairs Office-Gender Office regarding LGBTQIA+ issues. Similarly, more than 30 percent of participants indicated that students are able to access LGBTQIA+ related material on students' website and news prints (35.10%).

### 3.2.36 Multilingualism as a UFS resource

Language is defined as, “particular form or manner in which members of a group use vocal sounds and written signs to convey meanings to each other” (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p.35). Importantly the power of language rests in the fact that it is knowledge-driven (Mayr, 2008) – providing individuals with the medium to engage with others in the society for their economic and social benefits. This therefore sets language apart as an important medium of communicating through teaching/learning in indigenous languages (Le Grange, 2016). This study sought to assess the current language policy at the UFS and identify ways in which the policies could positively influence students’ engagement in the teaching and learning processes. We sought answers to one overarching question - what language policies are necessary to improve students’ academic engagement and outcomes? The section on multilingualism as a UFS resource focused on three subthemes: language policy, language usage and language usage.

## Language policy

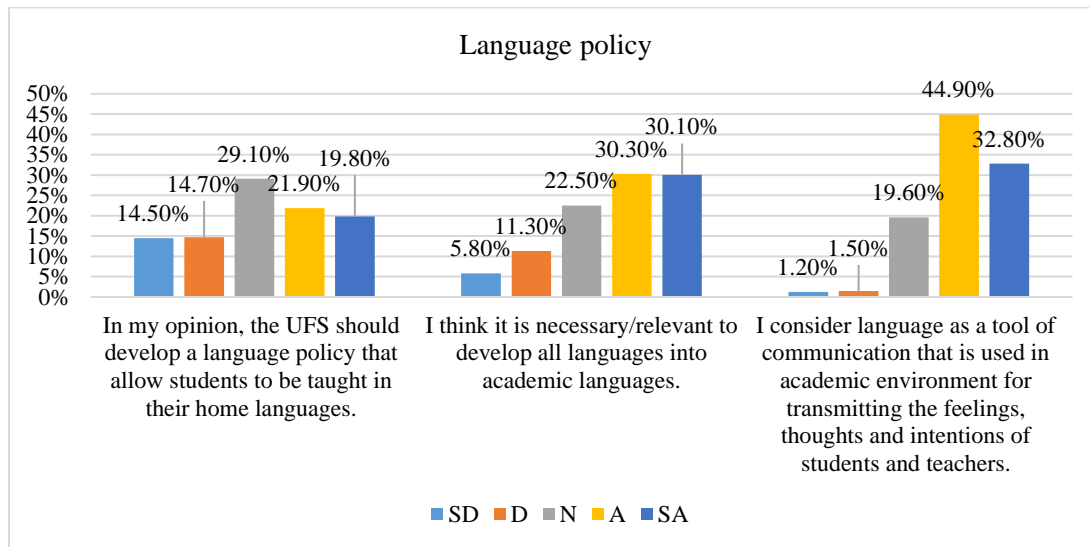


Figure 97: Language policy

Figure 97 shows the responses of students in relation to the UFS language policy. Significantly, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that they consider language as a tool of communication that is used in academic environment for transmitting the feelings, thoughts and intentions of students and lecturers (77.70%) and that, it is necessary to develop all languages into academic languages (60.40%). However, less than 45 percent of participants opined that the UFS should develop a language policy that allow students to be taught in their home languages (41.70%) while 29.20 percent of participants disagreed with the statement. The results however suggest that majority of participants will prefer the UFS to develop a language policy that allow students to be taught in their home languages.

## Language usage

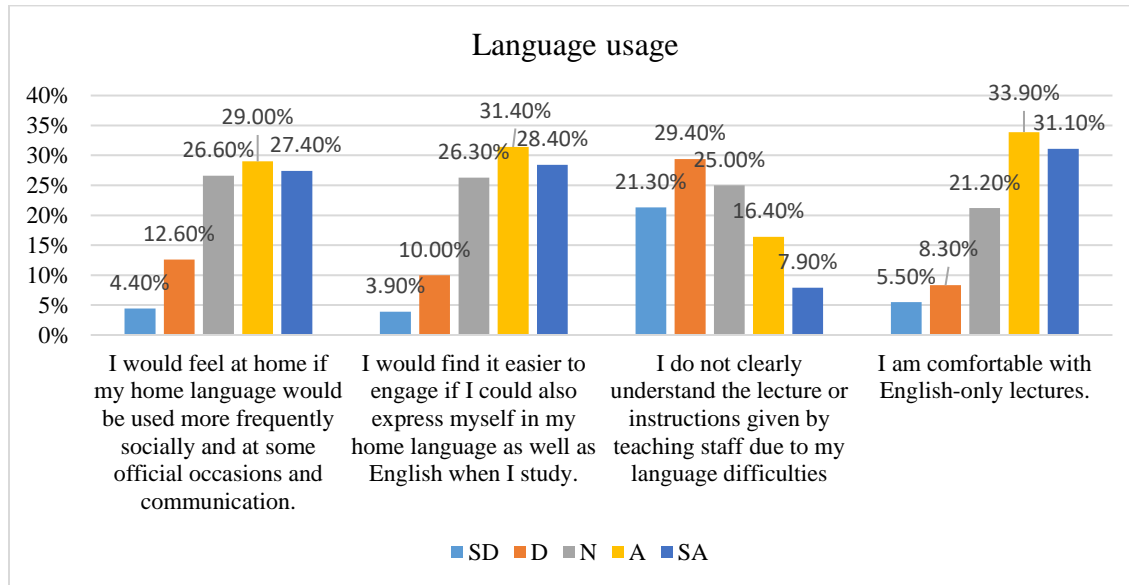


Figure 98: Language usage

Figure 98 shows the response by students with respect to their opinion on language usage at the UFS. The responses of students as shown in figure 96 revealed that more than 50 percent of participants indicated that, they would feel at home if their home language would be used more frequently socially and at some official occasions and communication (56.00%). Similarly 59.80 percent of participants indicated that they would find it easier to engage if they could also express themselves in their home language and English when they study. However, more than, 65 percent of participants indicated that they are comfortable with English-only lectures.

## Language support

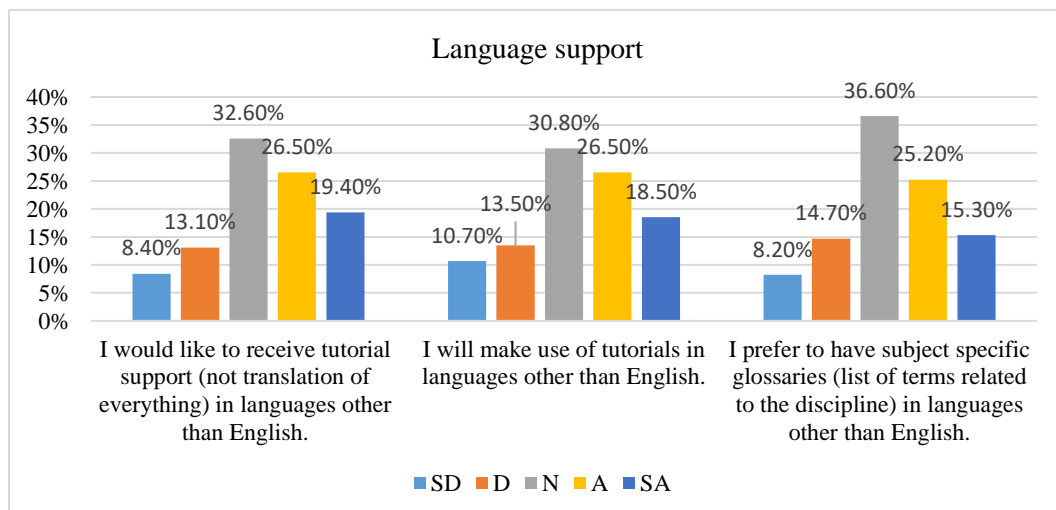




Figure 99: Language support

The sub-section on language support revealed that less than 50 percent of participants indicated that they would like to receive tutorial support (not translation of everything) in languages other than English (45.90%). Similarly less than 50 percent noted that they will make use of tutorials in languages other than English (45.00%) and that, they prefer to have subject specific glossaries (list of terms related to the discipline) in languages other than English (40.50%).

### 3.2.37 Students' voices on Language

*"I feel different languages only create more division among students and having only one language of lecturing would eliminate that"* (Student – South Campus).

*"I would request the UFS to add Zulu language in their modules"* (Student – QwaQwa Campus).

*"The university should offer the option to be taught in another language other than English"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Allow students to study in their home language. Or at least make tutorials in different home languages. Improve belonging by way of equality"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"English is the language of the world and all students should be guided to become good at speaking and learning in English, regardless of their home language"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Bring back the option to choose in what language we can study. Due to lectures who are not educated well enough, I'll be leaving the UFS at the end of the year, because I actually learn myself because the lecture isn't able to learn the students. So I'm paying tuition fees just to actually learn myself"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Doing away with Afrikaans and not even trying to develop Sesotho and isiZulu as academic languages is a big mistake"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"English is a universal language, therefore I feel that courses should be given in that language. If a student's home language is not English, as in my case, it is the responsibility of that student to grow in the English vocabulary. I think introducing courses in any language other than English will lead to a bigger problem in cross-cultural cohesion"* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*"Language that classes are taught in should not be a priority or issue. The priority should lie with communication amongst peers and lecturers. EG. My classes were in English, but most of the time I couldn't understand due to things like dialect, accents, speech pattern and speed of speech. I think the UFS places*

*too much on doing what the students want, rather than evaluating the issue on their own and diagnosing the problem at hand” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“Do not change the language policy again. English is a widely used language that everyone knows! (Even if it is not my first language either) Every industry works and operates in English, so this prepares students for the work environment. Keep it English!!!!” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“English should be the only language of instruction. Based on the diversity on campus I believe since English seems to be everyone 2nd language it is the best option and also English would enable students to communicate efficiently when abroad or at conferences” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“UFS claims to be a fair academic environment where all of the students are treated equally yet, it practises the opposite in some cases. It is really unfair for some of the students to be still taught in their home language while others have to learn in English, especially if that module is not a language module. It not fair nor ethical to still have students who are more privileged than others and that affects us as students, both emotionally and mentally. All modules, besides language modules, should be taught in English only. Not in English and Afrikaans” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I prefer the language of Instruction to be English” (Student – QwaQwa campus).*

*“As much as I understand that Afrikaans and Sesotho are other alternative languages, I find these languages used during lectures as unfair as I believe it benefits those who understand the language at the expense of those who don’t understand the language. If English is the only approved mode of education, so let it be. Should one have concerns and would like to get clarification, let it be on a one on one basis with the lecture or through emails” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The UFS should have kept the policy Afrikaans and English because all students knew what the languages was when they applied here now it's a problem for some students” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“I think UFS should only accommodate English and not Afrikaans because it's not fair that people who understand Afrikaans gets to ask questions and get explanations in their home language whereas most of us who don't understand it, gets to be explained in English of which it's not our home language. Therefore we will not understand better than those who are being explained in their home language” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“The level of language used in the academics is too high. It is sometimes difficult to understand it” (Student – Bloemfontein campus).*

*“It is a pity to see that Afrikaans is losing its stronghold as academic language at a former stronghold such as UFS. It should indeed not be imposed on students but no effort is made to protect this indigenous language - on the contrary the perception is there that it must be eradicated”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“I feel like more languages need to be emphasized because not all of us understand Sesotho or Afrikaans hence I'm saying when choosing tutors the language factor should be considered e.g. isiXhosa, isiZulu and so on...”* (Student – South campus).

*“Changing of the language of instruction from Afrikaans and English to only English was a revolutionary change that was needed. However, there still appears to be a lot of Lectures taught in Afrikaans and assessments written in dual language. This obviously still creates doubt about whether the policy has changed or not. It seems as though some departments have already implemented the language policy while others are still behind. Making sure that everyone is up to standard is very important in helping to create unity amongst the diverse groups”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Sign language should be recognised as one of the official languages”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“Most of the people are talking about English or their home language. Afrikaans are not being used anymore and it's sometimes difficult to express yourself in other languages”* (Student – South campus).

## Results – Distance students

The third part of this report presents results on the climate survey that was conducted among distance learning students of the University of the Free State. The survey required students to provide their views on the following aspects: institutional characteristics; distance learning experience; students' sense of belonging; religion; resources; students' safety and facilities; racial climate; academic climate; diversity climate; sexual orientation and; multilingualism. For the purpose of the cross campus comparisons, we resorted to analysing the written responses of participants in the study.

