

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE CLIMATE STUDY REPORT FOR 2021

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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

DIRAP - Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning

HR - Human Resources

HRA - Housing and Residence Affairs

ICT - Information and Communication Technology Services

ITP – Integrated Transformation Plan

NASFAS - National Student Financial Aid Scheme

SART - Sexual Assault Response Team

SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

UFS – University of the Free State

Executive Summary

Background

This report presents the major findings of the 2021 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 August 2021 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 on the following themes: institutional characteristics; students' residence and accommodation; students' sense of belonging; resources, students' safety and facilities; racial climate; academic climate; diversity climate; sexual orientation and; pedagogical relationships.

Summary of findings

Staff experiences

The results from the survey revealed high agreement percentages among staff concerning their views on the clear articulation of the mission statement and values of the UFS. Additionally, the majority of the study participants indicated that they understood the strategic goals of the UFS for the period 2018 to 2022. In relation to the transformation plan of the UFS, similar to the institutional climate results of 2019, less than 50 percent noted that they were satisfied with the following: the pace of change at the UFS in respect of the organisational structure; incorporating the views of staff in developing new work processes; and the transformation agenda of the UFS. The results show that first, majority of the study participants were of the opinion that the views of staff are not considered when crafting work process in the university. Second, that the UFS does not incorporate the views of staff in developing new work processes and third, that they are not happy with the transformation agenda of the UFS. We recommend that the UFS conduct a review of the institutional transformation agenda as part of the ITP midterm Review 2022. 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 revealed that 64.1 percent of academic and support staff contribute to the decision-making process in their department. This value represents a decrease in percentage of staff involvement in the decision-making process from the 76.46 percent recorded in 2019. The reason for the decrease could be the result of the COVID-19 pandemic where some line managers could not hold frequent meetings with their staff. The results further revealed that internal policies at the departments are clearly designed to elicit staff understanding. Furthermore, the findings showed that staff regularly receive information regarding impending changes in policies from their leaders. Contrastingly, less than 50 percent of participants were in agreement with the statement that institutional policies are consistently and fairly applied in all staff matters. To this end, this study recommends that the UFS evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies with respect to how they are applied in relation to gender, employment type, race, campus and department. As regards opportunities for professional growth among staff, more than 65 percent of participants indicated that there are opportunities for growth. This finding compares with the 2019 institutional climate report which revealed that less than 50 percent of participants indicated that there are opportunities for growth. Similar to the institutional climate results of 2019, the majority of our participants

indicated that their leaders ensured that, there was clarity of job roles and associated responsibilities, clear work procedures and feedback from their heads of department with respect to their work output.

Akin to the 2019 institutional findings, the majority of participants indicated that they are always provided with the technology they require for their job, they receive the needed support in respect of technology, they receive frequent training on technology application, and that the technology they use are frequently updated. Contrastingly, and similar to the institutional climate results for 2019, less than 50 percent of participants at South campus indicated that they received frequent training in technology application in their department. This study therefore recommends that the ICT department enhance technology application training for staff at the South Campus. The feedback from participants concerning the facilities at the three campuses show that above 70 percent were of opinion that the facilities on campus were in good condition while 67.20 percent of staff indicated that the buildings and grounds were accessible by persons living with disability. Further analysis of the data based on campus distribution of participants revealed that a higher percentage of participants at the South campus (90%) indicated that facilities on their campus were frequently upgraded as compared to those at Bloemfontein (60%) and QwaQwa (50%). Written feedback from some participants at the Bloemfontein campus pointed to the need for the facilities at the campus to be frequently upgraded.

Learning and staff development are important elements in every higher education institution. The feedback from participants showed that more than 50 percent agreed to the statement that there is commitment by management to ongoing training and development of staff (71.60%) and that, the training given to staff improves their performance (71.00%). Similarly, a little above 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that new employees are given adequate guidance and training on their jobs when they start work. In relation to career opportunities for staff, the feedback revealed that more than 50 percent of participants spent more time and effort in planning their career (58.30%), were offered opportunities to develop the skills required for their career progression (61.90%) and believe that there are enough opportunities for career progression at the UFS (52.50%). The results revealed an increase in staff perception about the opportunities available at the UFS for staff progression from 45.30 percent in 2019 to 52.50 percent in 2021. Participants who contributed to the study via open-ended mode commended management for the learning opportunities offered to staff especially through staff study benefits.

The study showed that a larger percentage of participants were of the opinion that the UFS fulfils its obligations with respect to remuneration and other benefits and that, they were satisfied with the conditions of service. On the contrary, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that the rewards they received from their work was fair and that they were satisfied with the income they received when compared to their colleagues in other universities. These results are similar to the institutional climate study report for 2019

where less than 50 percent of participants indicated that the rewards they received from their work was fair and that they were satisfied with the income they received when compared to their colleagues in other universities. We recommend that management should continue to engage staff on their concerns regarding the low wages, most especially in comparison to other universities in South Africa. Concerning 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. Similar results were obtained in the 2019 institutional climate survey. In relation to 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 and what some participants term as favouritism in the promotion processes. 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, 70.70 percent of participants noted that they were likely to stay and work at the UFS in the next five years while 58.40 percent noted that they will be working at the UFS in the next 10 years. Similarly, 58.70 percent of staff indicated that, they could see a future for them at the UFS. Comparatively, the institutional climate report for 2019 revealed the following: 66.60 percent of participants noted that they were likely to stay and work at the UFS in the next five years; 51.50 percent noted that they will be working at the UFS in the next 10 years; and 53.20 percent of staff indicated that, they 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.

The results of the study showed that the majority of participants were of the opinion that bullying and abusive behaviours are prevented and discouraged, that staff of different sexual orientation are valued and respected, and that staff with disability are properly integrated into the university community. Contrastingly, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that there is equal opportunity for all staff in the university. Comments from some participants revealed that communication between staff and those with hearing impairment are non-existent, therefore highlighting the need for the university to develop

alternative ways of promoting communication between staff without hearing impairment and those with hearing impairment.

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. The results represents an improvement on the results of the institutional climate study conducted in 2019 which showed that less than 40 percent of the participants understood the purpose of the ITP. The results of the 2021 institutional climate survey showed that more than 60 percent of participant were of the opinion that they identify with the values of the UFS, that the mission of the UFS is transformational and that they believe that the UFS practices are aligned with its values. A low point under this sub-section was that, less than 40 percent of the participants indicated that they were aware of the history of the UFS. We therefore suggest that management improve communication of the history of the UFS as well as the future direction of the university. Similarly, less than 50 percent of the participants indicated that they were involved in the decision-making Committees of the UFS. The result compares with the 2019 institutional climate report which showed that less than 50 percent of the participants indicated that they were involved in the decision-making Committees of the UFS. What the findings suggest is that there has been no improvement in the perception of students about their involvement in the decision-making Committees of the UFS. We again recommend that management improve student participation in university decision making structures.

Participants who resided on campus indicated strong sense of belonging. Furthermore, 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. Similar to the 2019 institutional climate report, the 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. An analysis of the results based on campus location revealed that more than 50 percent of participants at all three campuses - Bloemfontein Campus (54.20%), QwaQwa Campus (64.00%) and South Campus (74.00%) 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. Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate study 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. While the current study recorded comparatively

higher agreement percentages concerning the feedback they receive from the HRA department, the written submissions by students revealed that some heads of the residences do not consult students when drawing up residence programmes for them. We that heads of residence consult students when planning their activities for each year. 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. Furthermore students – especially first year students on NSFAS indicated that they were not informed to choose NSFAS accredited accommodation and this resulted in some additional financial burden on students. Other students also decried what they termed as the university's slow response to addressing the accommodation challenges faced by students at the QwaQwa campus. 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. Additionally there should be improved communication between the university and students regarding private accommodation and the steps the university is taking to address students' challenges.

The results show that more than 60 percent of participants felt valued as students, that the UFS culture allow for free and open expression of individual beliefs, and that their interaction with staff and students provided them with a sense of belonging. Also, more than 50 percent of participants agreed with the statement that, The UFS environment allows for open expression of ideas by students, and that they felt that the university recognises their humanity. These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate report that showed that more than 50 percent of participants felt valued as students, and that the university recognises their humanity. 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 and that, the UFS culture allow for free and open expression of individual beliefs. The feedback from participants revealed a strong culture of religious tolerance among students with more than 60 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. The written comments also revealed that students perceived the university to be very tolerant of students of diverse religions.

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. However, the written submission of some students pointed to the need for the university to extend the service hours of the Computer Laboratories particularly because some students do not have access to personal computers. Also, they highlighted the challenges they face

when accessing the internet using the Global Protect Application. We recommend that the university extends the service hours of the Computer Laboratories to cater for those needy students who do not have access to personal computers. We further noted low responses in respect of agreement on the dissemination of information on students' safety and security.

More than 50 percent of participants indicated that they were aware of the role of Protection Services Office and the Sexual Assault Response Team. Similarly, while 66.50 percent of participants indicated that they were aware of the 'Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy' of the UFS, 76.50 percent indicated that they I felt safe at their residence. Again, the feedback from participant revealed significant increases in the dissemination of information of the Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy' of the UFS and the role of the Protection Services Office. Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate report revealed that 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. Although the Protection Services Office seems to have worked on increasing students' awareness on their services we further recommend that there should be continued dissemination of the Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy' of the UFS to students.

Education funding by students especially during the COVID-19 pandemic remains a major concern among many students. More than 50.00 percent of participants were of the opinion that they had challenges buying books and other learning materials and are not able to buy food every day due to financial constraints. What the results suggest is that although a bigger percentage of students do not face financial constraints, a sizeable percentage require financial assistance. This finding compares to the 2019 institutional climate results which showed that less than 40 percent of the participants found it difficult to pay their tuition fees and accommodation, had challenges buying books and other learning materials, were not able to buy food every day due to financial constraints and were not able to perform well in their academics due to financial constraints. The results further revealed that 73.60 percent of participants rely on funds from the NSFAS to pay for their accommodation and buy food while 77.70 percent of participants relied on funds from the NSFAS to pay their fees. These results compare with the findings of the 2019 institutional climate results which showed that 45.50 percent of participants relied 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. 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. More than 50 percent of participants from the Education (85.60%), Humanities (82.60%), Law (72.70%), Theology faculties (66.70%), Economic and Management Sciences (73.70%), and Natural and Agricultural Sciences (70.70%). However, 25.00 percent of participants from the Health Science indicated that they

relied on NASFAS for the payment of their fees. The findings revealed marked increment in the number of students who rely on funding from NSFAS to pay their tuition fees. Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate results revealed that 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.

The results of the survey revealed that less than 20 percent of participants had experienced racism on campus. Similarly, more than 50 percent of participants noted that they felt that lecturers cared about students irrespective of their race while more than 60 percent of participants indicated that they considered the UFS as a learning environment that embraces the multiplicity of races, that the UFS is a learning environment that promotes the principles of equity, human rights & human dignity and they believe that the UFS treats all races equitably. A breakdown of the data based on students' response per faculty revealed that more than 50 percent of participants in the faculties of Law (60.00%) Theology (59.10%), Education (55.50%), Natural and Agricultural Sciences (59.60%), Humanities (58.80%) and Economic and Management Sciences (57.80%) were of the opinion that the UFS treats students of all races equitably. Conversely, less than 35 percent of participants in the Faculty of Health Sciences (31.30%) were of the opinion that the UFS treats students of all races equitably. These results compare with the 2019 Institutional Climate study which revealed that 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. 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 racisms cuts across the races and it is important for a collective approach towards deracialising the university space is adopted through academic and social activities.

The sub-section on intellectual engagement revealed that more than 60 percent of students enjoy the intellectual challenge that comes with the courses they study, lecturers' ability to stimulate their interest in the courses, incorporate ideas from different sources, and find the courses intellectually stimulating. These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate study which revealed that more than 70 percent of students enjoy the intellectual challenge that comes with the courses they study, lecturers' ability to stimulate their interest in the courses, incorporate ideas from different sources, and find the courses intellectually stimulating. To obtain the responses of students concerning their perception about lecturers' interest in their academic progress, we analysed the data based on faculty. The results revealed that students'

in Faculty of Humanities perceived the interest by academics in their academic progress to be very high (69.67%), then followed by Law (68.18%), Theology (61.90%), Education 61.74%), Economic and Management Sciences (60.28%), Natural and Agricultural Sciences (58.43%) and Health Sciences (50.00%). These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate study report which showed 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%). The results also showed that more than 60 percent of participants were of the opinion that the UFS environment provides the support they need to succeed academically, they receive the expected quality of academic advising they need as students, the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds relationships with other students, and the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds strong relationships between students and lecturers. Similarly, more than 55 percent of participants indicated that the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds a strong relationship between support staff and students. The written feedback from students however revealed that delays in the supply of computer laptops, and the lack of lecturers to teach some modules in certain departments as some of the challenges they face in their academic work.

Distance learners constitute a significant percentage of our student population at the UFS. Results from the survey revealed that the flexibility of distance learning has a positive effect on the academic performance of students. Particularly, the results revealed that more than 60.00 percent of participants agreed to the statement that, flexibility of distance learning has an effect on their academic performance, there are supportive resources for students who study through the distance learning mode, they receive prompt feedback from Lecturers when they encounter any issue with their learning, and that they have student leaders to represent interests of distance students at the Learning Centre and the UFS. These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate study report which revealed that 30.25 percent of participants indicated that they have student leaders to represent interests of distance students at the Learning Centre and the UFS. The results show that there have significant improvement in distance students' representation at the students' leadership structure.

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. Results from the learning centre experience aspect revealed that more than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they felt safe at the learning centre, they have attended programmes that enhance social cohesion among distance learning students, and they have mentors to support them at the Learning Centre. Conversely, less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they can easily access medical care at the Learning Centre in case of emergency (43.30%). Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate report revealed that less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they felt safe at the learning centre that they can easily access medical care at the Learning Centre in case of emergency (19.00%) and they have mentors at the Learning Centre. We recommend that, the Student Affairs Department support 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 2021 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 August and September 2021 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.

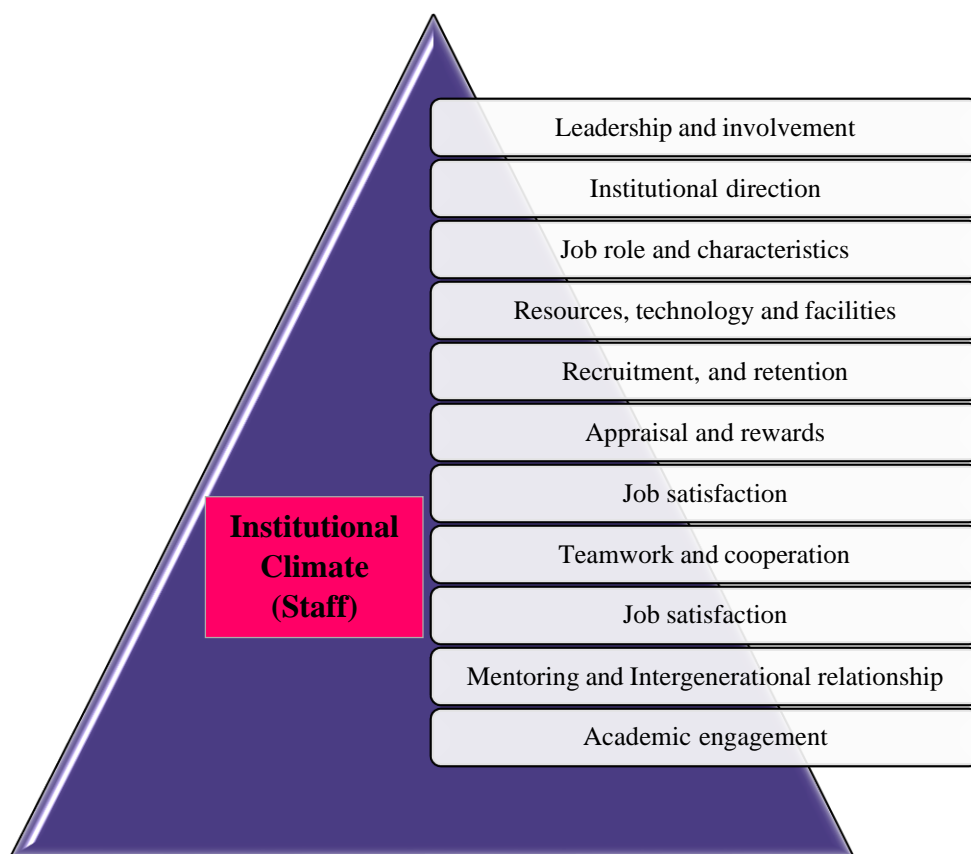


Figure 1: Institutional climate (Academic and support staff)

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.

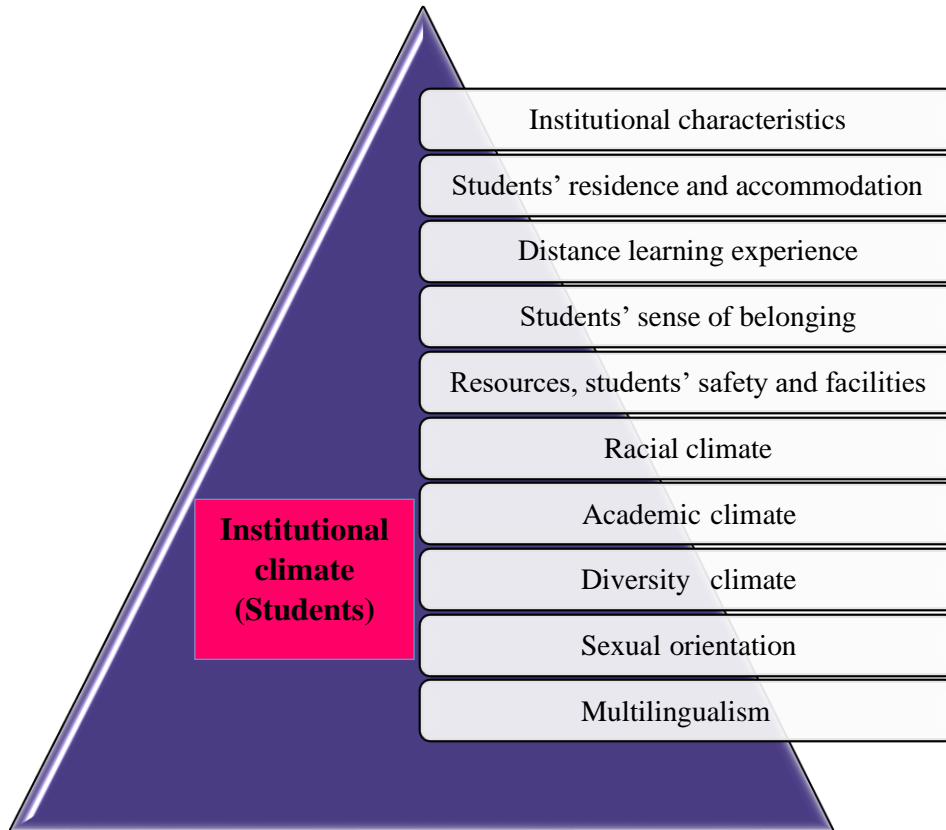


Figure 2 Institutional climate (Students)

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). 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.

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 August 2021.

2.2 Demographic information (Staff - academic and support)

The total number of academic and support staff who were expected to complete the questionnaire was 2508. The total number of staff who consented to participate in the study was 476 that represented 18.98% of the population.

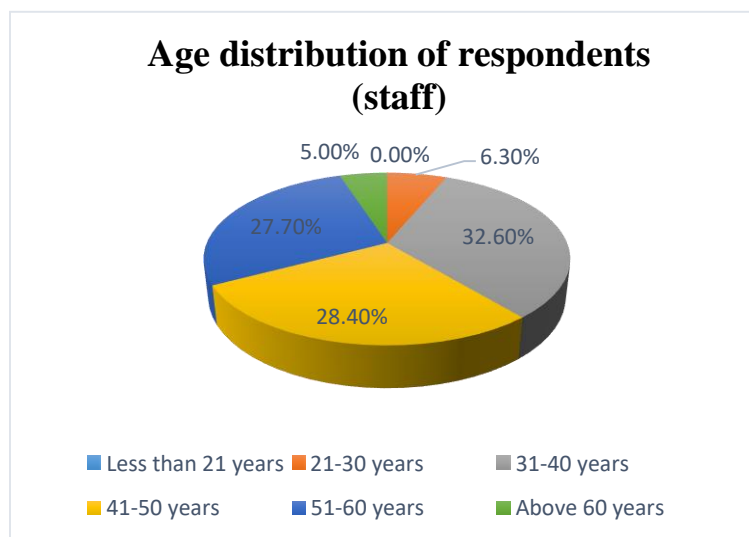


Figure 3: Age distribution of participants (staff)

The number of male participants were 183 which represent 38.4%, female participants were 291 which represent 61.1% while 2 participants which represent 0.4% of the total number of participants indicated others as their gender. As shown in figure 3, the age distribution of participants revealed that the highest age category of participants was those aged between 31 and 40 years who were 32.6% of the total participants.

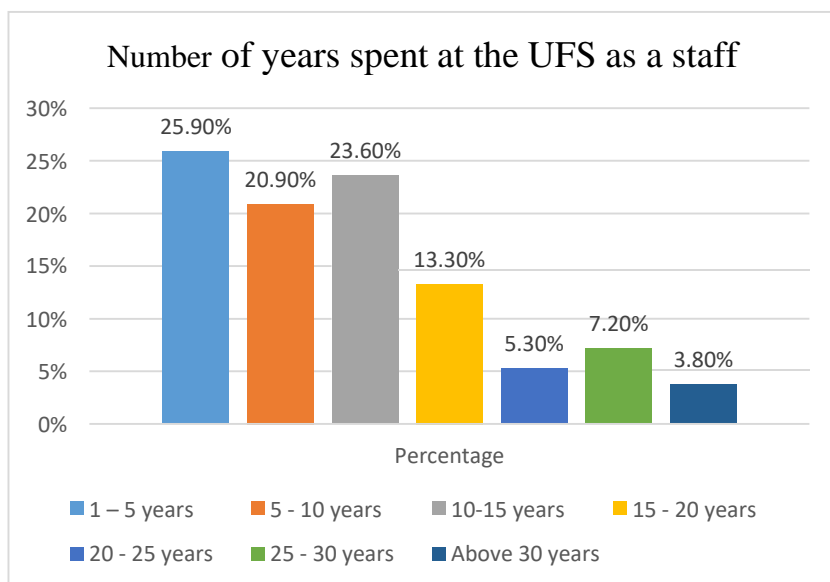


Figure 4: Number of years spent at the UFS as staff

Figure 4 shows the number of years spent at the UFS by staff. The majority of participants (25.90%) reported they had spent between 1 to 5 years working at the UFS while 3.80% 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.

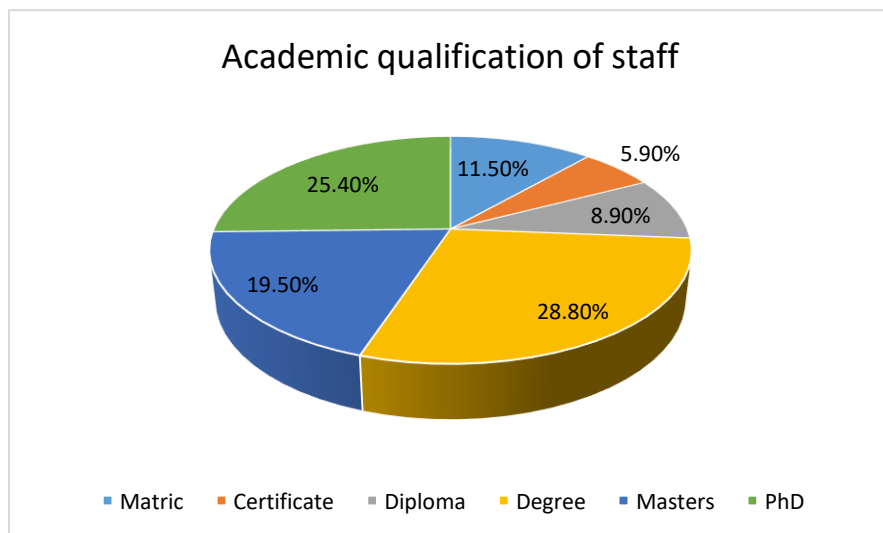


Figure 5: Academic qualification of staff.

Figure 5 shows the academic qualifications of participants based on six categories. Staff with Degree as their qualification were the highest category of participants - 137 (28.8%) while staff with certificates represented the least category of participants - 28 (5.80%).

The race distribution of the participants are as follows: white -206 (43.20%), African - 160 (33.50%), Coloured – 37 (7.80%), foreign national – African 7 (1.50%), Indian - 5 (1.1%), foreign national – other 2 (0.40%), and I prefer not to answer – 60 (12.40). The type employment as indicated by our participants are as follows: full-time - academic (34.40%); contract – academic (0.20%); full-time – support staff (62.70%); contract – support staff (1.70%) and others (1.00%).

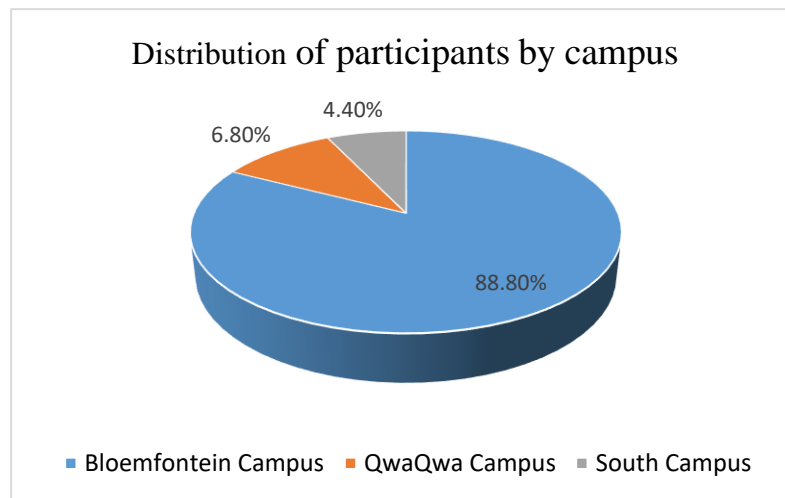


Figure 6: Distribution of participants by campus (staff)

As shown in figure 6, participants in the Bloemfontein campus constituted the highest number of participants (88.80%) with the least being participants in South Campus (4.40%).

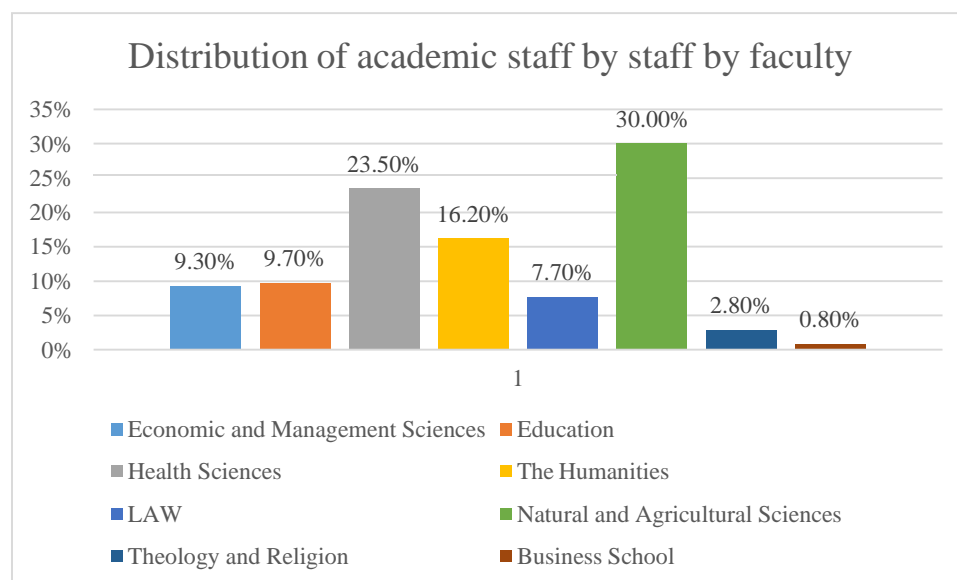


Figure 7: Distribution of academic staff by faculty

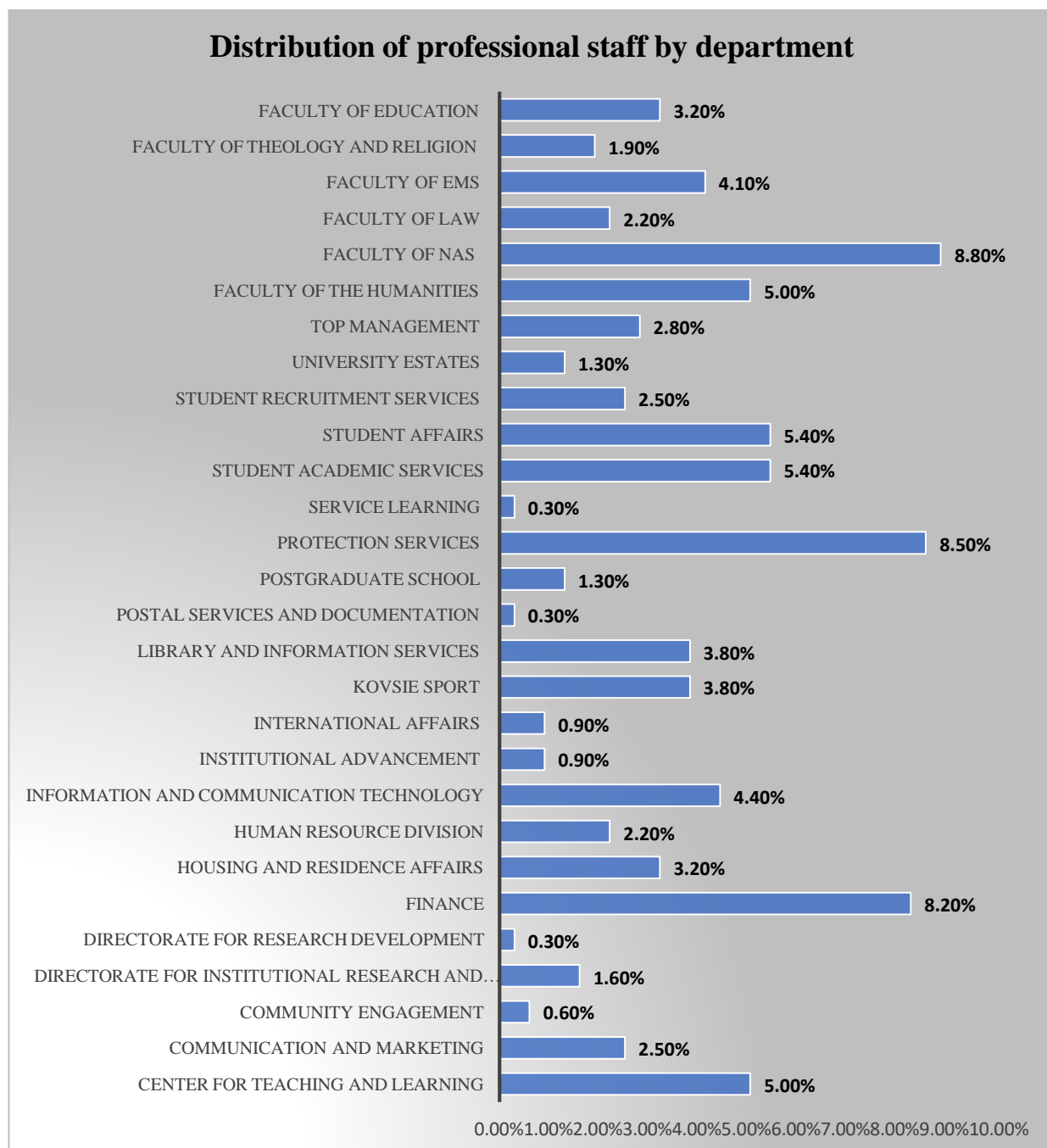


Figure 8: Distribution of professional staff by department

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 30,741. Out of the total number of students contacted, 1087 representing 3.54% of the total population of contact students completed the questionnaire.

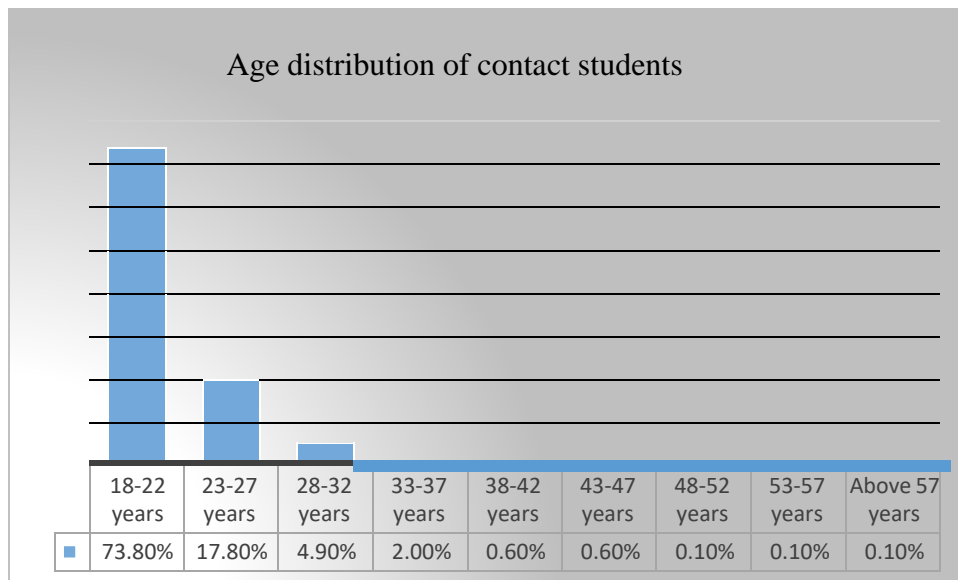


Figure 9: Age distribution of participants (contact student)

Figure 9 shows the age distribution of contact students who participated in the study. Participants who were aged between 18 and 22 years constituted 73.80% while the least category of students who participated in the study was those who were above age 57 representing 01.10% of the total participants. The distribution of participants by campus of study were as follows: Bloemfontein (58.8%); QwaQwa (27.6%) and; South Campus (13.6%).

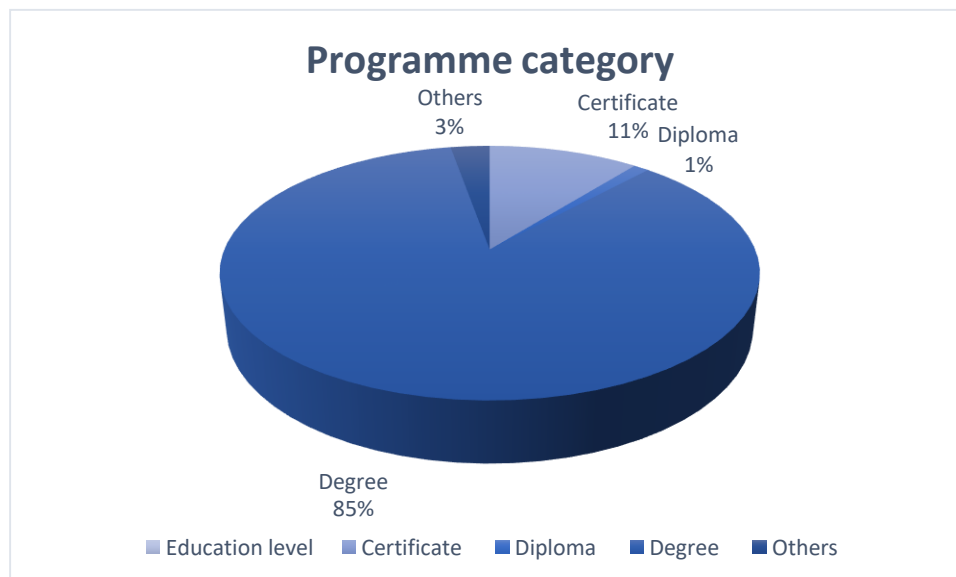


Figure 10: Distribution of education level of contact students.

Figure 10 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 85.0% while

students who were studying other programmes other than Diploma were 3.0% of total participants. The race distribution of participants are as follows: African (89.6%); Indian (0.4%); Coloured (3.4%); White (5.9%); foreign national - African (0.6%) and; Foreign national - Other (0.1%).

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 17.9%, Humanities (23.6%), Education (29.8%), Economic and Management Sciences (21.0%), Health Science (1.5%), Law (4.1%) and Theology (2.2%).

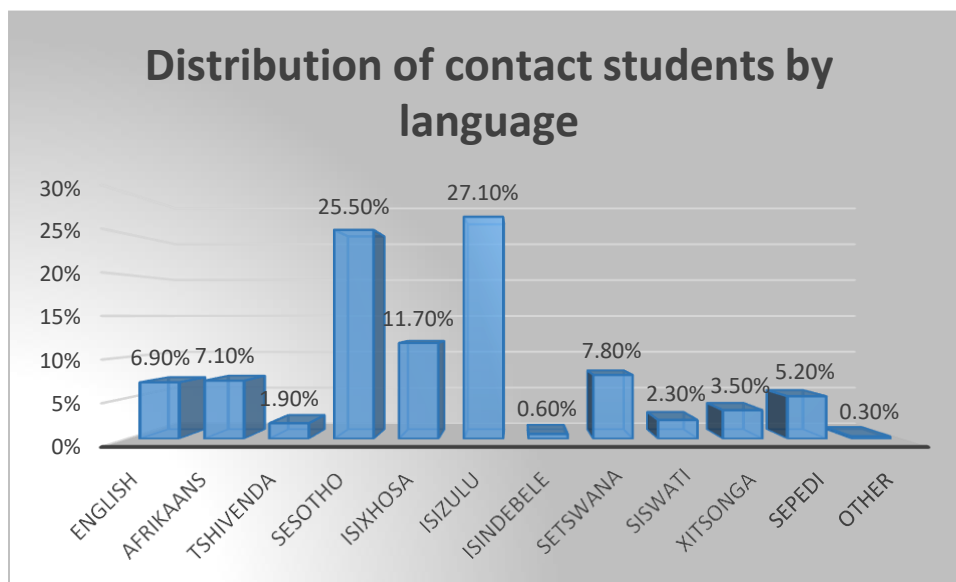


Figure 11: Distribution of contact students by language

Figure 11 shows the distribution of contact students by language. Significantly, the majority of the students indicated that Sesotho was their home language (25.5%) while students who noted that IsiNdebele was their home language represented 0.6 percent.

2.4 Demographic information (Distance students)

The total number of students who were enrolled in distance education programmes and who were contacted was 2255. Out of the total number contacted 33 representing 1.46% consented to participate in the study.

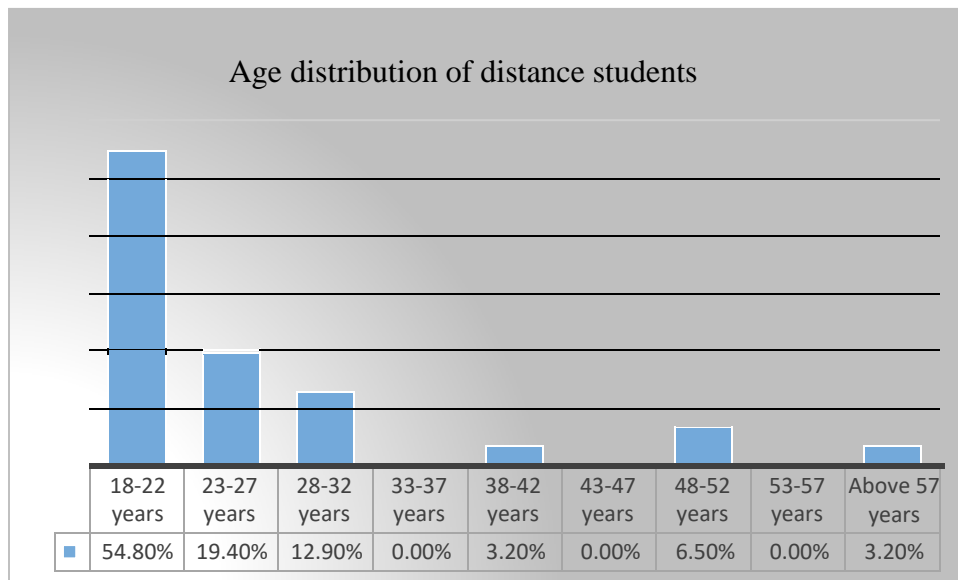


Figure 7: Age distribution of students enrolled in distance learning programmes

As shown in figure 12, the highest age group that participated in the study was those between ages 18 and 22 and this group constituted 54.80% of the total participants. However, participants who were aged between 53 and 57 represented those with the least participation rate with 4.30%. Out of the 33 participants who consented to complete the questionnaire, 29.0% were males while 71.0% constituted female participants. Additionally, 3.3% of the participants indicated Bloemfontein Campus as their campus of study while 96.7% indicated South Campus as their campus of study. The distribution of participants by race were as follows: African (96.8%); Indian (0.0%); Coloured (0.0%); and White (3.2%). The distribution of participants based on their faculties are as follows: Law (3.2%), Education faculty (12.9%), Humanities (48.4%) and; Economic and Management Sciences (35.5%).