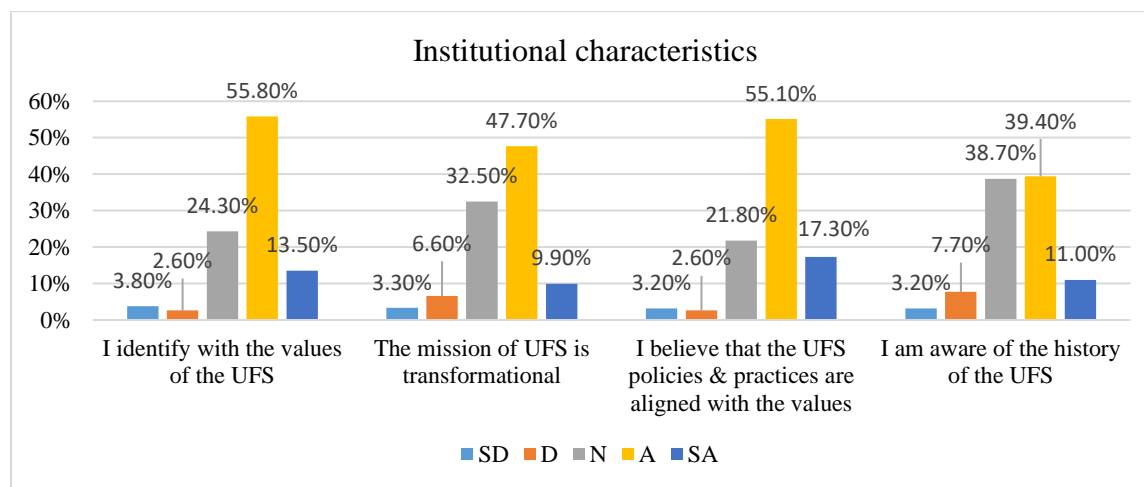


Figure 100: Institutional characteristics

Information on the mission, values and history of the UFS are very important to organisational development and for students. Figure 100 shows the responses of distance students regarding the mission, values and history of the UFS. Significantly more than 50 percent of the participants agreed to the statement that the mission of the UFS is well stated (57.60%) while 69.30 indicated that they identify with the mission of the UFS. Similarly, more than 50 percent of students noted that they believed that UFS policies were aligned with the values of the UFS (72.40%) and, that the mission of the UFS is transformational (57.60%).

### 3.3.1 Distance learning experience

The section on distance learning experience focused on the perception of students about their academic and social experiences at the learning centres. The first item sought to gather information on the academic experiences of distance learning students.

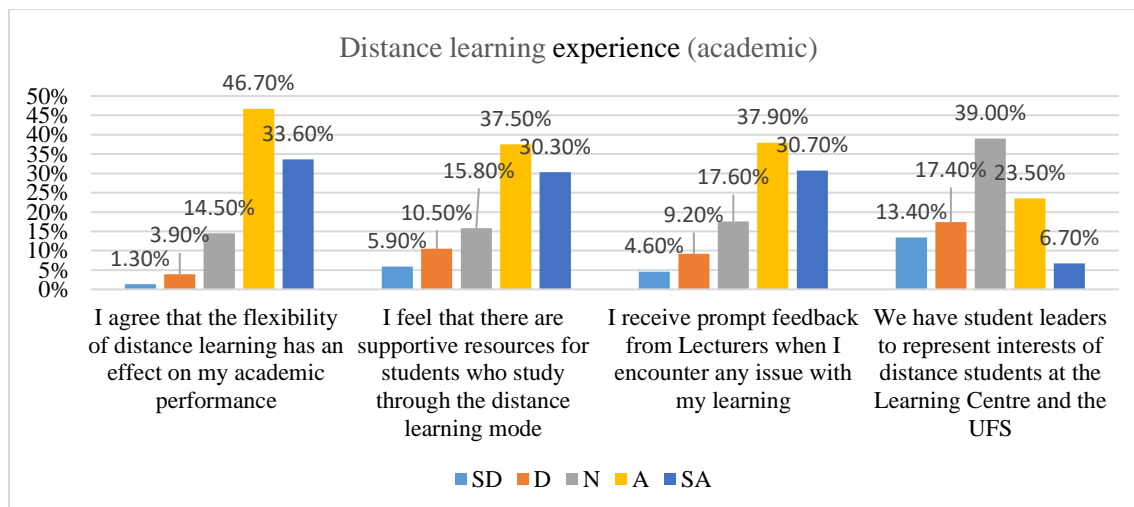


Figure 101: Distance learning experience (Academic)

Figure 101 shows the feedback in relation to the academic experiences of distance learning students. The result revealed that more than 80.30 percent of participants opined that, flexibility of distance learning has an effect on their academic performance. Additionally, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that, there are supportive resources for students who study through the distance learning mode (67.80%) and that, they receive prompt feedback from Lecturers when they encounter any issue with their learning (68.60%). Contrastingly, less than 35 percent of participants indicated that they have student leaders to represent interests of distance students at the Learning Centre and the UFS (30.25%). The results however reveals the challenges distance learning students have in relation to student leadership.

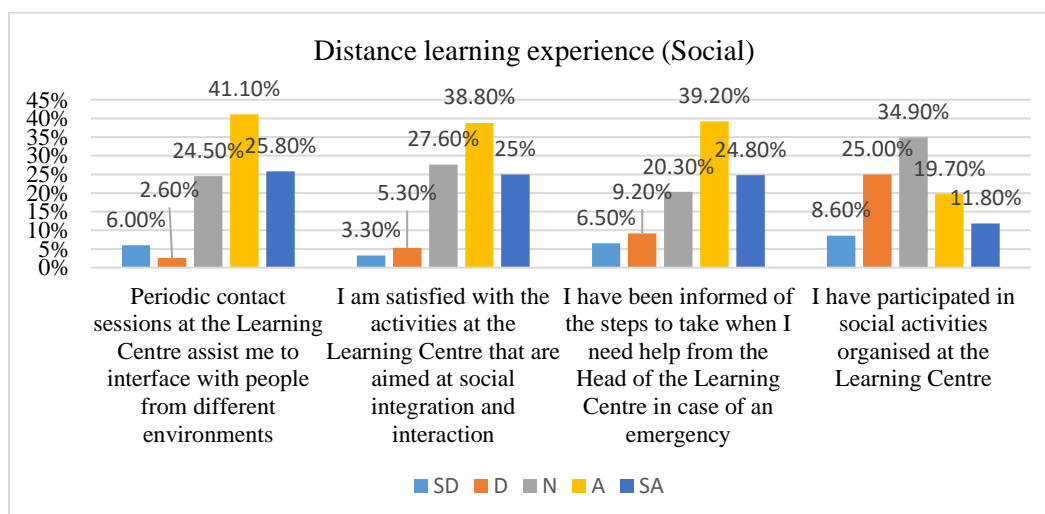


Figure 102: Distance learning experience (Social)

As shown in figure 102, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that periodic contact sessions at the Learning Centre assist them to interface with people from different environments (66.90%). Similarly, more

than 60 percent of participants stated that, they were satisfied with the activities at the Learning Centre that are aimed at social integration and interaction (63.80%) and they have been informed of the steps to take when I need help from the Head of the Learning Centre in case of an emergency (64.00%). However, less than 35 percent of participants (31.50%) of participants noted that they have participated in social activities organised at their Learning Centre – revealing the low level of participation among distance learners in social activities.

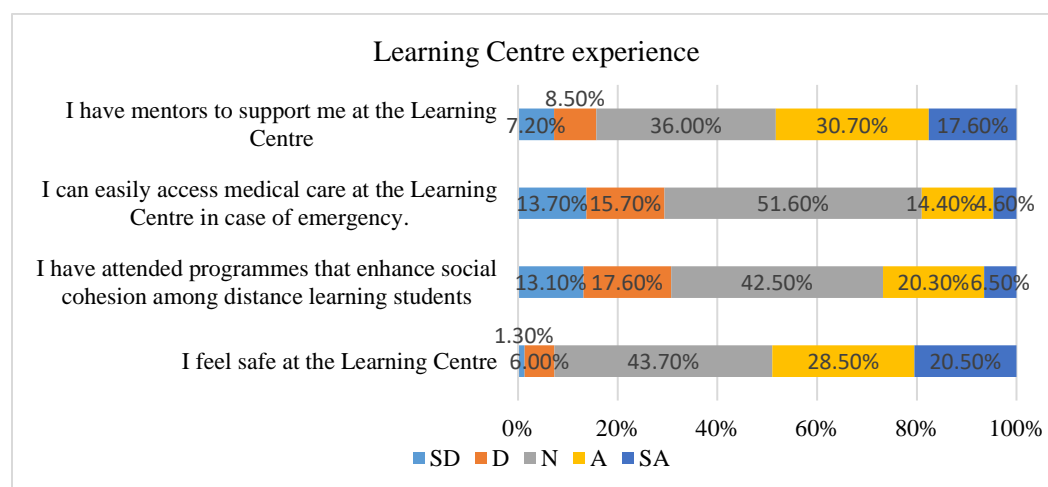


Figure 103: Learning centre experience

Results from the learning centre experience aspect revealed that less than 50 percent of participants opined that they felt safe at the learning centre (49.00%), can easily access medical care at the Learning Centre in case of emergency (19.00%) and have mentors at the Learning Centre (48.30%).

### 3.3.2 Students' voices on distance learning experience

*"As an online student the services I get are excellent. Whenever I encounter problems they are always on the line to help"* (Student - South Campus).

*"I have gained an abundance of knowledge in education through the online ACT. I never knew that would be possible through technology. It was an amazing experience"* (Student - Bloemfontein).

*"It is impossible to contact anyone using the landline.... The phones rings one way and then people cut the call"* (Student – Bloemfontein).

*"I am thoroughly enjoying the online experience as it is so flexible and allows me to work at my pace. Estie Scheepers has been phenomenal in the delivery of two of the modules: readily available to guide and assist. Her approach is truly inspiring!"* (Student – Bloemfontein).

*“I am aware that the LL.B long distance is now being phased out but still feel that the university was not properly prepared to present it via long distance. Blackboard is a disaster.....test are not loaded on time. Between Telkom and Eskom getting a degree is impossible and the university has not been understanding regarding these challenges. Keep in mind studying long distance is not just due to distance but also because I am working full time and the course is killing us with work load without considering that as an e-learn student I have to work full time as well. I feel like an LL.B guinea pig in the lab of the university”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

*“The communication between e-learn and the lecturers are very frustrating especially, regarding assessments that needs to be submitted and when”* (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

### 3.3.3 Students’ sense of belonging

The sub-section on students’ sense of belonging required students to provide their responses based on their experiences with their colleagues and staff at the learning centre. As shown in figure 102, more than 60 percent of participants felt valued as students (66.70%) and felt that the university recognises their humanity (63.50%) Additionally, more than 50 percent of participants agreed with the statement that, their interaction with staff and students provided them with a sense of belonging (59.60%) and that, the UFS culture allow for free and open expression of individual beliefs (59.20%).

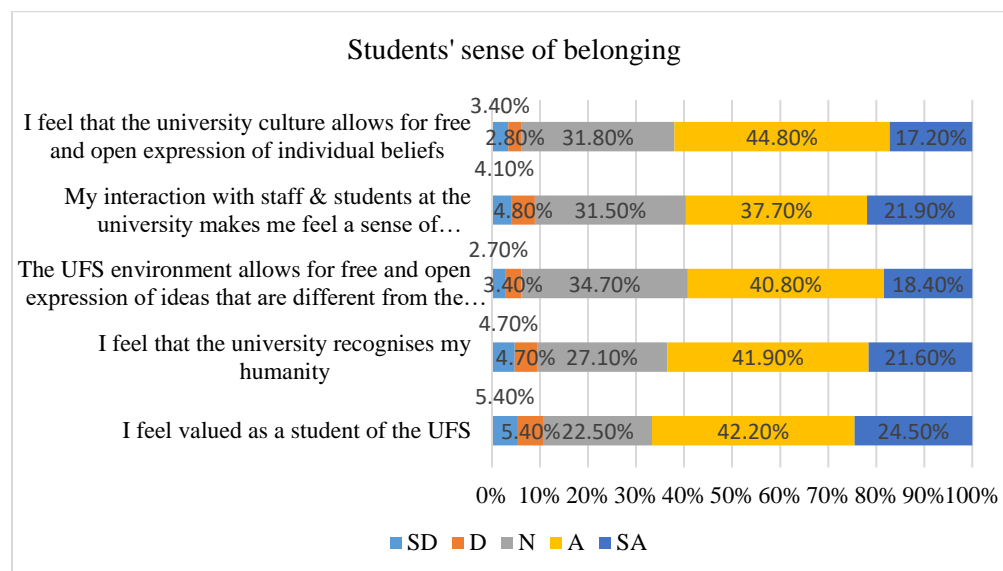


Figure 104: Students’ sense of belonging

### 3.3.4 Students' voices on sense of belonging

*“I would like to say UFS is the best Institution I have ever studied at they care about students always update me with everything you would swear that I am studying full time but I am on distance learning”* (Student – Bloemfontein).

*“I feel honoured to be a student of the UFS”* (Student South Campus).

*“Accommodate LGBTQI+ students and have organisations”* (Student).

### 3.3.5 Religion

The sub-section on religion was developed to gather relevant information regarding the experiences of distance learning students in relation to religious tolerance.

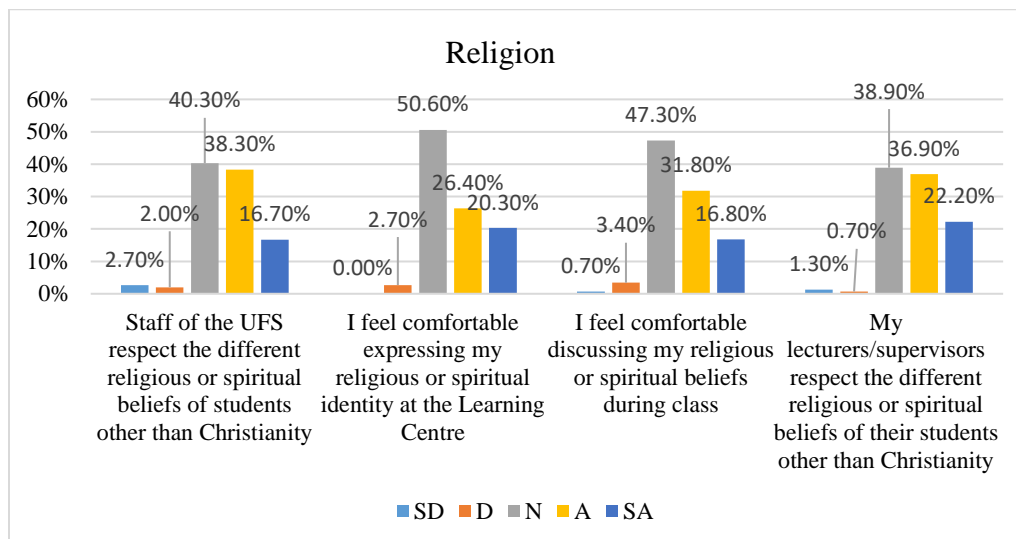


Figure 105: Religion

As shown in figure 105 more than 50 percent of participants indicated that, staff of UFS respect the different religious or spiritual beliefs of students other than Christianity (55.10%) and that, lecturers respect the different religious beliefs of their students other than Christianity (59.00%). Conversely, less than 50 percent of participants noted that they felt comfortable expressing their religious beliefs in class (48.70%) and at the learning centre (46.70%). More than 60 percent of participants noted that



### 3.3.6 Resources, facilities and health

The section presents the responses of distance learning students in relation to their experiences on the resources, facilities and students' health at the UFS.

#### Resources

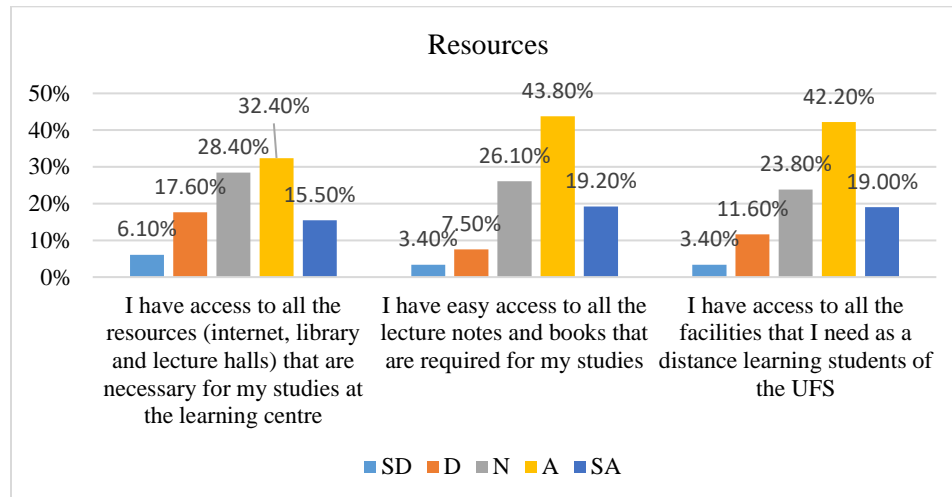


Figure 106: Resources

The first item under the resources sub-section required students to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement on the provision of learning resources at the UFS. As shown in figure 104, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that, they had access to all the resources (internet, library and lecture halls) on campus (47.90%). Notably, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that they had access to all the lecture notes and books required for their studies (63.00%) and have access to all the facilities they needed to use on campus for their studies (61.20%).

### 3.3.7 Students' voices on resources and support

*“At distance learning centres, it would be appreciable if UFS would provide knowledgeable facilitators because for certain courses students end up struggling on their own”* (Student – Bloemfontein).

*“The campus where I study is unorganized. The assignment feedback we receive are put in piles and some students just grab then and even destroy some of the assignments. We also waited for almost an hour and a half just to receive stickers with barcodes for our assignments. Weekends are tough to study and by doing this the institution waists a lot of precious family time”* (Student – Bloemfontein).

*“It is not easy to communicate with the university as a distance learning student, either by telephone or via emails” (Student - Bloemfontein).*

*“Stop putting wrong information on your website.....The certificate I applied for ended up lasting longer than the time stipulated on the website” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“UFS is helping me with what I do at work, I learn new information although there is problems here and there especially, using blackboard to submit our assignment no one is clear enough to help us” (Student).*

### 3.3.8 Information on safety and security

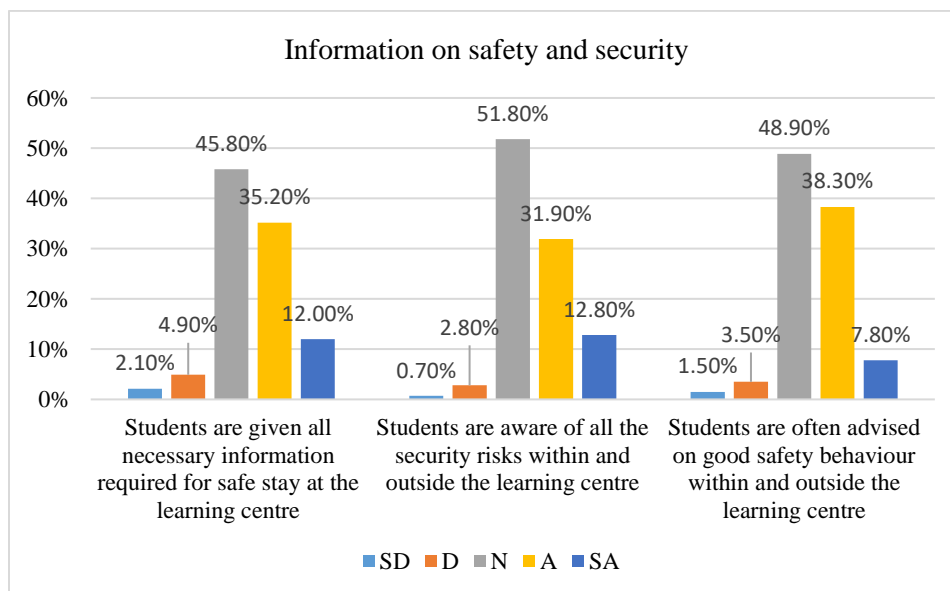


Figure 107: Information on safety and security

Information on safety and security at the learning centre is necessary for students because it serves to provide students with guidelines on whom to contact in cases of emergency and what is expected of students in order to keep safe. As shown in figure 107, less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they were provided with all the necessary information for safe living (47.20%), they were aware of the security risks at the learning centre (45.00%) and, they are often advised on good safety behaviour within and outside campus (46.10%).

### 3.3.9 Students' voices on safety and security

*“Let the University consider improving security measures at our centres because as students, we don't feel safe at all and this negatively affects our learning” (Student Bloemfontein).*

## Facilities

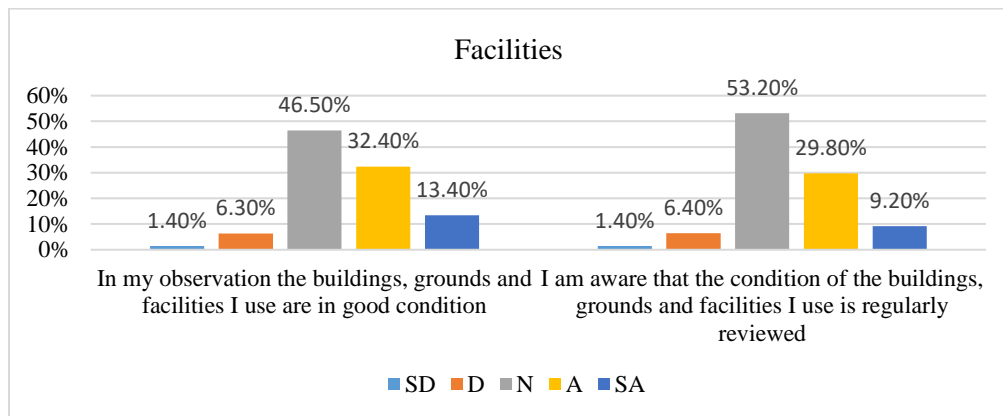


Figure 108: Facilities

The sub-section on facilities required participants to provide their responses on questions that relate to the maintenance and conditions of the facilities at the learning centre. As shown in figure 108, less than 50 percent of the participants agreed with the statement that, the buildings, grounds and facilities they use are in good condition (45.80) while 39.00 percent noted that, the buildings, grounds and facilities they use are regularly reviewed.

### 3.3.10 Students' voices on facilities

*"The learning centre at Sunward Park High is always filthy.....classrooms are not cleaned prior to our arrival. Community is not effective. I do not receive some messages as received by my colleagues. Sunward Park High classrooms are not cleaned before we arrive at the learning centre"* (Student).

### 3.3.11 Students' finance

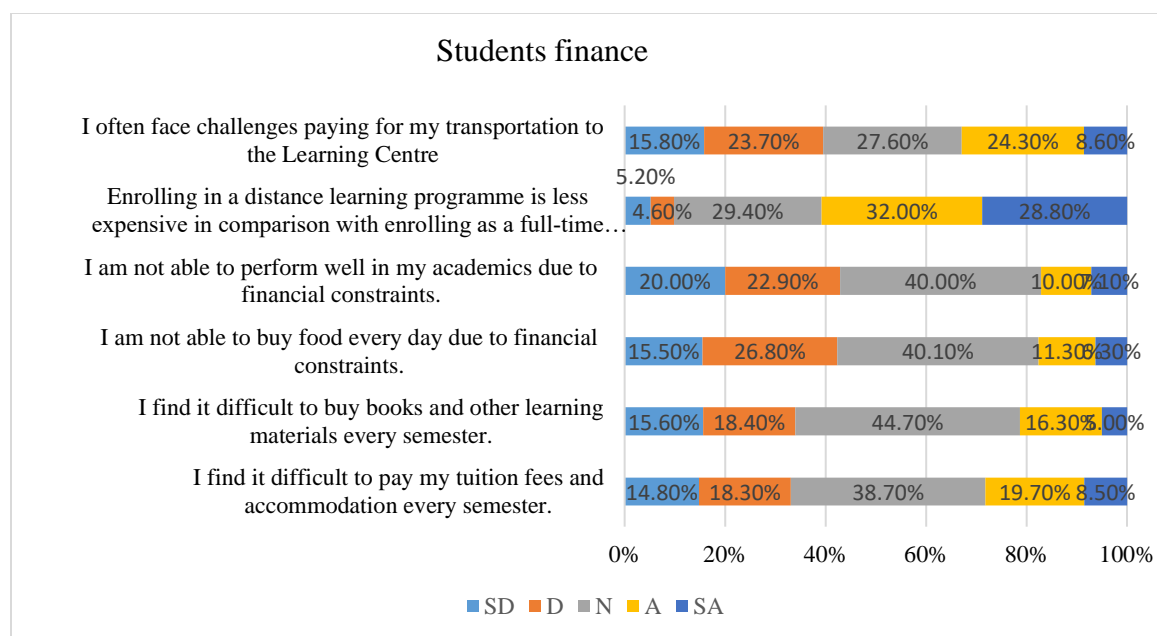


Figure 109: Students finance

Figure 109 shows the distribution of the responses of participants on six items. Less than 40 percent of the participants opined that: they found it difficult to pay their tuition fees and accommodation every semester (28.20%); had challenges buying books and other learning materials every semester (21.30%); are not able to buy food every day due to financial constraints (17.60%) and; often face challenges paying for their transportation to the Learning Centre (32.90%). Similarly, the results showed that 61.00 percent of participants agreed that, enrolling in a distance learning programme is less expensive in comparison with enrolling as a full-time student. What the results suggest is that although a bigger percentage of students do not face financial constraints on campus, a sizeable percentage require financial assistance.