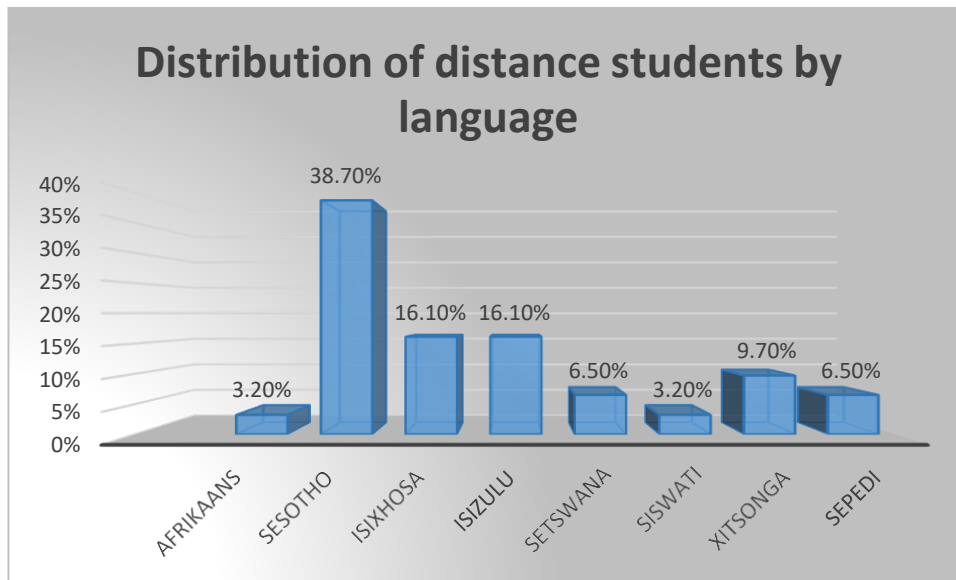


Figure 83: Distribution of participants by language (distance students)

Figure 13 shows the distribution of distance students by language. The majority of participants (38.70%) indicated that Sesotho was their language while 3.2% of participants indicated Afrikaans and SiSwati 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; 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 data collection and analysis processes. 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 would 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 done purposely to obtain information about some aspects of the institutional climate of the UFS for the

period 2021. 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; and ascertain the relationship between different variables (where necessary). 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 the study avoided seeking information from participants that could lead to revealing their identity. The entire section A that contains some biographical information on the participants 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 narrative data of participants 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.

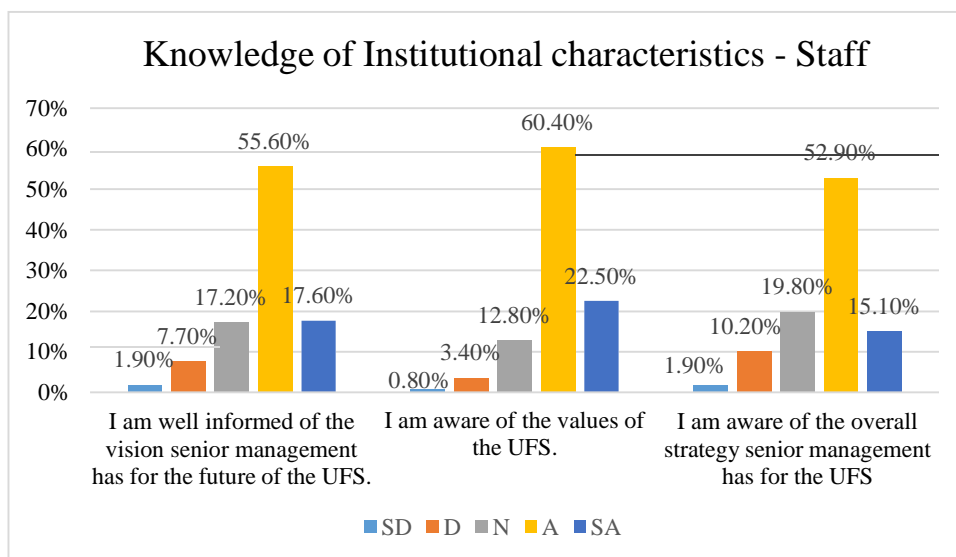


Figure 94: Knowledge of institutional characteristics (staff)

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 73.20% of the participants while 82.90% of participants indicated that they were aware of the values of the UFS. Concerning staff knowledge about the overall strategy of senior management for the UFS, 68.00% of participants noted that they were aware of the overall strategy of the UFS. These values represent significant increases of staff knowledge of institutional characteristics which could also be attributed to a deliberate effort of the part of management of the university to disseminate the vision and values of the university to staff. Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate survey revealed the following: 67.60% of participants indicated that they were informed of the vision that senior management had for the UFS; 76.60% of participants indicated that they were aware of the values of the UFS and; 61.70% of participants noted that they were aware of the overall strategy of the UFS. 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 (81.00%), awareness of the values of the UFS (95.20%) and, awareness of the overall strategy of the of senior management for the UFS (90.00%). These values represent increase in the data gathered from 2019 across all three campuses.

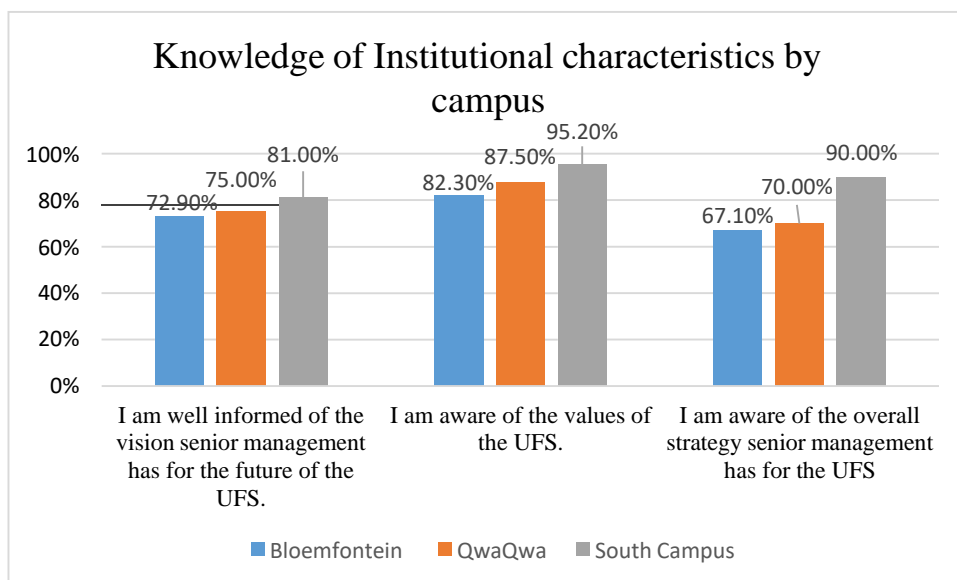


Figure 15: Knowledge of institutional characteristics (staff)

Knowledge of the history, mission, values of institutions as well as the strategic goals are very important to crafting an institutional ethos that support transformation and innovation. The second aspect under the institutional direction section sought to gather relevant information on the knowledge of staff about the mission, values and the 2018 to 2022 strategic goals of the university.

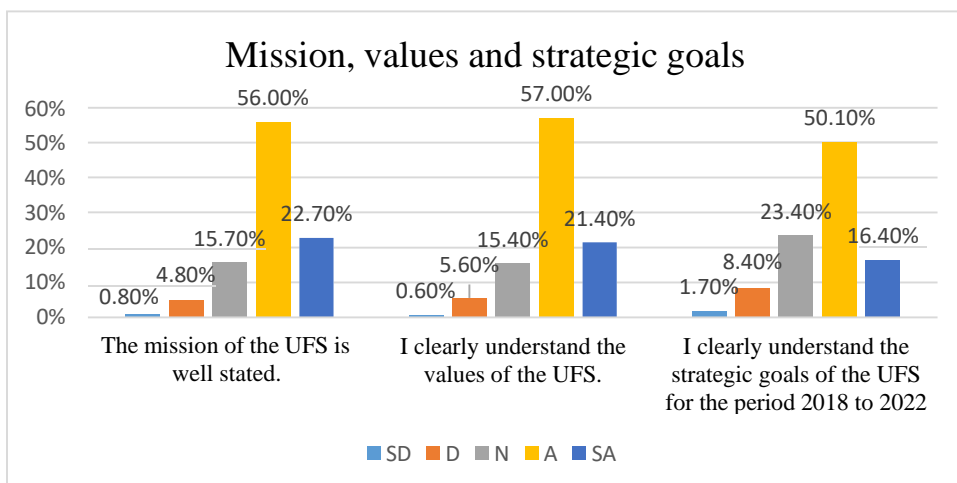


Figure 106: Mission and values (staff)

Figure 16 shows the responses of staff regarding their perception about the mission, values and strategic goals of the UFS. Significantly the majority of participants agreed to the statement that the mission of the UFS is well stated (78.70%). As shown in figure 16, 78.4 percent of participants indicated that they understood the values of the UFS. Similarly majority of participants noted that they clearly understood the strategic goals of the UFS for the period 2018 to 2022 (78.40%). An analysis of the responses by staff on

the various issues regarding the mission, values and the strategic goals of the UFS based on campus location was performed. The results revealed 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 (95.20%), that staff clearly understood the values of the UFS (95.20%) and, that staff clearly understood the strategic goals of the UFS for the period 2018 to 2022 (85.70%). Similarly, the results showed high percentages of acceptance from participants at the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campuses. Conversely on 55.60 percent of participants at the QwaQwa campus indicated that they understood the strategic goals of the UFS for the period 2018 to 2022.

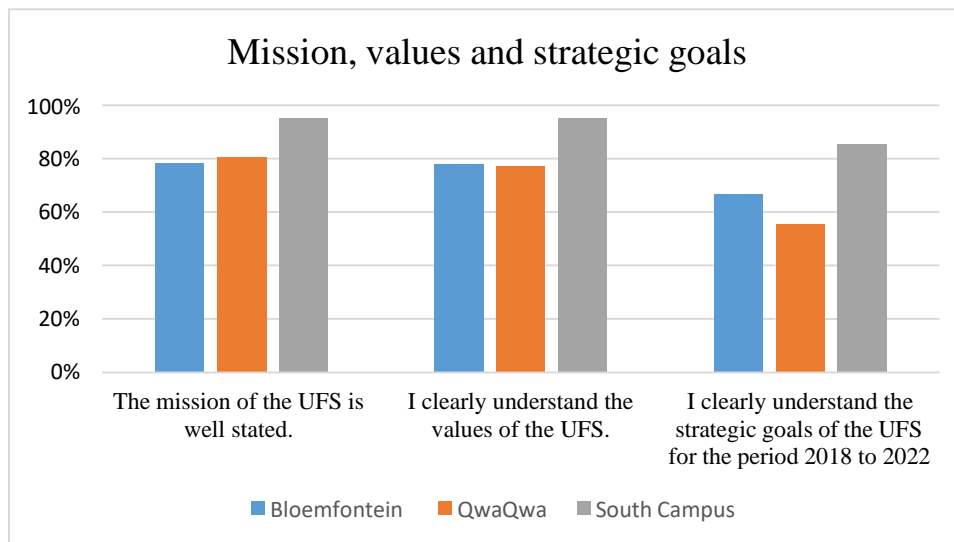


Figure 17: Knowledge of institutional characteristics (campus)

3.1.2 Change and innovation

The last feature under the institutional characteristics section is change and innovation. Figure 18 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 18 revealed that more than 50 percent of participants indicated that they were happy with the pace of change at the UFS and that the UFS provides staff with resource and technical support that enhance innovation.

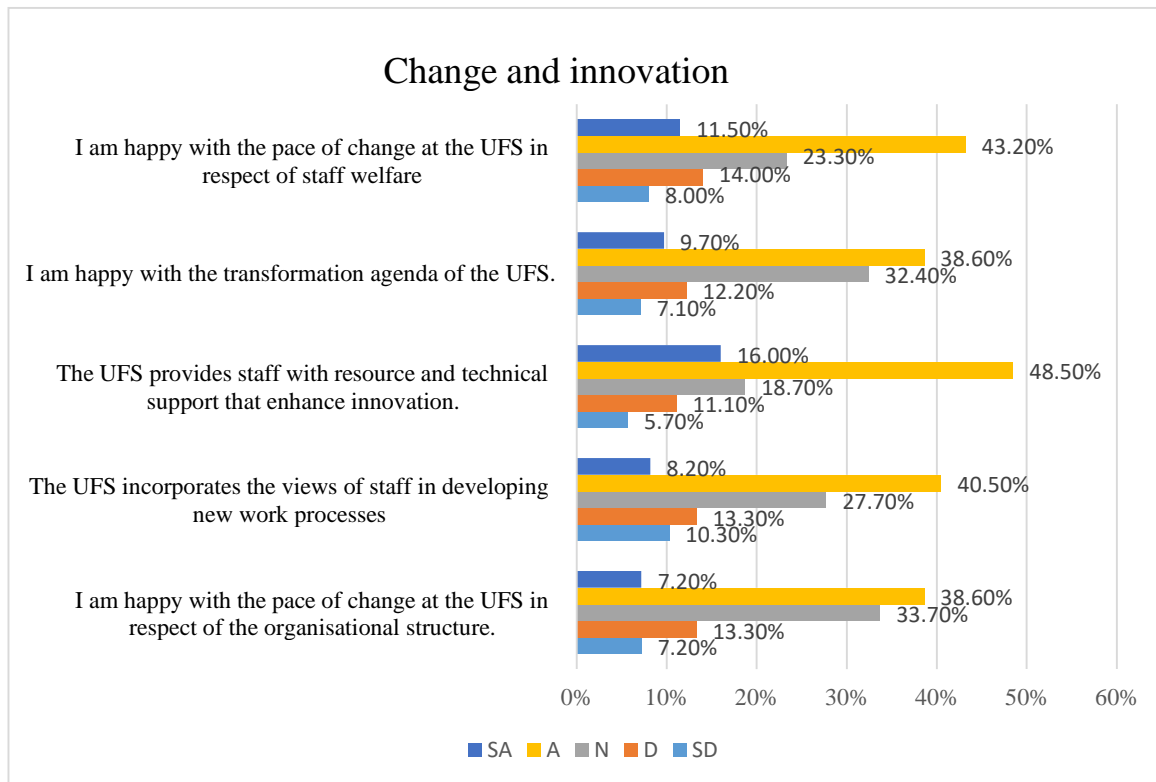


Figure 118: Change and innovation (staff)

Contrastingly, less than 50 percent of participants were of the opinion that they were happy with the following: the pace of change at the UFS in respect of the organisational structure; the UFS incorporates the views of staff in developing new work processes; and that they were happy with the transformation agenda of the UFS. The results show that first, majority of the study participants were of the opinion that the views of staff are not considered when crafting work process in the university. Second, that the UFS does not incorporate the views of staff in developing new work processes and third, that they are not happy with the transformation agenda of the UFS.

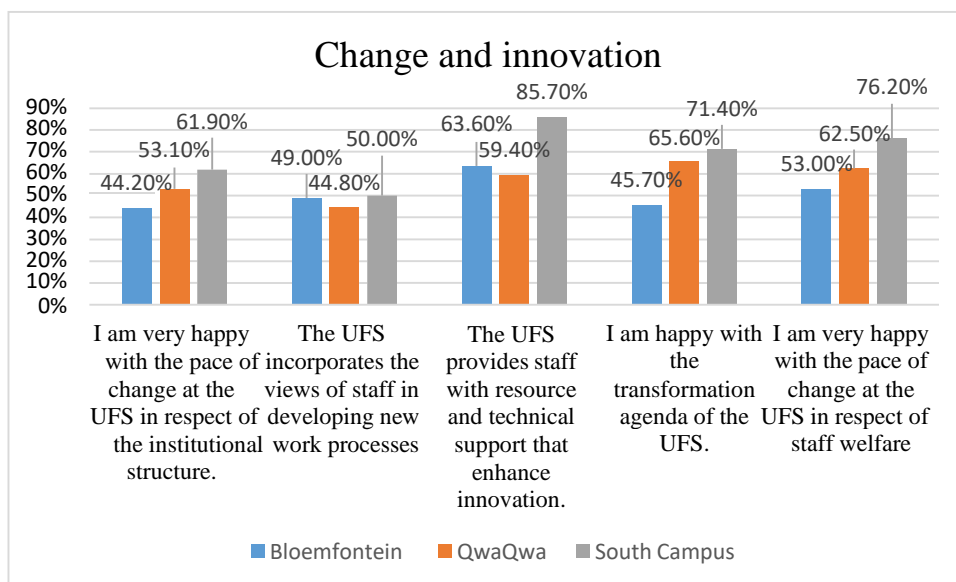


Figure 19: Change and innovation (campus)

A cursory look at the responses of staff with respect to change and innovation and based on campus location (see figure 19) revealed that at the Bloemfontein campus, less than 50 percent of staff were happy with the transformation agenda of the UFS as well the pace of change in relation to the institutional structure. Similarly, less than 50 percent of participants at the QwaQwa campus indicated that the UFS incorporates the views of staff in developing new work processes.

However, while figure 19 showed that less than 50 percent of staff agreed to the statement that the UFS incorporates the views of staff in developing new work processes, 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 innovation

UFS has improved a lot when it comes to transformation and I will like that to continue for years to come. Also, I will like the university to improve on taking care of students' wellbeing because things are quite difficult during these covid19 times. I hope these surveys are taken seriously in taking care of both staff and students. [Staff A1]

Is it possible to be human-cantered? This should be a key point that UFS emphasizes. This institution educates humans, which should be understood since they are very diverse. Even while UFS appears to strive to give things a personal touch, I believe it lacks the earnestness with which it oversees the individuals

that make up UFS as a whole, students and staff. UFS is keeping up with the standards of other academic institution when it comes to innovation. [Staff A1]

UFS still feels like a nation with smaller states inside it, and the regulations and procedures for each faculty/department seem to be distinct. I am not sure whether the university is aware that each department has its own culture and management style, which should be clear, but how come staff members from the same institution have nothing in common when it comes to the university's culture and sense of belonging? This demonstrates how detached this institution is, from its employees to its students. [Staff A1]

I am satisfied with the UFS transformation but wish to see the CARE values initiative that was initiated by VC Institutional Change before the pandemic for the well-being of both staff and students. Too many times than not, I have sensed a general frustration amongst staff, and very little patience with each other in these difficult times. [Staff A1]

Currently several departments are employing staff to duplicate administrative work like keeping separate records of claims, following up on where it has stopped, payments, finances - a concept that flies against productivity and efficiency, not to mention effectivity. I have in my department a staff member spending a large amount of time running a separate financial system to enable me to effectively plan and manage the financial aspects, with resulting reduction of outputs on other aspects. [Staff A1]

We have everything we need as an Institution to become one of the leading Global institutions or at least in top 5 in South Africa. The problem is people who have authority and decision making power in the system, that create stumbling blocks in some areas. Surveys on leaders need to be created so that the voice of staff on the ground can be heard and taken into consideration. [Staff A2]

I would like to touch on the socially just aspect. Where I don't believe the department recognizes the needs of the current student population to be successful. Our role is to provide the students with opportunities and a fair chance of being successful at those opportunities. The challenges before the opportunity frustrate and fatigue the student we should look into how we create an environment that is fair on all students. [Staff A3]

Give the QwaQwa Management the titles that enables them to participate effectively on the university management committees- we should not be accommodated in our own institution but we should be part of the decision making processes- of our own 'University of the Free State. [Staff A4]

Much more research support needs to be provided - mainly time and support staff (research officers). There needs to be sufficient staff to cover all the clinical duty areas. The teaching environment at the provincial hospitals needs to be improved. Many areas lack basic equipment, also certain basic building / hospital environment leaves much to be desired. [Staff A5]

The lack of proper research support (funding and equipment) at the UFS is making me EXTREMELY despondent. If I do not source outside funding, then I will not be able to do much. When 90% of the publication subsidy funding generated through my publications disappears into the bottomless pit to support who knows what and who on campus, and we have to be satisfied with the 10% tip we receive, then I feel more motivated to do something else with my time. The 10% tip we receive as 'reward' for our publication outputs, of which we can only receive 50% as income/bonus (minus tax, leaving you with 3% of what you have generated for the UFS) is a real slap in the face, especially when you consider how poorly our salaries compare to other South African universities (I believe we have the worst-paid professoriate in the country). I would consider the comparatively poor salaries and bonuses as a major contributor to low staff morale and a lack of ambition amongst many academics. Not that I expect the UFS to change anything - they have proven they don't give much of a shit about the academic staff. [Staff A6]

I really believe that the future of the University is bright especially with the vision and strategies that are continually communicated by the Rector. [Staff A6]

We all know what the problems are; there is no will to change things, the status quo is maintained. Loyalties are more important than what is right or best for the organization. [Staff A6]

For the past three decades that I have been part of the university of the Free State (based at QwaQwa Campus) I have seen immense improvement in the following areas, changing culture of them and us toward one institution with shared values that embrace academic excellence, sense of humour (you are because I am), equitable sharing of resources (there is still room for improvement) because of the location of the QwaQwa Campus, seen improvement on infrastructure development, and on staff and students wellness. [Staff A6]

The UFS has a wealth of initiatives that are superior to other institutions. The work done by DIRAP and CTL for example are outstanding. However we need to focus on the core business of the institution and reduce the administrative expectations and requirements. Extra administration in departments -- for example essentially being responsible for selection committees -- can be centralised with HR, freeing up academics' time, and decreasing delays in processes. [Staff A6]

We are making strides as an institution in adopting human centeredness approach in dealing with complex problems facing our society in focusing on the empowerment of individuals to solve their own societal problems- and I think this is an exciting new ways of dealing society complex problems that our country is currently faced with in its history. [Staff A6]

Arguably on the face of it the institution is human centred. However the daily interactions between HR and staff do not always support the 'talk'. We need to clarify, not through questionnaires, but actual longitudinal

face to face interviews what a human centred, and human led institution looks like, so that when we have hiccups in communication we are able to work through these in supportive and critically engaging ways. Staff start to feel demoralised when there is a culture of impunity. I don't necessarily feel the existence of that given my rank -- but colleagues who are not 'senior' experience the brunt of reaction rather than response. Also we are expected to do a lot -- and UFS management need to recognise this. Many academics are doing the work of 3 or 4 individuals; so while you want us to do 'everything' understand that can, but within time slices and limits. If you want us to do research and so support a research led institution consider the sabbatical period. Consider a 6 month period after every three years. If you want us to improve our teaching provide course offerings that encourage colleagues to get a diploma (for example) in higher education teaching. In other words demonstrate too that teaching IS important; and support this reality through supporting awards for teaching (as suggested and adjudicated by the students). [Staff A6]

The UFS leadership has access to all the resources and expertise to make transformation a success and to achieve its vision. They however refuse to make use of it and instead bow to the institutional culture. It is difficult to understand how an institution can botch a registration year-after-year despite having the same tools as other institutions who have successful registrations. Registration is just one example... [Staff A6]

I am honoured to work for an Institution like the UFS, especially under the current top management leadership. I just wish there were better induction systems for new employees, especially when taking up new roles in management at departmental level. A lot of employees and line managers are good people with the necessary skill set to complete the job, but translating that into leading a team of people can be challenging. [Staff A6]

At the UFS, it boils down to knowing the right people and playing political games. If you do not play these games, you can forget to make any further inputs into the well-being of the department or the faculty or the UFS. [Staff A6]

Overall, I think the positives of working at the UFS outweigh the negatives. A negative that I would like to highlight here is that in my experience, there is not sufficient reward for good performance and not enough punishment for bad performance which leads to a culture of mediocrity. This does not mean that there are not many individuals who work very hard and perform very well but to me that seems to be because these individuals are intrinsically motivated and would be high performers in any organisation. [Staff A6]

The UFS is going backward on transformation. Lip service is paid to 'best praxis'. The will of the 'old guard' prevails. There is a fear to engage on important issues that are stifling transformation. Social cohesion is the UFS's biggest problem. Staff (especially the SLG) hide their resentment for each other behind smiles and collegiality while they sabotage each other in the dark. In the end the student suffers. [Staff A6]

The willingness to transform is there on paper, but in reality, most senior staff members are unwilling to consider that someone of a different race and much younger than them can actually have something of value to say and contribute. In spite of your qualifications, you are treated by many as a token appointee. At some point you begin to feel drained of the passion you arrived with at the beginning of your employment. [Staff A6]

I love the UFS and has been here for more than 38 years. Still we lack transformation, meaning growth in African academics in top positions, professors, and head of departments. How much effort the UFS put in to obtain academics from previous disadvantage groups. What happened to grow your own timber, related to African academics if we use the excuse we cannot find the perfect candidate? Predominantly black students for their funds, but predominantly white lecturers. We need to change!!! I am white but can feel their pain. [Staff A6]

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. This study 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.

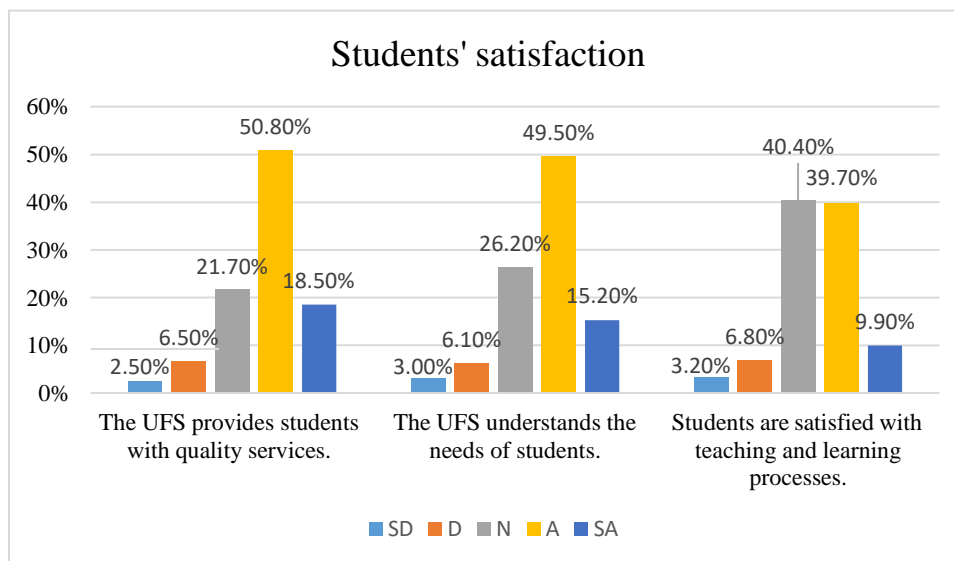


Figure 120: Staff perception about students' satisfaction in three items

As shown in figure 20, more than 50 percent of staff indicated satisfaction in the quality services the UFS provide students. Conversely less than 50 percent agreed to the statement that students are satisfied with teaching and learning processes.

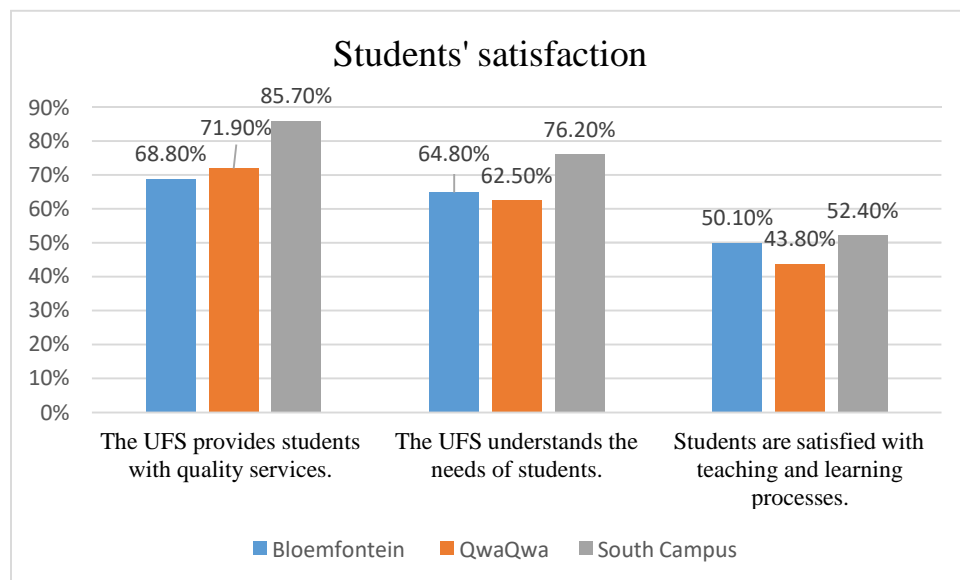


Figure 131: Staff perception about students' satisfaction (distribution by campus)

The responses of staff regarding the three items and based on campus distribution revealed that more than 50 percent of participants and the Bloemfontein and South campuses indicated that students were satisfied with teaching and learning processes. However, less than 50 percent of participants at the QwaQwa campus agreed to the statement that students were satisfied with teaching and learning processes. What the results suggest is that staff at the QwaQwa campus perceive student satisfaction with respect to teaching and learning to be low.

3.1.5 Staff voices on students' satisfaction

The biggest concern is the registration process, even before COVID. Programme Enrolment does not work, and it creates frustration for students and staff alike. What happens is that staff and students start the academic year frustrated, negative and exhausted. This is not the way an academic year should start. The UFS however constantly indicates that the problems will be investigated and fixed, but that has not happened since 2017. Due to COVID, the 2021 registrations proved how unreliable this system is. [Staff A6]

The emotional abuse staff are going through, at the hands of students and student bodies, are a disgrace. Students 'attack' staff verbally and emotionally and the top management do nothing about it. It is always

just the student's voice that matters. During registrations we worked 18 hours a day, just to receive an energy bar from the UFS Wellness office! As if we were not working hard enough, it felt that they were saying: 'thanks for working 18 hours a day, here is some energy - we hope we can squeeze another two hours out of you today'. This was a slap in our faces. [Staff A6]

The willingness to transform is there on paper, but in reality most senior (most of white ethnicity) staff members are unwilling to consider that someone of a different race and much younger than them can actually have something of value to say and contribute. In spite you qualifications, many treat you as a token appointee. At some point, you begin to feel drained of the passion you arrived with at the beginning of your employment due to the condescending treatment of white senior staff members.

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 22 and 23 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.

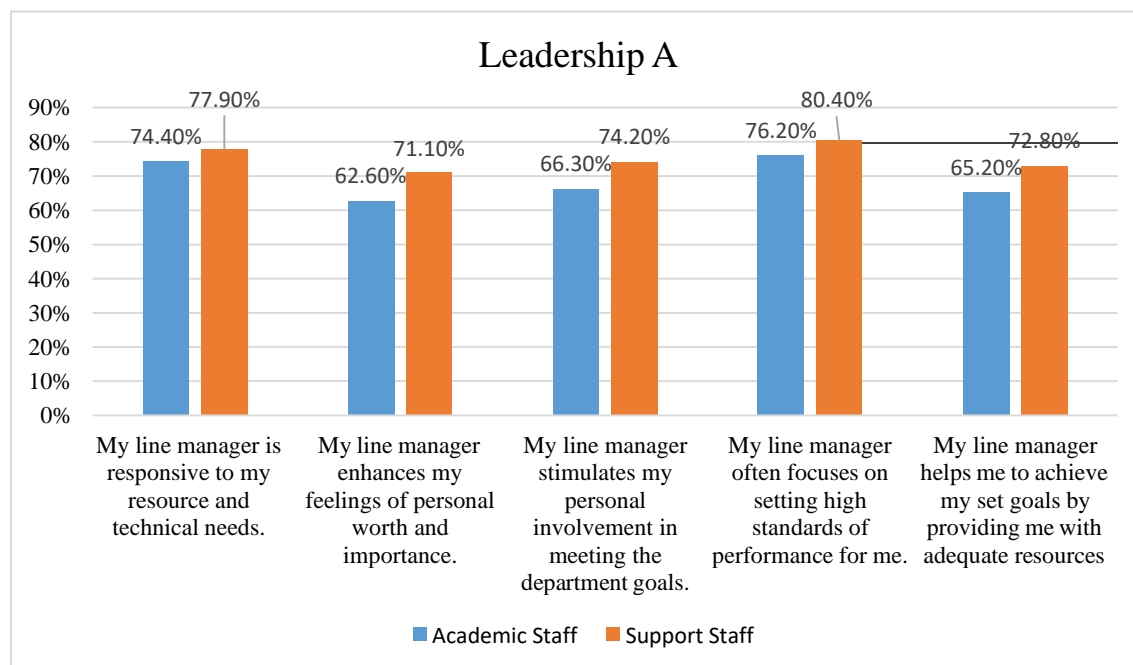


Figure 14: Leadership - Academic and support staff

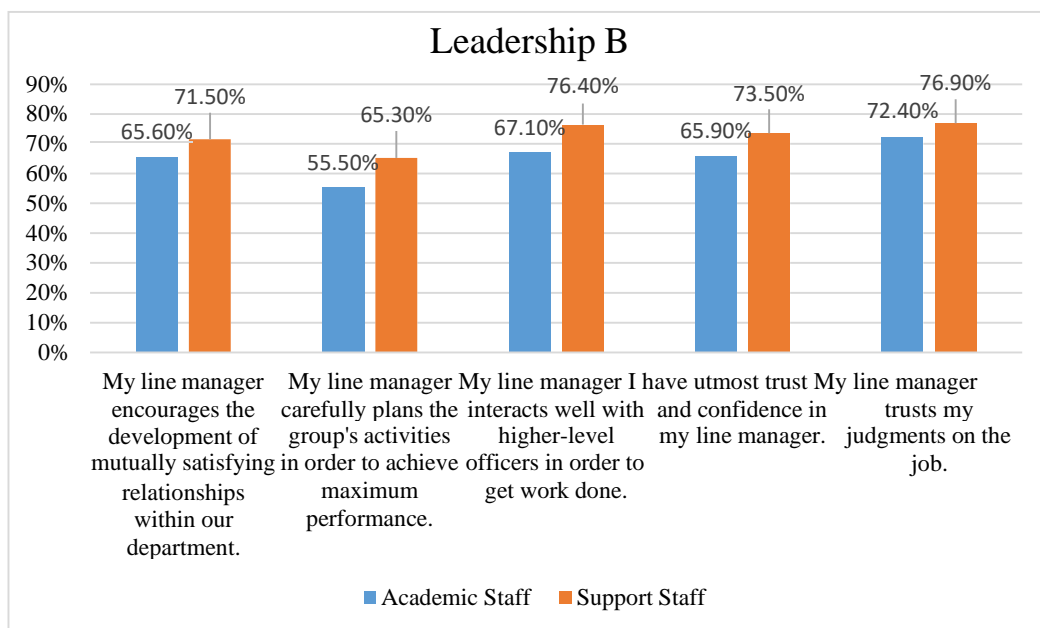


Figure 23: Leadership – Academic and support staff

The results revealed that most line managers and heads of department are aware of and responsive to the resource and technical needs of their staff (76.80%), most line managers and heads of department often focus on high standards of performance and set example by working hard (78.60%) and most line managers and heads of department trust the judgement of their staff (75.00%). The results reveal increases in all three items when compared with the percentages recorded in 2019. In particular the 2019 results revealed the following: that most line managers and heads of department 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%).

The results from the involvement sub-section revealed that 64.1 percent of academic and support staff contribute to the decision-making process in their department. This value represents a decrease in percentage of staff involvement in the decision-making process from the 76.46 percent recorded in 2019. Reason for the decrease could be the result of the COVID-19 pandemic where some line managers could not hold frequent meetings with their staff.

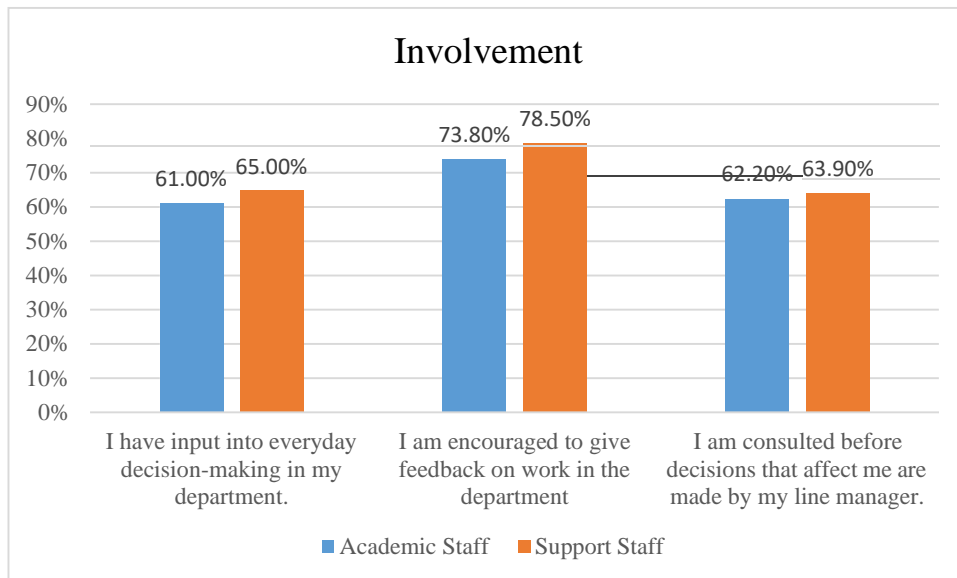


Figure 24: Staff involvement (Academic and support staff)

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”.