### 3.3.12 Financial aid

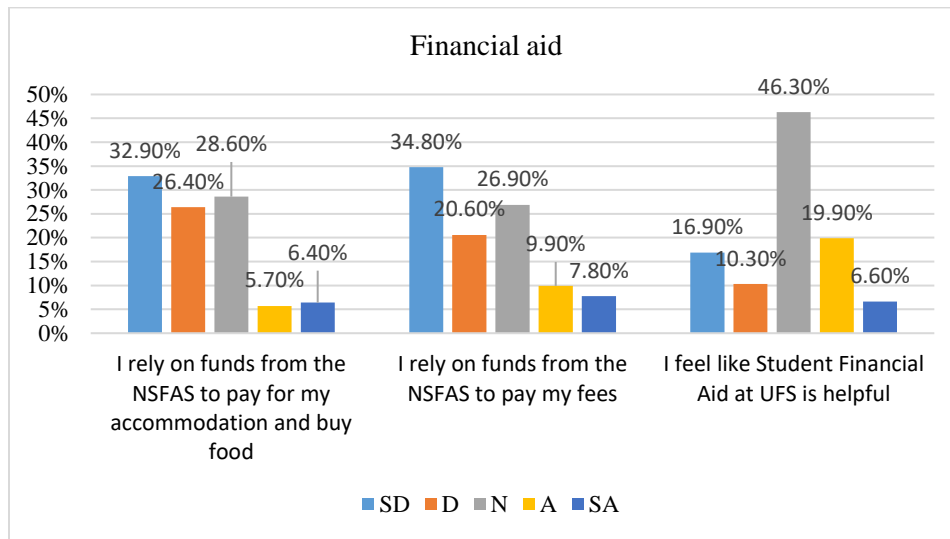


Figure 110: Financial aid

The results of students' opinion on the importance of financial aid to their study and stay on campus revealed that only 12.10 percent of participants rely on funds from the NSFAS to pay for their accommodation and buy food while 17.70 percent of participants relied on funds from the NSFAS to pay their fees. However, 26.50 percent of students noted that students' financial aid is helpful.

### 3.3.13 Students' voices on finance

*"I am not sure if UFS sends out reminder emails to current students to remind them when payment is due for the next module. I have noticed the frustration of students who have made late payments and would not like to find myself in this situation"* (Student – Bloemfontein).

*"The financial statements should be given to learners on a monthly basis so that they can plan in terms of paying outstanding amounts. Learners should be informed of where they are in terms of module completion and how many modules left to complete"* (Student - South Campus).

*"UFS should try to have a financial department that can help students and respond by correcting mistakes on accounts"* (Student – Bloemfontein).

### 3.3.14 Academic/Social life Balance

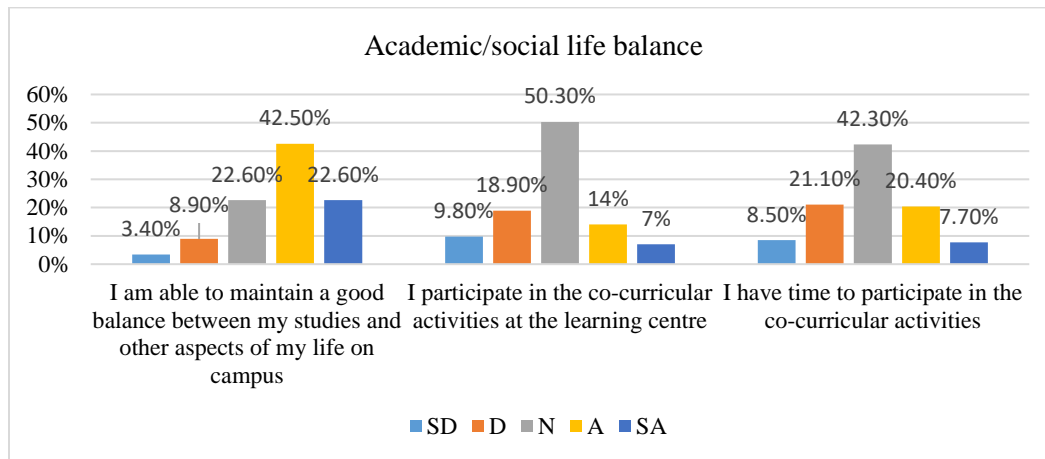


Figure 111: Academic/Social life Balance

The academic and social life balance sub-section provides relevant information on the perception of distance learning students in relation to academic/social life balance. Significantly, 65.10 percent of participants indicated that they maintain a good balance between their studies and other social activities on campus. Despondently, less than 30 percent of students opined that they participate in co-curricular activities (21.00%) and make time to participate in co-curricular activities (28.10%).

### 3.3.15 The UFS racial climate

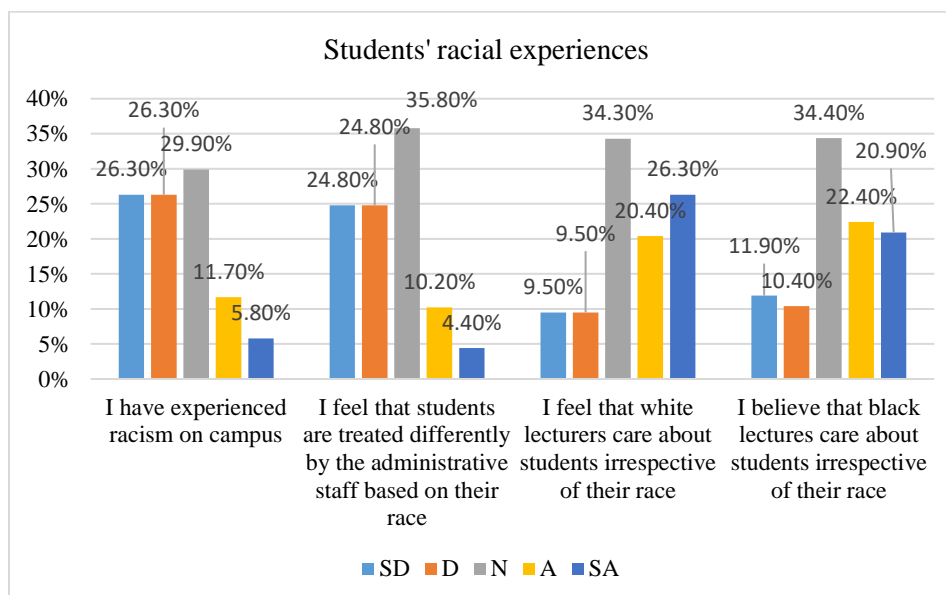


Figure 112: Students' racial experiences

The racial climate sought to gather information regarding the perception of distance learning students about their experiences at the learning centre in relation to race. The section had three main sections: students' racial experiences at UFS, racial climate and cross-cultural interaction. As shown in figure 112, 17.50 percent of participants indicated that they had experienced racism at the learning centre. The percentage of participants who indicated that students are treated differently by the administrative staff based on their race was 14.60 percent. However, less than 50 percent of participants opined that, they felt white lecturers cared about students irrespective of their race (46.70%) and that, black lectures care about students irrespective of their race (43.30%). What the results suggest is that majority of the participants felt that most lecturers cared about students irrespective of students' race.

### UFS race culture

The responses of students as regards race culture at the UFS is presented in figure 111. Significantly, less than 30 percent of participants opined that the UFS culture privileges white students (19.10%) and black students (14.50%). Additionally, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that the UFS learning environment embraces the multiplicity of races (58.50%) and, promotes human rights & human dignity (61.10%). More than 50 percent of participants were of the opinion that UFS treats all races equitably.

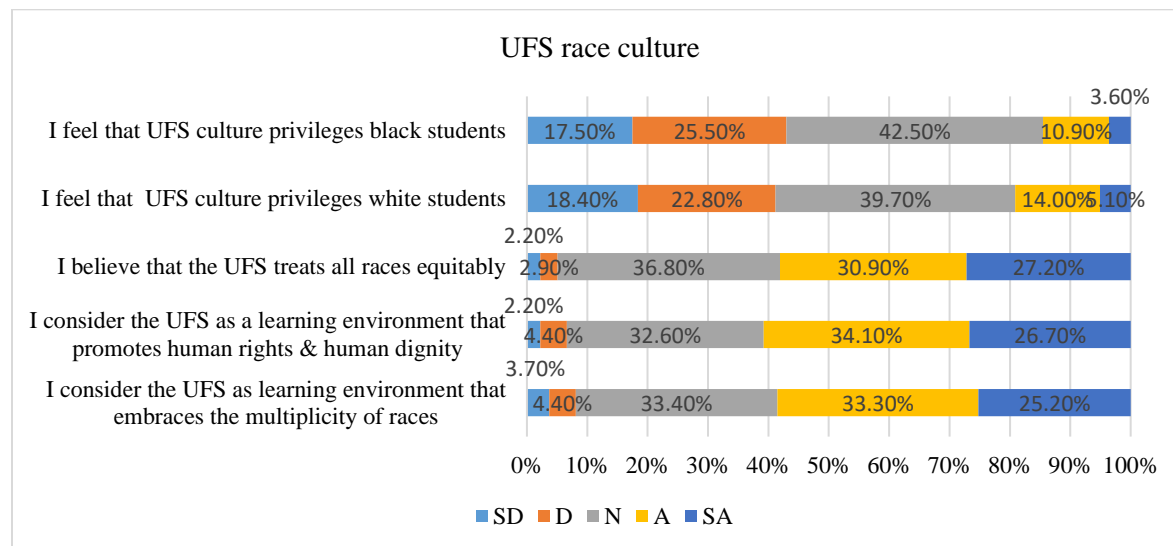


Figure 113: UFS race culture

The results further show that the current culture of the UFS neither privileges black or white students as indicated by the participants.

### 3.3.16 Students' voices on racial climate

*“UFS lectures are not racist, stereotyped or discriminative. They treat everyone equally & fairly” (Student - South Campus).*

*“I approached South Campus for accommodation for my daughter who is a full time student at UFS. Upon reception (very unfriendly) we were totally ignored and dismissed, while other students who came after us were assisted. Some applied while we were there and they were accommodated immediately. I am of the opinion that the accommodation there was/is reserved for a certain racial group. It is highly frustrating and totally unacceptable that this is the case at a university in the democratic land we are supposed to live in. I am a hard working student at UFS. My daughter works very hard to be a good student. We are not getting any financial help from anyone. I am struggling to keep up with the student life especially with my daughter having to move into a flat which I can hardly afford. I feel students who are not getting financial help are being exploited, excluded and demoralized. The university must please make their residences inclusive and non-racial” (Student – Bloemfontein).*

*“They must look for black tutorial also.....don't only focus on whites” (Student - South Campus).*

### 3.3.17 Cross-cultural interaction

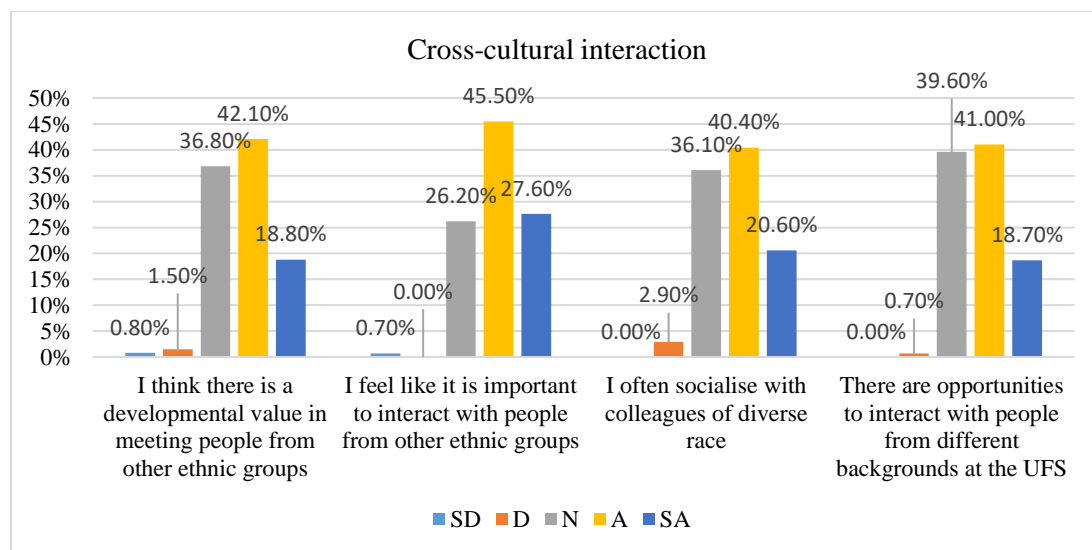


Figure 114: Cross-cultural interaction

Figure 114 shows the data on the responses of distance learning students in relation to their experiences on cross-cultural interaction. Significantly, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that, there is a developmental value in meeting people from other ethnic groups (60.90%), they often socialise with



colleagues of diverse race (73.10%), there are opportunities to interact with people from different backgrounds at the UFS (61.00%) and it is important to interact with people from other ethnic groups (60.00%).

### 3.3.18 Academic climate

The section on academic climate sought to gather the views of distance learning students in relation to their experiences under three main aspects: intellectual engagement, students-lecturers engagement and supportive campus environment

The sub-section on intellectual engagement revealed that more than 80 percent of students studying via distance learning modes enjoy the intellectual challenge that comes with the courses they study (83.00%). This result however compares to 77 percent recorded by the contact students therefore revealing the difference between distance learning students and contact students.

#### Intellectual engagement

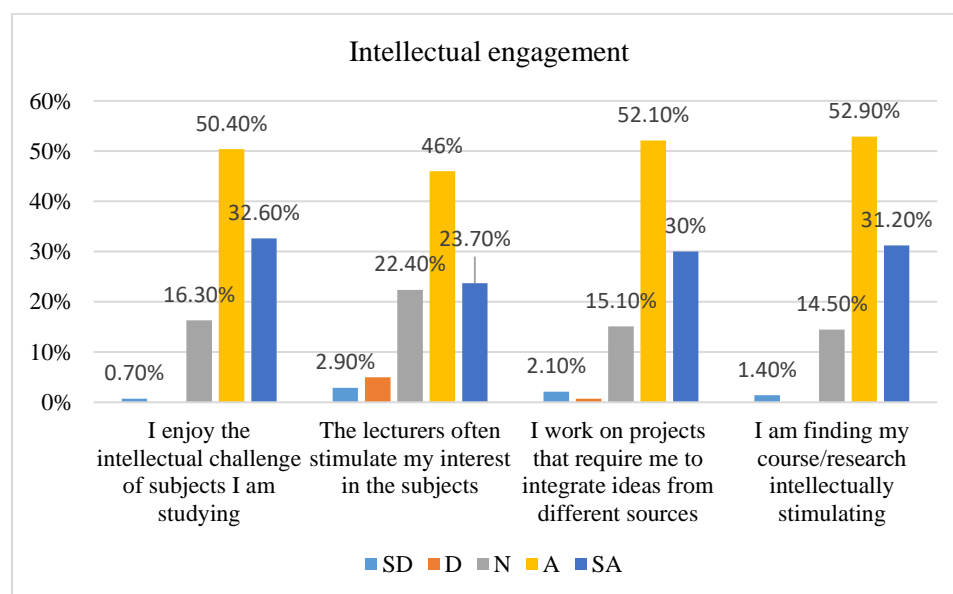


Figure 115: Intellectual engagement

As shown in figure 115, 70 percent of participants agreed to the statement that lecturers often stimulate their interest in the courses (70.00%) while 82.10 percent indicated that they work on projects that require them to integrate ideas from different sources. Significantly, 84.10 percent of participants indicated that they find their course intellectually stimulating.

## Students-lecturers engagement

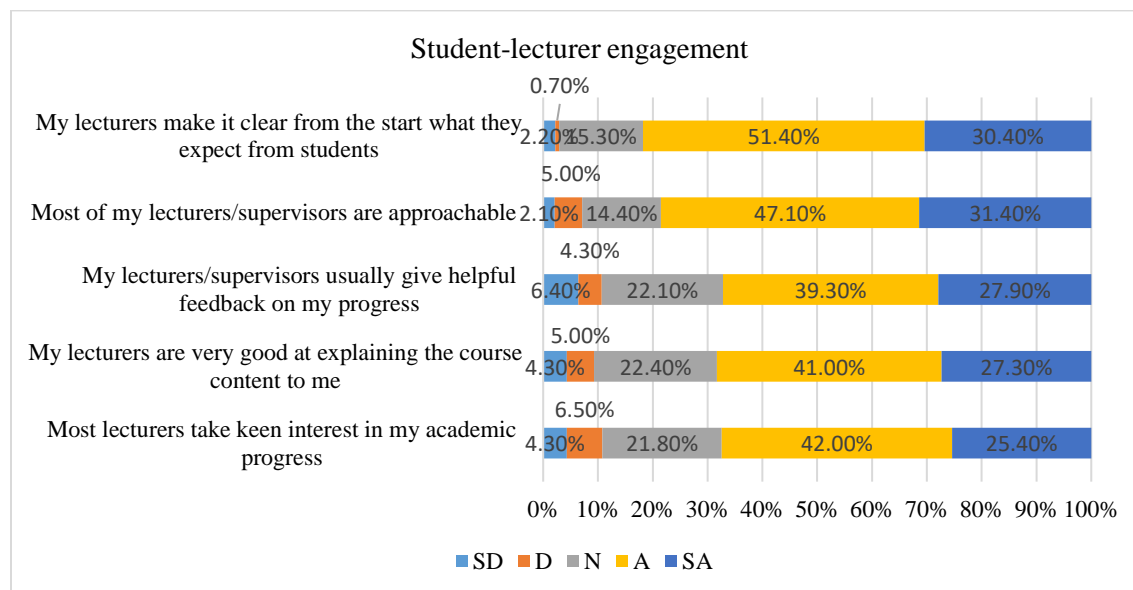


Figure 116: Student-lecturer engagement

The sub-section on student-lecturer engagement revealed high level of engagement between students and lecturers. Significantly, more than 70 percent of participants indicated that, most of their lecturers/supervisors are approachable (78.50%) and, their lecturers make it clear from the start of their courses or modules what they expect from students (81.80%). More than 60 percent of participants indicated that, their lecturers are very good at explaining the course content to them (68.00%) and that usually gave helpful feedback on their academic progress (67.20%). Similarly, 67 percent of participants indicated that most of their lecturers took keen interest in their academic progress.

### 3.3.19 Students' voices on academic climate

*“Learning at UFS has increased my knowledge of the subjects and the different ways of teaching English and Geography in the classroom” (Student - Bloemfontein).*

*“The online part time courses could be more interactive - lecturer and student. It feels as if the part time student is 'oor gelaat aan sy eie genade'- no beter phrase to use, than this one in Afrikaans” (Student - Bloemfontein).*

*“When assignments are assessed and returned, there is no order. We have to dig through piles of assignments to find our scripts. Some colleagues have received their laptops for the next phase of the*

course, whilst I have not. SMS, email etc. must all be used when communicating to use as one line of communication may be down” (Student - South Campus).

“Students should have access to view their results on time and be given a chance to re-submit the assessment they failed e.g. maths assessment 1 EMCP only 5 people passed the module and they did not attend the class but those who attended failed. Resubmission will be the best and fair because the facilitator misled the student and now many student no longer feel comfortable attending” (Student - South Campus).

“While studying the Post Graduate Diploma in Financial Planning I, have been increasingly demotivated by the number of errors made by UFS in the quizzes and past papers....The memos provided for past papers have a number of errors of which [a staff] has admitted to but this means the students last year were robbed of these marks. I hope that this is not repeated this year. It may be the one or two marks needed to pass!” (Student - South Campus).

### 3.3.20 Supportive campus environment

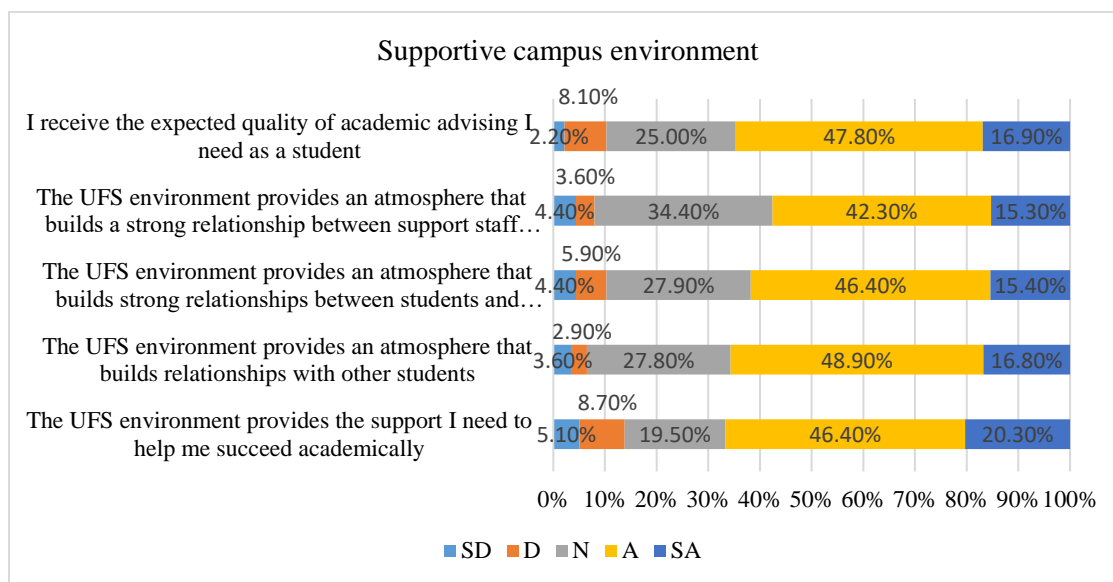


Figure 117: Supportive campus

Figure 117 shows the distribution of participants' perception of the supportive campus environment at the UFS. The results revealed that more than 60 percent of participants opined that, the UFS environment provides the support they need to succeed academically (66.67%), that, they receive the expected quality of academic advising they need as students (64.70%) and, the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds relationships with other students (65.80%). Similarly, more than 55 percent of participants opined that, the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds strong relationships between students

and lecturers (61.70%) and, the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds a strong relationship between support staff and students (57.60%).

### 3.3.21 Diversity climate

The sub-section on the diversity climate at the learning centre covered aspects such as interaction with diverse peers, students' perception about interaction with diverse lecturers and the importance of diversity-related course learning. The first aspect required participants to share their opinion regarding their interaction with diverse peers.