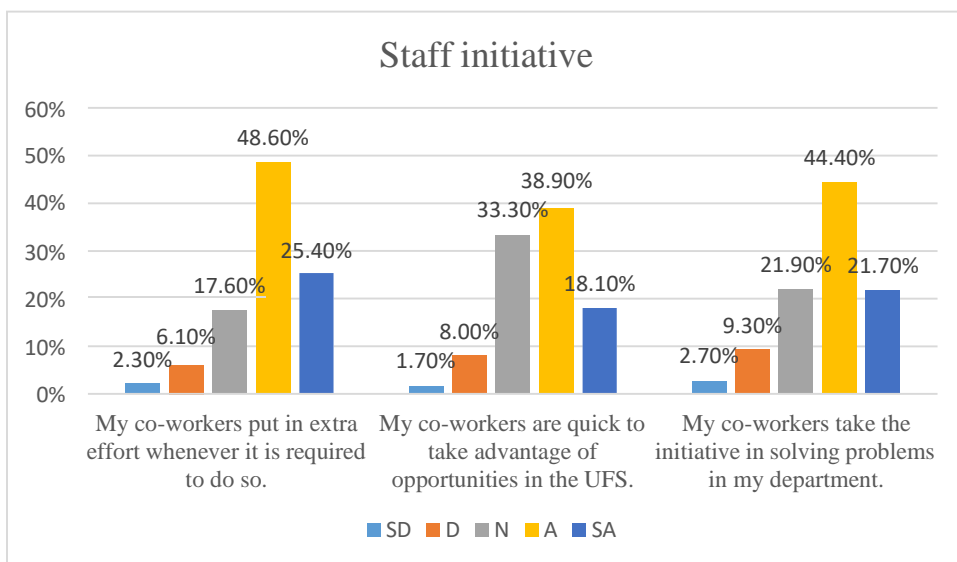


Figure 25: Staff initiative

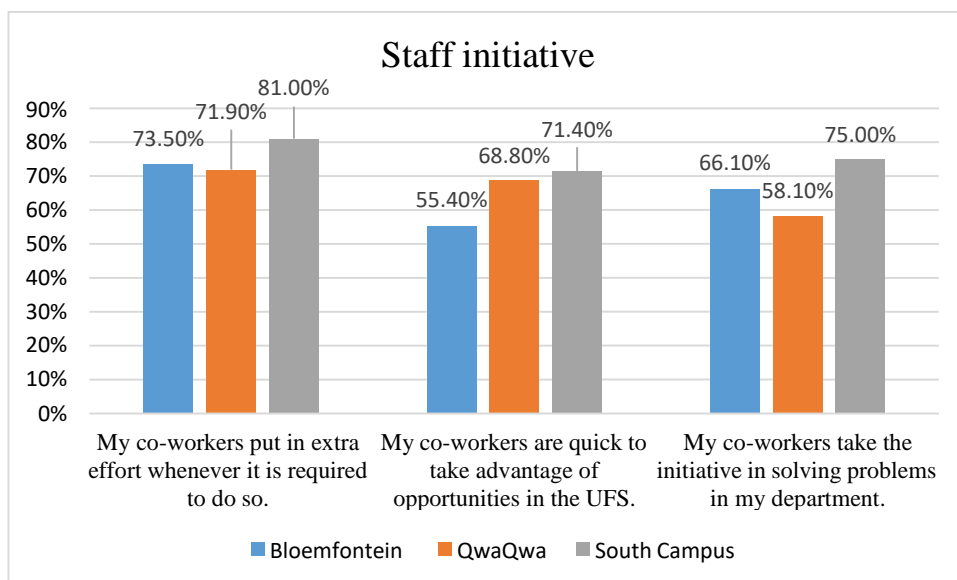


Figure 156: Staff initiative (distribution by campus)

Figure 26 shows the distribution of participants' responses regarding staff initiative based on campus location. Importantly more than 50 percent of participants across all three campuses agreed to the three statements that suggest that staff are involved in the initiative of the departments. 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

The UFS creates wonderful opportunities, but if one is not allowed to speak in meetings, how does one learn and grow? [Staff A6]

If you don't have a title in front of your name, your input into anything is disregarded. We are often asked for an 'input' on matters, but they do not want to take our concerns serious - after all, we are the people on ground level who deal with the operational side of all the policies and rules and have the experience and insights into what would work and what not (and I'm talking from 17 years of experience at the UFS). Yet, our inputs are not taken seriously. At the end of the day, when things go wrong, we need to clean up the mess and when you dare to tell them that they were warned against it, you are the one who is wrong. Why bother to ask our inputs in the first place? Or is it just to do 'window dressing' and say that they 'consulted' on the matter?? They are only bluffing themselves. There is a saying in Afrikaans: 'Die vis vrot van die kop af' - and this is what is happening here. [Staff A6]

Qualified lecturers with real-world work experience, demonstrated initiative and perseverance are trampled into the ground all for the sake of not 'hurting the feelings' of other staff which do not do their prescribed work - either due to incompetence, negligence or arrogance. I am very willing to build a research unit with sustainable postgraduate student throughput in my department, but my line manager does not enable me to teach or do research in my field of expertise. [Staff A6]

Unfortunately junior staff members (lecturers and lower) are not supported when they experience challenges with line managers. It is too easy for line managers to portray staff in a negative light making it easy for them to manipulate the system in their favour while making the staff seem inadequate. [Staff A6]

The blanket belief that anyone who is a line manager or higher cannot be wrong and is not questioned or held to account is problematic and does not help in changing the culture of the institution. People who have previously informed the necessary role players are not believed if they have a history of complaints. Lower level staff members are not afforded the opportunity to air grievances anonymously or in a way that they are protected because the policies place all of the power in the line managers' hands. This does not reflect a human centred approach and nor is it socially just. The philosophy of 'Care' at the institution is more for marketing than real change. [Staff A6]

I don't feel included and role is sometimes surpassed by urgency of request. Currently feel like I am being steered and empowered in the vision. Seems like colleagues are opposed to inclusive change and leadership. [Staff A6]

Even though experiences change from department to department owing to individual personalities and conduct, I clearly grasp what the UFS is about. I find my department to be hospitable and delightful to work in, but I cannot say the same for others. As a result, each department's experience inside the UFS is distinctive. Apart from a misunderstood personalities found here, my experience in my department has been 'superb.' My time here has been remarkable. [Staff A6]

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.

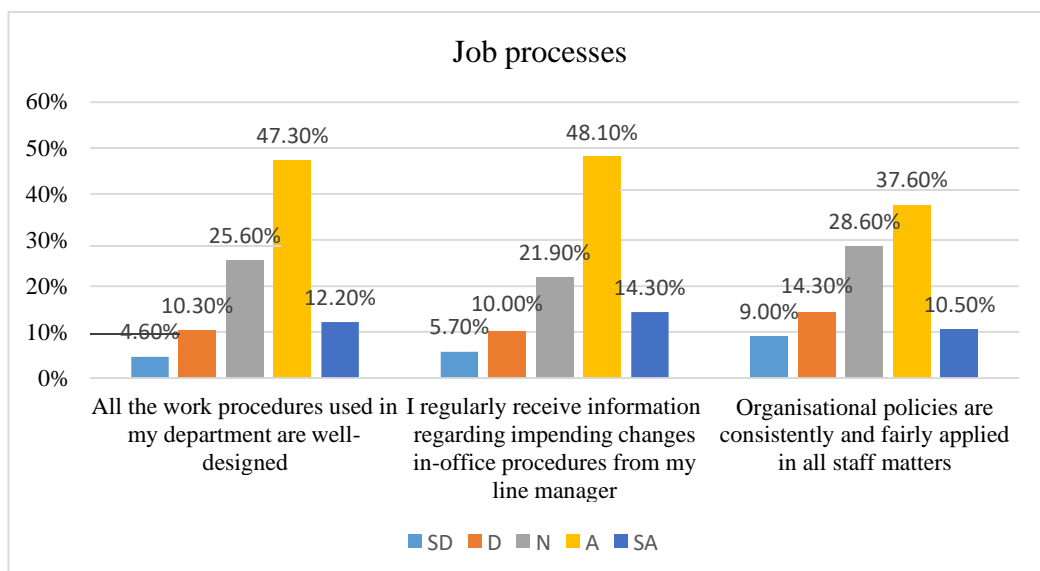


Figure 167: Policies in relation to work processes

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, less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that the policies at the UFS are consistently and fairly applied in all staff matters. This compares with the result of the 2019 climate survey report which revealed that more than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that the policies at the UFS are consistently and fairly applied in all staff matters. We further analysed the responses of participants based on campus to reveal the differences.

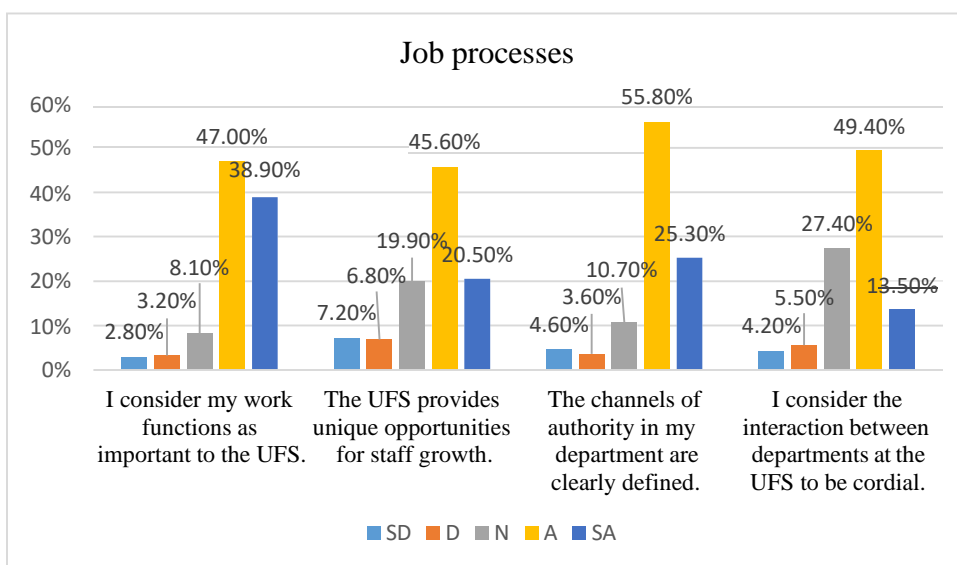


Figure 178: Job processes (Distribution by campus)

Participants indicated that their work functions are important to the overall development of work processes at the UFS (85.90%) and that, the channels of authority in their department were clearly defined (81.10%). Similarly, 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” revealed high agreement rate (66.10%). The results represent an increase from the percentage recorded in the 2019 institutional climate report that revealed that less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that the UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth.

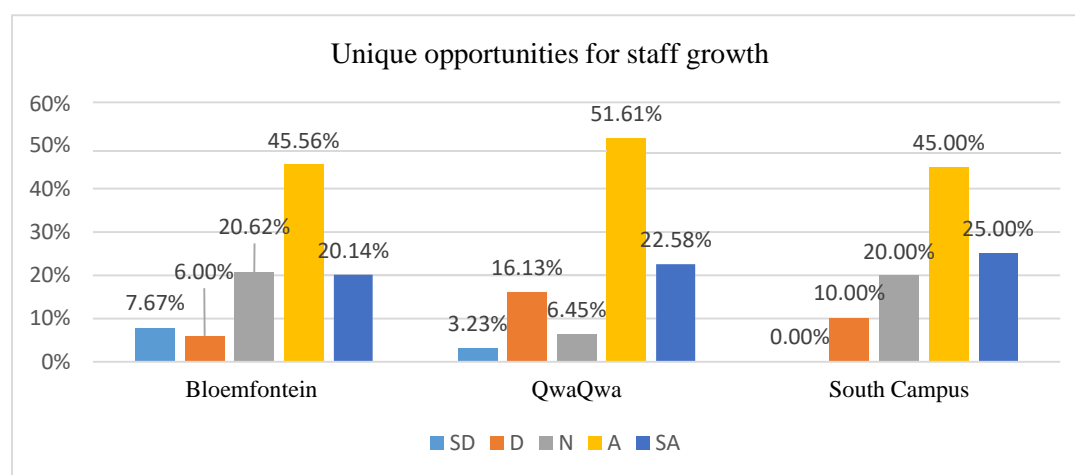


Figure 189: Unique opportunities for staff growth (campus distribution)

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, more than 50 percent of all participants in the three campuses were of the opinion that the UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth. These results compare with the results from the 2019 climate report where 50% of participants at the Bloemfontein campus indicated that the UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth while 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 (64.42 %) when compared to support staff (67.23%). Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate report revealed that 50.37 percent of academic staff were of the opinion that the UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth while 47.02 percent of support staff were in agreement of the statement.

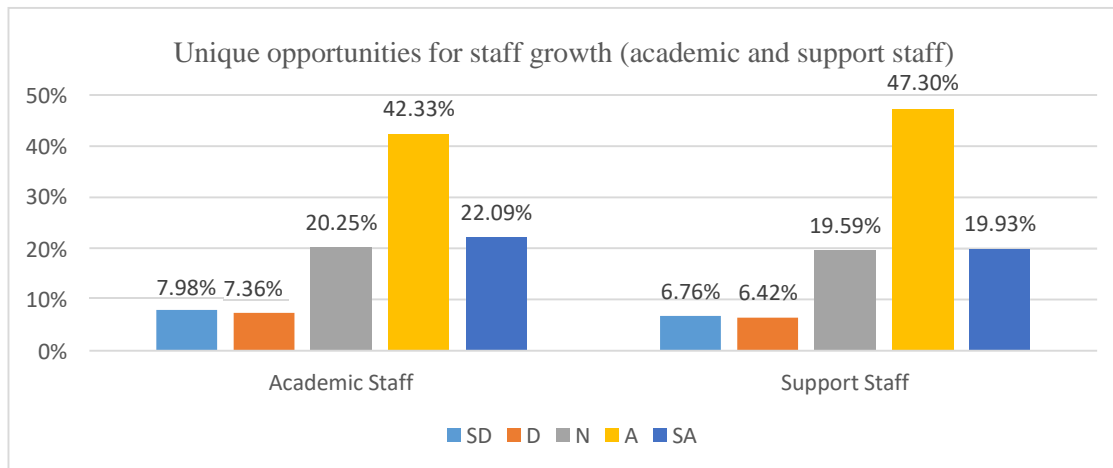


Figure 30: Unique opportunities for staff growth (academic and support staff)

3.1.10 Role clarity

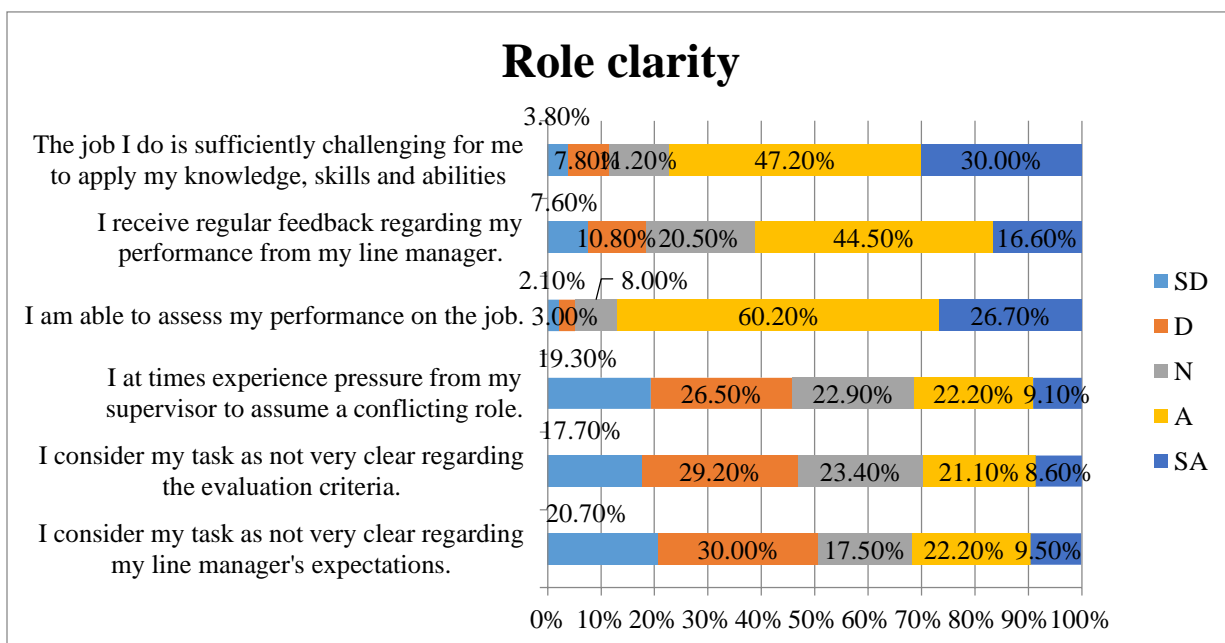


Figure 31: Role clarity

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 18.5 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 32, while 64.07 percent of support staff indicated that they received regular feedback from their leaders, 57.93 percent of academic staff indicated that they regularly received feedback from their leaders. This compares with the 2019 Institutional Climate report which revealed that 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.

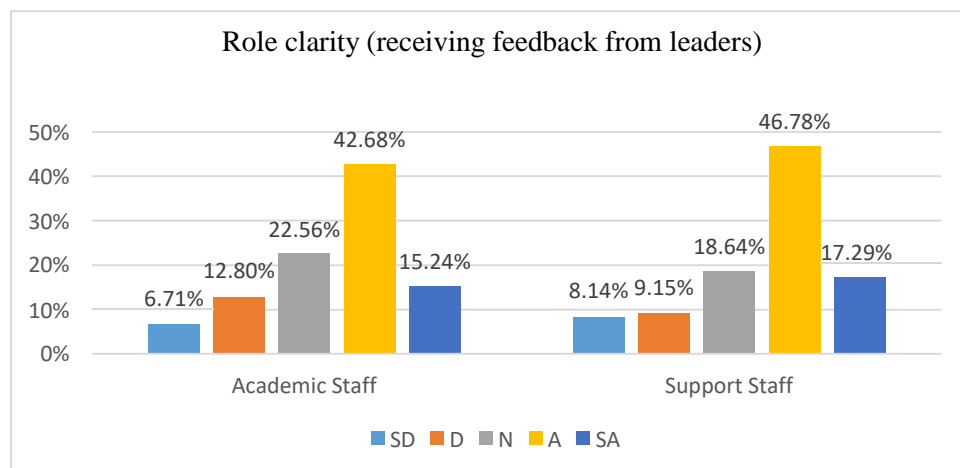


Figure 32: Role clarity (feedback from leaders academic and support staff)

3.1.11 Ethics

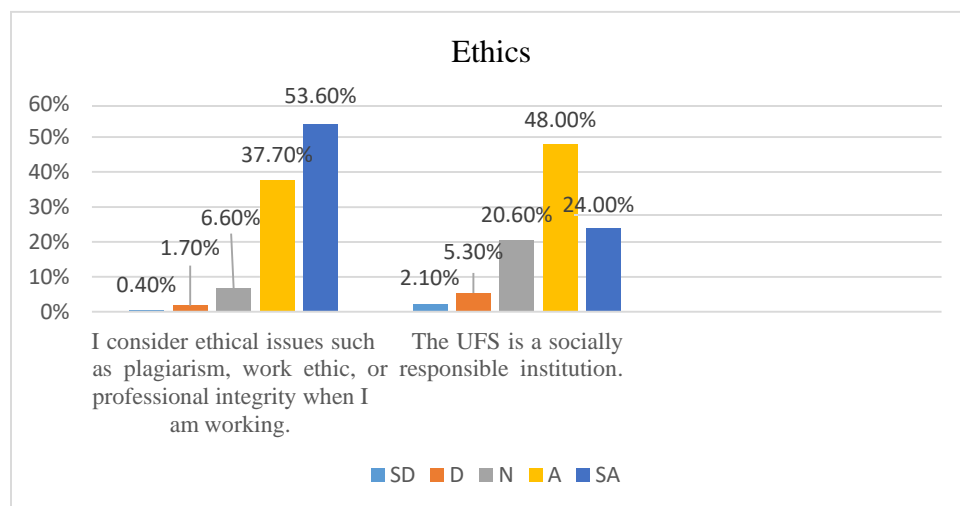


Figure 33: Ethics

As shown in figure 33, 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

The workload sometimes makes it difficult to cope especially on campuses such as the QwaQwa. We generally play multiple roles and it is generally not easy for somebody who is not in QwaQwa to understand this issue. While the retirement age is 60 years. I hope to exit earlier for my health. [Staff A6]

Main area of dissatisfaction - expectation to be available after hours / while on annual leave. There is a culture in the faculty (not within my department, but from the faculty) that expects a work week to consist of 60+ hours in order to carry a rapidly expanding administrative load in addition to meeting other KPA demands. With the move to online teaching, student and lecture related admin has increased, but this is not considered in terms of staffing. [Staff A6]

UFS takes a very long time to make decisions because it has to go through so many processes. By the time the decision is made the problem is obsolete. Although there are policies in place, it is vague and the implementation differs from person-to-person (i.e finances with regarding day-fees, purchases, etc.). Information is not readily available i.e how the student fund entity is calculated for the departments if you have more students will the student fund for the department increase, etc. So much pressure on students to have good grades, so students just study to pass tests and exams, students do not learn to remember and use knowledge and skills to be professionals in the real world. No consequences for students who are rude towards lecturers/staff. Interruption of academic and research work with the constant emails 'requiring urgent information', then staff must stop what they are doing to give information and academic mapping that HR, DIRAP, student affairs, etc. is supposed to have and should do. The work overload due to constant emails requiring urgent information, webinars, meetings that last for hours... [Staff A6]

I feel overworked and underpaid, underappreciated, and pressured to perform in areas I do not necessarily have the skills. The UFS wants to put staff members in a box: to be a 'good' employee, you have to conform to X, Y, and Z. Not everyone can conform to these expectations, and expecting them to do so places undue mental and physical pressure on staff members. Staff mental well-being is completely ignored. Sending out a wellness e-mail every other week is not helpful to anyone. What staff need is proper, qualified therapists on staff who are accessible, or at least extra contributions from the UFS to be able to afford proper mental healthcare. Staff are made to believe that they cannot succeed outside of the university, yet are expected to boost the university's status wherever they go. [Staff A6]

I am really very happy with my department, my colleagues and my line manager. Wonderful. But please the bureaucratic burden is truly becoming ridiculous and it seems to me that various 'support departments' are trying to justify their existence by enforcing their 'systems'/'initiatives'/'programs' ... I feel I have less and less time to spend on my core concerns, namely teaching and research. These are the things I am good at

and enjoy. Teaching demands its own time, consequently research gets side-lined, which will hamper my chances at promotion in future. A vicious cycle that needs to be broken. [Staff A6]

I regularly receive requests to provide information or complete tables etc. on short notice, i.e. by 08:00 in the morning to be handed in by 12:00 the same day. E-mails sit on desks and is only sent out before due dates, thus I have missed funding opportunities as we did not have the time to complete the proposals in the short time frame. This is merely an indication of the poor planning and perhaps no planning and just pushing the monkeys to our shoulders. I have in the beginning sent notes to possible suggestions and even notes of identifying deficiencies with examples, mostly I dont even receive a note of acknowledgement. [Staff A6]

Give researchers decolonized research ethics guidelines. The manner ethics are structured keeps research and impact on community level back. What happened to researcher responsibilities towards ethical practices? Waiting weeks for permission to conduct research kills innovation and creativity before a project even commences. [Staff A6]

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.

3.1.13a Resources

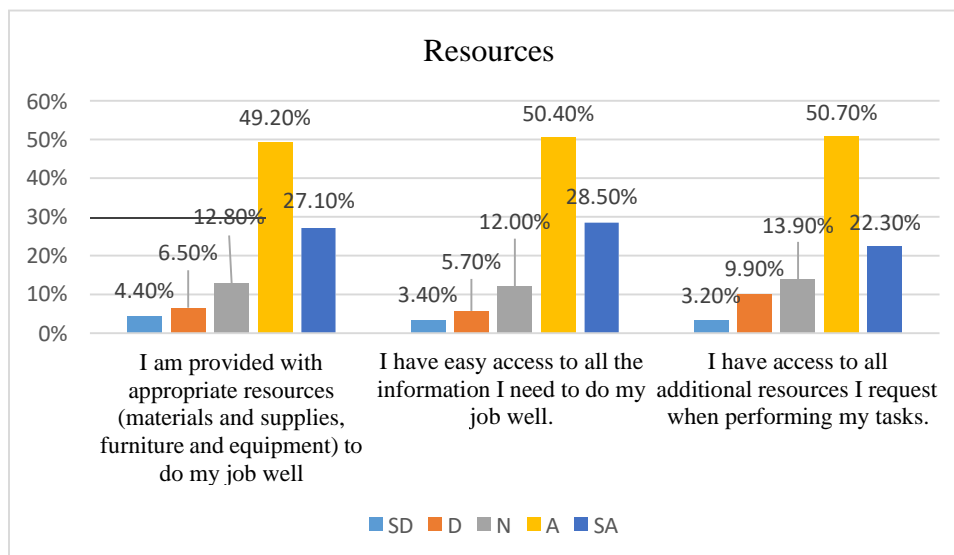


Figure 34: Resources

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 70 percent of staff indicated that, they were provided with appropriate resources (76.30%) and had easy access to information and working materials (78.90%).

3.1.13b Technology

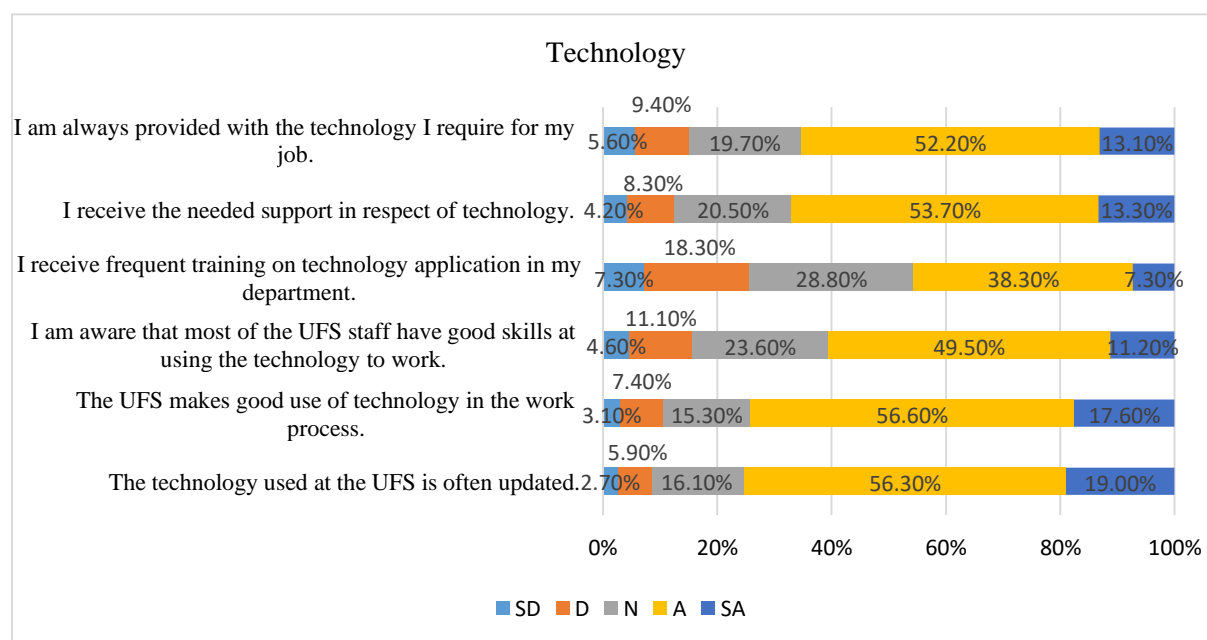


Figure 35: Technology

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 (81.50%), high proficiency in the application of technology by staff (90.00%) and, regular support in the use of technology (68.70%). Further analysis (see figure 36) showed that more than 50 percent of participants in all three campuses indicated that they receive frequent training in technology application in their department. Comparatively, less than 50 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein and South campuses indicated in 2019 that they receive frequent training in technology application in their department.

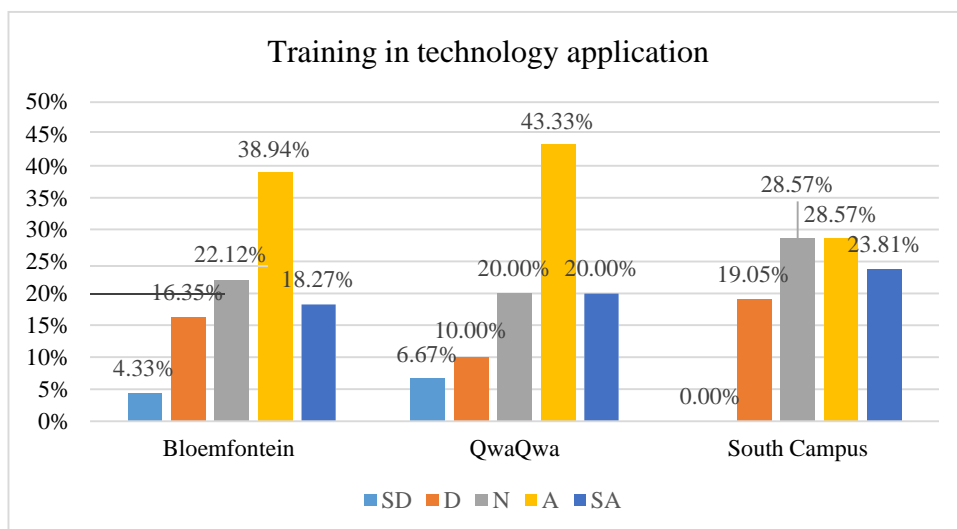


Figure 196: Technology (Training in technology application)

3.1.13 c Facilities

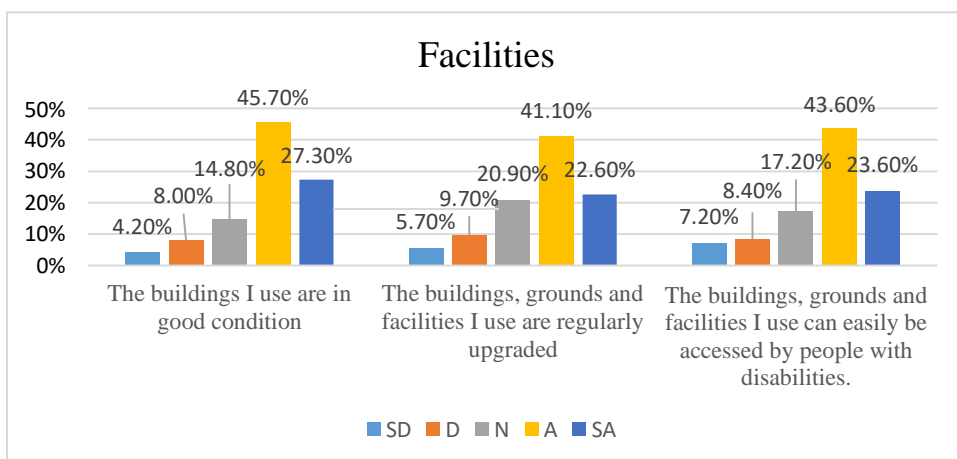


Figure 207: facilities

Responses from staff in relation to facilities on the three campuses show that above 70 percent of participants opined that the facilities on campus were in good condition while 67.20 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 37 shows that, 63.70 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.

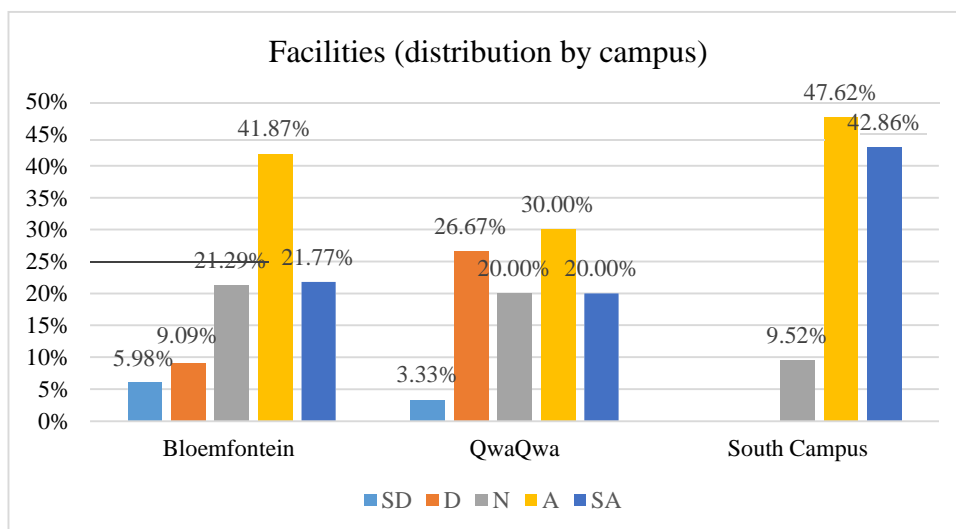


Figure 218: facilities (distribution based on campus)

A cursory look at figure 38 show that while more than 60 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein and 90 percent at the South campuses indicated that facilities on campus were frequently upgraded while 50 percent of participants at the QwaQwa campus agreed with the statement. What the results suggest is that staff at all three campuses perceive that the facilities at the campus are not frequently upgraded as expected.

3.1.14 Staff voices on resources, technology and facilities

The systems used by the UFS, specifically People Soft campus solutions, is not used optimally. We are decades behind other universities such as Wits, who are also using People Soft. It is time that ICT get up to date and equip staff with the proper tools to do their work. There are also numerous cases where systems are built for one Faculty or division, but never rolled out to the other Faculties, while all Faculties will benefit from that system. The other Faculties are left in the dark and need to struggle on their own. Collegiality does not exist at the UFS. [Staff A6]

Technology is working excellently and is on point. [Staff A6]

I know there is probably no water for this, but I remember the pride the UFS used to take in its grounds. It used to look like an inviting place where students would want to spend time. There was something visionary about it. The 'aesthetic appearance' of campus has, in my opinion, taken a huge knock. There is so much ugliness, poor (short-sighted) planning and lack of care. I am glad the Red Square has received a makeover, but overall a dispiriting situation on campus. [Staff A6]

I know maybe it is financially challenging. It can be a good idea that support service departments can have their own buildings with proper equipment as well as updated resources such as laptop, computers for us to work comfortably and meet expected deadlines. [Staff A6]

3.1.15 Safety

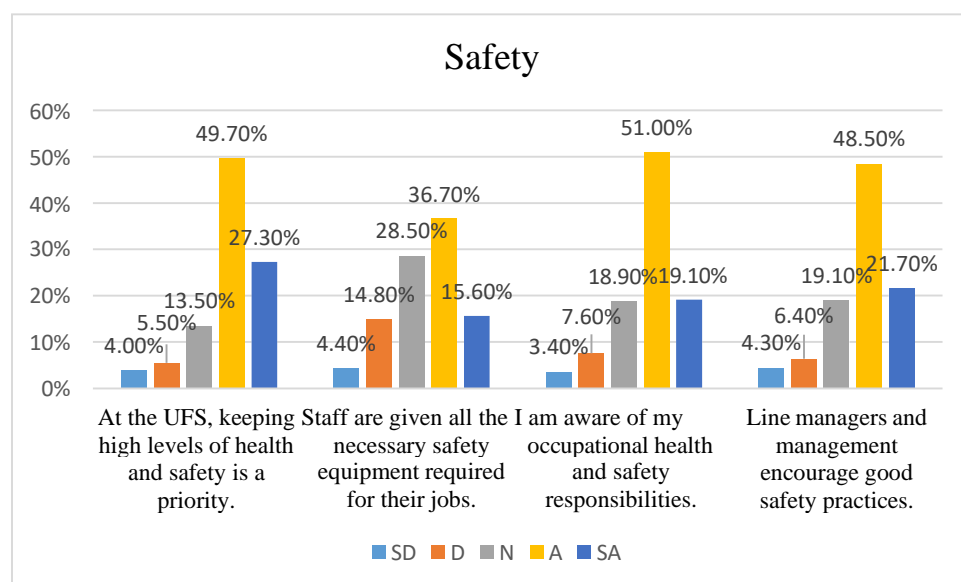


Figure 229: Safety

More than 75 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 (52.30%) and that, management encourage good safety practices (70.20%).

3.1.16 Staff voices on safety

Management expect staff to be on campus (even those who do not need to be in terms of work obligations) just to be here because I assume managers think that presence equals productivity or that if they cannot see you then you are not working. Meanwhile, since the pandemic, I have been working most days, evenings and weekends to transform courses for students and to get my research, project and publishing work done. Also, why does top management expect staff who can work from home to be on campus if top management sits at home and are not exposed to COVID themselves? Additionally, there is no vaccine mandate, and not even clear communication to students that if they come onto campus it is highly recommended that they be vaccinated. I have fragile parents that I look after, and a child of 5 who cannot be vaccinated yet and is

therefore not protected. All the people who do not vaccinate drive mutations of the virus that makes the vaccination useless. So I feel exposed and that top management is moving too slowly with sorting out safe working conditions for me on campus (for example by having a vaccine mandate that requires staff and students to be vaccinated, or negative tests if you do not want to vaccinate). Additionally, because I am responsible, I had to test myself twice for COVID before lecturing to students, since I had close contact with a COVID case so that cost me R1600. I could not get a free COVID test from Universitas because they only give this to hospital staff and medical students. I am not being refunded for securing the safety of my students and co-workers, but am required to fund this out of my own pocket, to keep people who refuse to vaccinate, safe from exposure via myself. I cannot in good conscience expose people unknowingly to a virus. [Staff A6]

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.

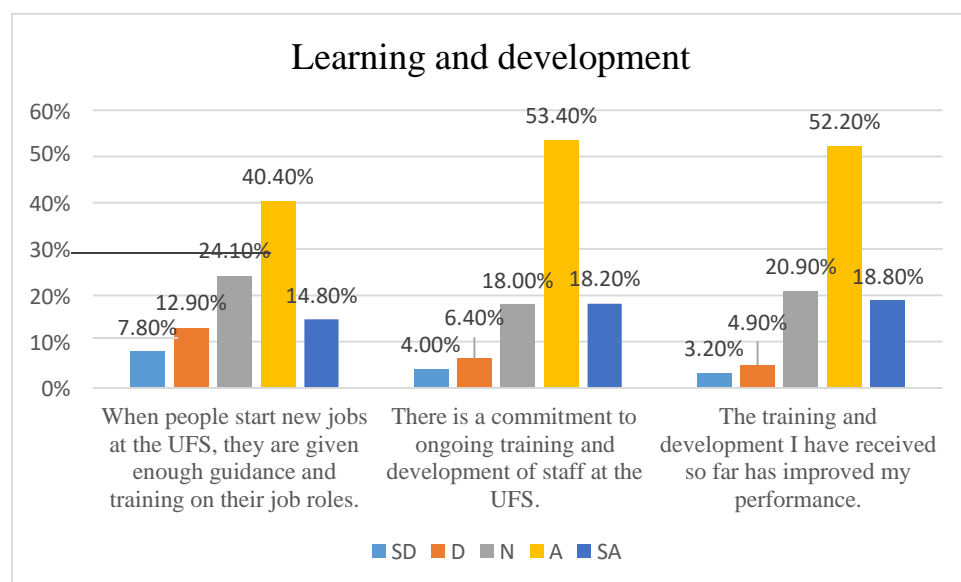


Figure 40: Learning and development

Figure 40 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 (71.60%) and that, the training given to staff improves staff performance (71.00%). 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.

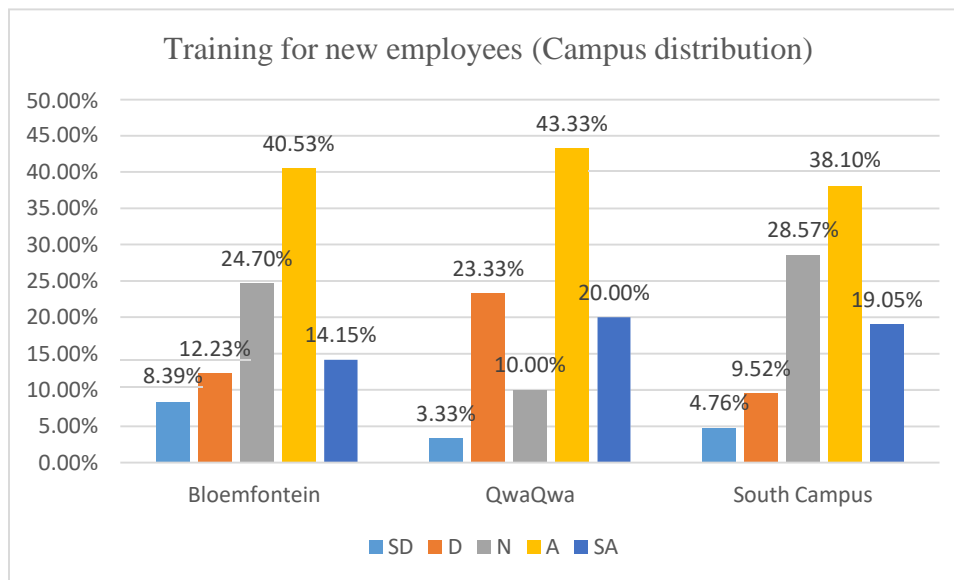


Figure 41: Training for new employees (distribution by campus)

A detailed analysis of the responses of staff revealed that while more than 50 percent of participants in all three campuses indicated that they received adequate training when they were employed.

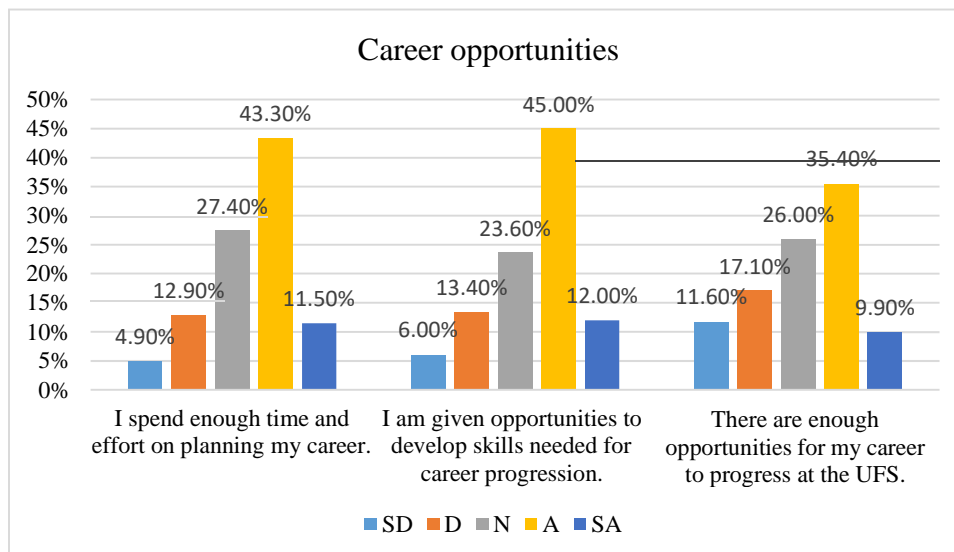


Figure 42: Career opportunities

The sub-section on career opportunities showed that, more than 50 percent of staff spent more time and effort in planning their career (58.30%), were offered opportunities to develop the skills required for their

career progression (61.90%) and believe that there are enough opportunities for career progression at the UFS (52.50%). The results revealed an increase in staff perception about the opportunities available at the UFS for staff progression from 45.30 percent in 2019 to 52.50 percent in 2021.