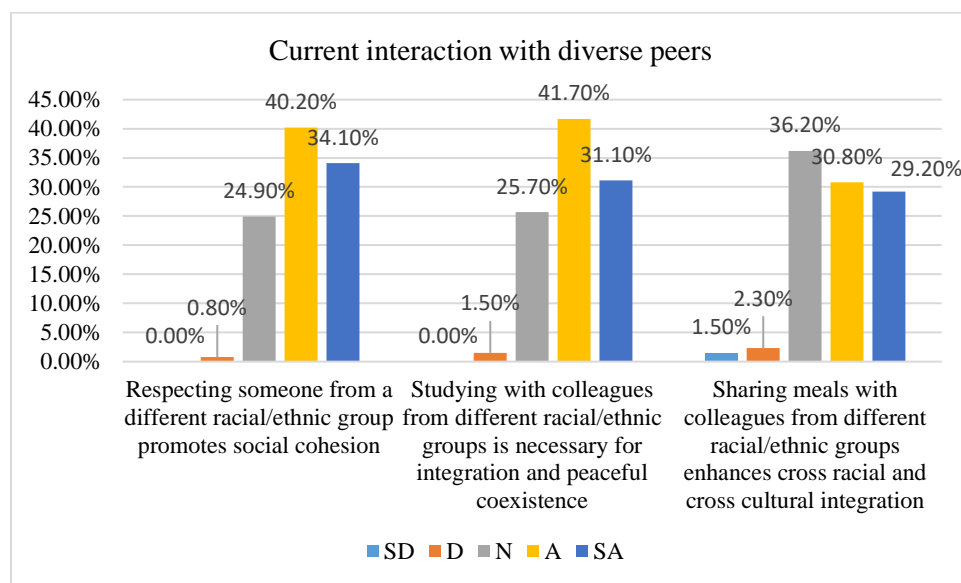


Figure 118: Interaction with diverse peers

The sub-section on interaction with diverse peers revealed high percentages in all the three statements. Markedly, participants agreed to the statement that, respecting someone from a different racial/ethnic group promotes social cohesion (74.30%), studying with colleagues from different racial/ethnic groups is necessary for integration and peaceful coexistence (72.80%) and, sharing meals with colleagues from different racial/ethnic groups enhances cross racial and cross cultural integration (60.00%).

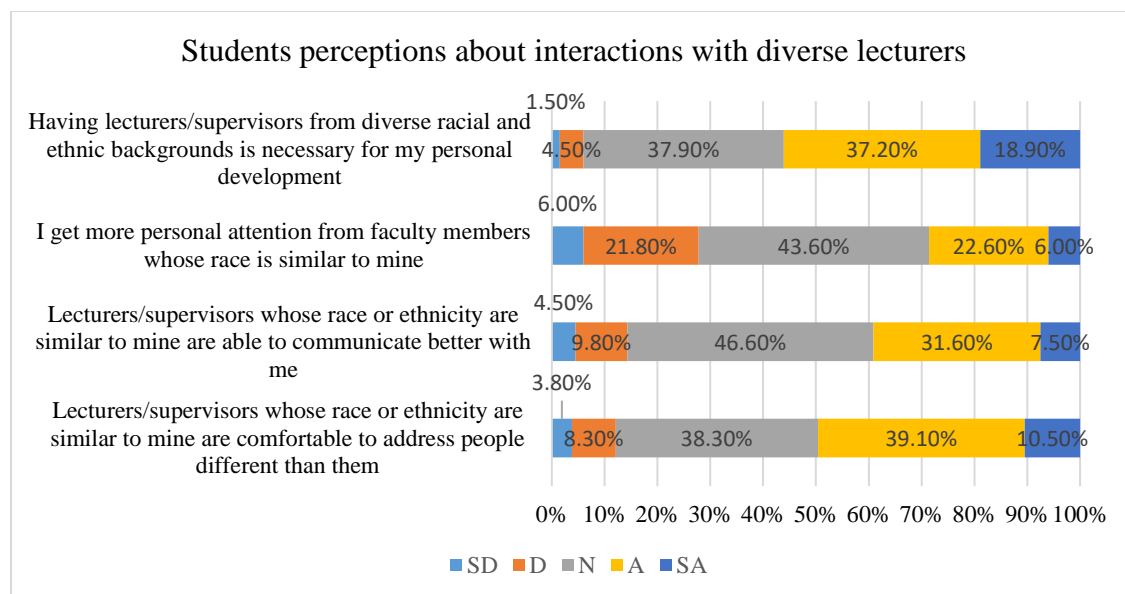


Figure 119: Students' perception about interaction with diverse lecturers

Results from the sub-section on students' perceptions about interactions with diverse lecturers showed that distance learning students perceived their interaction with lecturers from diverse backgrounds (race/ethnic) as good. As shown in figure 119, 49.60 percent of participants opined that, lecturers whose race or ethnicity were similar to theirs are comfortable to address people different than them while 56.00 of participants noted that, having lecturers from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds is necessary for their personal development (56.00%).

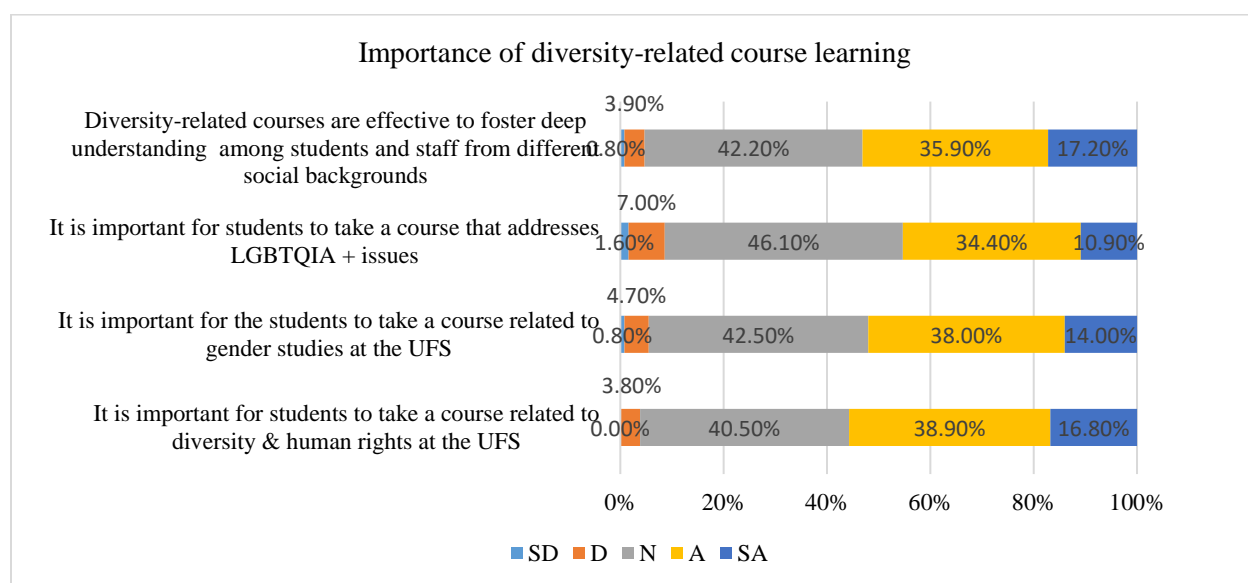


Figure 120: Importance of diversity-related course learning

The responses of the participants on the sub-section regarding the importance of diversity-related course learning revealed mixed responses. More than 50 percent of participants indicated that, it is important for students to take a course related to diversity & human rights at the UFS (55.70%) and diversity-related courses are effective to foster deep understanding among students and staff from different social backgrounds (53.10%). Similarly, more than 50 percent of participants opined that, it is important for students to take a course related to gender studies at the UFS (52.00%). However, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that it is important for students to take a course that addresses LGBTQIA + issues (45.30%).

### 3.3.22 Language usage

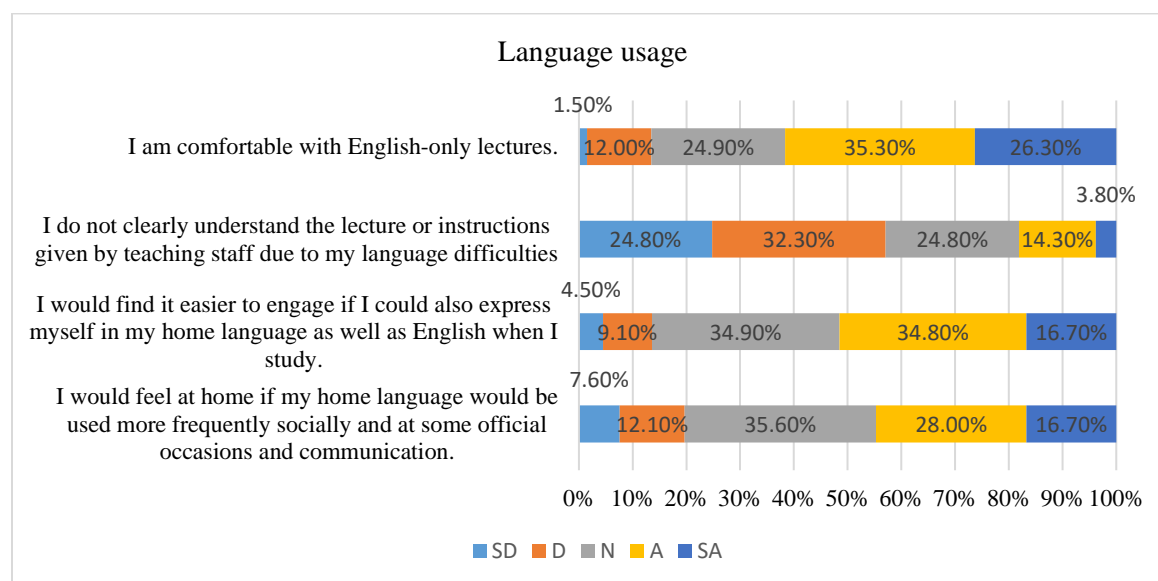


Figure 121: Language usage

Figure 121 show the distribution of responses by distance students with respect to their views about language usage at the UFS. The responses of students as shown in figure 120 revealed that more than 50 percent of participants indicated that, they would find it easier to engage if they could express themselves in their home language and English when they study (51.50%) and that, they are comfortable with English-only lectures (61.60%). However, less than 50 percent opined that they would feel at home if their home language would be used more frequently socially and at some official occasions and communication (45.00%) while 57.10 percent disagreed to the statement that, they do not clearly understand the lecture or instructions given by teaching staff due to their language difficulties.

## Language support

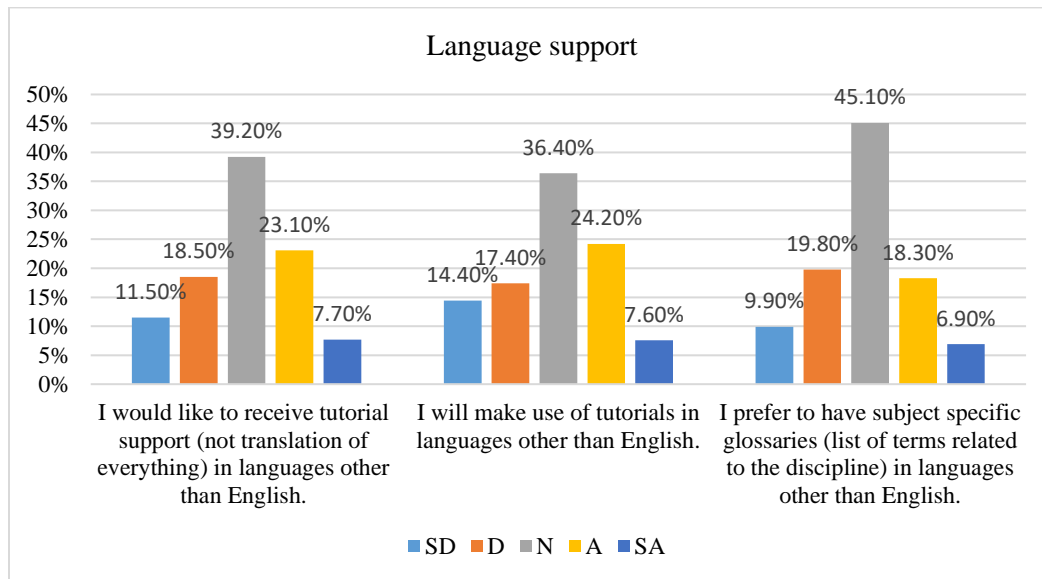


Figure 122: Language support

The sub-section on language support revealed that less than 50 percent of participants indicated that they would like to receive tutorial support (not translation of everything) in languages other than English (30.80%). Similarly less than 50 percent noted that they will make use of tutorials in languages other than English (31.80%) and that, they prefer to have subject specific glossaries (list of terms related to the discipline) in languages other than English (25.20%).

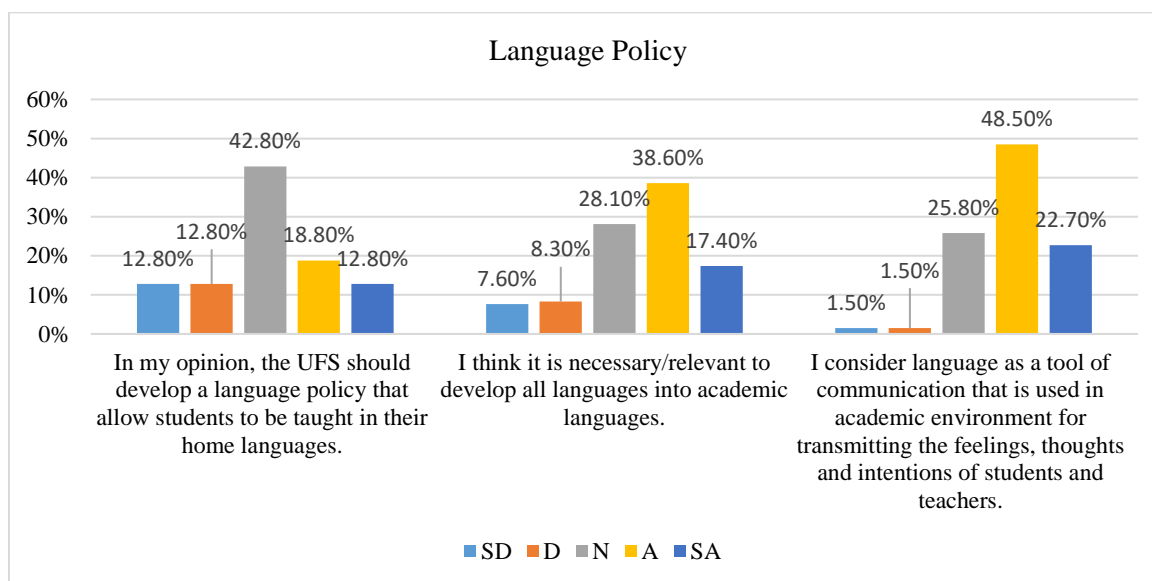


Figure 123: Language policy

Figure 123 shows the responses of students in relation to the UFS language policy. Significantly, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that they consider language as a tool of communication that is used in academic environment for transmitting the feelings, thoughts and intentions of students and lecturers (71.20%) and that, it is necessary to develop all languages into academic languages (56.00%). However, less than 45 percent of participants opined that the UFS should develop a language policy that allow students to be taught in their home languages (31.60%). Similar to the views of the contact students, the results gathered from the distance learning students however suggest that majority of participants will prefer the UFS to develop a language policy that allow students to be taught in their home languages.

### 3.2.23 Students' voices on language usage

*"I am not attending.... so the online program is 100% good for me and the communication language is also perfect"* (Student - South Campus).

*"Our home languages must be added in the correspondence"* (Student).

*"I think the use of English in all communications is the best way other than use of other languages. In as much as we would love to accommodate and promote other SA languages I think English is universal"* (Student).

*"African languages must be added on the program as it is added in primary level"* (Student)

*"I would like the UFS to add more languages for translation so that every student can be able to fully understand and not only translate in specific languages only"* (Student - South Campus).

*"There should be translators for those who don't understand English"* (Student - South Campus).



## **4.0 Recommendation**

### **4.1 Recommendation – staff experience**

#### **4.1.1 Change and transformation**

Although the survey data points to the fact that the majority of the participants are aware of the transformation agenda of the UFS, it is evidently clear from the comments of some participants that some staff are not well informed of the content of the ITP and the work streams. It is recommended that frequent stakeholder engagement and information dissemination should be broadly undertaken to enable staff to understand the transformation agenda of the UFS. According to the Education White Paper of 1997, a programme for the transformation of higher education, “the transformation of the structures, values and culture of governance is a necessity, not an option, for South African higher education” (DOE, 1997: 29). This provision requires the involvement of all staff in the transformation process of universities. Hence, we recommend that top management and middle management appointments that are aimed at transforming the UFS are communicated to the university community. Additionally, although transformation is essential, it is also important for management to ensure that persons who are appointed to various positions have the requisite knowledge, skills and experiences to occupy these positions. Additionally, training and mentorship programmes should be organised for all new appointees. The transformation agenda of the UFS should emphasise the importance of a lasting integration of the different races that would also ensure that future generation of staff at the UFS would have a strong sense of belonging. Frequent engagement between the HR department and staff should be conducted. Clear succession planning should be developed and implemented to enable potential staff to be identified and trained for leadership positions. The contestations among academic staff on the importance of research and teaching and learning should be addressed through broad engagement at the faculty and institutional levels.

#### **4.1.2 Leadership and staff involvement**

Evidently, the responses from support staff showed high levels of leadership influence and contribution in their work processes when compared to the responses from academic staff. Additionally, two main issues that drew low academic staff agreement were in the areas of leadership planning and leadership support for faculty to achieve set goals (teaching, research and service). The study further revealed high level of staff involvement in the decision-making process of the various department although 26 percent of participants indicated that they were not involved in the decision-making process of their departments. We recommend that Heads of department involve academic staff in the planning and implementation of department goals –

especially those that directly affect the output of academic staff. Additionally, there should be support for academics – especially early career academics to plan and achieve their professional goals. Leaders who do not engage their staff in the decision-making process should be advised by the Deans on the importance of group planning and implementation processes.

We recommend that managers should inform staff of their departments about the outcome of meetings that are related to the ITP and other important matters. There should be broad consultations and interaction between leaders and their staff in their units/departments. These consultations should be carried out in an environment that is collegial, unthreatening and respectful. Additionally, leaders should hold frequent meetings with their staff. Staff who report issues between their leaders and themselves to the Human Resources Department should be given feedback on the status of their issues and where possible a proper closure of the issues should be conducted. There should be consistency in the application of policies and rules in the various units, departments and the Human Resources Department – every staff should be treated equally and fairly in a conducive working environment. Heads of departments should be aware of the integration in marketing, reputation, and brand management. Significantly, leaders should be involved in the front line services of the university and also engage their staff in the frontline activities. Departments that require additional staff members should be provided with additional staff to enable them carry out their jobs effectively. Feedback from some heads of department pointed to the fact that some academic staff are performing the roles of administrative staff in their faculty. We recommend that clear administrative tasks that are not required of academic staff are given to administrative staff to enable academic staff perform their core functions of teaching and research satisfactorily.

#### 4.1.3 Motivation and initiative

Feedback from participants revealed that, staff put in extra effort whenever they were required to do so, take advantage of opportunities and take initiative in solving problems. However, 40 percent of participants at South Campus agreed to the statement that they were quick to take advantage of opportunities at the UFS. We recommend that Issues regarding staff motivation and the need to take up higher job responsibilities especially at the South Campus should be addressed. Additionally, there should be clearly defined pathways for growth and opportunities for staff to develop themselves to occupy higher positions.

#### 4.1.4 Job processes

The feedback from participants revealed that, internal policies at the departments are clearly designed to elicit staff understanding, channels of authority in the various departments are clearly defined while staff

regularly receive information regarding impending changes in policies from their leaders. Contrastingly, less than 50 percent of participants opined that UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth. Results showed that, while 50% of participants at the Bloemfontein campus indicated that the UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth, less than 50 percent of participants in QwaQwa and South Campus agreed to the statement. A cursory look at the responses of staff in relation to the unique opportunities the university provides for staff growth revealed high agreement percentage for academic staff (50.37%) when compared to support staff (47.02%). We recommend that opportunities for staff growth in terms of promotion among support and academic staff should be enhanced. The Human Resource policies should be available on the website of the university. Staff should be provided with adequate logistics to perform their tasks and given clear job description. Complaints by lecturers with very high teaching workloads should be addressed to enable them perform in their work processes.

#### 4.1.5 Role clarity

The sub-section on role clarity revealed high level of staff agreement in relation to aspects such as clarity of their job roles and associated responsibilities, clear work procedures, less supervision from leaders in respect of task performed by team members and their ability to assess their work output. A low point however was that, while 57.35 percent of support staff indicated that they received regular feedback from their leaders in respect of their work output, 42.18 percent of academic staff indicated that they regularly received feedback from their leaders. We recommend that academic staff should be given regular feedback on their teaching and other assigned roles.

#### 4.1.6 Learning and development

Staff at QwaQwa campus indicated a lack of opportunities for short learning programmes and some postgraduate programmes. In order to ensure the continuous development of staff, it is important for management of the University to introduce short learning programmes at QwaQwa campus. In the words of one of the participants, “Introduction of short courses will boost the university with third stream income and will empower local communities without travelling long distance”. Support staff who present at conferences or publish articles in peer review journals should be recognized and incentivised by the University. Additionally, there should be increased opportunities for staff growth at the UFS and this should include provision of adequate financial and other support for support staff who are pursuing higher degrees. Staff at the QwaQwa campus should be provided with frequent training on the application of technology and safety equipment required for their jobs. Additionally, the building in QwaQwa campus should be regularly upgraded to meet the needs of staff and students.

#### 4.1.7 Resources, technology and facilities

We recommend that staff should be provided with all the necessary resources to do their job and the needed technical support. Additionally, staff at QwaQwa campus should be given the required resources to perform their task adequately and their technology should be updated when required. The use of access cards on all campuses by staff should be enforced to ensure that every staff member logs in when they report for work and also log out when they leave campus. Computer laboratories in the various campuses should be well equipped to ensure that students and lecturers have good teaching and learning experiences. New employees should be given adequate training on the use of technology on campus. This is important to ensure that they (new employees) easily adapt to the work processes of the UFS when they are engaged. Classroom support for teaching and learning especially in the 7am/8am classes should be improved. Quick response should be given to queries regarding facilities, resources and laboratories to ensure that lecturers deliver content as expected of them. Continuous maintenance should be carried out in all the facilities on all UFS campuses. Participants at the QwaQwa campus reported a lack of teaching spaces and the challenges associated with teaching students in spaces that are not conducive for effective teaching and learning. The building of additional classroom spaces and students residences at QwaQwa campus will help reduce the number of reported cases of venue allocation and the delivery of teaching in conducive learning environments.

#### 4.1.8 Safety

The responses by participants on safety revealed staff concerns regarding safety arrangements for staff and students during students' protests. If necessary, there should guidelines or policies regarding classroom evacuation of staff and students during students' protests. Additionally, staff and students should receive prompt communication regarding students' protest to enable them take adequate safety precautionary measures. Concerns regarding the admission of persons without access cards to the University should be addressed. The security officers at the University gates should be compelled to ensure that persons who do not have access cards are screened before they enter the university premise.

#### 4.1.9 Rewards, recognition and appraisal

The study revealed staff discontentment about the current performance management system and it would be very important for management to prioritise the revision of the current performance management system. We recommend that there should be adequate support for leaders with regard to resource provision and additional staff support where necessary. Additionally, there should be a minimum number of years for persons to occupy positions in acting capacity. In complimentary ways, clear policies on remunerating

leaders who serve in acting capacity should be developed. A participant at QwaQwa campus reported disparities in the salaries of staff in different campuses of the University. While such disparities portends the improvement of staff morale at the UFS, it also creates among disadvantaged staff, a lack of sense of belonging. Similarly, some participants reported disparities in the salaries of staff of different race. In order to give credence to the object of transformation in the university space, it is important for the university to take a critical look at the complaints of staff regarding disparities in their salaries based on campus location, race and gender. Some participants indicated the complexities in the promotion of academic staff in the university. In the words of one of the participants, “conditions on the different campuses are extremely different yet we are evaluated on same criteria for promotion, and in most cases we can only apply for promotion when there is SLE available”. It is important for academic staff to be engaged continuously on the requirements for promotion and the need to motivate staff to apply for promotion. This recommendation also applies to support staff who indicated that the policies and guidelines regarding the promotion of staff is at times unfair, discriminating and, not based on documented procedures. It is very important for promotion of staff to be based on fairness and very clear procedures. Issues regarding career progression seemed to be a major concern for both academic and support staff. Future discussion on how to support staff to develop their career and progress will be very essential in creating a conducive working climate.

#### 4.1.10 Teamwork and cooperation

The study revealed academic staff discontentment of the hostile working relationship with staff of the following departments: ICT, HR, Facilities Management and Finance. It is important for the Heads of Department and Deans of Faculty and the other support services departments to create a more friendly working relationship. If possible, there should be officers within the various faculties to liaise with the support services departments on behalf of academics. We also recommend that communication between staff of different departments should be enhanced.