3.1.18 Staff voices on learning and development

I hope if we can make sure we frequently improve staff members especially making a lot of training so that we can be able to participate in decision making and problem solving in our beloved UFS. [Staff 6]

My experience at the UFS in the last 3 years have been extremely difficult. From having to move my PhD from University of Pretoria to UFS because my HOD could not understand the vision my UP supervisor and I had for my research. The experience of being at the UFS as a PhD student has also made life more difficult in some ways. It took me 9 months and several rejections from ethics over things like spelling and grammar which were exaggerated to be far worse than they were and contradictory comments towards my theoretical discourse. And a comment that I should conduct my research in Afrikaans. I raised this issues and reported them formally. I got no support, in fact I felt attacked by those structures. These are just a few of the experience I have gone through where I have either felt victimized or generally unsupported by my department and other university structures. [Staff 6]

So far, I am happy with the support from the Line manager, Dean's office (Faculty), and UFS-ESAP Programme; Postgraduate School, and CTL. [Staff 6]

I feel that it is very unfair that employees are not developed and groomed for future/senior positions. Every time positions are advertised, external people are chosen for the roles, meaning we as the staff that have been at UFS for long are stuck in the roles that we were employed. There is no progression for us. Another point is that new staff that is employed for the same roles as us, are hired on better remuneration packages than old staff, which is not fair because we still need to train them and assist on their roles. [Staff 6]

The study benefit allowed me to complete a degree and for that I am grateful. [Staff 6]

There should be study loans for staff pursuing non funding courses such as MBA should be factored in for support staff. Study leave should be made available for support staff to attend online lectures or pursue postgraduate research. E.g Masters, PhD, etc. [Staff 6]

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.

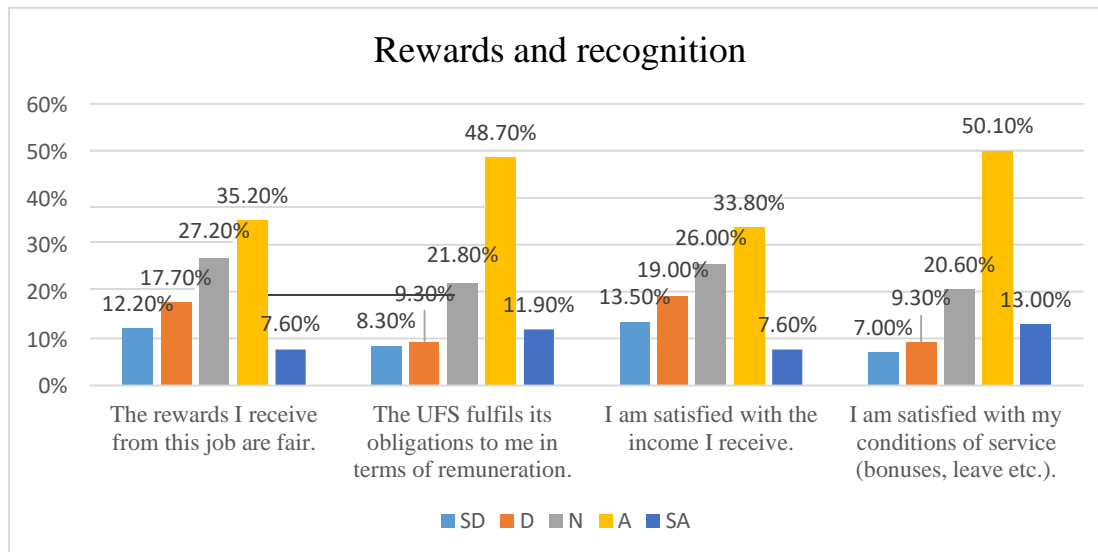


Figure 43: Rewards and recognition

As shown in figure 43, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that the UFS fulfils its obligations with respect to remuneration and other benefits (60.60%) and that, they were satisfied with the conditions of service (63.10%). Conversely, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that the rewards they received from their work was fair (42.80%) and were satisfied with the income they receive (41.40%). These percentages compare with the results obtained in the 2019 institutional climate study where 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, 40.74 percent of academic staff and 43.10 percent of support staff indicated that the rewards they received from their job was fair.

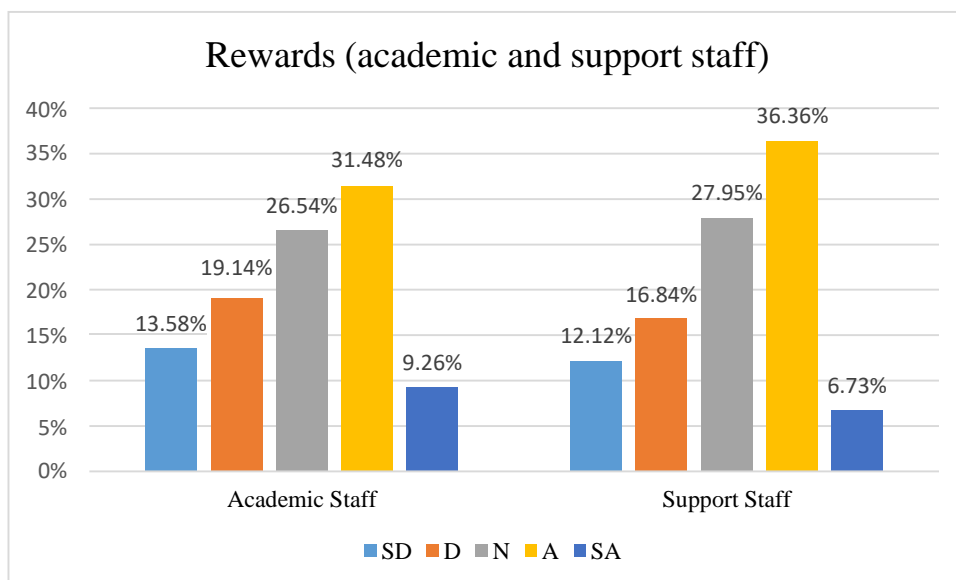


Figure 44: Rewards (academic and support staff)

3.1.20 Performance management

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

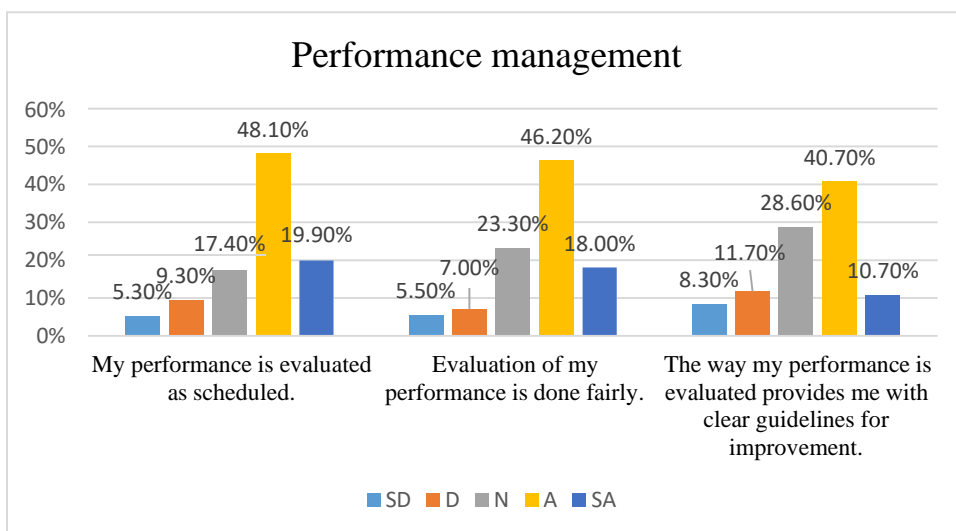


Figure 235: Performance appraisal

In relation to staff performance management, more than 50 percent of staff indicated that their job performance is reviewed and evaluated as scheduled (68.00%), the evaluation of their performance is fairly conducted (64.20%) and, the feedback provides clear guidelines on areas for improvement (51.40%).

3.1.21 Staff voices on rewards, recognition and appraisal

The fact that white women already employed at the UFS have no chance of being appointed in a different position elsewhere on campus (and I'm not talking about promotions - I am just talking about a horizontal move) is a disgrace. Management and HR should not even try to deny this. I am talking of personal experience. I am aware that I was the preferred candidate for the same position I currently have, just in another Faculty, but the appointment was overruled by the 'equity committee' because I am white. They simply went and appointed a black woman (which they admitted required intensive training), without even consulting the line manager of that position. This means that no white woman will be able to move around on campus - I do not see how someone already appointed at the UFS, and just moving to a different department could influence the equity of the UFS. Therefore, white women are basically 'stuck' in the post they are currently in, until the day you retire (or if you resign). This reality is not conducive to the mental well-being of white women on campus (specifically support staff). In this aspect, the UFS has failed to create a working environment that provide white women with the opportunity to grow. Even after I have completed my Master's degree at this university, it means nothing because I cannot even move to a different department, because of the colour of my skin. I have also sat on numerous shortlisting- and interview panels and we are always instructed to simply ignore any applicant if they are white (even if they do qualify for the position). The UFS is grossly applying discrimination on the basis of skin colour. [Staff A6]

Favouritism plays a big role in promotion as some academics are groomed for promotion and others are told they are not good enough. The gap between support staff and senior academic staff is so obvious that it sometimes makes one nauseous to see. Senior academics often think they can speak and act towards support staff as if they are "trash" but still expect them to perform. When junior support and staff speak up for themselves they even become more victimised and are told to drop the issue as they are overreacting and how dare they speak up! What happened to the ethical values and humane behaviour of senior staff of this university? [Staff A6]

I have made peace with the fact that I will never be promoted again. The promotion criteria in my faculty are not clearly defined, despite a recent reformulation of said criteria. There is also an unfair weighting in terms of teaching and research. Research performance weighs far more heavily in a promotion application than teaching does. The amount of modules a lecturer offers, the effort that goes into their student interactions, the amount of marking and number of students, are not taken into account at all when applying for promotion, despite claims of doing so. Some lecturers are not strong researchers, and need more guidance in order to get their work published. Though some sessions on achieving this are presented by the university, some staff members need one-to-one sessions specific to their disciplines or faculties. Staff also need guidance in terms of which journals they can approach to publish. [Staff A6]

Am I aware of the promotion criteria? Yes. Do I have enough time in the year to achieve all of these objectives? No. This is due to the excessive time I put into my modules. Favouritism is evident for promotion criteria along with an emphasis on research outputs, regardless of the other criteria. Quality of lecturing duties are inconsistent: some lecturers continuously update study material and spend excessive time on creating additional material for students to understand the content of a module. Other lecturers focus only on high pass rates with a limited focus on understanding the material. (This relates also to developing students' ability on long-term learning). [Staff A6]

Promotion is an extremely difficult process. I don't even consider applying for promotion due to time and energy put into the process. If you are white, it is not even worth the effort. [Staff A6]

The service staff module of UFS does not necessarily fit all service staff roles and requirements on campus. HR can maybe rethink the structures and hierarchy to create more opportunities for promotion within the service staff. [Staff A6]

The remuneration package should be improved as cost of living is going very high. The university should officially increase the retirement age to 65 years to give some level of job security and reduce staff turnover to other universities. Many universities pay their staff some money when they graduate especially PhD students and the UFS should do same. [Staff A6]

We are operating as support staff on campus with degrees equal to academic staff. However, the 'models' available at the UFS regarding PMS, development plans and remuneration packages (based on support staff profiles) are not applicable. [Staff A6]

Salaries are very inconsistent. Junior personnel being employed in the same position as me would get a higher salary than me, even though I've been in my position for 6 years. My line manager was unwilling to participate in a process to mitigate this, and help from the HR/Finance departments has not helped me. The process is too demanding to only get to a point of fair salaries. [Staff A6]

UFS is one of the universities that take care of its workers. Salaries might be different from those of coastal universities but staff working at UFS are happy because of the working environment they are in. [Staff A6]

Check the remuneration based on what people receive as being fair. There are discrepancies that Line managers and HR are not willing to address and shove under the carpet. [Staff A6]

Also I feel that automatic notches should be brought back- our departments would motivate for a notch once is 3-4 years and this really disadvantages the employees as our take-home salary gets lesser with every year that passes. [Staff 6]

The university has a potential of being a leading university in SA, only if it can really and genuinely address the issues of remuneration and job grading. I still feel that if you are a black South African your chances of growth in this institution are limited. [Staff 6]

3.1.22 a 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.

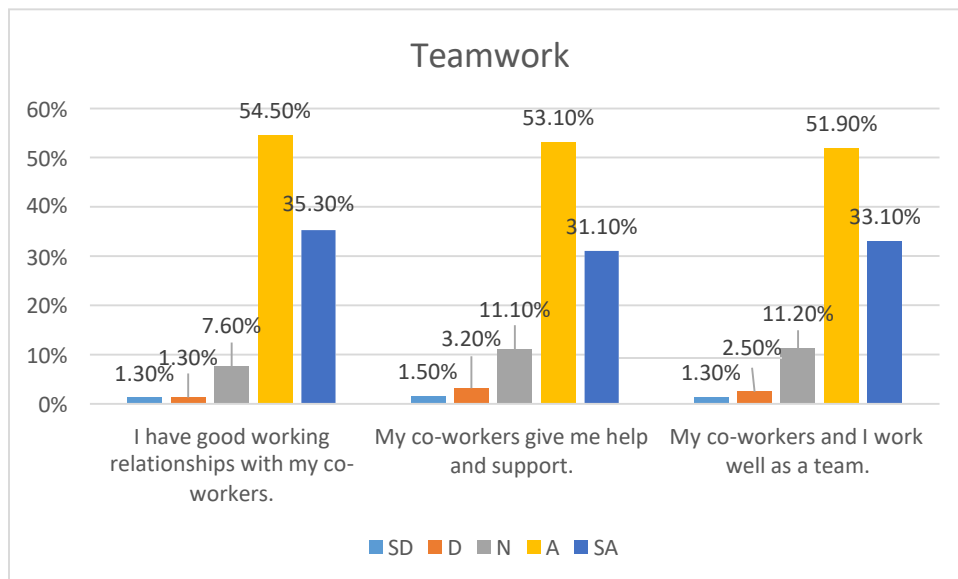


Figure 246: Teamwork

Results from the study showed very high percentages by way of staff agreement to the statement that there is good working relationship among colleagues (89.80%), support from colleagues (84.20%) and, team work (85.00%).

3.1.22 b Cross unit/campus cooperation

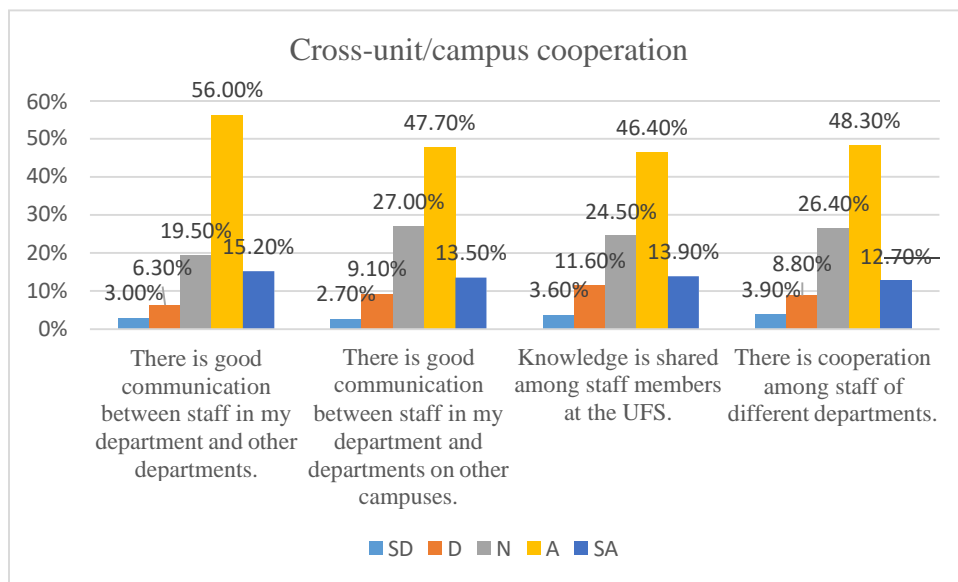


Figure 257: Cross-unit/campus cooperation

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 (71.20%) and sharing of knowledge and information among staff in different campuses (61.20%).

3.1.23 Staff voices on teamwork and cooperation

I am great and happy that I am part of UFS. It was my dream to be part of UFS but sometimes I feel the department is the wrong one for me. But UFS is the best Institution to be in and work for. [Staff 6]

There could be better cooperation between departments if we can stop competing among ourselves. [Staff 6]

I love working in the Chemistry department. [Staff 6]

The UFS is one of the best employment spaces that I have experienced. It is very warm and felt like a family at work, hence I do my best to be productive as I appreciate the relationship I have with my colleagues. Socially the working relationship with co-workers is excellent in our department. [Staff 6]

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.

3.1.24a Personal accomplishment

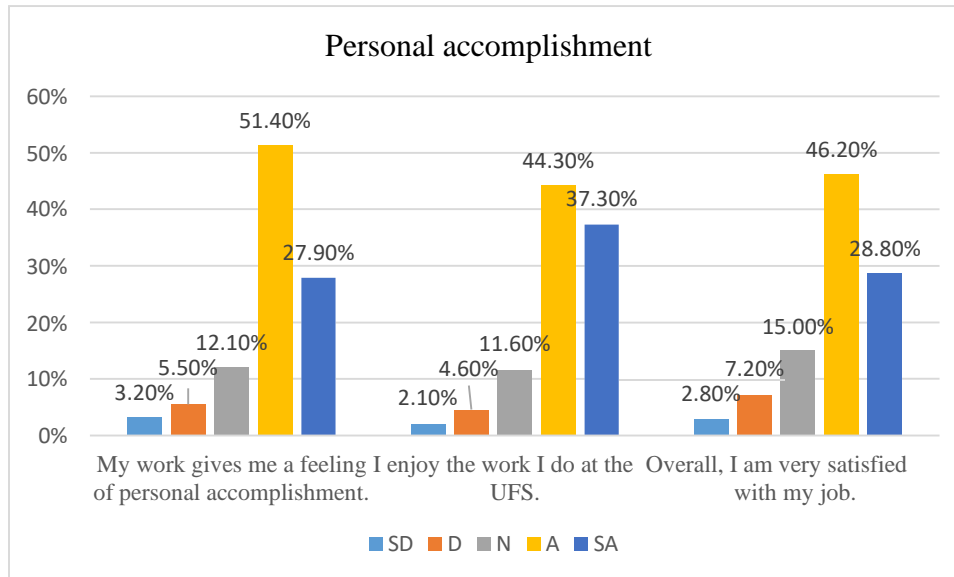


Figure 268: Personal accomplishment

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 (79.30%), enjoy the work they do (81.60%) and are satisfied with their jobs (75.00%).

Staff intention to stay

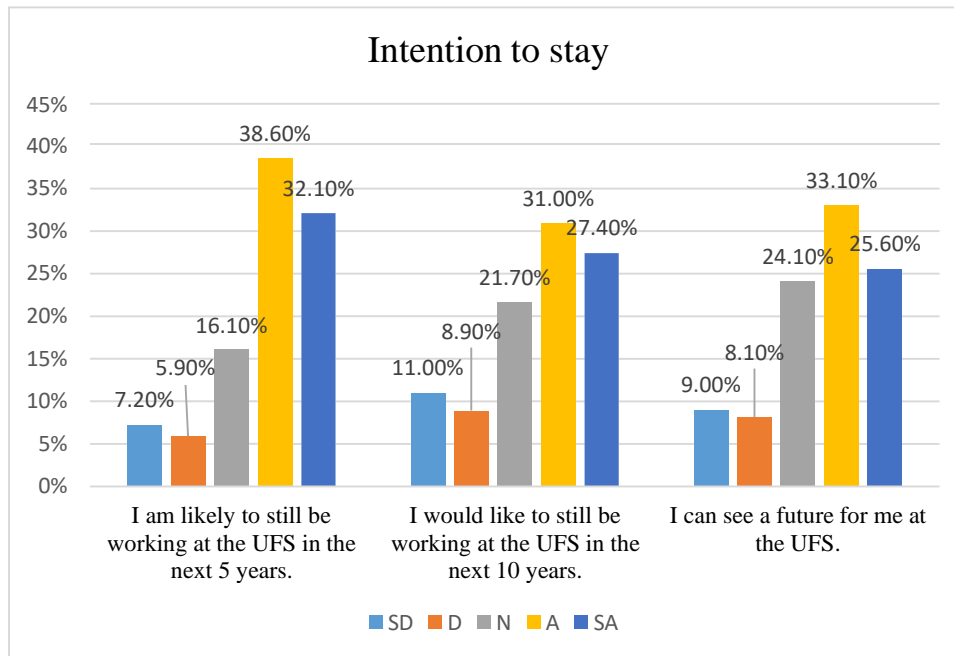


Figure 279: Intention to stay

We considered the intention of staff to stay at the UFS as an essential aspect of job satisfaction. Significantly, 70.70 percent of participants noted that they were likely to stay and work at the UFS in the next five years while 58.40 percent noted that they will be working at the UFS in the next 10 years. Similarly, 58.70 percent of staff indicated that, they could see a future for them at the UFS. Comparatively, the institutional climate report for 2019 revealed the following: 66.60 percent of participants noted that they were likely to stay and work at the UFS in the next five years; 51.50 percent noted that they will be working at the UFS in the next 10 years; and 53.20 percent of staff indicated that, they could see a future for them at the UFS.

3.1.24 b Staff commitment to the UFS

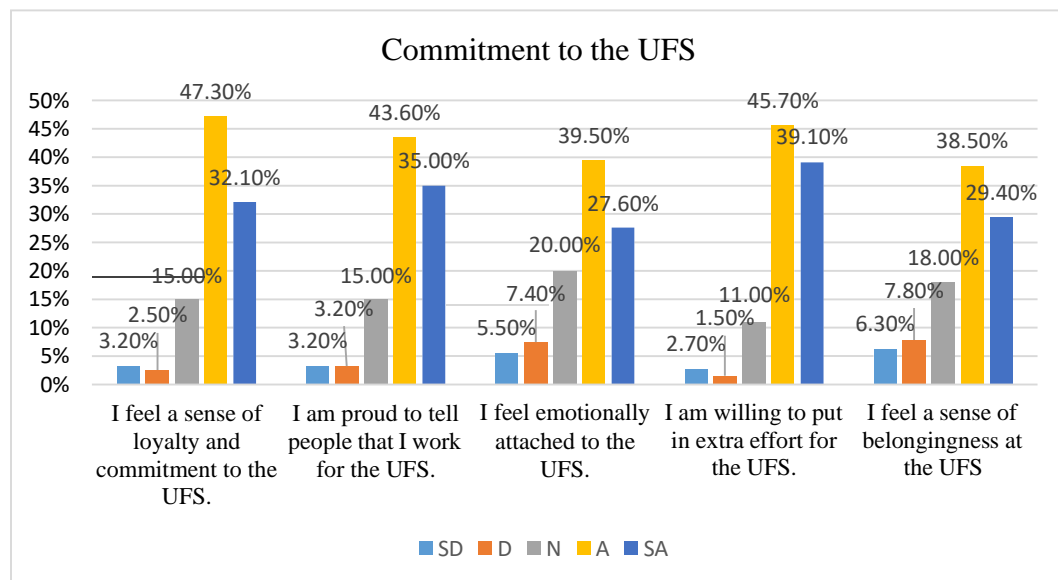


Figure 50: Staff commitment to the UFS

The responses of staff revealed a high sense of loyalty and commitment to the UFS (79.40%), a sense of pride to work for the UFS (78.60%), willingness of staff to put in extra effort for the UFS (84.80%) and a sense of belongingness (67.90%). 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

There is no proper retention policies as UFS is currently neglecting its experienced employees since newly appointed employees earn more salaries than employees that are already employed. It must also be mandatory for staff and line managers to develop their skills regularly by attending training and workshops. There must be restructuring at the ICT department as young people with innovative skills and abilities are at the lower levels not are hired given opportunities to make a great contribution they are hired to do. [Staff 6]

Why is it that we have new staff appointed and given high ranks and staff members that are currently employed at the Division are left at the same low positions even though the newly appointed staff members are not even more educated than the current staff? Why is it that other staff members within the Student Affairs Department are promoted and none in our Division and when we ask our Line Manager she tells us there are not enough SLE's. Why is it that other staff members in their admin positions within our

Department are in higher ranks and am the only staff member in the same type of position who has never been promoted [Staff 6]

Why must we be loyal to the UFS if we know that we will never be promoted or get the job? I used to be loyal. I now only focus on doing what I need to get my job done and nothing more. The UFS is used as a stepping stone by senior managers to further their careers, and then once this is done over a few short years, they leave. They earn the bonuses and the salaries, and get the titles, but then those of us who work hard and earn our way through the system for years on end, are side-lined. I have no time for our senior managers. [Staff 6]

3.1.26 Staff welfare

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

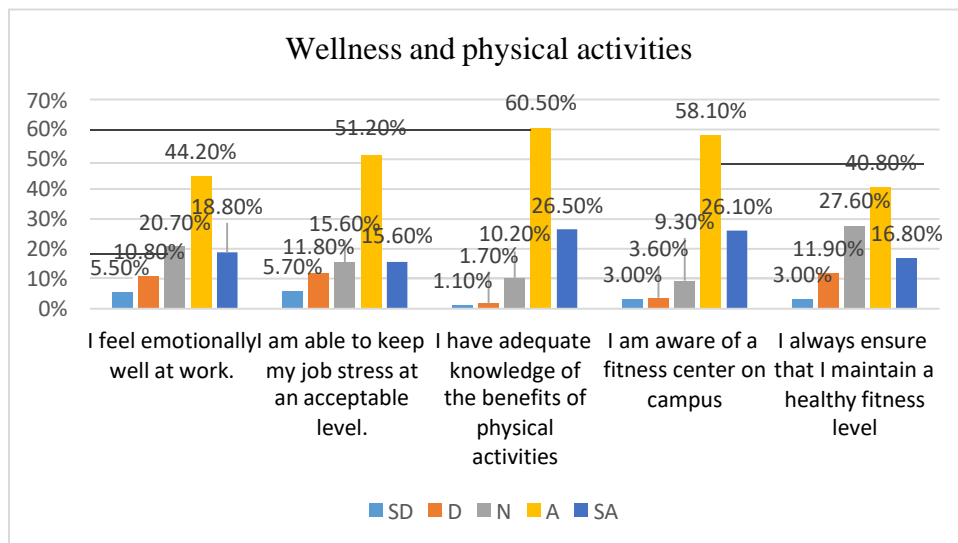


Figure 51: Wellness and physical activities

The sub-section on wellness and physical activities revealed that more than 60 percent of staff feel emotionally well at work (63.30%), keep their stress level low (66.80%), are aware of the benefits of physical activities (87.00%) and are aware of a fitness centre on campus (84.20%). Similarly, 57.60 percent of participants indicated that they regularly participate in physical activities on campus.

3.1.27 Work-life balance

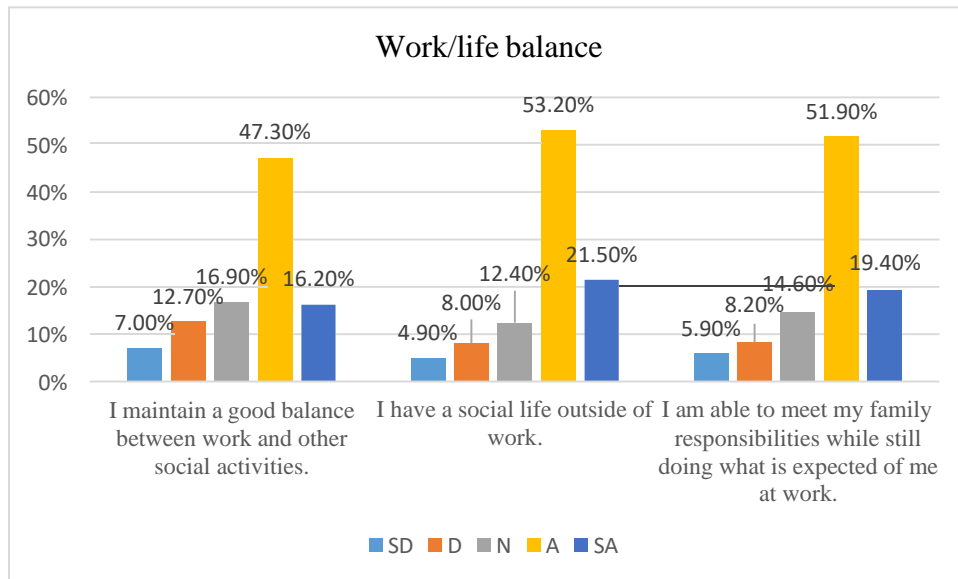


Figure 52: Work-life balance

Results for the work-life balance sub-section showed that staff maintain a good balance between work and other aspects of their life (63.50%), maintain a social life outside work (74.70%) and are able to meet their family responsibilities while still doing what is expected of them at work (71.30%). 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

I enjoy working at the UFS but struggle with the expectations eg supervising more than 5 PhD, more than 5 masters AND being a great teacher AND being a world renowned academic with multiple publications each year against what is realistically possible in a small department. [Staff 6]

I suspect that a lot of innovation is hampered by the sheer pressure of teaching and publishing and supervising students. We have great ideas but there is not the time to explore and implement them. [Staff 6]

The growing administrative burden makes it impossible to attend to regular working hours, let alone creative work. Even though ample opportunities are created by the UFS (e.g. LinkedIn courses), it is difficult to find the time to fit this in between hundreds of emails and mundane administrative tasks. [Staff 6]

The UFS is not about people, it is about money. The institution is only concerned with how much research you can deliver, and how much that would bring in for the university. The way in which academics cannot

access the moneys received for research outputs without exorbitant penalties is ridiculous. Staff salaries, especially for 'lower ranked' academic staff as well as support staff, are laughably low. Staff wellness is another laughable institution; it does nothing to assess or address staff issues, especially the mental health problems many staff members live with. The pressure of performing is also incongruent with the vague and impossible to achieve promotion criteria. Staff can never meet the criteria, as the bar is constantly moved. Staff are demoralised and despondent, yet the university does not address this, but only adds more pressure. [Staff 6]

We need more staff; we can't keep up by doing six people's work and maintain standards and be forward-thinking if we have to be responsible for admin, finances, training of students, delivering of services, etc. I can't keep up like this. And being one person only to run an entire department, is not good for the UFS's reputation for future as well. If I leave, no one can step in/up. [Staff 6]

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.

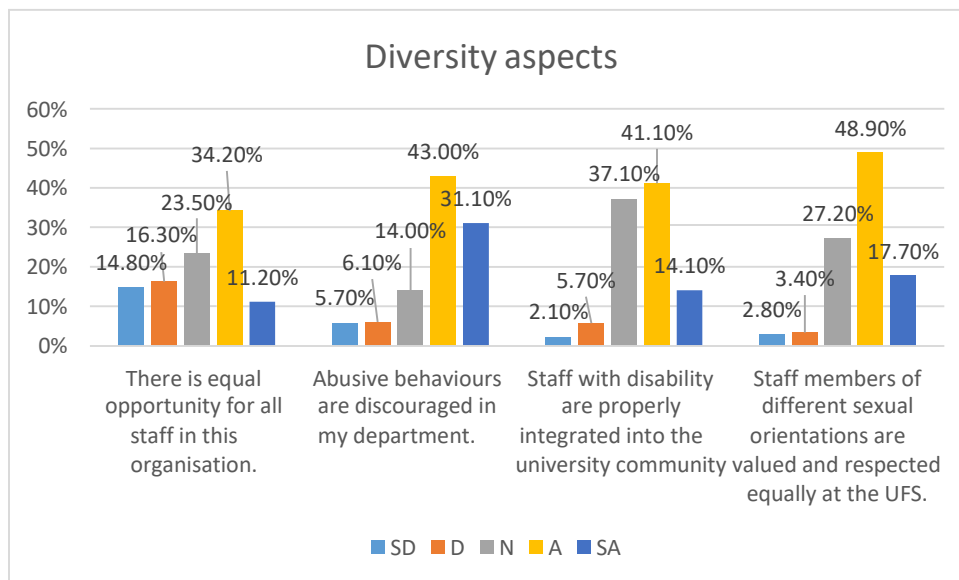


Figure 53: Diversity aspects

Results for the diversity climate section revealed that more than 50 percent of participants indicated that abusive behaviours are prevented and discouraged (74.10%), staff with disability are well integrated into the university community (55.20%) and, staff of different sexual orientations are respected (66.60%). However, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that there is equal opportunity for all staff. Similarly,

in 2019 results of the institutional climate study revealed that less than 40 percent of participants indicated that there is equal opportunity for all staff. Feedback from participants revealed that while more than 50 percent of participants at QwaQwa indicated that there is equal opportunity for staff, less than 50 percent of participants in Bloemfontein and South campuses stated that there is equal opportunity for staff (see figure 54).

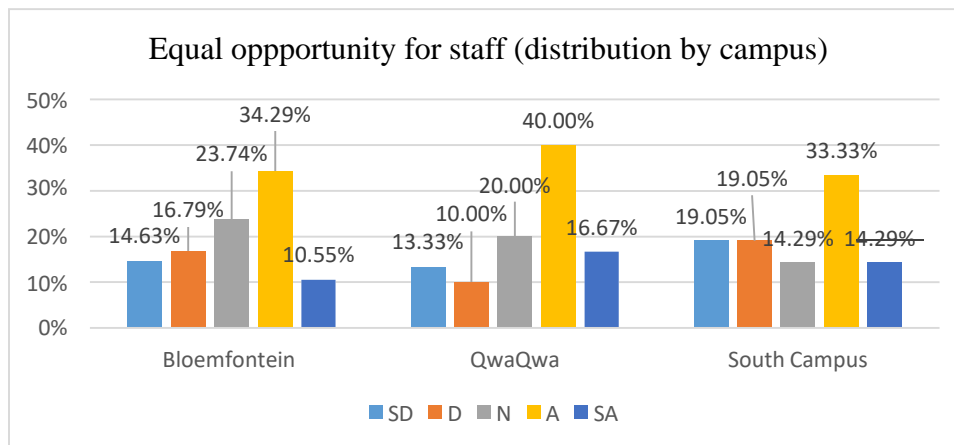


Figure 284: Equal opportunity for staff (distribution by campus)

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 at the Bloemfontein and South campuses.

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.

3.1.29a Victimisation

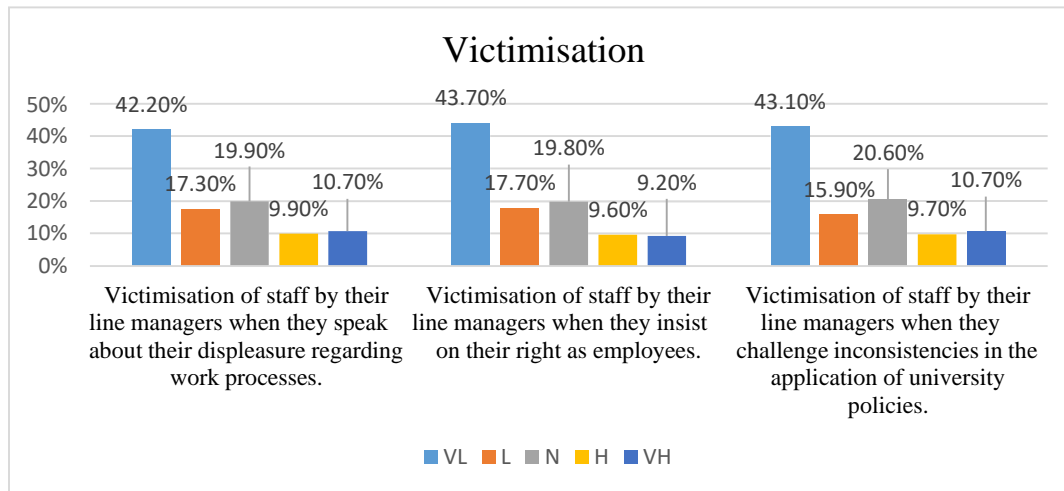


Figure 295: Victimisation

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 gender 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 17.80 percent by male participants. This finding compares to the results of the 2019 Institutional Climate study where 21.40 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.

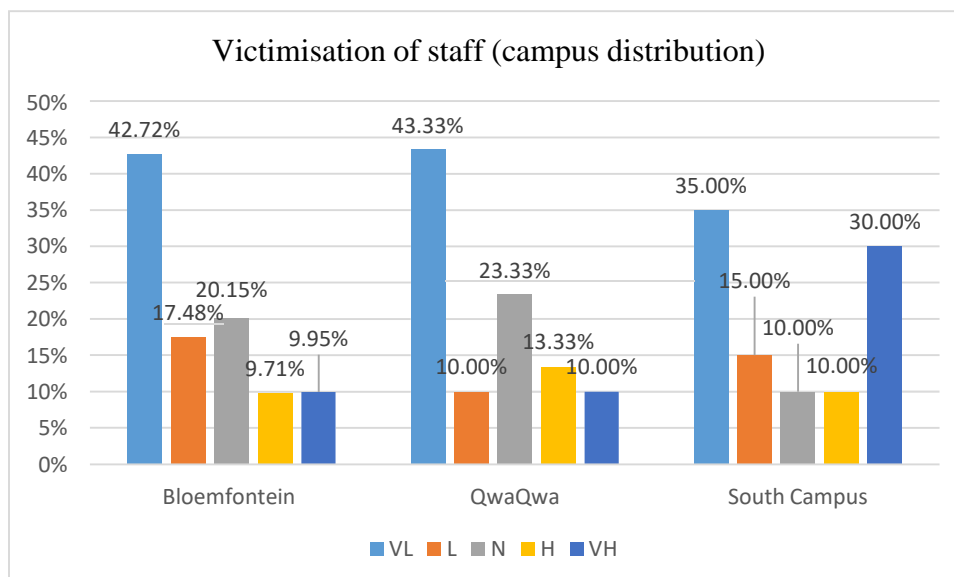


Figure 306: Victimisation of staff due to the voicing of their displeasure (distribution by campus)

Figure 56 shows the responses of staff about their experiences with victimisation in relation to them voicing their displeasure about the application of policies or practices. Significantly, 23.33 percent of participants at the QwaQwa campus indicated some form of victimisation compared to those in Bloemfontein (19.66%) and South Campus (40.00%).

3.1.29b Discrimination

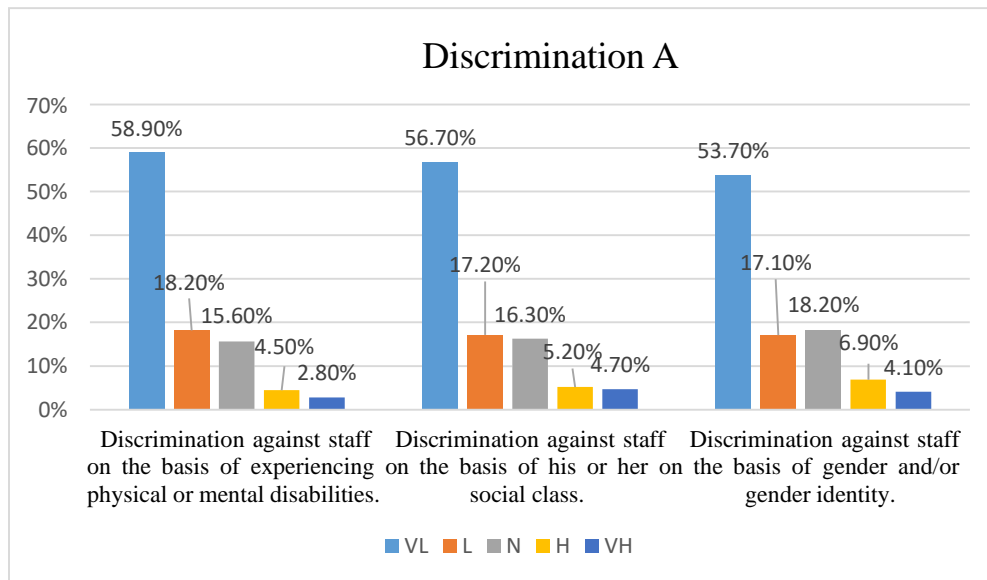


Figure 57A: Discrimination

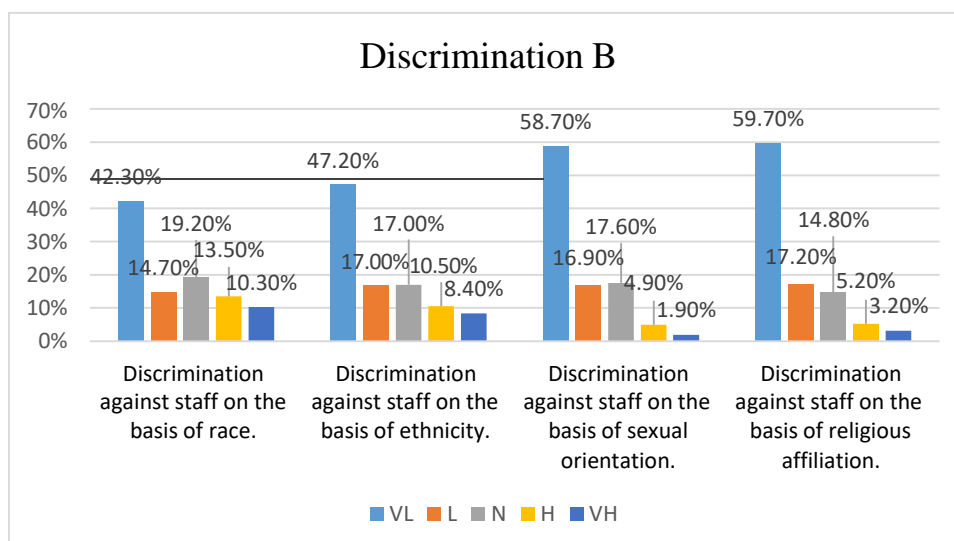


Figure 57B: Discrimination

Figures 57 A and 57 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 (77.10%), staff social class (73.90%), gender (70.80%), sexual orientation (75.60%), religious affiliation (76.90%), and ethnicity (64.20). However, the percentage of participants who indicated that they experienced low level of discrimination based on race were 57 percent. This result compares with the results of the 2019 Institutional Culture survey that showed 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%). However, the feedback of participants based on race and ethnicity were below 60 percent, the data was further analysed to reveal the differences based on race and campus distribution.

3.1.29c Harassment

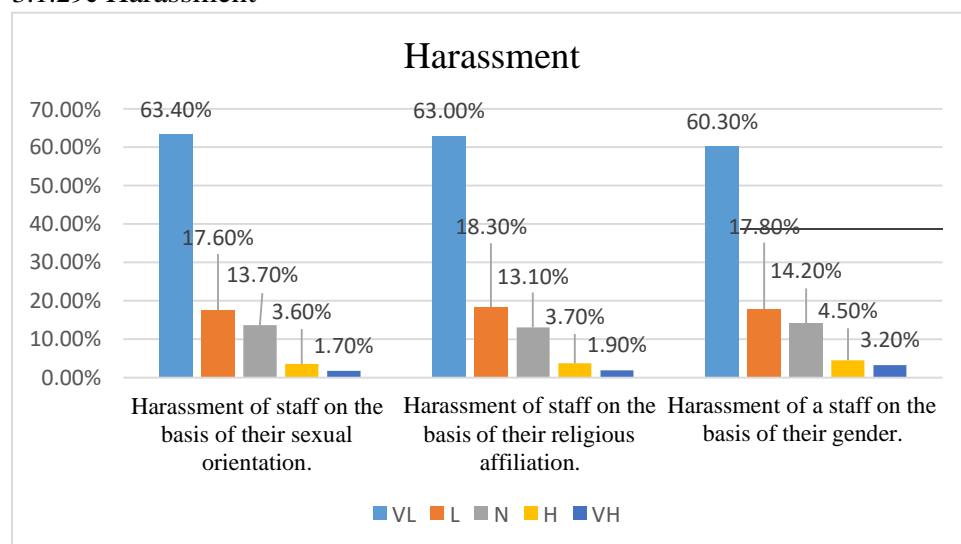


Figure 318: Harassment

The feedback from participants in relation to Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation (81.00%), religious affiliation (81.30%) and gender (78.10%) revealed low levels of harassment among participants.

3.1.31 Staff voices on victimisation, discrimination and harassment

Communication between hearing staff and staff with hearing loss are basically non-existence. The UFS must take in consideration that hearing loss is a global pandemic. There are numerous staff and students with hearing loss on the campuses. UFS need to understand the different communication methods staff/students are used for instance during virtual meetings/workshops/conferences. These often happen on Zoom platform together with google docs with a real-time capturer. There must be a clear understanding of what a real-time capturer is and what subtitles are. UFS staff should be trained to be a real-time capturer since it is about correct spelling and fast typing skills which every academic should be well equipped with (typing skills). The UFS should consider the correct real-time captioning software to improve speed. When

this is in place, UFS could save a lot of funds. I am a staff member with severe hearing loss and feel too bad to request every time for a capturer. I struggled in the past when someone was appointed by UFS to do real-time captioning and unfortunately, he had actually no idea about what they were doing. UFS funds was wasted, my time was wasted and I experience uncomfortable emotions. In fact, this method could help all at UFS, staff and students. [Staff A6]

The UFS says something but does another. It speaks about care but it does not make an effort to make staff feel cared for. Staff and Students feel demotivated and no one is brave enough to openly talk because of the fear of victimization. I hope this is not just a ticking of the box like most things done here but that something will be done about this negative experience. [Staff A6]

As a junior researcher, I feel for them [junior researcher] because I am often treated the same way. One moment senior academics will tell you that the best thing that ever happened to them just to get you to do their bidding (even when it is not part of your job description) just because they think they are above doing this less nice part of their job and the next moment you are handled in a trashy way and simply dismissed. It is despicable to treat people this way despite their rank, race or ethnicity. Again I ask 'What happened to the ethical values and humane behaviour of senior staff of this university'. [Staff A6]

Senior academics are often demeaning and speak down to younger academics, purely based on their experience and their disbelief in your capabilities, in spite of your hard-earned qualifications, more so if you are Black. Unfortunately, many senior staff members serve as 'gate-keepers' to growth opportunities and are often unwilling to consider the opinion of younger academics whom they feel are inexperienced and cannot possibly teach them anything, even though we have different life experiences. Your opinion is said to matter on paper, but in reality, it does not. Most departmental meetings are simply a formality, decisions which affect your career and work as a young academic are often made without your consultation. If you question these decisions, you are simply told that they are based on experience and you still need to learn even with a PhD to your name, your opinion on your experience counts for nothing if you are under 35 years of age. [Staff A6]

Certain staff in the department get preferential treatment and are rewarded for inadequate performance when others are doing the work. New employees get job grading when older employees have been performing and do not get bonuses or raises. This is particularly unfair for those that have taken on more work or promised raises and new people come in and get this. [Staff A6]

5.2 Other academics – Survey results

This section discusses results of the survey that was conducted to obtain information from other academics and senior academics on their experiences in relation to intergenerational relationships between other academics and senior academics.

5.2.1 Career advising

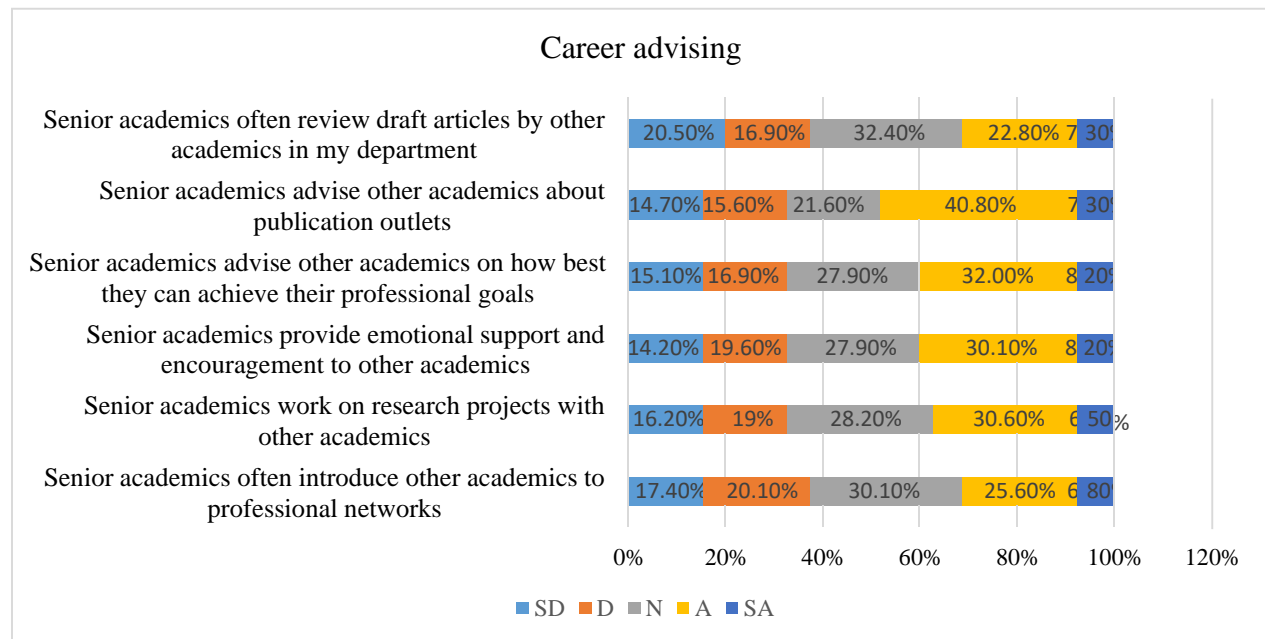


Figure 59: Career advising - other academics

The section on career advising sought to gather relevant data from academic staff regarding the advice other academics receive from established academics. The results revealed that less than 50 percent of academics agreed to all the items in the career advising category. What the results suggest is that, the level of career advising among academic staff is low. What the results further suggest is that there is low support for other academics from the established academics with respect to their objective career aspects such as research productivity, promotion and tenure and, teaching performance. Similarly, low percentages were recorded with respect to objective career aspects such as assisting other academics through linkages to professional networks.

5.2.2 Collegiality

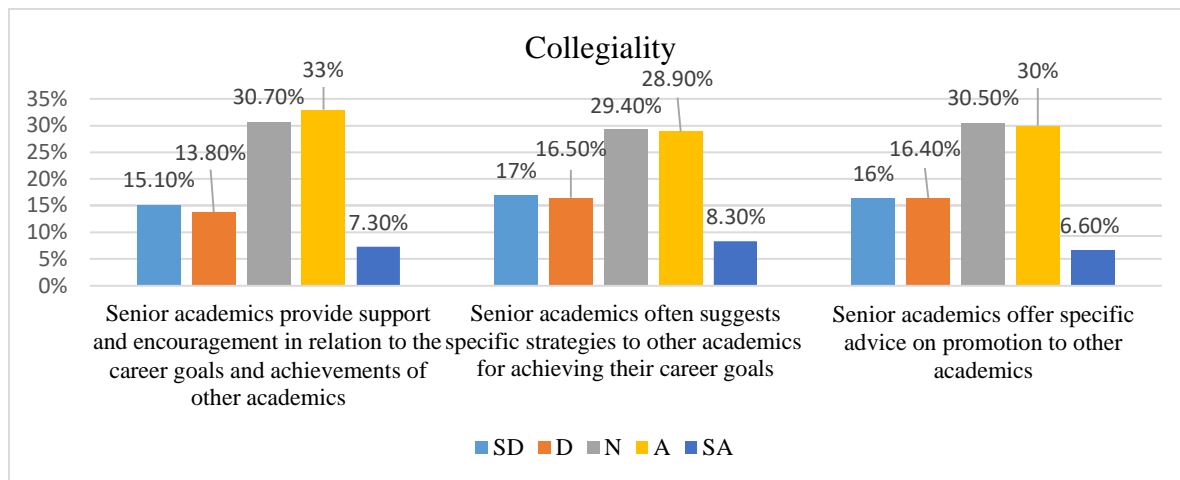


Figure 60: Collegiality - Other academics

Results on the collegiality sub-section revealed that less than 50 percent of other academics received support in the achievement of their career goals from established academics. Additionally, less than 50 percent of other academics received advice on promotion from established academics. Similar to the results gathered from the career advising sub-section, the collegiality climate in the UFS is relatively low.

5.3.3 Information Source

The section on information source sought to gather relevant information participants regarding how often academics received information from the department.

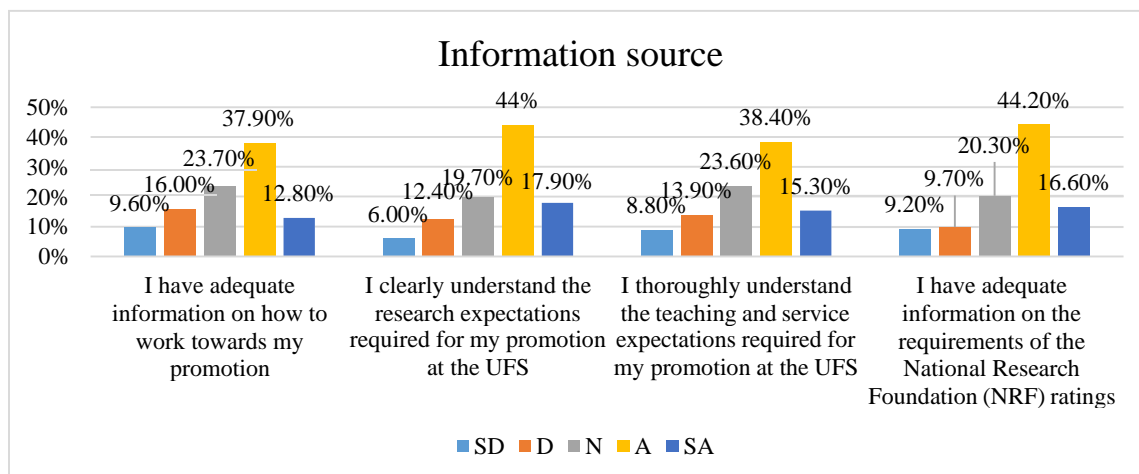


Figure 61: Information source - other academics

The sub-section on information source sought to gather relevant data on the perception of academic staff regarding the processes used in dissemination information and the sources of information in their

department. As shown in figure 61, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that they received relevant information on their promotion, research and service expectation and, the requirements for NRF ratings.

5.3.4 Socialising with other academics

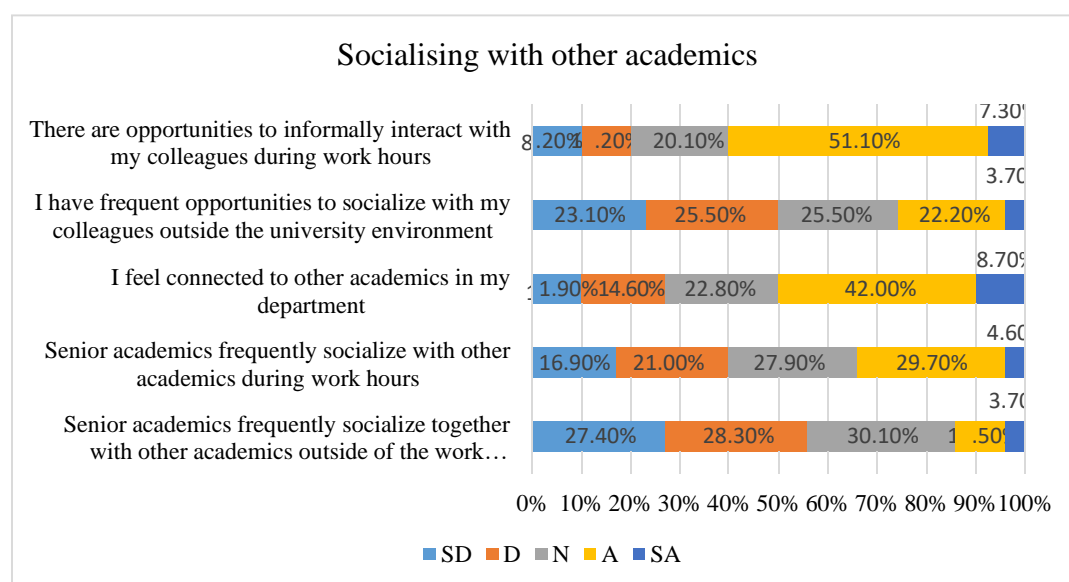


Figure 62: Socialising with other academics

The sub-section on socialising was developed to provide information on the level of socialising between established academics and other academics. As shown in figure 62, more than 50 percent of participants noted that, there are opportunities for senior academics and other academics to interact during working hours (58.40%) and that, they felt connected to other academics in their department (50.70%). However, less than 35 percent of participants indicated that, senior academics socialised with other academics outside of the work environment (14.20%), senior academics socialise with other academics during work hours (34.30%) and frequently socialised with other colleagues outside the university (25.90%). Summarily, the results revealed low level of socialising between senior academics and other academics and low level of socialising among academics outside the university.

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, an analysis of the written responses of participants was performed.

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: integrated transformation plan; mission and values and; student involvement and; students' satisfaction.

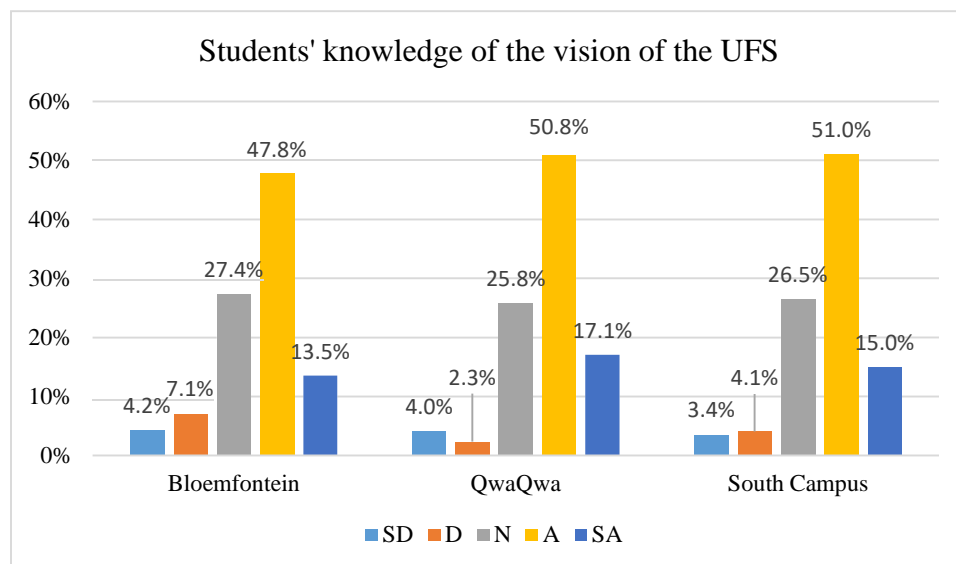


Figure 63: Students' knowledge of the vision of the UFS

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 63.80 percent of the participants had read the vision statement of the UFS while 9.30 percent indicated that they had not read the vision statement. These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate report that 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 63, 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, 67.90 percent of participants at the QwaQwa campus, 66.00 percent of participants at the South Campus and 61.30 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein 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.

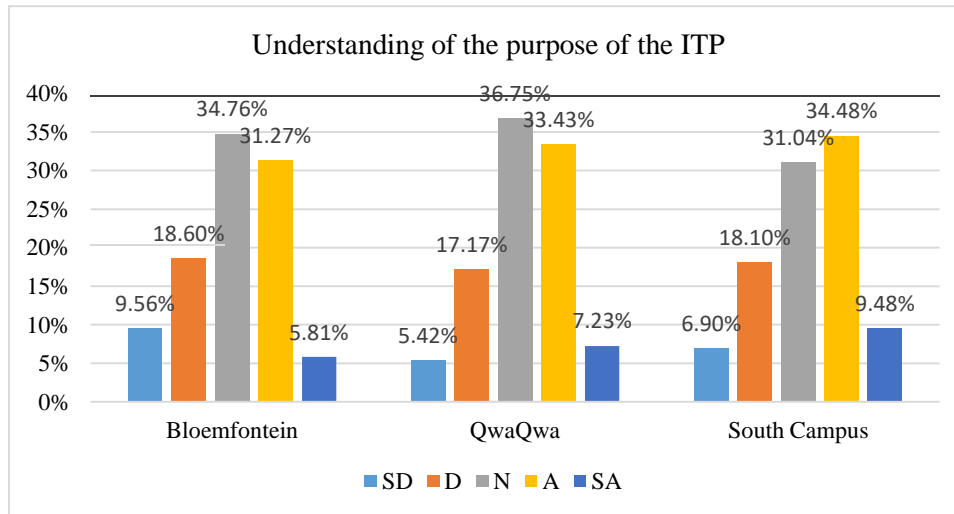


Figure 64: Students' understanding of the purpose of the ITP

In contrast to the results obtained in the question regarding students' understanding of the vision statement, results show that 42.90 percent of the participants indicated that they understood the purpose of the ITP. An analysis of the results based on the campus location as shown in figure 58 revealed that less than 50 percent of participants across all three campuses indicated that they understood the ITP. These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate survey which 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

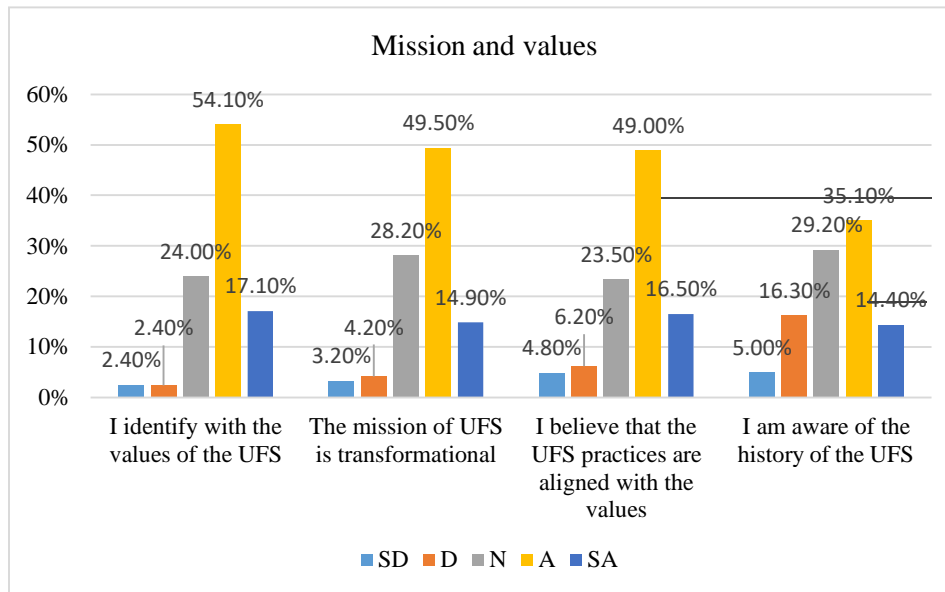


Figure 65: Mission and values of the UFS

Information on the mission, values and history of institutions are very important to the development of the UFS. Figure 65 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 they identify with the values of the UFS (71.20%) while more than 50 percent of the participants noted that the mission of the UFS is transformational (64.40%). Similarly, 64.50 percent of participants believed that the UFS practices are aligned with its values while less than 50 percent of the participants indicated that they were aware of the history of the UFS. These values compare with the 2019 institutional climate data which revealed that 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

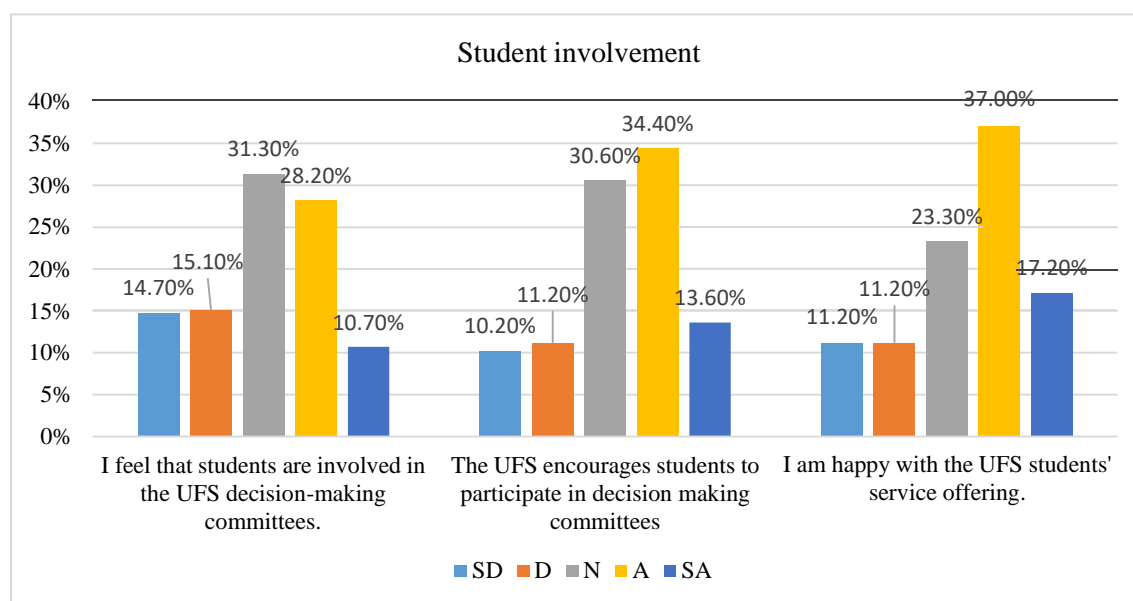


Figure 326: Student involvement

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 less than 50 percent of participants were of the opinion that UFS encourage students to participate in decision-making Committees and that they are involved in the decision-making committees (38.90%). However, more than 50 percent indicated that they were happy with the university's service offering (54.20%). These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate study which showed that 50 percent of participants were of the opinion that UFS encourage students to participate in decision-making Committees while less than 50 percent indicated that students are involved in the decision-making committees (38.50%). The written comments of students on institutional characteristics are presented in section 3.2.4.

3.2.4 Students' voices on institutional characteristics

UFS is amazing especially the South Campus .The lecturers there are very good [Student, South Campus].

The special thing about UFS is that you feel proud to be a student. Your Student card is your pride. Listen to what the students want. There should be respect and development. I love UFS [Student, South Campus].

The institution feels stagnant not only from the perspectives of staff but also from the perspectives of students. The institution is not progressive in terms of advancing student life, student safety, and community management. Thinking through a conservative lens one can easily see how it affects those who are marginalised [Student, Bloemfontein]

As a student who went to a tertiary institution before I enrolled at the UFS, the UFS requires a lot of introspection vision making to ensure that whatever the institution is trying to achieve is not only limited to teaching staff but all staff. The institution does not ooze the prestige it sets for itself nor does it feel like it is progressing to attain it. [Student, Bloemfontein]

I would be happy if UFS can't keep us waiting for a long time to reply our emails, and I will be happy if they take our problems seriously, thank you. [Student, Bloemfontein]

It is very nice to be part of the UFS family. [Student, Bloemfontein]

Have a free bus system between the Bloemfontein campuses that does more than 4 trips between the 2 campuses. Train RAs in leadership and people's skills, many RAs don't understand personal space, nor is there protections for students against RA abuse. Train lectures on cultural differences and language communication. Many lecturers cannot differentiate between race and ethnicity which is demonstrated in their body language, communication and attitude when teaching. Separate printing services, it is disappointing to see the institutions printing services to be so archaic, from adding money in order to print, to the actual printing process. There are too many SRC positions at different levels that is simply not sensible in many instances, like faculty representatives being separate from campus SRC. This simply doesn't help students or the institute from functioning to its best. Lastly is the residence rules in relation to visitors, as it stands, the rules don't prevent female visitors from male residences and vice versa, the reasoning behind it is illogical. Preventing either sexes from visiting each other for whatever reason seems flawed when tested on same sex relationships. Kindly revisit these. [Student, Bloemfontein]

I love myself, I motivate myself to keep going and I take my studies serious. [Student, Bloemfontein]

I think the UFS should respond to our emails, it takes them days or even weeks to reply, or they do not reply at all. [Student, Bloemfontein]

The UFS is the cleanest institution [Student, Bloemfontein]

The UFS should identify students who are needy at home and help them out with food parcels, Times are tough and the allowance is not enough. [Student, Bloemfontein]

If distance education could be permanently included on the Bloemfontein Campus, I would be the happiest student in the world [Student, Bloemfontein]

Have a plan for replacing old professors and lectures. We don't want to lose their expertise when they leave but we also don't want to keep them longer than their time [Student, Bloemfontein]

The university should develop a medium that will allow students express their issues and get them resolved on time. The current university rules and regulations that the SRC has to abide by are not favourable to poor students. I have lost any sense of belonging [Student, Bloemfontein].

I think that the UFS would have to inform students about every change in the University. They should ask students how they feel about certain issues before they are implemented [Student, Bloemfontein].

Management must always have face-to-face meeting with students. They only have face-to-face meeting with students during strikes [Student, QwaQwa].

Management of the UFS should listen to the students' issues more and resolve them to avoid conflict. The management should not always run to the police when the students demand their needs to be met [Student, QwaQwa].

Train lecturers in cultural differences and language communication, many lectures cannot identify differences between race and ethnicity, which is evident in their body language, communication and attitude when teaching. Separate printing services, it is disappointing to see the institutions printing services to be so archaic, from adding money in order to print, to the actual printing process. There are too many SRC positions at different levels that is simply not sensible in many instances, like faculty representatives being separate from campus SRC. This simply does not help students or the university function at its best. [Student, South Campus].

It has appeared to my attention that the UFS takes our health seriously and decided to switch to online learning. It is very kind of the management team to be so responsible and considerate, I cannot be grateful enough. [Student, QwaQwa].

There are issues that can be resolved without any confrontations with management of the UFS. For example, we started with online learning last year but students were not provided with data while other institutions got data. Secondly, private accommodation applications are not attended while some are rejected for no reason. The workload is traumatising at the same time we have modules which have no classes but the assignments and tasks are always there and due. I do not understand why we are being charged high fees while we are not even on campus. Take students matters seriously and stop favouring other races than others. [Student, QwaQwa].

The UFS can encourage students on and off-campus to consistently interact with each other. Secondly, English and Afrikaans must not be the only languages used on exam question papers or tests. Lastly, students must always be encouraged to get tested for all diseases and health activities introduced by the university. I would love to view the whole campus [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.

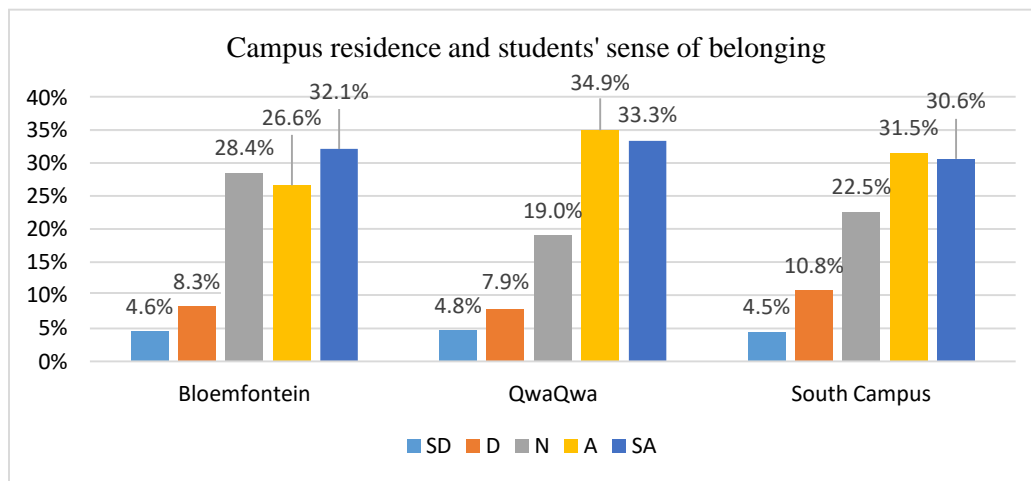


Figure 337: Campus residence and students' sense of belonging

Participants who reside on campus indicated strong sense of belonging. As shown in figure 67, more than 60 percent of participants at the QwaQwa Campus (68.20%) and South Campus (62.00%) indicated that their experience living in a residence on campus made them feel that they belonged. Similarly, 58.70 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein Campus indicated that their experience living in a residence on campus made them feel that they belonged. This finding compares with results of the 2019 institutional climate study which showed that 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 68, more than 70 percent of participants on the three campuses opined that there is positive effect of residence life experience on their academic performance. Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate survey revealed that more than 80 percent of participants on the three campuses opined that there is positive effect of residence life experience on their academic performance.

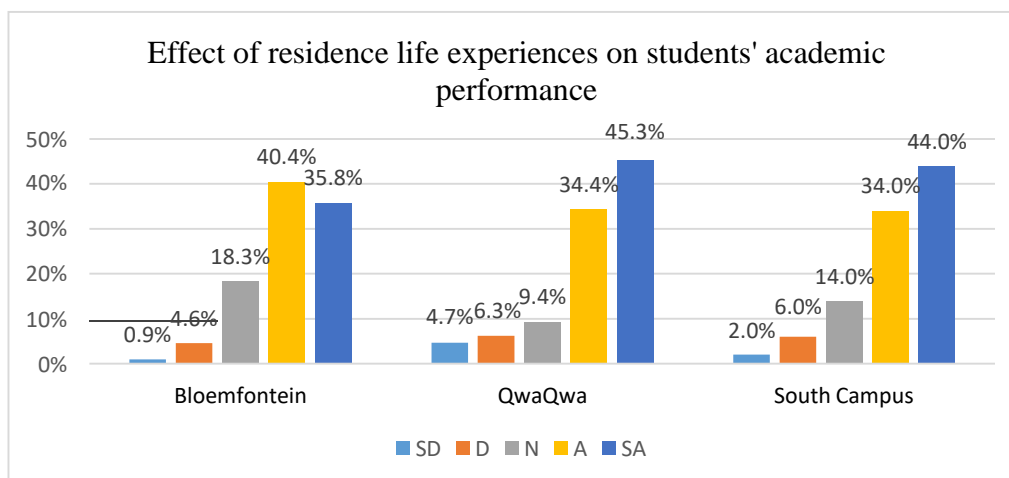


Figure 348: Effect of residence life experience on students' academic performance

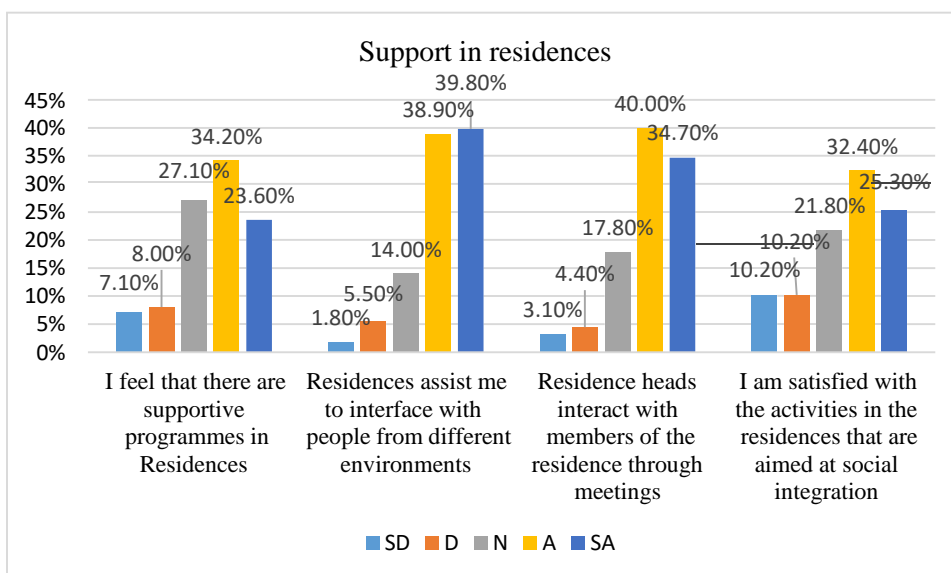


Figure 359: Students' residence life experiences

Figure 69 shows other features of students' (on-campus) life experiences. The result revealed that more than 60 percent of the participants indicated that, they interface with people from different environments at the residences (78.70%) and residence heads interact with students through meetings (74.70%). Similarly, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that they are satisfied with the activities in the residences that are aimed at social integration (57.70%) and that, they feel that there are supportive programmes at the residences (57.80%). More than 60 percent of participants noted that they received prompt feedback from Housing & Residence Affairs (HRA) when any of the fixings or fittings in their room needed to be fixed.

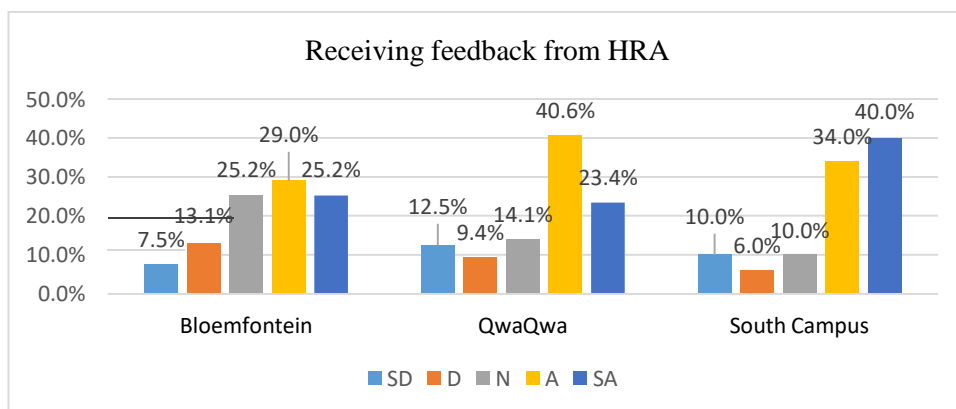


Figure 70: Receiving feedback from HRA

However, as shown in figure 70, an analysis of the results based on campus location revealed that more than 50 percent of participants at all three campuses - Bloemfontein Campus (54.20%), QwaQwa Campus (64.00%) and South Campus (74.00%) 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. Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate study 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

Residence Heard(s) must stop choosing events for us and make us participate by force. They should start asking for our opinions!

I think residences should provide more support to us. Our development as members of a society could be catapulted by residence activities. For example, certificates of achievement should be awarded to deserving students. Also, the University should ensure that we do not lose our identities and that, as we meet different people and experience new cultures, our standards are not reduced to those of the people around us. For instance, there was an event in res where we were afforded alcoholic beverages. I hate alcohol and cigarettes! [Student, Bloemfontein].

The Residence Head(s) should ask for our opinions and views whenever they want to make a particular decision(s) or implement particular regulation(s).Some things must be optional, we can't be forced to do somethings! [Student, South Campus].

The wellbeing of Residence students should be of priority. Things like the condition of bathrooms, kitchens should be set as priority [Student, Bloemfontein].

UFS can ensure that in residents there's mixed races and that interaction within students is mandatory so that students can develop and interact with different people outside their ethnicity [Student, QwaQwa].

The on-residence students who have not received permit for 1st semester should be allowed to go back to 2nd semester this is affecting us as we choose to live on campus for resources we find in university [Student, QwaQwa].

I think that the UFS must try to employ people who understand how to talk to students and help them without a doubt [Student, QwaQwa].

Is the residence rules in relation to visitors, as it stands, the rules don't prevent female visitors from male residences and vice versa, the reasoning behind is illogical. Preventing either sexes from visiting each other for whatever reason seems flawed when tested on same sex relationships. Kindly revisit these. [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.