#### 4.1.11 Staff welfare and work-life balance

Results from this study show that, less than 40 percent of participants indicated that they regularly participate in physical activities on campus. We recommend that, information on sporting facilities on campus should be widely disseminated. The study revealed that some female participants are not happy with the support given to women - particularly, those with children. In the words of one of the participants, “more should be done to support women academic and administrative staff, particularly those with children. Many women are lost to academia as a result of the failure of academic institutions to consider the unique

pressures that parenthood places on women, and to consult with these women about the best possible forms of support that will enable them to thrive”. The policy regarding the number of months newly employed staff are required to serve on probation should be strictly followed to ensure that newly employed staff do not feel that they are unwanted in the university. We also recommend that staff at the South campus should benefit from the Health and Wellness workshops/lunch gatherings that are organised at the Bloemfontein campus. Additionally, programmes such as the Health and Wellness Expo that is organised by the Division for Organisational Development and Employee Wellness should be extended to the QwaQwa campus. This will ensure that staff at the QwaQwa campus benefit from the health and wellness workshops organised for staff of the University.

#### 4.1.12 Victimisation, discrimination and harassment

The study revealed that some staff feel that they are either victimised, harassed or discriminated against by other staff members. First, feedback from some participants revealed that some female staff feel sexually harassed by their male colleagues. Secondly, the study revealed that there exist among some staff the perception the current UFS climate is not conducive to speaking out or reporting incidents of sexual harassment by male staff. We recommend that management of the UFS develop structures and systems that will allow staff to openly and freely report all forms of victimisation, discrimination and harassment to appropriate units. Moreover, all staff of the university should eschew all forms of discrimination and victimisation – especially those that are motivated by racial, gender, leadership positions and social status prejudices. This is the only way staff can feel safe, welcome and have a sense of belonging at the UFS. Some participants commented on the benefits of attending the diversity and inclusivity training workshop that are organised for staff on campus. More of such workshops should be organised for staff and if possible, heads of departments should be made to ensure that their staff commit to participating in the workshop. Lastly, issues regarding discrimination among staff should not only be investigated but also the outcome of such investigations must be published for members of the university community to be informed of the measures put in place by management to curb issues such negative practices.

## 4.2 Recommendations -Students

### 4.2.1 Institutional characteristics

One of the outcomes of the study was the suggestion by students that staff should display their identification cards to enable students recognise staff who serve them in the various administrative offices. We therefore recommend that management ensures that all staff display their identity cards or name tags especially, when serving students. We also recommend that management ensure that students are represented on the various decision-making Committees of the University. Additionally, student leaders should be trained to understand their roles and responsibilities on such statutory Committees. This would ensure that students participate in the deliberations that concern their academic and social well-being. Higher education institutions in South Africa are required to celebrate diversity, promote dialogues and conversation on transformation and other related social issues among students (SAHRC, 2016:66). This arrangement should include students' representation on faculty committees in the University. Additional avenues for interaction should be opened to students of the UFS to discuss the transformation plan of the University. It is important for management of the UFS to take the necessary steps to inform students about the history of the UFS. Additionally, while several measures have been taken to improve the culture of the UFS in different aspects, there is the need for periodic information to be disseminated to students in respect of the progress made and the impact of initiatives implemented.

### 4.2.2 On-campus residence

Maintenance at the various students' residences should be frequently carried out in order to ensure that students report positive experiences at their residences and also create a conducive learning environment for students. We also recommend that particular attention should be placed on replacing worn out fittings and fixtures in the residences on campus. Additionally, the HRA should promptly respond to students' inquiries and requests and where quick solutions to issues cannot be provided, the department should promptly inform students of when their concerns would be addressed. In order to enhance social cohesion on campus, it will be very important to consider mixing students of different races in the residences. Several participants indicated their dislike for the current residence policy of the university. It is recommended that broad consultations should be carried between management and students to ensure that students understand the basis for the development and implementation of the policy. Staff of the HRA should accord students the necessary courtesies when they approach them for assistance. Students at the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campuses indicated low satisfaction with regard to the responses by the HRA to their concerns raised in respect of malfunctioning fixtures and fittings in their residences. It will be very important for

prompt response to be given to students when they report issues regarding the fittings and fixtures in their rooms to the HRA.

#### 4.2.3 Students' sense of belonging

International students should be made to feel welcome within the UFS space. Staff should be oriented on the need to address the needs of international students in all aspects. It is important for the University to eschew all negative reporting that portends the internationalisation agenda of the UFS. First year students who live outside campus should be given the necessary support especially during orientation to give them a sense of belonging. Issues regarding safety, transportation, religion and health at the QwaQwa campus should be addressed to enhance students' sense of belonging. Communication between staff and students at all functions in the three campuses should be in English language. The use of other languages by students and staff at meetings should be discouraged since this practice continues to negatively affect students' sense of belonging and affects the reputation of the University to outsiders. Students who cannot afford meals should be profiled and continuously supported to ensure that they feel cared for within the University irrespective of their economic backgrounds. Students should be engaged before policies are released by management of the university. While the University remains an open space for students' participation in political activities, it is important for management to ensure that such activities on campus do not affect the privacy and freedom of expression of other students. Additionally, no student should feel intimidated by others because of their political inclination and this issue should be properly addressed to ensure that every student has a strong sense of belonging.

#### 4.2.4 Off-campus residence experience

Two main issues emerged under the off-campus residence domain – security and transportation seemed to be of importance to students who reside outside the UFS. It is important that management of the UFS provide adequate security for students who reside outside campus. Additionally, a students' shuttle between South Campus and the Bloemfontein Campus will be very important for transporting students and staff. The report of the Ministerial Committee that was appointed to investigate student accommodation at contact Universities in South Africa in 2010 reported that only 20% of the total number of contact students were accommodated in 2010 (Heher, 2017). This finding however shows the challenges faced by most Universities in South Africa including the UFS. The UFS should explore the possibility of developing off-campus community projects where students are housed in residential clusters with additional support from the UFS. The development of these clusters should be done through leasing of facilities within defined



zones around the university. This will allow for increased resource allocation for security and health provision as well as enhanced students' communication to students who live in those clusters. The university should consider arranging for transportation for students who attend lectures late in the evening and who live outside campus. Such arrangements could include entering into agreement with transport companies to provide services to students who live outside campus at a cost. There should also be a shuttle service for students who reside outside campus. Increases in transportation cost for students at the QwaQwa campus should be communicated to students before it takes effect.

#### 4.2.5 Supportive campus environment

The transportation system for students' off-campus students at the QwaQwa should be improved. Feedback from students suggest challenges in the transportation of students from their off-campus residences to the University. Importantly, students who require transportation services to be extended to their locations should be assisted. Administrative staff who attend to students should be encouraged to extend professional services to students and also treat them with respect. UFS policies on 'Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy should be widely disseminated among students.

#### 4.2.6 Academic climate

The relationship between students and their supervisors should be improved especially at the postgraduate level. Feedback from the participants pointed to the fact that many students are not satisfied with their engagement with their thesis supervisors. Lecturers should be discouraged from passing negative comments on students' performances in class. Such comments negatively affects students' motivation to learn and also portends their sense of belonging. Lecturers should be more accessible to students and mandatory consulting sessions should be enforced in all departments for lecturers. Communication between distance students and lecturers should be improved. Additionally, online learning students reported that their telephone calls to the offices on campus are often not picked. It is important for staff to engage students to receive their concerns. Distance learning student should have leaders to represent their interests at the Learning Centres.

#### 4.2.7 Race relations

Staff and students of all races should be continuously reminded to treat persons of other race with respect. Students who are racially abused should be encouraged to report all such incidents to the appropriate offices

for redress. Issues regarding differences in students' perception about the effect of race on their experiences continue to affect their experiences on campus. Lecturers should be discouraged from 1) giving special attention to students of specific race. In order to create an atmosphere of conducive learning that is based on trust, all students in a class should be given equal courtesies and support 2) making students of certain races feel unwelcome due to prejudices and constant references to historic events 3) using languages other than English when teaching a diverse class and, 4) exacting subtle forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation based on race or gender. More social engagement activities should be organised on campus to enhance cross-cultural activities in all the three campuses of the UFS. More engagement between staff and students at QwaQwa campus in relation to cross-cultural interaction and relationship should be promoted. Beyond social activities, we recommend the use of formal learning modules and courses and students' prior experiences to enhance social cohesion and integration among students of different races. Such pedagogical approaches (see Leibowitz, Bozalek, Rohleder, Carolissen and Swartz, 2010) in classroom environment will ensure that students engage in healthy discussions on issues regarding diversity in general. Lastly we strongly encourage the integration of students' residences to give further articulation to the transformation drive and also desegregate the university residences. Please refer to our detailed report on race and gender which forms part of our institutional culture study for additional information on the voices of participants on campus.

#### 4.2.8 Facilities

Routine maintenance in the lecture halls should be carried out. For example, many seats in the lecture rooms at Genmin Lectorium (Next to the computer labs) as stated by a participant are broken. Secondly, location maps should be erected on all three campuses to aid students and staff locate facilities on campus. Additional study rooms should be built for students at QwaQwa campus to enable students who stay off-campus have a conducive place to study or wait for their lecturers while on campus. Students and staff who use buildings under renovation should be informed any construction or renovation that will be taking place to ensure that adequate arrangements are made to relocate lectures. Facilities on campus should be always kept clean and students should be educated continually on the need to keep the campus clean. Facilities on all three campuses of the university should have access ways for persons living with disabilities. Signage on campuses should be written in English to enable all users of the facilities to read. The Computer laboratories and the library at QwaQwa campus should be expanded to accommodate more students.

#### 4.2.9 Safety and security

Security cameras should be installed in the cafeteria at South Campus. Security for students who live off campus should be enhanced to minimise reports of pilfering by off-campus students. Speed bumps should be fixed at the main entrance of QwaQwa campus to regulate vehicular speed limits at the entrance. Security at the various gates of the UFS should be enhanced to ensure that persons who do not have permission to enter the campuses are not allowed entry.

#### 4.2.10 Finance

The UFS should develop an integrated finance systems which links to all the different sectors of the University. Tax invoices for the payment of fees should be easily accessed by students. Students' complaints about NASFAS should be expedited and prompt feedback should be given to students when they request for any information regarding their funds disbursement. The meal allowance for students at QwaQwa campus should be released early to enable students' access their funds easily.

### **Additional information**

We should indicate that the number of students who consented to participate in the survey represent a little above 6% of the total student' population on campus. While this percentage is very low, the findings of the study – especially the voices of students should be considered as very important in identifying specific issues that require immediate attention to create a university climate that enhance social cohesion, students' sense of worth and belonging as well as a non-racialized university space. We are particularly impressed with the staff response rate of 28.62 percent when compared with the students' response rate. In relation to the structure of the questions, we noted that some participants had challenges understanding a few items (questions) in the survey. Importantly, we did not include the items that we considered as problematic in the analysis and so the feedback from the participants are not captured in the final report. We should indicate that we are very grateful to staff and students who provided us with very useful feedback on the survey items and we shall incorporate these corrections and suggestions in any future survey. It is important to indicate that the findings of this study should be read alongside the detailed qualitative research conducted by the research team under the following themes: race, gender and religion in a multi-racial learning environment - the search for equity in an evolving higher education space; names, symbols and spaces as tools for transforming higher education institutions; language preferences of students and the effect of language policy on students' academic engagement and; decolonization and africanization of higher education institutions and their effect on academic practice.

We acknowledge that while the focus of the work streams on institutional culture is to investigate the current and desired culture of the UFS along specific themes, we relied on a quantitative approach to gathering and analysing data through a widely known and used method - institutional climate study. Our motivation for choosing the climate study stems from two main reasons. First is the contestation surrounding the use of quantitative approach to investigating the culture of institutions and the perceived weaknesses in the use of such approach. Second, is the importance of examining the acquired competences of students and staff in interpreting their expectations of the University and its environment and how they make meaning of their interactions with others on a personal level. Significantly, findings from the climate survey are intended to support the reports of other institutional culture related studies that are currently being conducted by the research team using a qualitative approach. We should emphasise that this study forms part of broad institutional culture study and the report should be read alongside the six other reports under the institutional culture study.

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