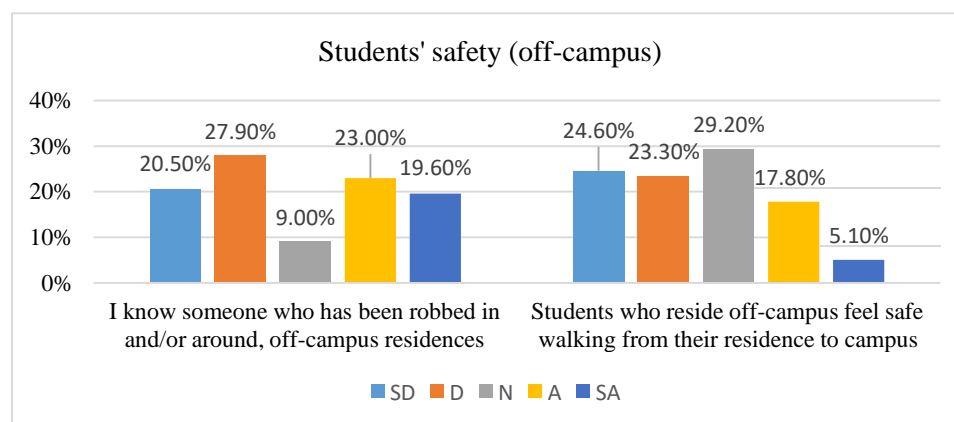


Figure 71: Students' safety (off-campus)

As shown in figure 71, less than 50 percent of the participants (42.60%) indicated that they knew a colleague who had been robbed in and/or around off-campus residences. Additionally, less than 25 percent of participants (22.90%) of participants noted that they felt safe walking from their residence to campus. The results reveals students perception about off-campus residence safety issues. The results compare with the institutional climate report of 2019 which revealed that less 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.

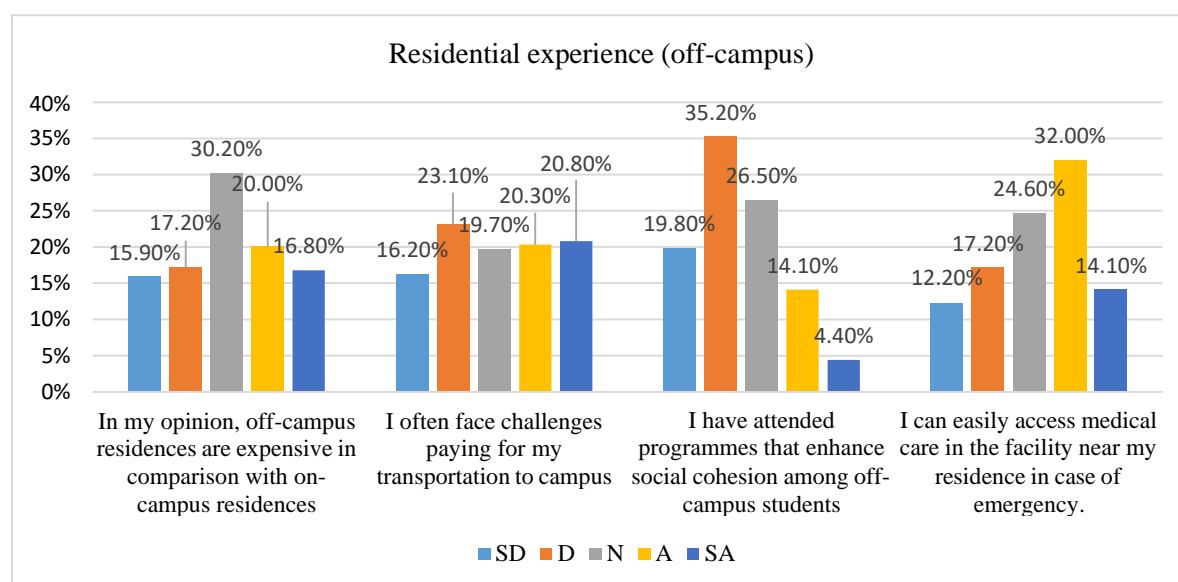


Figure 72: Students' residential experience (off-campus)

The feedback from students who reside off-campus showed that 36.80 percent of participants were of the opinion that off-campus residences are expensive in comparison with on-campus residences. Similarly, 41.10 percent of participant agreed to the statement that they often face challenges paying for their transportation to campus while less than 20 percent of participants (18.50%) indicated that they have attended programmes that enhance social cohesion among off-campus students. Lastly 46.10 percent of participants indicated that they could easily access medical care in a facility near their residence in case of emergency. These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate results which showed that 18.50 percent of participants indicated that they had attended programmes that enhance social cohesion among off-campus students and 39.10 percent of participants indicated that they could easily access medical care in a facility near their residence in case of emergency. 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 would like to know why our Private Accommodation Application are not being responded to. I would like to know why we are getting incompletes on our applications. I am a first year and I had no idea that we should choose NSFAS accredited accommodation and now I owe my landlord thousands and thousands. I feel like on the Orientation at the beginning of the year UFS should make it clear to students that they have to stay at an accredited accommodation [Student, Bloemfontein].

UFS should show care about students living off campus and release their PA allowance early as they use their meal allowance to pay rents which is wrong [Student, QwaQwa].

The UFS does not care about students living off-campus , as already we having problems with paying rent as the PA procedure is not like the previous and is hard for us first years [Student, QwaQwa].

May the University consider pacing up the Private Accommodation procedure, as we are constantly telling our landlords that we will be approved, whereas the University is not helping us [Student, QwaQwa].

The university has to ensure that every private accommodation is safe and meets every expectation or requirement [Student, Bloemfontein].

I think UFS should consider students feeling and provide them with the required support they need academically. For instance I am struggling to pay the land lord but the application for PA are not even attended. For us students who are in QwaQwa campus we are in an area that has no accredited accommodation and it is hard to beg landlord documents because they are private to them [Student, QwaQwa].

UFS should give out more information to its students about the accommodations both private and accredited especially for those who are being funded by NSFAS!! [Student, QwaQwa].

UFS is not responsible for students' safety and they violate students' rights, students are facing challenges on Private accommodation money they have been waiting but they are not being approved while their landlords demand their money for rent. They must approve all Private accommodation students on time. [Student, QwaQwa].

The UFS should treat off campus students the same as on campus in terms of payments of funds since February until July no money for rental, no Laptops promised by school. UFS should pay students their MA money every 29th of the month so students can cover their debt in the beginning of the following month and that covers a lot of financial crisis such as hunger. [Student, QwaQwa].

We seriously need institutional based off-campus residences. Being an off-campus student has been really tough and it still is. [Student, Bloemfontein].

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 in the university. As shown in figure 73, more than 60 percent of participants felt valued as students (61.20%), that the UFS culture allow for free and open expression of individual beliefs (61.20%) and that their interaction with staff and students provided them with a sense of belonging (61.60%). Furthermore, more than 50 percent of participants agreed with the statement that, The UFS environment allows for open expression of ideas by students (52.90%), and that they felt that the university recognises their humanity (56.80%). These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate report that showed that 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%).

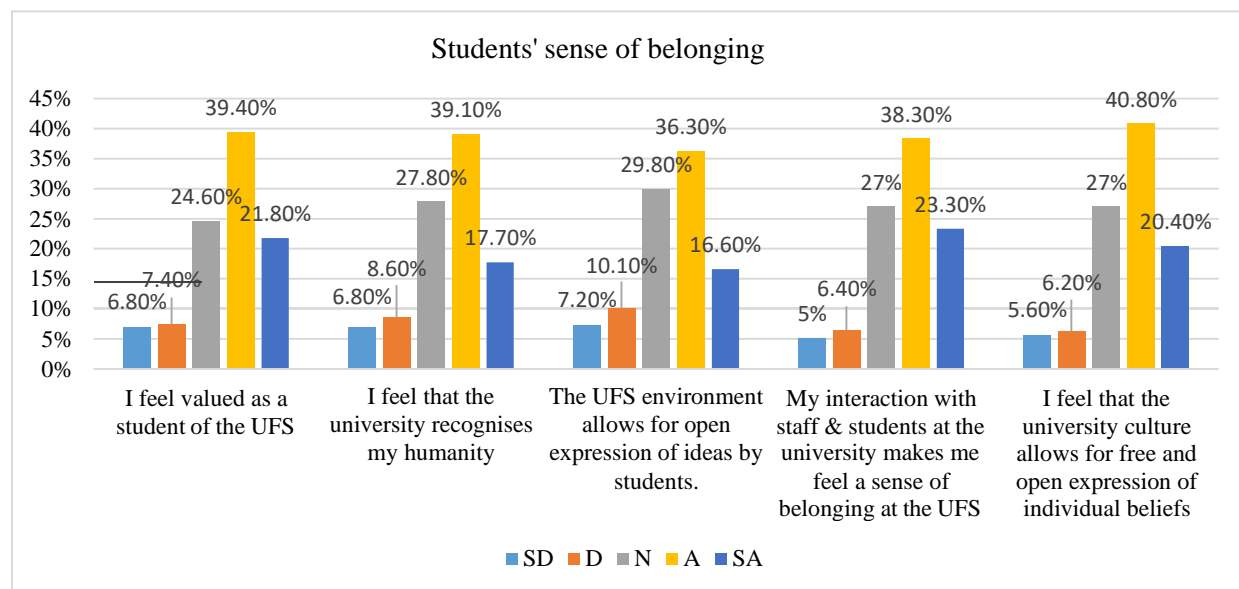


Figure 73: Students' sense of belonging

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

3.2.10 Students' voices on sense of belonging

I think that the staff working with the social work students tend to meet many of the expectations that we have because it is important for us to discuss belongingness, religions and differences. Thus our lecturers can be very involved in our lives [Student, Bloemfontein].

UFS environment has made me feel home as I have not been discriminated [Student, Bloemfontein].

The staff should just acknowledge the fact that the students in UFS are from different countries/provinces, so it is important to communicate with them with a language they can understand [Student, South Campus].

I am happy that everyone is allowed to be themselves on campus without been discriminated on [Student, QwaQwa].

As a Muslim niqabi (woman who wears a face veil) I feel comfortable on campus. [Student, Bloemfontein].

UFS welcomed me with warm hands and I feel lucky to be a KOVSIE though I can't always participate on online learning [Student, South Campus].

I had an indecent where I spoke Afrikaans in class, and all the non-Afrikaans speaking students yelled at me and discriminated against me for speaking Afrikaans. I feel that students should have the right to study in the language that they desire. [Student, Bloemfontein].

The varsity still feels like it belongs to certain people and not all. UFS needs to create a culture that accommodates every one. We are feel included regardless of colour or race. That is important [Student, Bloemfontein].

My experience in UFS is that I learn different of things that UFS is accommodate different kinds of people but we all communicate with one language [Student, Bloemfontein].

I think the security guards should treat us fairly so we can get a great sense of belonging to the school. The health department should also have an email address and not take calls only for students to be able to share their concerns via email [Student, Bloemfontein].

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 74 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 with fellow

students on campus (66.50%). More than 60 percent of participants noted that staff of the UFS respect the different religious or spiritual beliefs of students other than Christianity (68.60%) and that they felt comfortable expressing my religious identity on campus (67.30%). Similarly, 76.70 percent of participants indicated that lecturers respect the different religious beliefs of their students other than Christianity (70.00%).

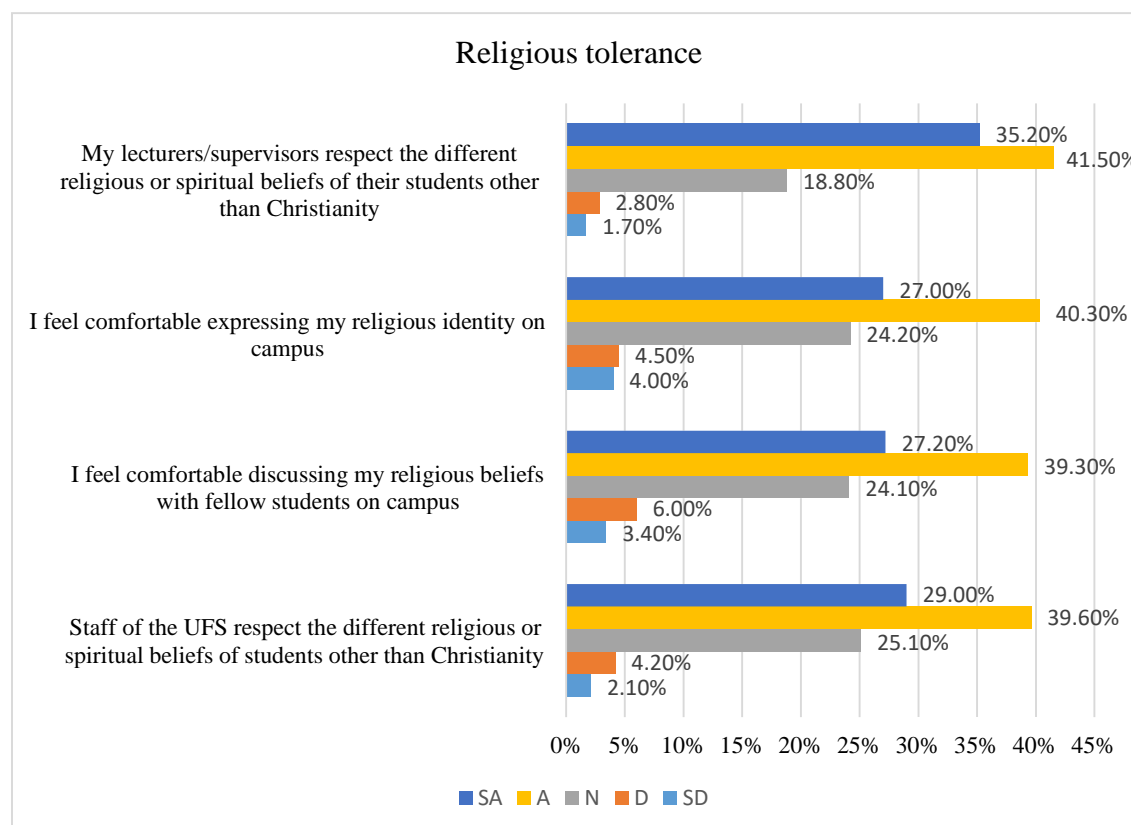


Figure 74: Religious tolerance

3.2.13 Students' voices on religion

The university can improve on its religious environment to accommodate students of various backgrounds, although its history tells a different story [Student, Bloemfontein].

In terms of religion, UFS can provide event that allows student to show respect and care with their religions [Student, Bloemfontein].

If more information could be given on religions, and so forth it would be great. [Student, Bloemfontein].

UFS is doing its best to students in terms of students of different religions. That is what we as students want, to be respected because together we are one. [Student, Bloemfontein].

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.

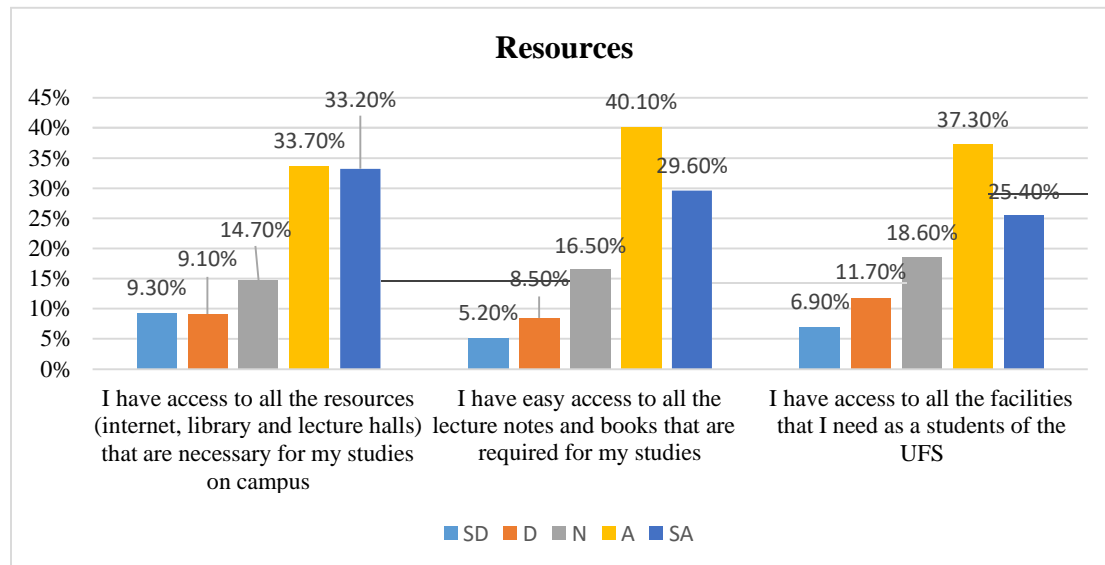


Figure 75: Resources

First, participants were required 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 69, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that, they have access to all the resources (internet, library and lecture halls) on campus (66.90%), have access to all the lecture notes and books required for their studies (69.70%) and have access to all the facilities they needed to use on campus for their studies (62.70%). Section 3.2.15 present the written comments of students on resources at the UFS. Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate results showed that 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. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges some students face accessing the university campus could account for the low agreement percentages recorded in the three domains compared to the percentages of 2019.

3.2.15 Students' voices on resources

I quite enjoy all my lecturers, this semester and the last. I hope to see the UFS renewing the chemistry equipment in the two chemistry laboratories, specifically laboratory 2. (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

I see student receiving laptops but I am not selected (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

The UFS should always give appropriate time for learners to collect their laptops or notebook at the campus because not every first year student got their laptops. Students should be allowed to access the university campus (Student – QwaQwa Campus).

Students on QwaQwa Campus are in need of water and electricity.....that is all. THANK you (Student – QwaQwa Campus).

Water quality is poor at QwaQwa campus, electricity issues should also be resolved ASAP. (Student – QwaQwa Campus).

I think the university should make sure that everyone who is part of the university should get all resources he/she require, like electricity, water specifically hot water (Student – QwaQwa Campus).

Everything has been good so far but the fact that some of us first year students still do not have student cards really worries me because we are even approaching the end year. (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

On-campus students have more resources than off-campus students. For instance, most off-campus students need data because off-campus students are struggling in the area of research because we do not have data (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

The University should allow computer Labs to be opened 24/7 because there are lot of people who do not have computers and prefer to study at computer labs the whole night (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

Many students are in need of data for academic purposes, some of us struggle with Global Protect (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

The university should check the WiFi networks to ensure that we have internet for our study. (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

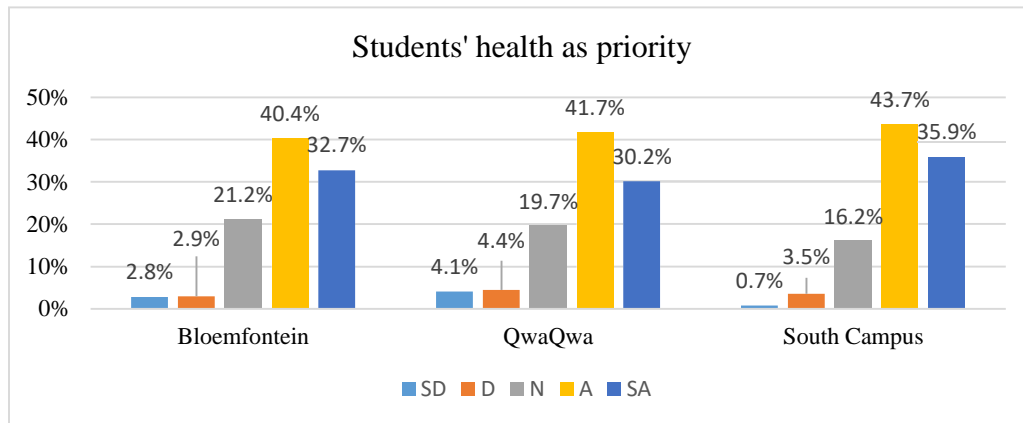


Figure 366: Health as a priority

As shown in figure 76, more than 70 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

It has been an interesting experience, however, I wish there were more psychologists. (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

The university should create awareness about their health facility and how it works (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

The UFS should help students with health issues. I felt like the service at the clinic was not good because they kept on saying it is fully booked every day and I had to look for another clinic while we have a clinic on campus. I was not satisfied with how they treated me at the clinic on campus. I did not get any help at all. (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

Please encourage students to attend counselling sessions. Students are not okay out there. I see students resorting to drugs and alcoholism to cope with their course. (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

Many students are in need of free health care services and it is difficult to when they are from out of the province. (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

I know the health is good at the UFS but I believe we should not pay anything for what is on campus because it is not accessible. We the first year students are not allowed on campus so I am not satisfied with the fact that we should pay for facilities we are not able to use (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

COVID-19

I have not yet been to the university physically because of the pandemic but my academics have not been affected and I feel a sense of belonging in the university and the online learning is very clear and fun. (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

My overall experience at UFS is great and I cannot comment much about the on campus life because I barely have on campus experience. I am a first year student, the entire 2021 I have been learning from home. (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

The UFS for me should try to improve its health and safety by ensuring that all students are safe by having social distancing for students on campus and have sanitation especially during these days of COVID-19. (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

I wish we all stay safe, let us not lose hope. This Corona will pass and we will be happy again. We miss face to face class and to interact with other students (Student – QwaQwa campus).

Due to COVID-19, it is difficult to interact with students considering most students were not on campus. Therefore I do not have a sense of belonging. The University could come up with programs that allow student either in the same faculty or students' doing the similar courses to interact in an online manner (Student – QwaQwa campus).

3.2.18 Safety and security

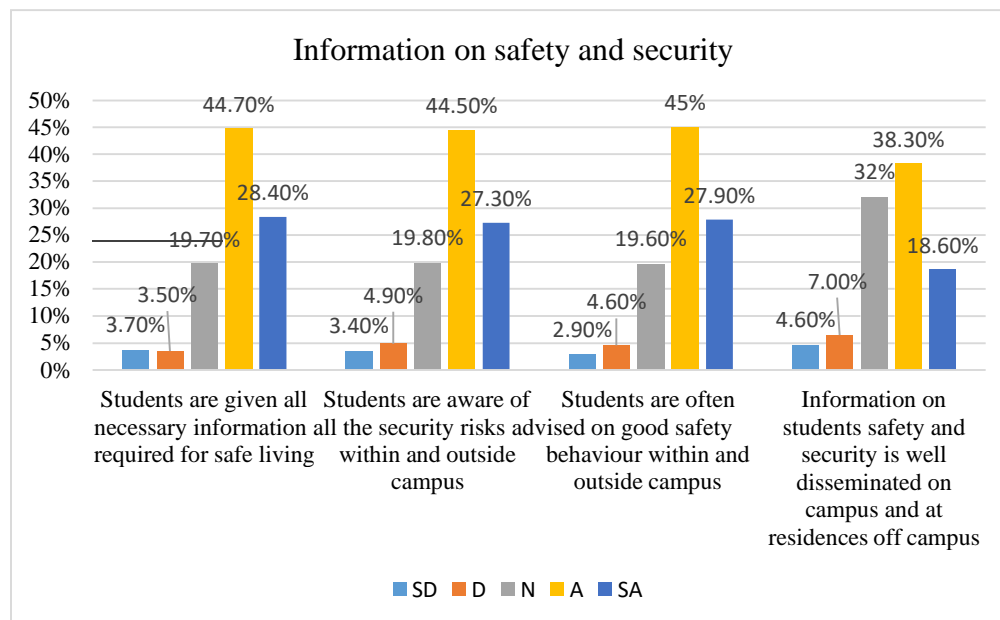


Figure 377: Information on safety and security

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 77, more than 70 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they were provided with all the necessary information for safe living (73.10%), they were aware of the security risks on campus (71.10%) and, they are often advised on good safety behaviour within and outside campus (73.00%). Similarly, 56.90 percent of participants indicated that information on students' safety and security is well disseminated on campus and at residences off campus. The feedback from the participants revealed marked improvement in all areas concerning students' safety and security. As compared to the 2019 institutional climate study, 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%).

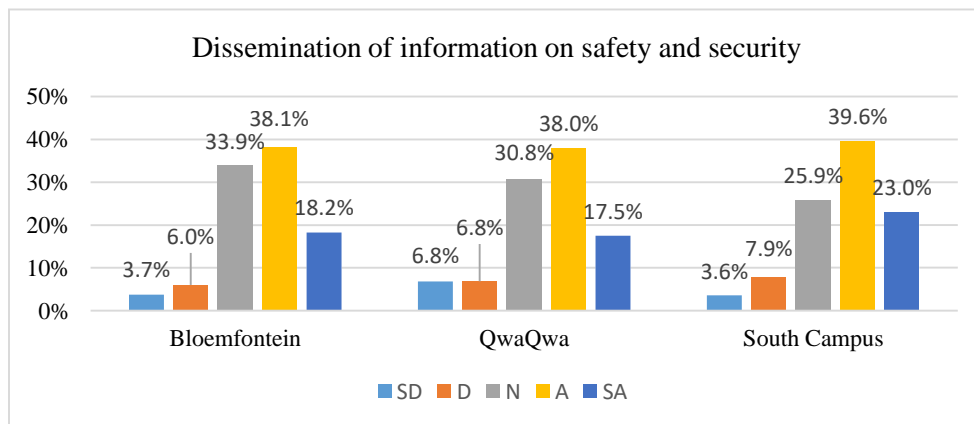


Figure 387: Dissemination of information on safety and security (distribution by campus)

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 the following: South Campus (62.60%); Bloemfontein (56.40%) and; QwaQwa (55.50%). These findings compare with the 2019 institutional climate results that showed the following concerning students' feedback on the extent to which information on students' safety and security is disseminated on campus and at residences off campus: South Campus (71.30%); Bloemfontein (47.10%) and; QwaQwa (49.08%).

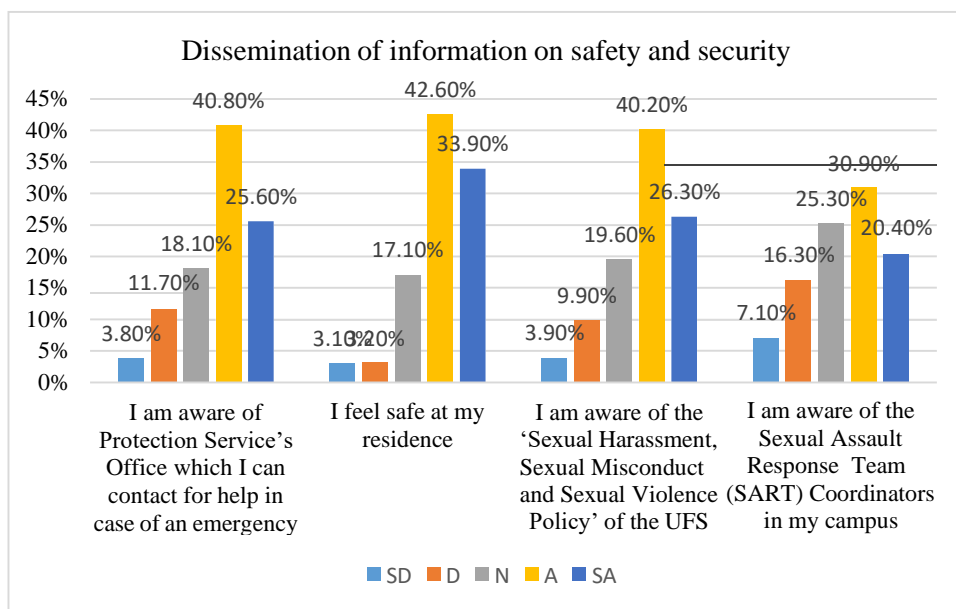


Figure 398: Campus protection and security

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 78, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that they were aware of the role of Protection Services Office (66.40%) and the Sexual Assault Response Team (51.30%). Similarly, while 66.50 percent of participants indicated that they were aware of the 'Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy' of the UFS, 76.50 percent indicated that they I felt safe at their residence. Again, the feedback from participant revealed significant increases in the dissemination of information of the Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy' of the UFS and the role of the Protection Services Office. Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate report revealed that 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, in the 2019 institutional climate report, 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

UFS cares a lot about the student safety. I stay off campus and the UFS safety organisation have visited my accommodation and they were advising us about safety and they gave us contact details so that we can contact them if we are not feeling safe (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

The university should communicate to students beforehand and take action when riots take place to ensure the students safety (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

The UFS should care more about students that stay in off-campus residences. They should make their safety a priority (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

I think the UFS needs to ensure the safety of students who are living off campuses especially on the gates off campus must not be the free entry security must be tight and that should be ensured by UFS by checking every off campuses security (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

Concerning safety can the management improved to patrol all over the surroundings of the university in order to help students who stays off campus (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

Some of the security guards do not adhere to COVID-19 protocols (Student – Bloemfontein campus).

I think UFS should hire more security for off-campus that will patrol all the time especial during the night. (Student – QwaQwa campus).

As UFS student, I am not happy. Students are being killed and robbed. I would like the UFS to improve safety on campus and off campus as well. (Student – South campus).

3.2.20 Facilities

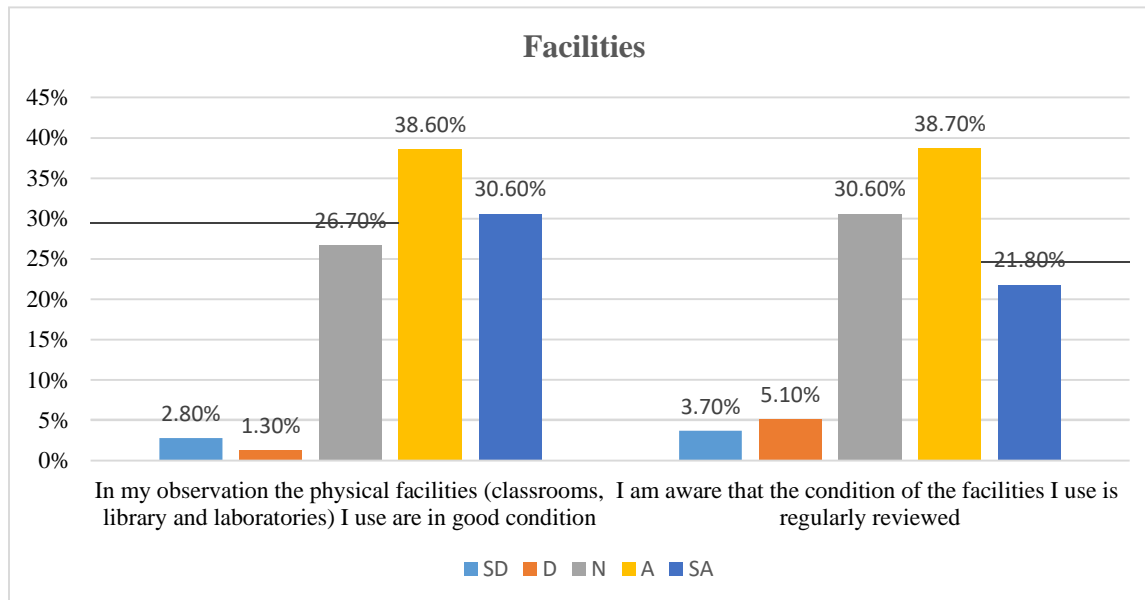


Figure 409: Facilities

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 79, , 69.20 percent of participants agreed with the statement that, the buildings, grounds and facilities they use are in good condition while 60.50 percent noted that, the buildings, grounds and facilities they use are regularly reviewed. This compares with the 2019 institutional climate report which showed that 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 similar to the views of students in 2019.

Signage on campus should not be in Afrikaans and English only. Perhaps Sesotho can be added. If not, only English should be used for communication of directions on signs (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

The UFS should continue to upgrade it university especially at the QwaQwa campus (Student - QwaQwa campus).

I got lost too much because of the names of the building and the way it is written on the timetable (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

I wish that the university can help reduce noise levels in study areas like the 24/7 study area. It is always noisy and security guards do not do anything (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

There Should Be More Facilities In QwaQwa Campus. More Faculties, More Sports and a lot more of new developments (Student - QwaQwa campus).

The UFS should make shops or allow other businesses to rent the premise because there are fewer shops on the premises of the UFS (Student - QwaQwa campus).

3.2.22 Students' finance

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

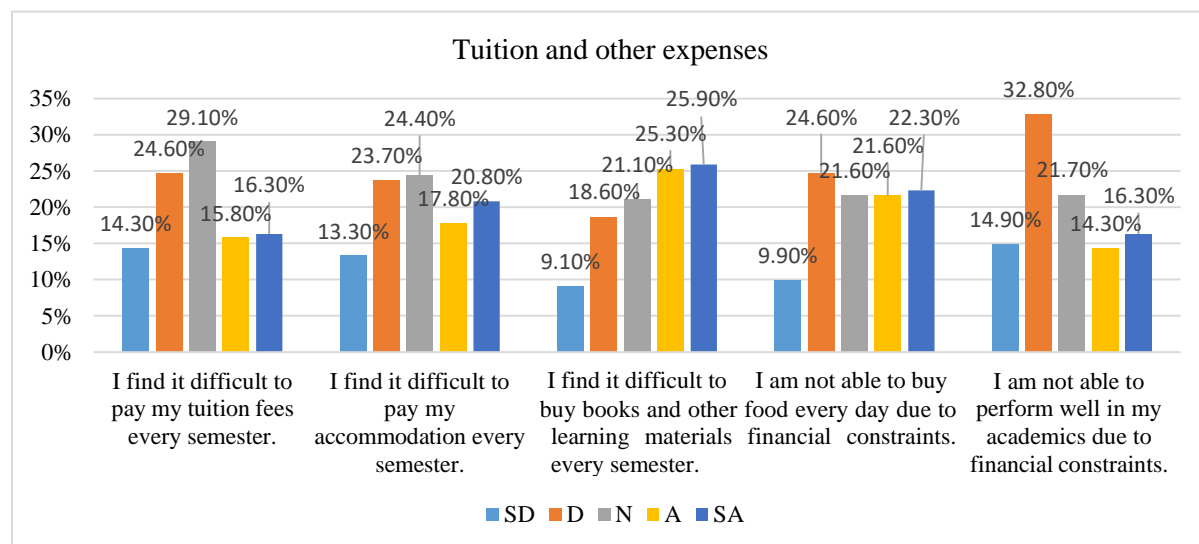


Figure 80: Tuition and other expenses

Figure 80 shows the distribution of the responses of participants on five items. Less than 40 percent of the participants opined that: they found it difficult to pay their tuition fees every semester (32.10%); they found it difficult to pay their accommodation every semester (36.60%); and are not able to perform well in my academics due to financial constraints (30.60%). Conversely, more than 50.00 percent of participants were of the opinion that they had challenges buying books and other learning materials every semester (51.20%) and are not able to buy food every day due to financial constraints (43.90%). What the results suggest is that although a bigger percentage of students do not face financial constraints, a sizeable percentage require financial assistance. This finding compares to the 2019 institutional climate results which showed that less

than 40 percent of the participants 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%), were not able to buy food every day due to financial constraints (24.00%) and were not able to perform well in their academics due to financial constraints (24.00%).

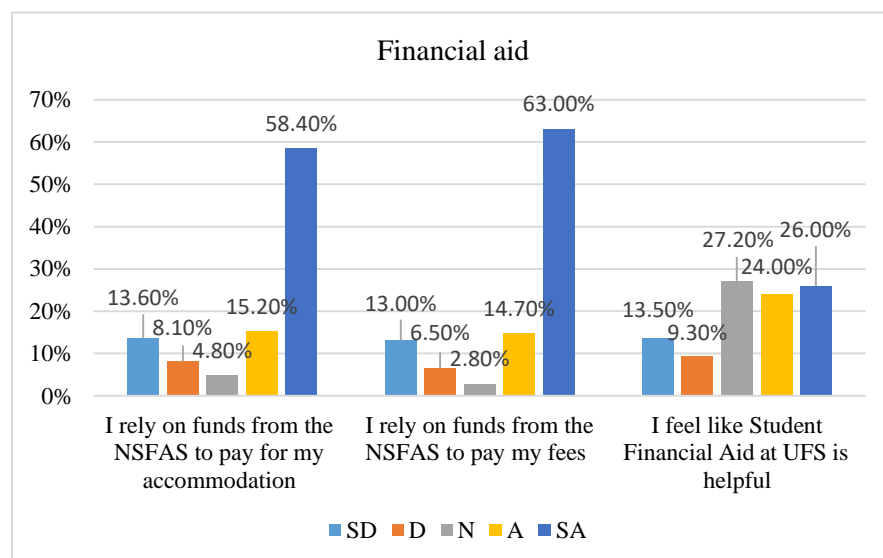


Figure 81: Financial aid

The results on students' opinion about the importance of financial aid to their study revealed that 73.60 percent of participants rely on funds from the NSFAS to pay for their accommodation and buy food while 77.70 percent of participants relied on funds from the NSFAS to pay their fees. Similarly, 50.00 percent of students noted that students' financial aid is helpful. These results compare with the findings of the 2019 institutional climate results which showed that 45.50 percent of participants relied 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.

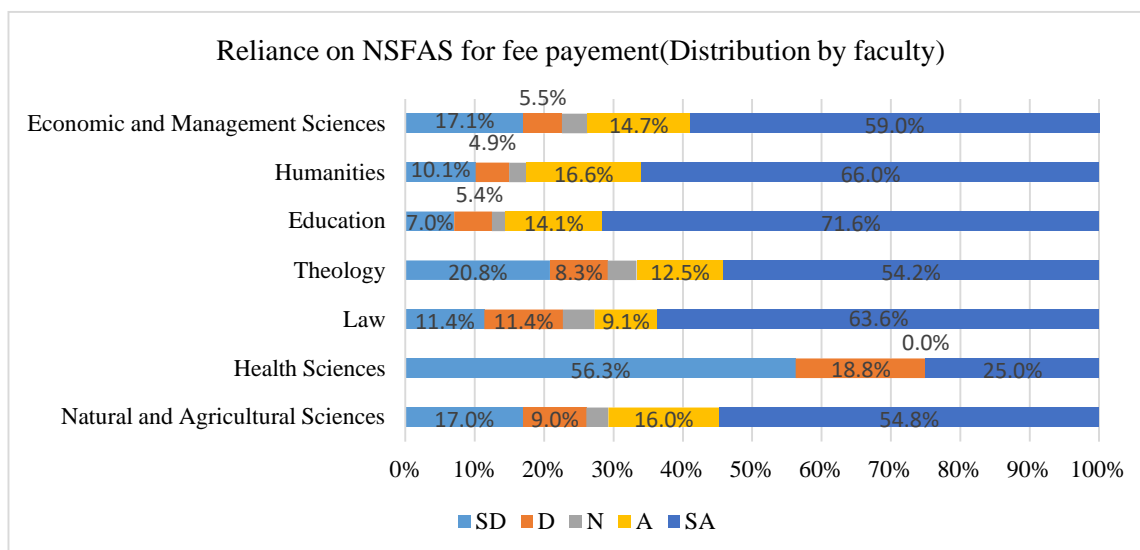


Figure 82: Students' dependence on NSFAS for payment of school fees

In order to identify the faculty with the highest percentage of students who rely on NSFAS for payment of their school fees, we analysed the data to reveal the differences in responses based on faculty. As shown in figure 82, more than 50 percent of participants from the Education (85.60%), Humanities (82.60%), Law (72.70%), Theology faculties (66.70%), Economic and Management Sciences (73.70%), and Natural and Agricultural Sciences (70.70%). However, 25.00 percent of participants from the Health Science indicated that they relied on NSFAS for the payment of their fees. The findings revealed marked increment in the number of students who rely on funding from NSFAS to pay their tuition fees. Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate results revealed that 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 NSFAS for payment of their school fees. However, less than 15 percent of participants from the Health Science indicated that they relied on NSFAS for the payment of their fees.

3.2.22 Students' voices on finance

I honestly feel like UFS could provide Students with more financial support. Student at the South campus use NSFAS but majority lose funding after transitioning to Bloemfontein campus. There's no financial support for those Students. Some students have outstanding fees and is concern not knowing whether their bursary funders will pay or not. The UFS did not even take it upon themselves to ensure students are fine or to make sure that these student's fees will be paid. Therefore being at the South campus your experience will never be fruitful but rather have constant concerns. (Student - South campus).

UFS must pay attention to learners that have financial problems and make sure that it does not get to the point where students with financial problems get deregistered. (Student - South campus).

The financial office of the UFS does not work as they are supposed to. I am not the only one who is crying, but 90% of students that I'm sure. FIN AID must enforce new laws (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

The UFS should consider making Private accommodation allowance process fast because many students are struggling others are being evicted by their landlords because of the delay (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

I am a NSFAS student and it is sad how we did not get our full book allowance since we applied for laptops because books are very expensive and till today we have not get our laptop and regarding our PA application it is sad that the financial aid does not take us seriously when we are in need (Student– QwaQwa campus).

I think that new staff should be hired at the finance department especially the NSFAS unit. From my own point of view they are rude, slow and do not care about the student's wellbeing (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

Issue students' funding promptly. As things currently remain, I feel nothing but pain and anger and as if I chose the wrong institution. There also needs to be reviews on the ridiculous prices for these accredited accommodations, the price hikes are criminal (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

Funza Lushaka and Financial Aid must do better, I don't feel part of the university. You try to get good grades to keep a bursary and yet you still suffer (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

Students' financial assistance should be one of the priority of the university. Bringing bursaries around Free State to the attention of the students and the students to the attention of the bursars around Free State and companies offering vacation work for students in Bloemfontien (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

The UFS financial centre is really not helpful, I've called that department various times and I have received no help... it is either they answer the call and transfer you to where you will not receive any help/ they don't answer at all(the whole experience was draining and annoying). In addition, UFS doesn't really help the first years, in March I didn't know if I was supposed to come to campus or not. The university doesn't inform first years of anything, we hear information from other people (which is really not fair) (Student– Bloemfontein campus).

I would not say much about academic concerns from the institution, because it is doing well. But, when it comes to our benefits from our funding, the university is silently killing us, indeed. Late or slow process of out allowances and or applications e.g. P.A is really killing us slowly. Only if the institution could

understand the feeling of needing something and having nowhere to get it or get help from and the stress we go through, more especially food or need to pay for rent; I think everything would be good. We are dying from stress down there. We really need help please (Student– QwaQwa campus).

3.2.23 Academic - social life balance

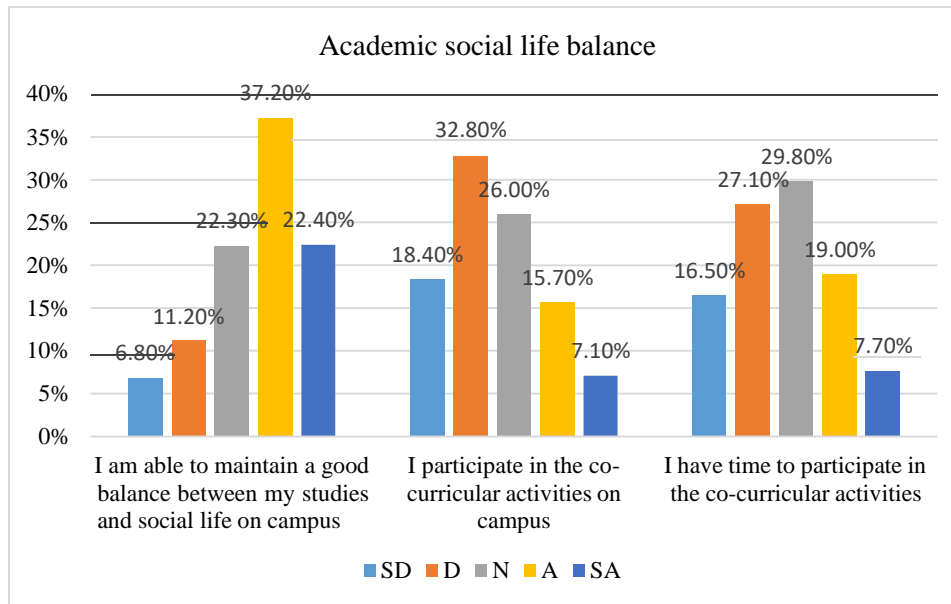


Figure 83: Academic - social life balance

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, 59.60 percent of participants indicated that they maintain a good balance between their studies and social life on campus. Despondently, less than 30 percent of students opined that they participate in co-curricular activities (22.80%).

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 84, 16.3 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 20.00 percent.

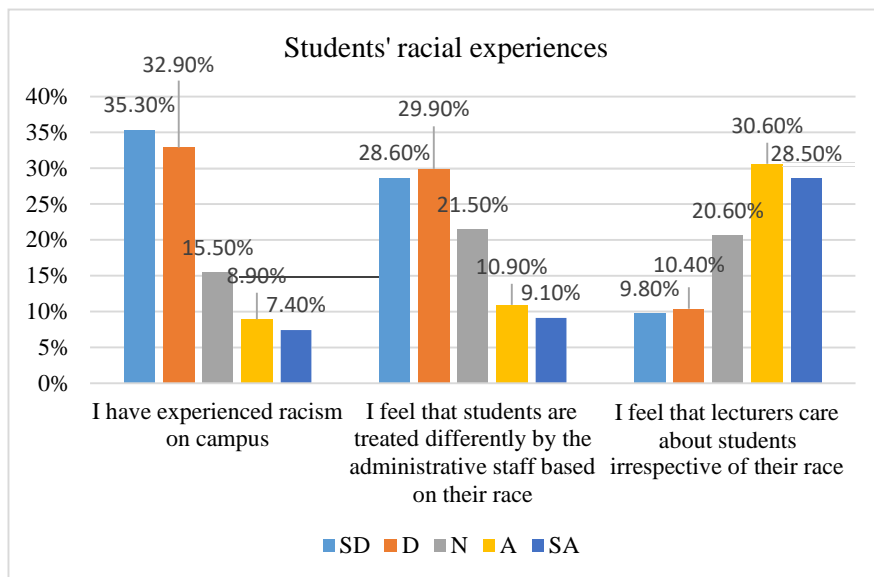


Figure 84: Students' racial experiences

Conversely, more than 50 percent of participants (59.10%) indicated that they felt that lecturers cared about students irrespective of their race.

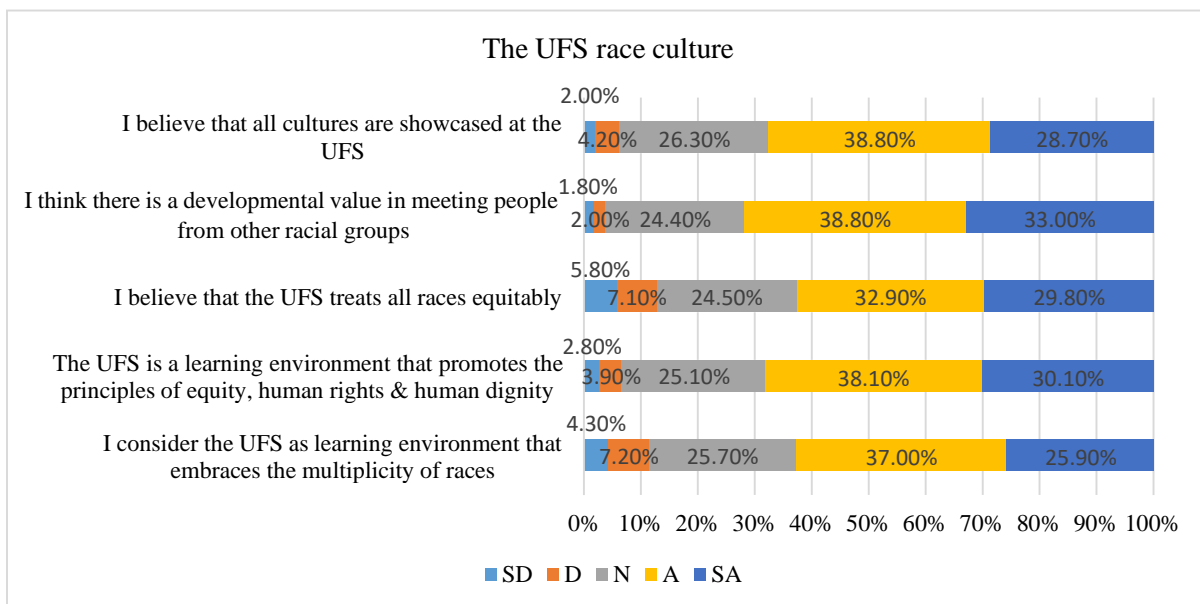


Figure 85: UFS race culture

The responses of students as regards race culture at the UFS is presented in figure 85. Significantly, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that they considered the UFS as a learning environment that embraces the multiplicity of races (62.90%). Similarly, 68.20 percent of participants were of the opinion

that the UFS is a learning environment that promotes the principles of equity, human rights & human dignity (68.20%) while 62.70 percent of participants indicated that they believe that the UFS treats all races equitably.

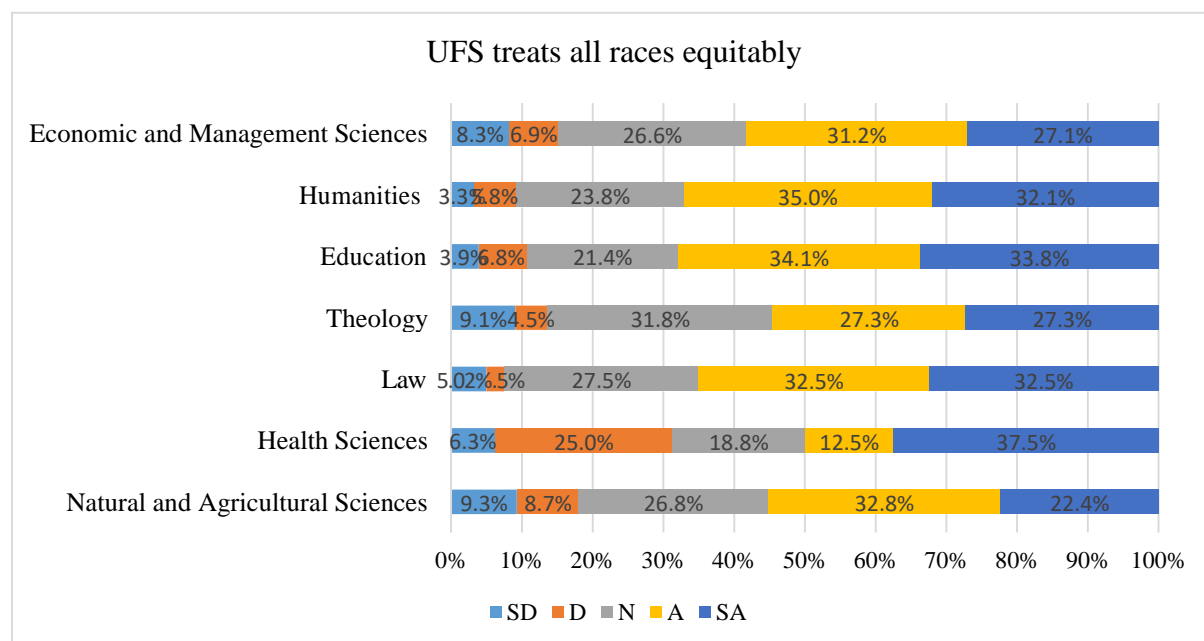


Figure 416: UFS treats students of all races equitably (distribution by faculty)

Figure 86 shows the responses of students in relation to the question on how the UFS treats students of all races. The results show that more than 50 percent of participants in the faculties of Law (60.00%) Theology (59.10%), Education (55.50%), Natural and Agricultural Sciences (59.60%), Humanities (58.80%) and Economic and Management Sciences (57.80%) were of the opinion that the UFS treats students of all races equitably. Conversely, less than 35 percent of participants in the Faculty of Health Sciences (31.30%) were of the opinion that the UFS treats students of all races equitably. These results compare with the 2019 Institutional Climate study which revealed that 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. Figure 81 shows an analysis of the data based on the perception of participants about how the UFS treat students of all races.

3.2.25 Students' voices on race

“Stop trying to force equality, it only breeds resentment. Continue with the offers, but don't purposefully force students together. Some cultures and beliefs are not meant to mix, no matter how hard you try.

Respect is a given, I won't force my beliefs and culture onto another and I will not appreciate it if someone forces theirs onto me” [Student – Bloemfontein]

“Favouritism on the part of our lecturers should stop especially when it is race based” [Student – South Campus]

“When I entered the UFS I felt welcome and equal to others regardless of race.” [Student – QwaQwa Campus].

“The UFS must ensure that they treat everyone equal regardless of their race or culture” [Student – Bloemfontein]

“There mustn't be any race based discrimination” [Student – Bloemfontein].

3.2.25 Cross-cultural relationship

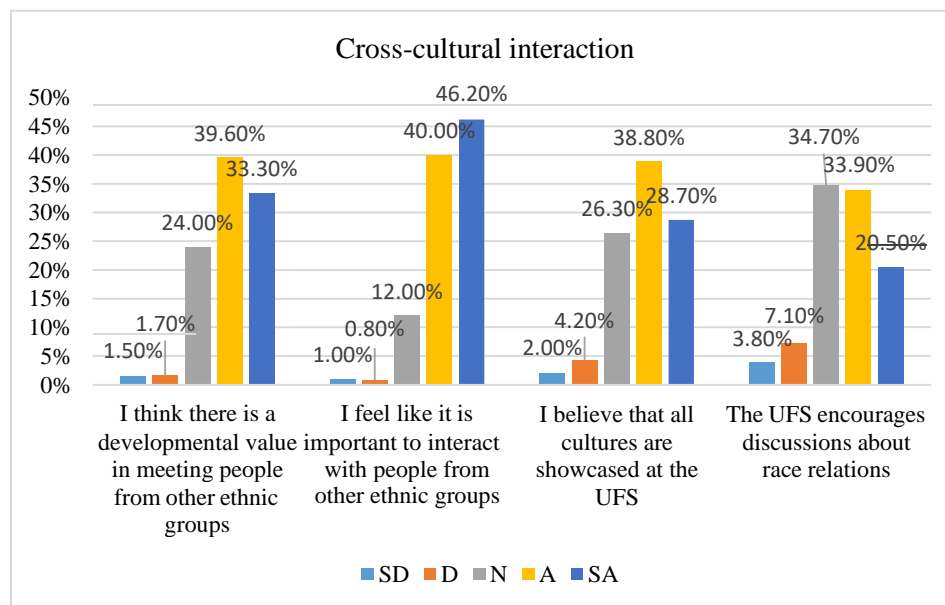


Figure 427: Cross-cultural interaction

Figure 87 shows the data on the responses of students in relation to their experiences on cross-cultural interaction. More than 60 percent of participants indicated that: there is a developmental value in meeting people from other ethnic groups (72.90%); they feel like it is important to interact with people from other ethnic groups (86.20%); and that they believe that all cultures are showcased at the UFS (67.50%)

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

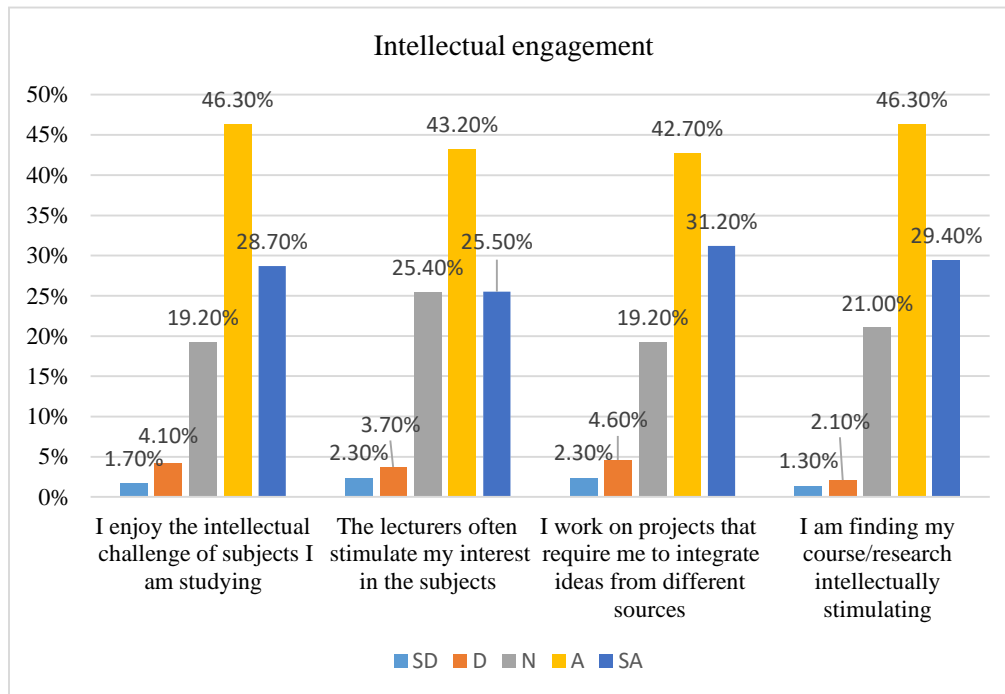


Figure 438: Intellectual engagement

The sub-section on intellectual engagement revealed that more than 60 percent of students enjoy the intellectual challenge that comes with the courses they study (75.00%), lecturers' ability to stimulate their interest in the courses (68.70%), incorporate ideas from different sources (73.90%) and, find the courses intellectually stimulating (75.70%). These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate study which 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

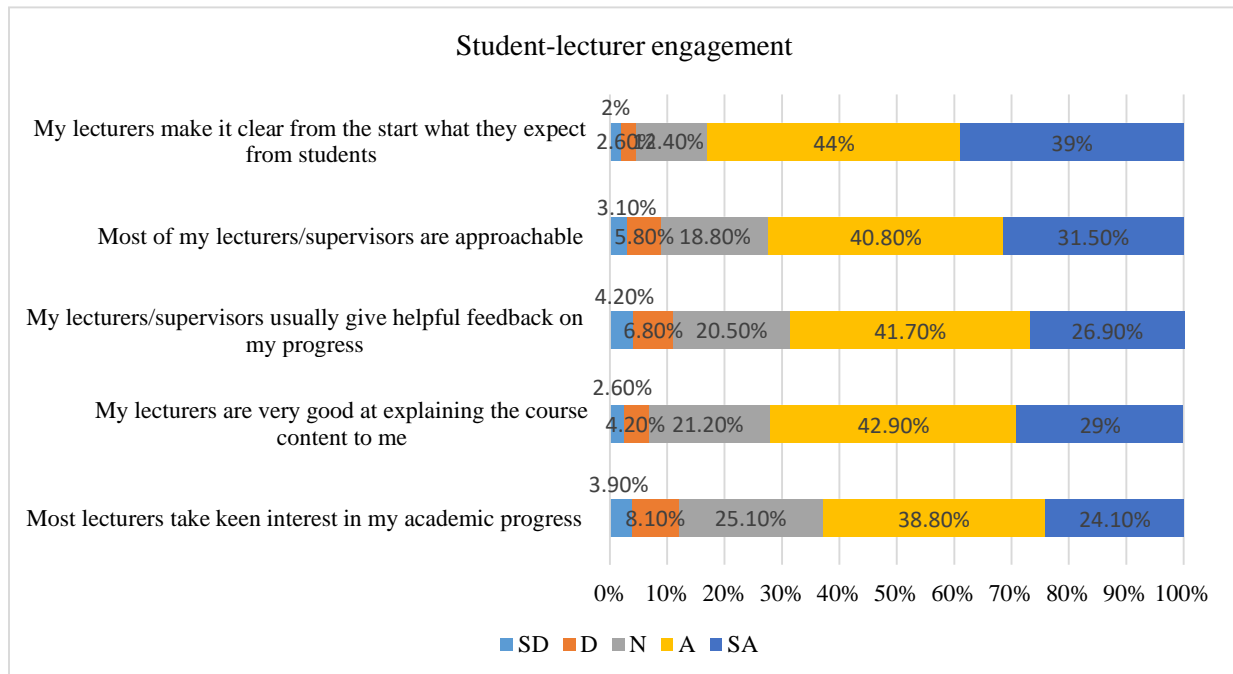


Figure 449: Student-lecturer engagement

The sub-section on student-lecturer engagement revealed high level of engagement students and lecturers. Significantly, more than 60 percent of students indicated that, most of their lecturers took keen interest in their academic progress (62.90%), are good at explaining the course content to them (71.90%), are very approachable (72.30%), and make it clear from the start of their courses or modules what they expect from students (83.00%).

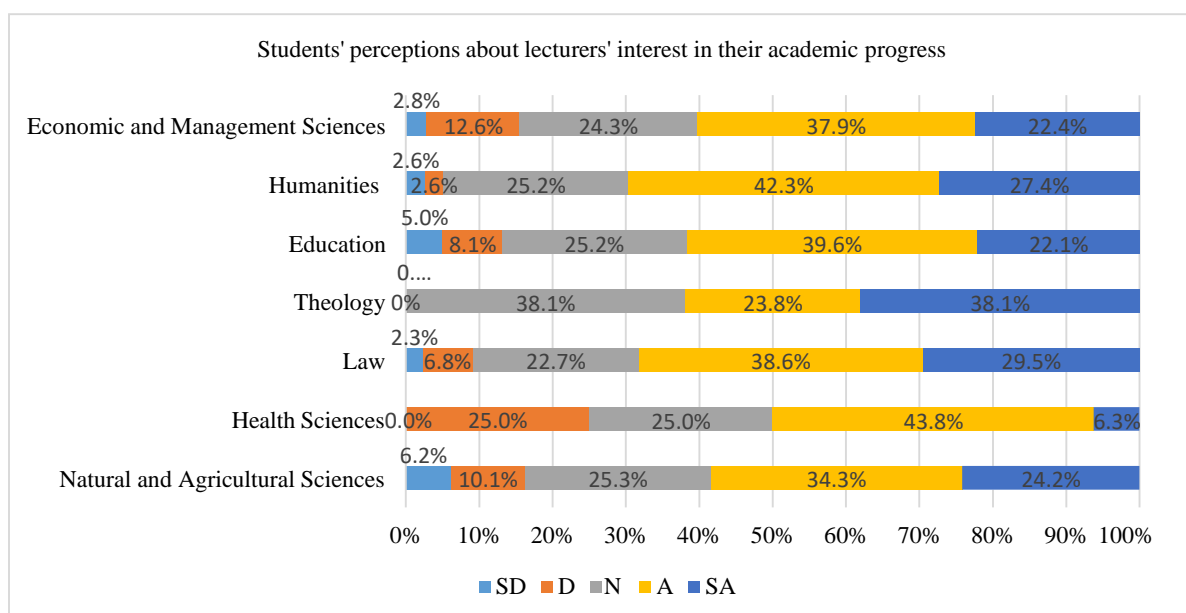


Figure 90: Students' perception about lecturers' interest in their academic progress

To obtain the responses of students concerning their perception about lecturers' interest in their academic progress, we analysed the data based on faculty as shown in figure 90. The results revealed that students' in Faculty of Humanities perceived the interest by academics in their academic progress to be very high (69.67%), then followed by Law (68.18%), Theology (61.90%), Education 61.74%), Economic and Management Sciences (60.28%), Natural and Agricultural Sciences (58.43%) and Health Sciences (50.00%). These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate study report which showed 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%).

3.2.31 Supportive campus environment

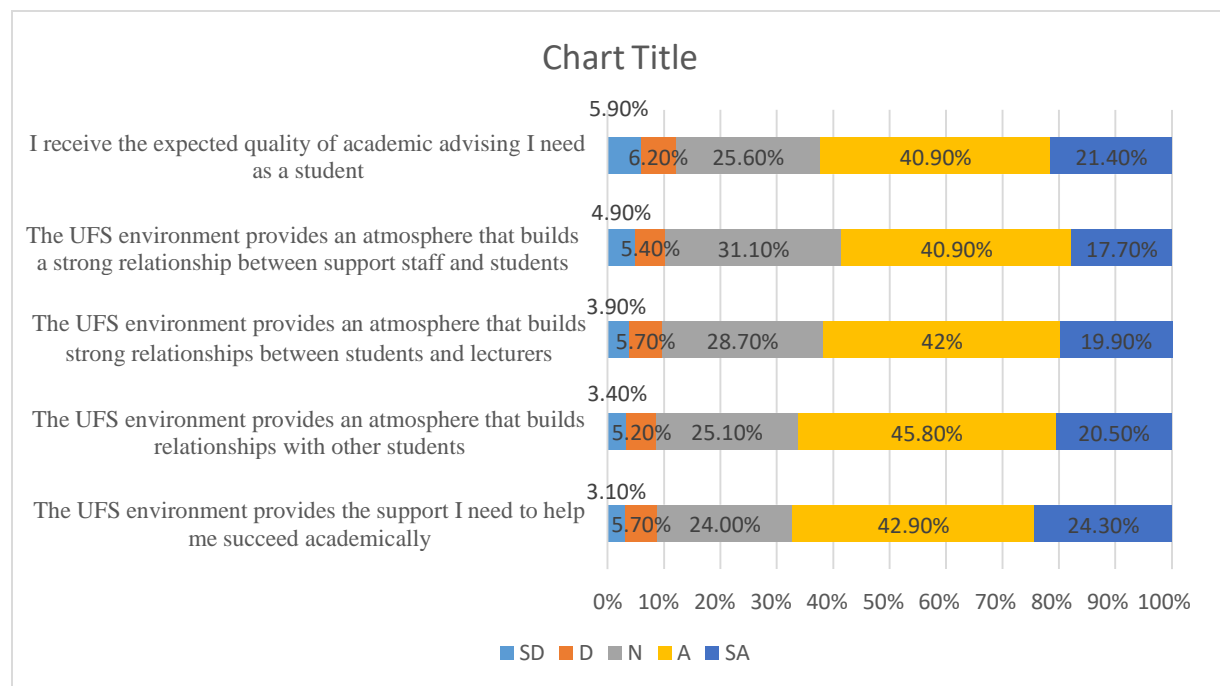


Figure 91: Supportive campus environment

Figure 91 shows the distribution of students' perception on the supportive campus environment at the UFS. The results showed that more than 60 percent of students were of the opinion that, the UFS environment provides the support they need to succeed academically (67.20%), they receive the expected quality of academic advising they need as students (62.30%), the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds relationships with other students (66.30%) and the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that

builds strong relationships between students and lecturers (62.00%). Similarly, more than 55 percent of participants indicated that the UFS environment provides an atmosphere that builds a strong relationship between support staff and students (58.60%).

3.2.32 Students' voices on supportive campus environment

"I am still enjoying is being invited to Join Golden key international honour society and also by participating on extracurricular activities which is FutureLEAD leadership challenge. I really like how the UFS is exposing us to some of the positive graduate attributes." [Student – Bloemfontein].

"My experience is that students from other faculties are not treated as special as the students from the faculty of health sciences". [Student – Bloemfontein].

"The UFS should be able to relate and cater for all their students irrespective of their social and economic status." [Student – Bloemfontein].

"Most of the students are unable to study well because they have been waiting for their laptops. We don't have access permits, we also don't have laptops. How are we expected to study?" [Student – QwaQwa].

"There has never been a year where there hasn't been problems with a module. For example: not having a lecturer for a subject for a semester, but still having to pay for the subject even though there were no classes; not receiving academic advise for all of the years that I have been a student; the emails that I have send in the last three years were never answered - even if the issue was critical. I was told that I could do my teaching practice at any school. At the beginning of the second semester I was informed that I would have to go to a specific type of school. Now I have to redo a module and also pay for it next year due to the misinformation spread across the curriculum. Having lecturer not reply to emails in regards to submissions multiple times. The issue was that the lecturer closed the link three days earlier and then refused to reply to the students." [Student – Bloemfontein].

"I would like to thank the UFS university for being supportive and caring for all it students. I am very grateful for the education the university is giving students making our future look bright." [Student – Bloemfontein].

"I have been treated with respect and dignity in UFS and I want to do long life learning." [Student – Bloemfontein].

3.2.33 Diversity climate

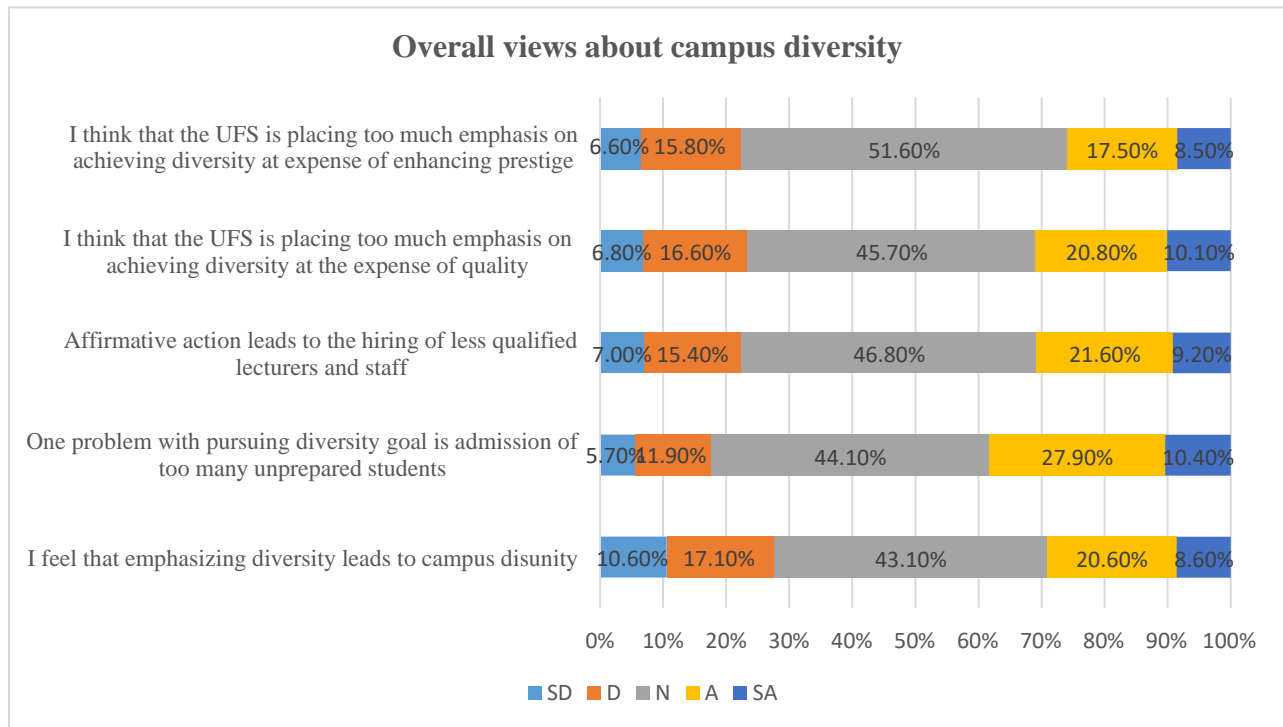


Figure 92: Students' overall views about campus diversity

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.

3.2.33 a 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.

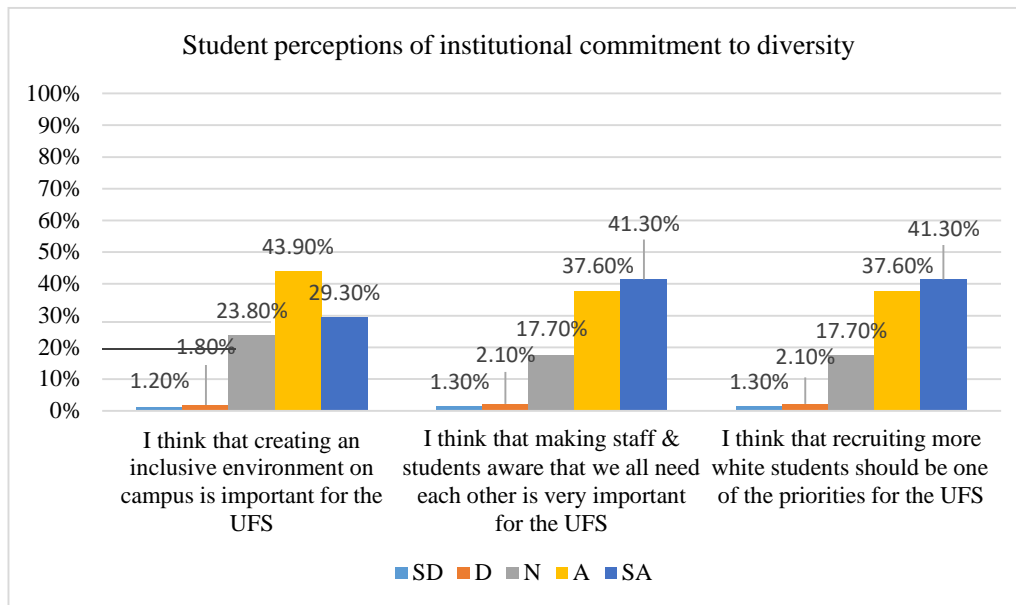


Figure 93: Students' perception of institutional commitment to diversity

As shown in figure 93, more than 70 percent of participants were of the opinion that, creating an inclusive environment on campus is important for the UFS (73.20%), making staff & students aware that we all need each other is very important for the UFS (78.90%) and recruiting more white students should be one of the priorities for the UFS (78.90%).

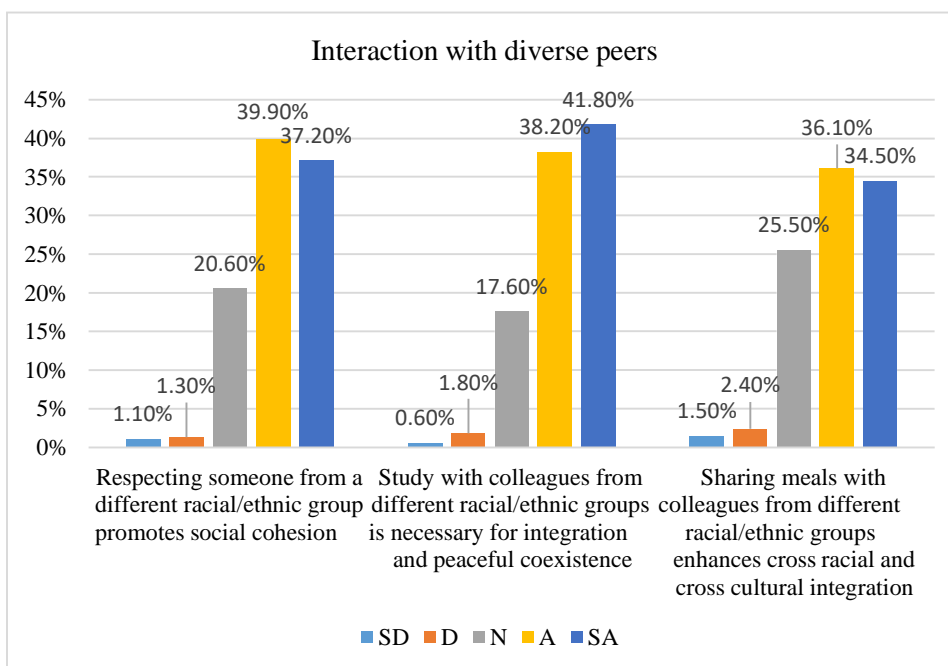


Figure 94: Interaction with diverse peers

The sub-section on interaction with diverse peers revealed high percentages in all the three statements. For instance, participants agreed to the statement that, respecting someone from a different racial/ethnic group promotes social cohesion (77.10%), studying with colleagues from different racial/ethnic groups is necessary for integration and peaceful coexistence (80.00%) and, sharing meals with colleagues from different racial/ethnic groups enhances cross racial and cross cultural integration (70.60%).

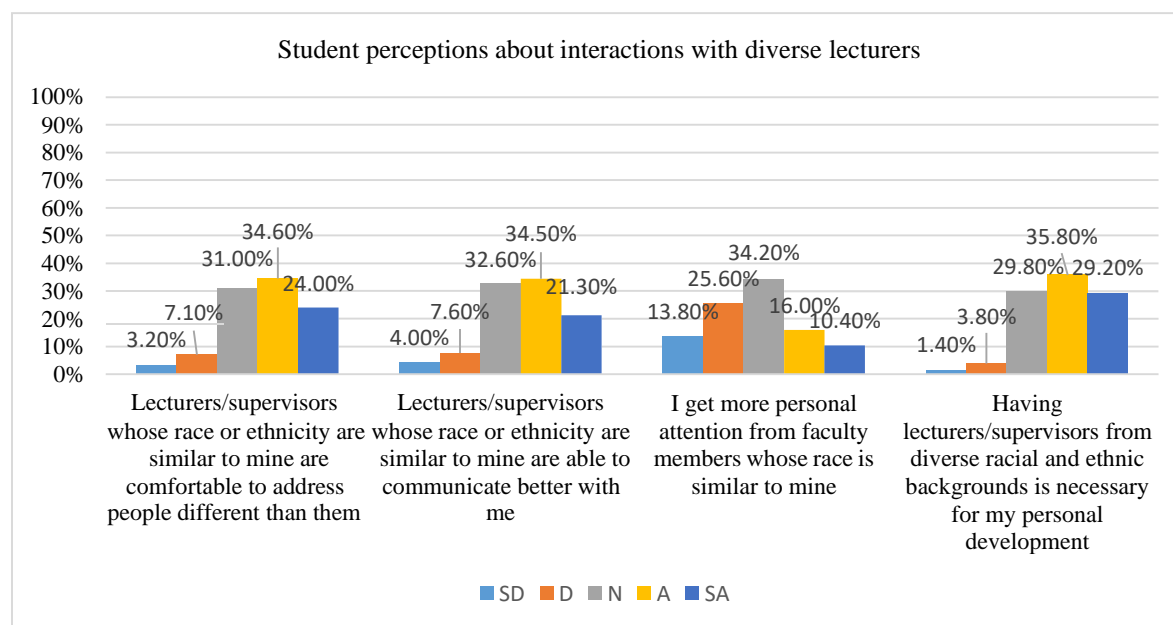


Figure 455: Students' perception about interaction with diverse lecturers

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 (58.60%), lecturers whose race or ethnicity were similar to theirs are able to communicate better with them (55.80%), and, having lecturers from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds is necessary for their personal development (65.00%). However, less than 30 percent of participants opined that they obtained more personal attention from faculty members whose race is similar to theirs (26.40%).

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 (56.10%), diversity-related courses are effective to foster deep understanding among students and staff from different social backgrounds (57.30%) and that it is important for students to take a course that addresses LGBTQIA + issues (53.00%).

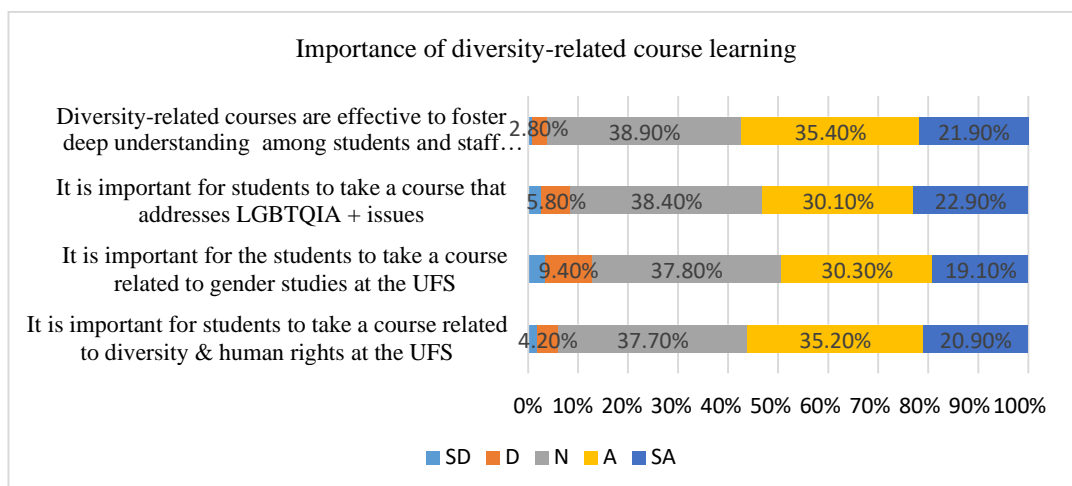


Figure 466: Importance of diversity-related course learning

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%).

3.2.34 Sexual orientation climate

Figure 47: 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+.

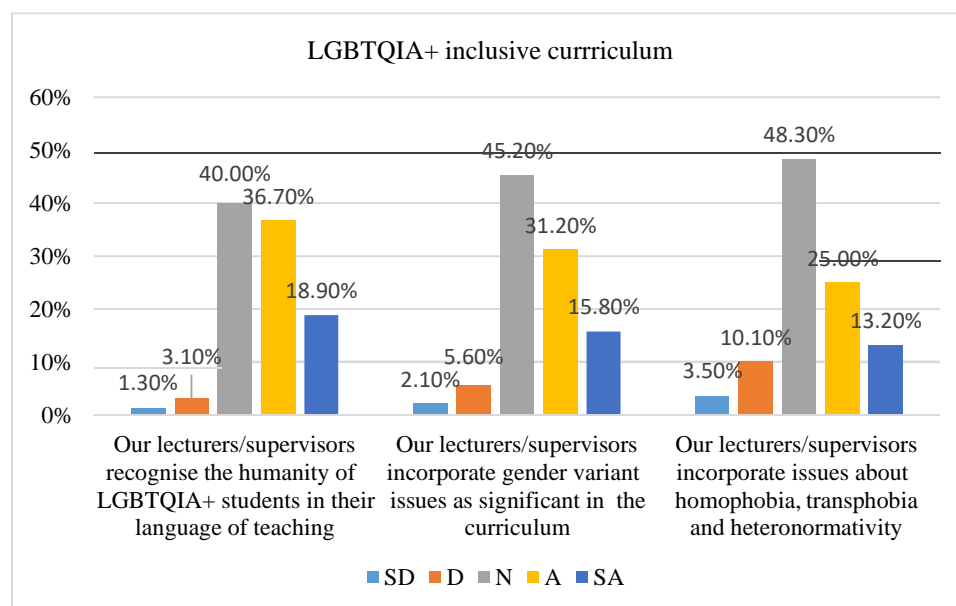


Figure 487: LGBTQIA+ inclusive curriculum

The result from the sub-section on LGBTQIA+ inclusive curriculum revealed that more than 50 percent of participants opined that lecturers recognise the humanity of LGBTQIA+ students in their language of teaching (55.60%) Conversely, less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that lecturers incorporate gender variant issues as significant in the curriculum (47.00%) and, lecturers/supervisors incorporate issues about homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity (38.20%).

3.2.35 Institutional Support

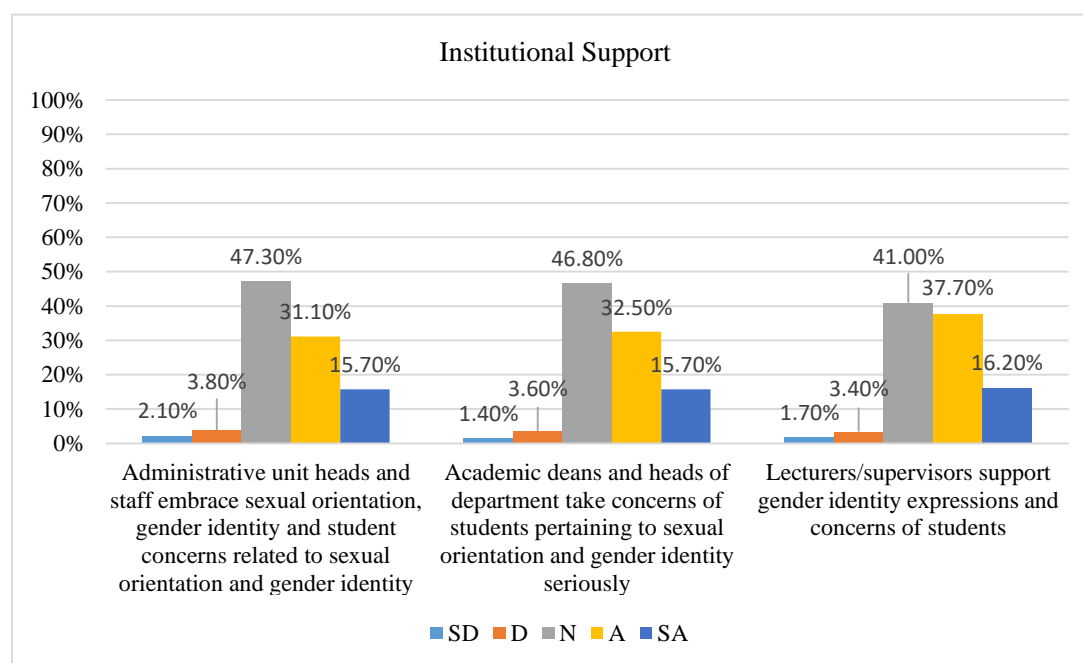


Figure 498: Institutional Support for LGBTQIA+

The sub-section on the perception of participants on institutional support for LGBTQIA+ however showed 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 (46.80%) and that academic deans and heads of department take concerns of students pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity seriously (48.20%). Conversely, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that lecturers/supervisors support gender identity expressions and concerns of students (53.90%).

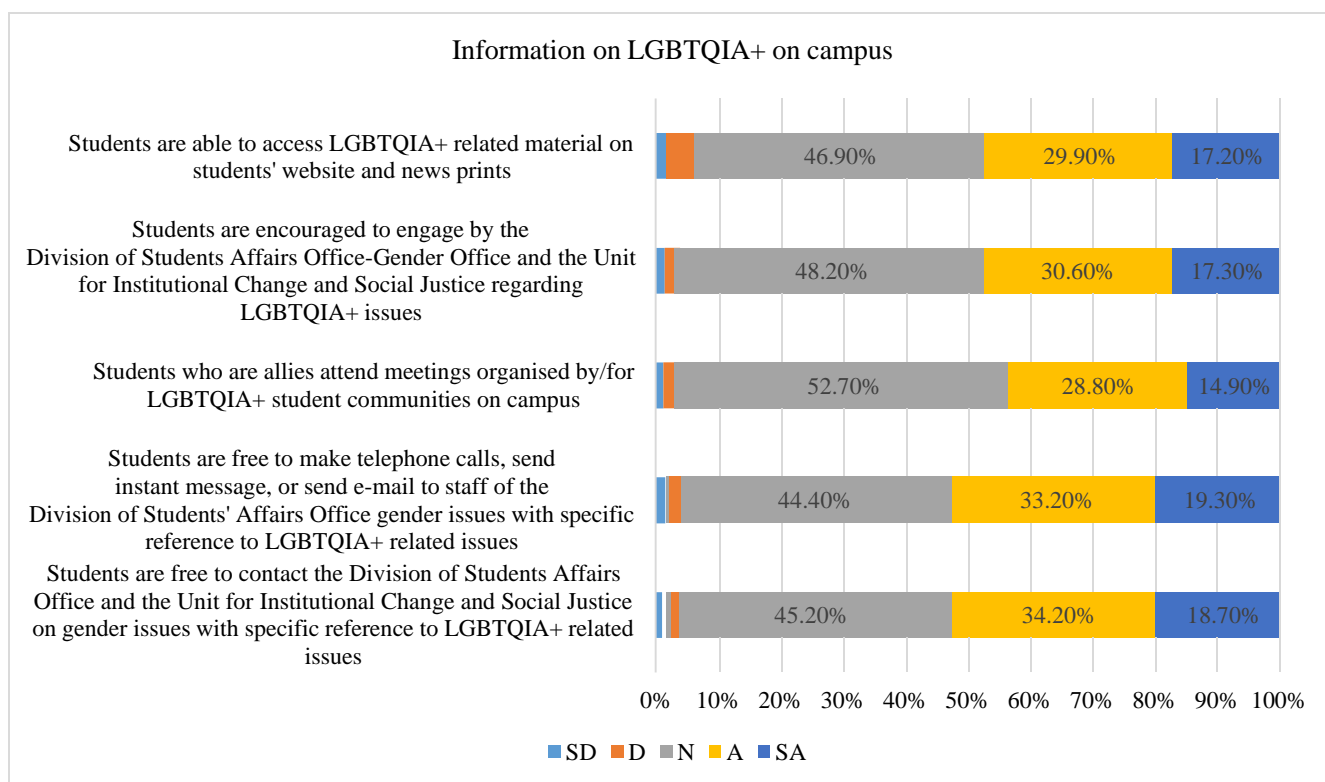


Figure 509: Information on LGBTQIA+ on campus

The section on the perception of participants on information on LGBTQIA+ on UFS campus showed that more than 50 percent of the participants opined that, Students are free to contact the Division of Students Affairs Office and the Unit for Institutional Change and Social Justice on gender issues with specific reference to LGBTQIA+ related issues (52.90%) and that students are free to make telephone calls, send instant message, or send e-mail to staff of the Division of Students' Affairs Office gender issues with specific reference to LGBTQIA+ related issues (52.50%). Conversely, the results revealed that less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that students who are allies attend meetings organised by/for LGBTQIA+ student communities on campus (43.70%) and that students are able to access LGBTQIA+ related material on students' website and news prints (47.10%).

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.

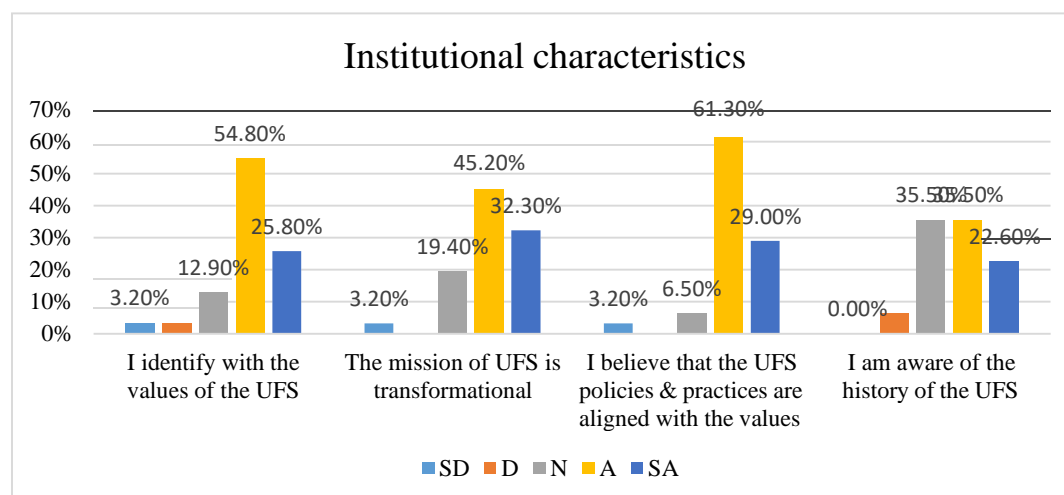


Figure 51: Institutional characteristics

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. More than 50 percent of the participants agreed to the statement that the mission of the UFS is transformational (77.50%), they identify with the values of the UFS (80.60%), they are aware of the history of the UFS (58.10%) and they believe that the UFS policies & practices are aligned with the values (90.30%). These values compare with the 2019 institutional climate which showed that more than 50 percent of participants (69.30%) indicated that they identify with the mission of the UFS, 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.

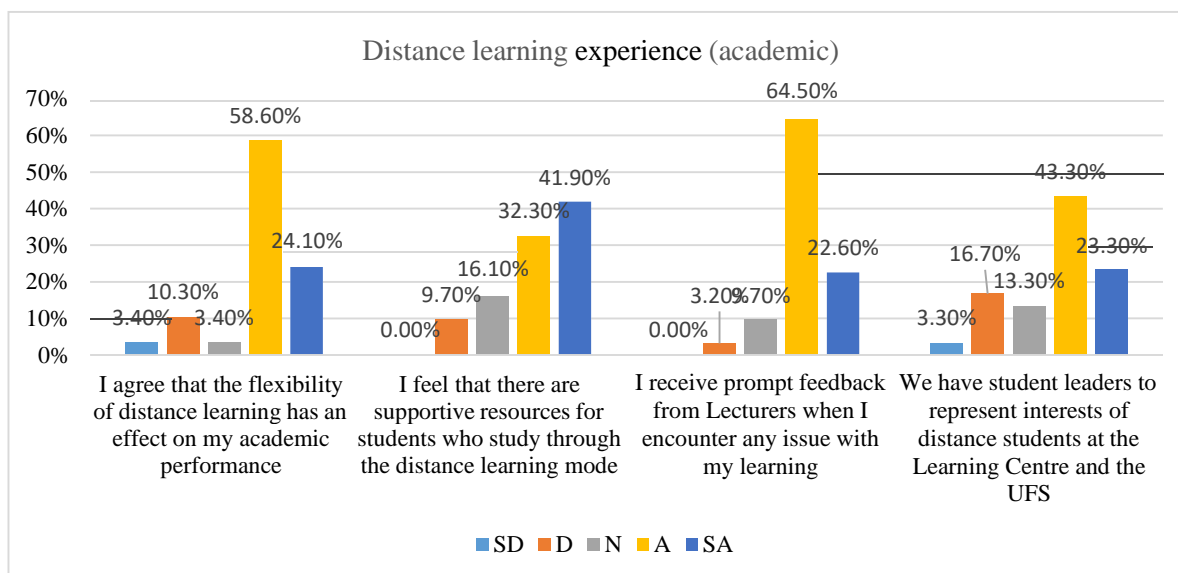


Figure 52: Distance learning experience (Academic)

Figure 101 shows the feedback from participants on the academic experiences of distance learning students. The result revealed that more than 60.00 percent of participants agreed to the statement that, flexibility of distance learning has an effect on their academic performance (82.70%), there are supportive resources for students who study through the distance learning mode (74.20%) they receive prompt feedback from Lecturers when they encounter any issue with their learning (87.10%) and that they have student leaders to represent interests of distance students at the Learning Centre and the UFS (66.60%). These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate study report which revealed that 30.25 percent of participants indicated that they have student leaders to represent interests of distance students at the Learning Centre and the UFS (30.25%).

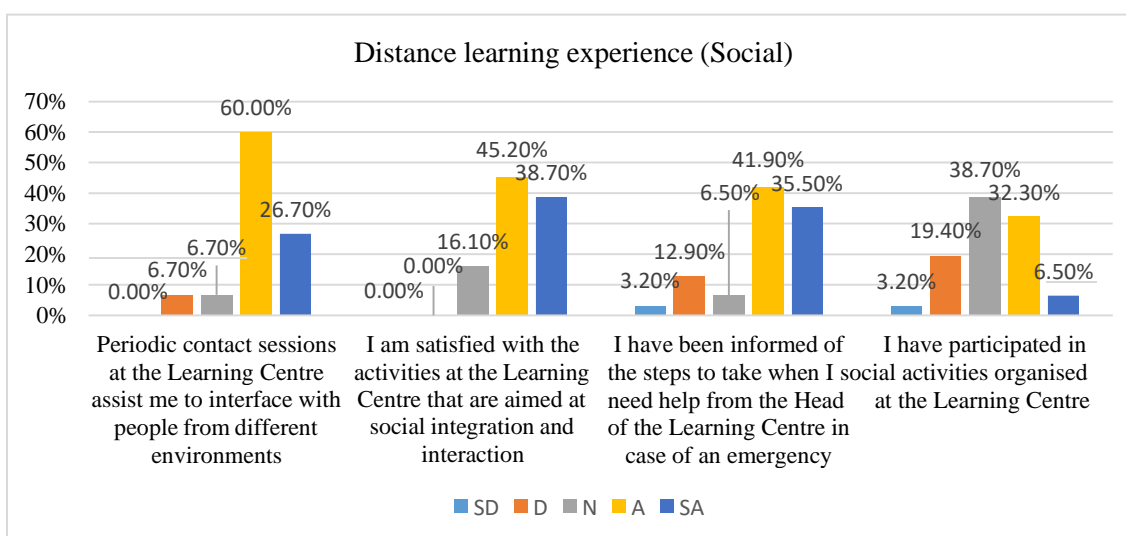


Figure 53: Distance learning experience (Social)

As shown in figure 102, more than 70 percent of participants indicated that periodic contact sessions at the Learning Centre assist them to interface with people from different environments (86.70%), that, they were satisfied with the activities at the Learning Centre that are aimed at social integration and interaction (83.90%) 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 (77.40%). However, 38.80 percent of participants indicated that they have participated in social activities organised at their Learning Centre – revealing the low level of participation among distance learners in social activities.

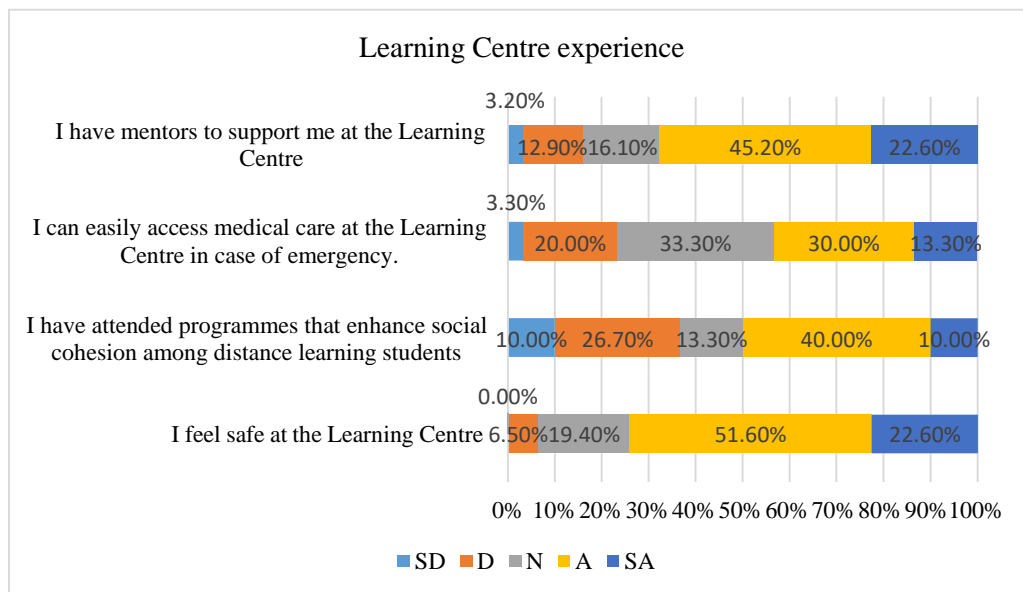


Figure 54: Learning centre experience

Results from the learning centre experience aspect revealed that more than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they felt safe at the learning centre (74.20%), they have attended programmes that enhance social cohesion among distance learning students (50.00%), and they have mentors to support them at the Learning Centre (67.80%). Conversely, less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they can easily access medical care at the Learning Centre in case of emergency (43.30%). Comparatively, the 2019 institutional climate report revealed that less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they felt safe at the learning centre (49.00%), that they can easily access medical care at the Learning Centre in case of emergency (19.00%) and they have mentors at the Learning Centre (48.30%).

3.3.2 Students' voices on distance learning experience

"Interesting to me thanks so much UFS team, facilitators well done for you work thanks so much."

"I would like the UFS to fix this issue of not seeing our grading on blackboard as distance learning students. Simplifying it for an easy access will be ideal. The issue of not receiving data for classes is also a predicament when we have our virtual classes."

"We have had no live digital interaction with our lecturer. Although I understand the dynamics of distance learning (I have done 2 degrees through UNISA), it is very difficult to only interact with the lecturer by means of email. The course work is very difficult and it would be of great assistance if there can be two or three sessions during the year when the students can dial in to an online Question and Answer session with the lecturer. "

"There are many mistakes in the modules and the feeling I got was that there is just too much copying and pasting in the Study Guides. Although the lecturer does respond to email questions, the delays in getting responses are frustrating. But I have learned a lot and for that I am thankful."

"I have been treated well as a first year student and online session are good as well, I can proudly say I am still happy to be part of this amazing institution."

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 (90.00%) and felt that the university recognises their humanity (79.30%), that the UFS environment allows for free and open expression of ideas that are different from the dominant views (83.30%), their interaction with staff and students provide them with a sense of belonging (80.00%) and that, the UFS culture allow for free and open expression of individual beliefs (86.70%).

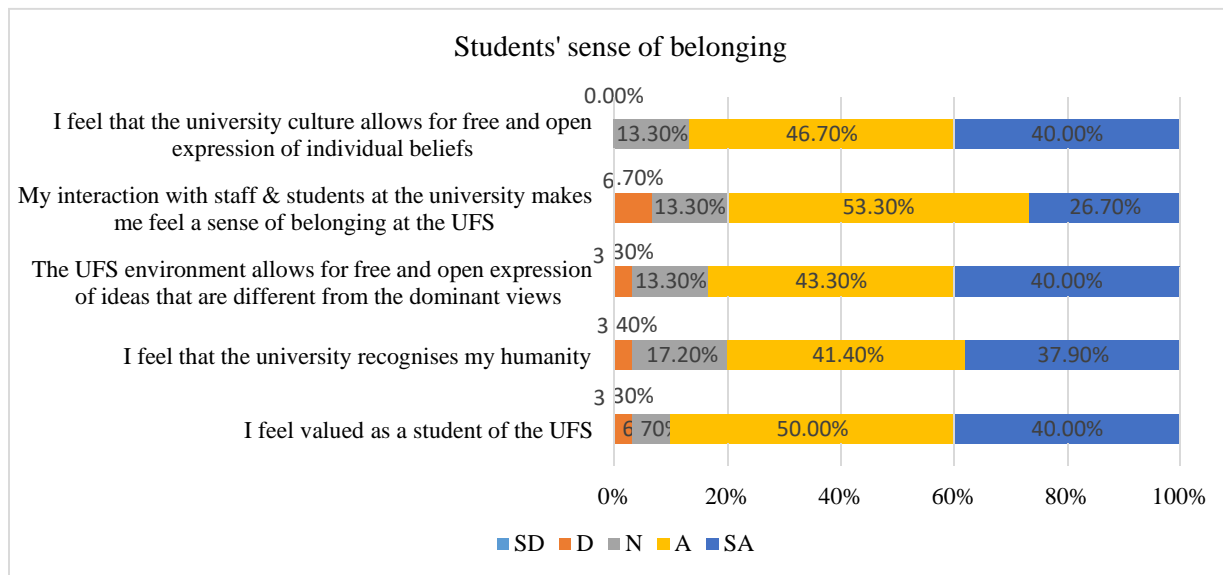


Figure 55: Students' sense of belonging

3.3.5 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

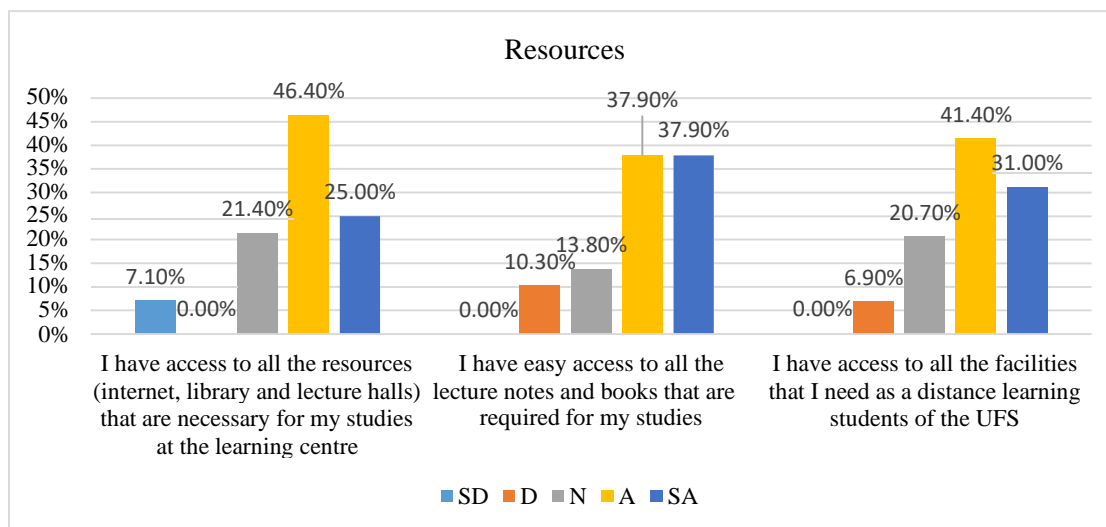


Figure 56: Resources

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, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that, they had access to all the resources (internet, library and lecture halls) on campus (71.40%), that they had access to all the lecture notes and books required for their

studies (75.80%) and that they have access to all the facilities they needed to use on campus for their studies (72.40%).

3.3.8 Information on safety and security

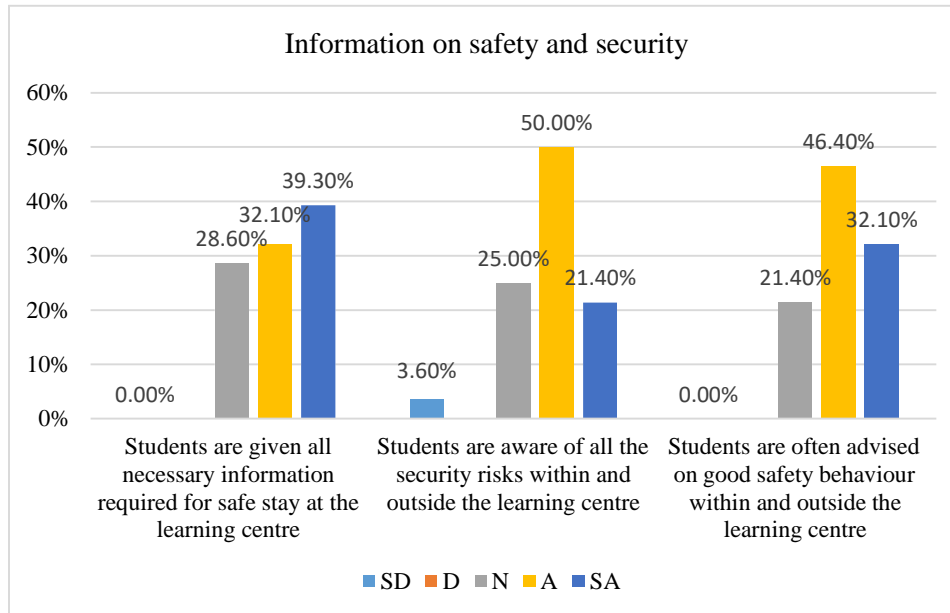


Figure 57: Information on safety and security

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, more than 70 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they were provided with all the necessary information for safe living (71.40%), they were aware of the security risks at the learning centre (71.40%) and, they are often advised on good safety behaviour within and outside campus (78.50%).

3.3.9 Facilities

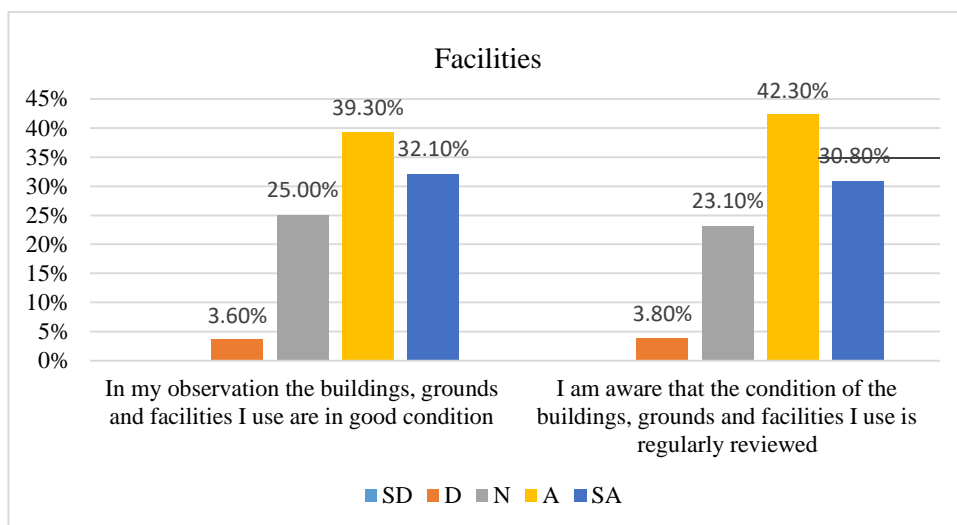


Figure 58: Facilities

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, more than 50 percent of the participants agreed with the statement that, the buildings, grounds and facilities they use are in good condition (71.40) and that, the buildings, grounds and facilities they use are regularly reviewed (73.10%).

3.3.11 Students' finance

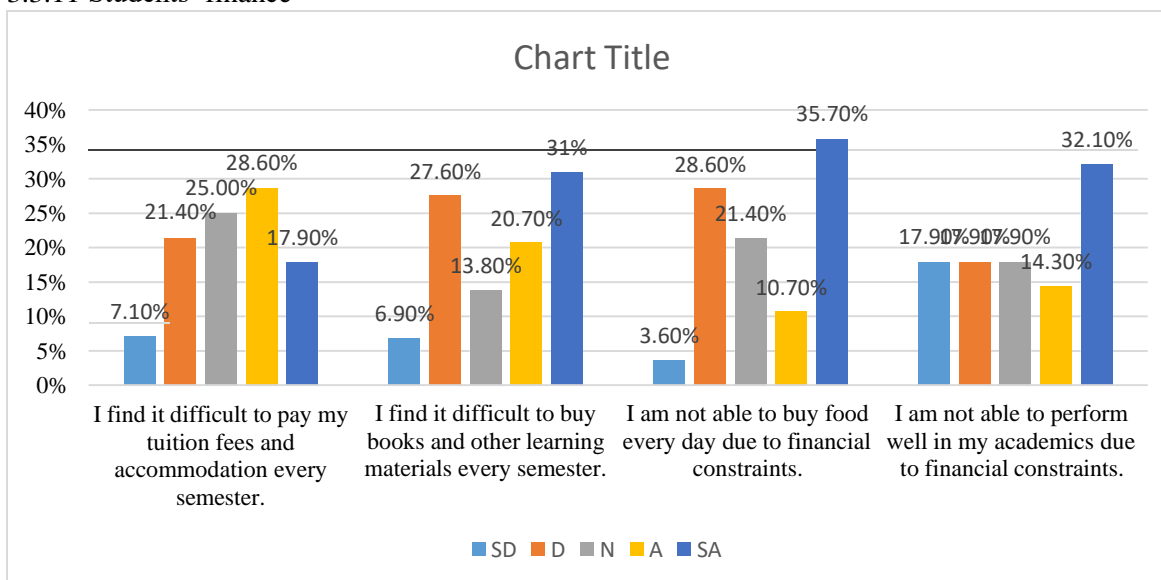


Figure 59: Students finance

Figure 109 shows the distribution of the responses of participants on four items. Less than 50 percent of the participants agreed to the statements that: they found it difficult to pay their tuition fees and accommodation every semester (46.50%), are not able to buy food every day due to financial constraints (46.40%), and I

am not able to perform well in my academics due to financial constraints (46.40%). Conversely 51.70 percent of participants agreed to the statement that they had challenges buying books and other learning materials every semester.

3.3.12 Financial aid

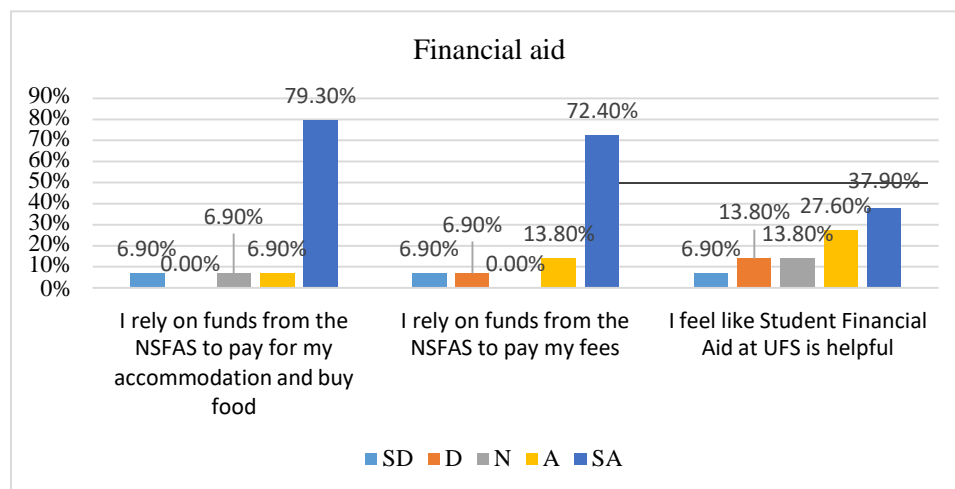


Figure 60: Financial aid

The results of students' opinion on the importance of financial aid to their study and stay on campus revealed that more than 80.00 percent of participants depend on funds from the NSFAS to pay for their accommodation and buy food (86.20%) and also depend on funds from NSFAS to pay their fees (86.20%). Similarly, 65.50 percent of students noted that students' financial aid is helpful. These results compare to the 2019 institutional climate results which 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 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 70 percent of students studying via distance learning modes enjoy the intellectual challenge that comes with the courses they study (93.30%), their lecturers often stimulate their interest in the subjects (83.40%), they work on projects that require them to integrate ideas from different sources (75.80%) and they find their module to be intellectually stimulating.

3.3.13a Intellectual engagement

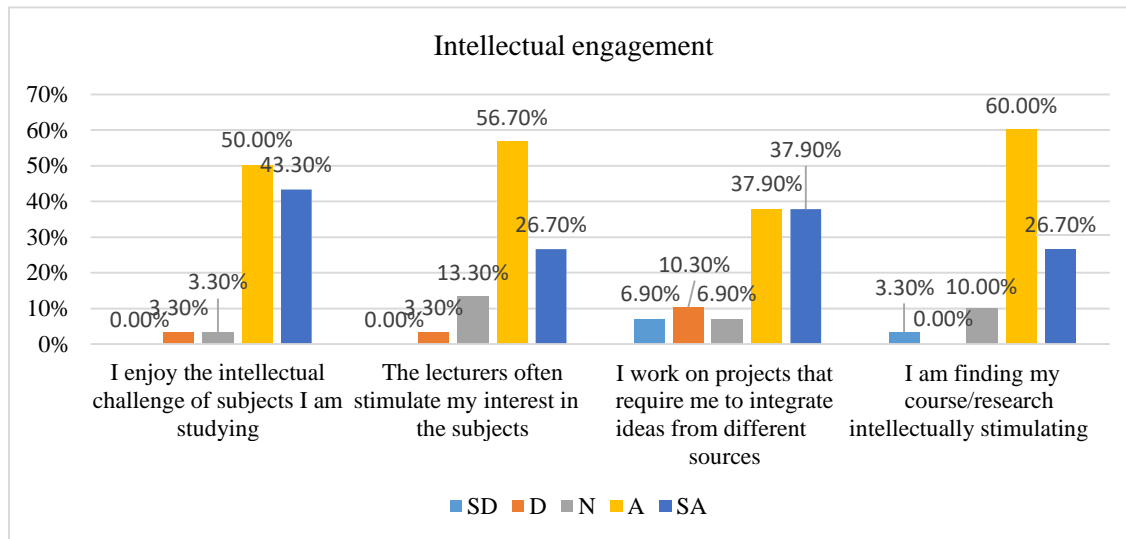


Figure 611: Intellectual engagement

3.3.13b Students-lecturers engagement

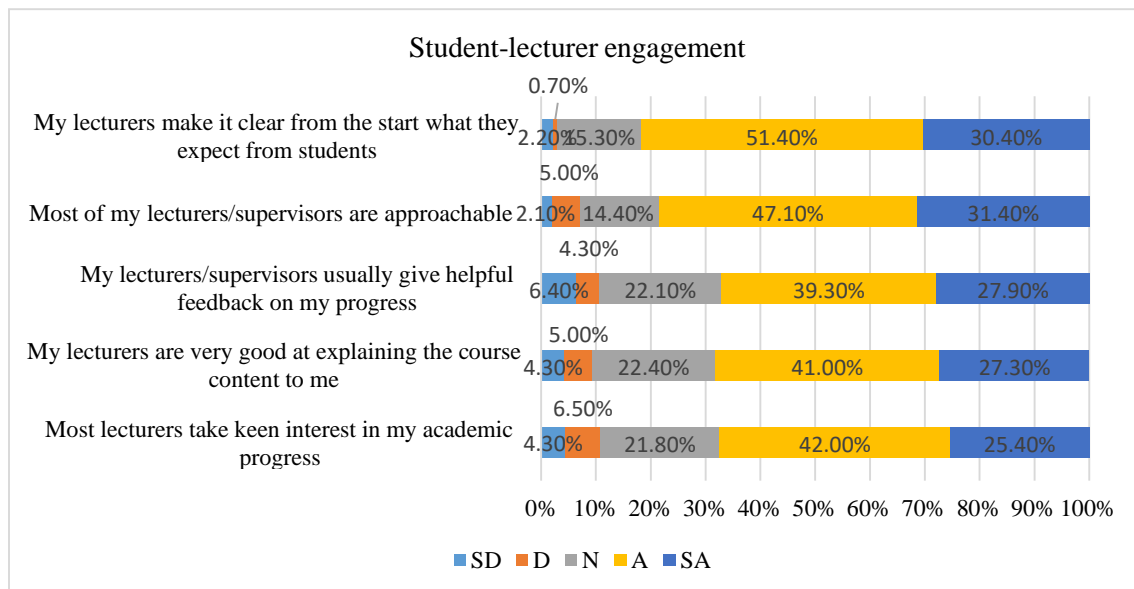


Figure 622: Student-lecturer engagement

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.

3.3.20 Supportive campus environment

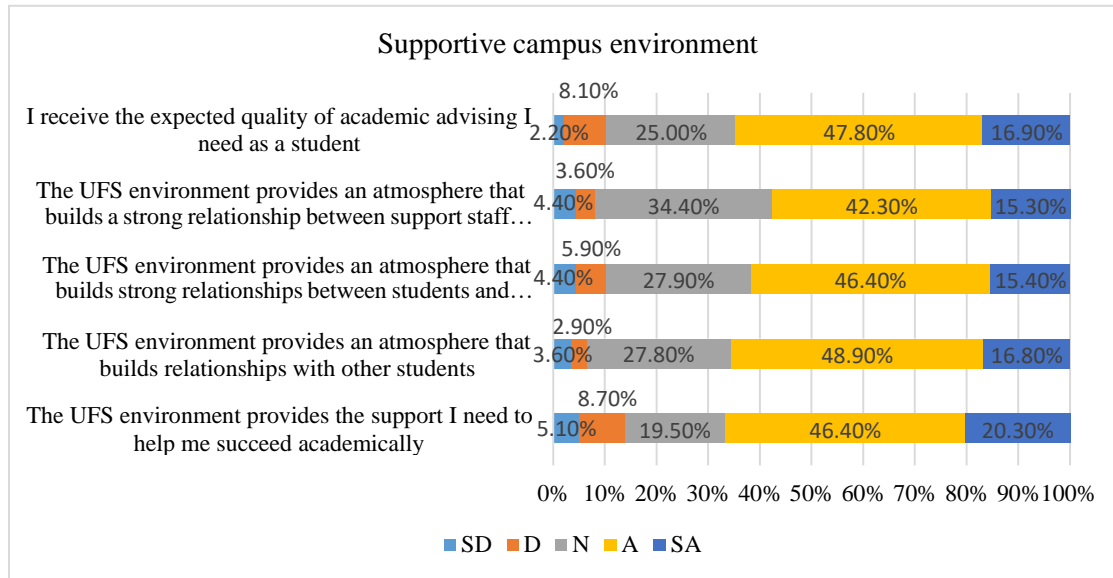


Figure 633: Supportive campus

Figure 113 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%).

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 Recommendation – staff experience

4.1.1 Change and transformation

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered many work processes in higher education setting including the UFS. Arguably the pandemic brought about many changes to the planned activities of the university towards the transformation process. Notwithstanding these challenges, the research team continued with its work under the circumstances. The results revealed marked improvement among staff about their knowledge of the mission, vision and strategic direction of the UFS. While the survey data shows that the majority of the participants are aware of the transformation agenda of the UFS (as compared to the 2019 institutional climate survey report), it is still 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 continuous stakeholder engagement and information dissemination should be broadly undertaken to enable staff to understand the transformation agenda of the UFS. 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 continually 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. We again recommend that 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. We also recommend that the UFS conduct a review of the institutional transformation agenda as part of the ITP midterm Review 2022. 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

Akin to the 2019 institutional climate survey, 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 results from the involvement sub-section revealed that 64.1 percent of academic and support staff contribute to the decision-making process in their department. This value represents a decrease in percentage of staff involvement in the decision-making process from the 76.46 percent recorded in 2019. Reason for the decrease could be the result of the COVID-19 pandemic where some line managers could not hold frequent meetings with their staff. 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. Also, 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. More than 70 percent of participants at South Campus agreed to the statement that they were quick to take advantage of opportunities at the UFS. While the agreement percentages for 2021 are higher than those recorded in 2019, we recommend that issues regarding staff motivation and the need to take up higher job responsibilities especially at the Bloemfontein 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. More than 50 percent of participants noted that they regularly receive information regarding impending changes in policies from their leaders. However, less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that the policies at the UFS are consistently and fairly applied in all staff matters. This compares with the result of the 2019 climate survey report which revealed that more than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that the policies at the UFS are consistently and fairly applied in all staff matters. The statement that, “UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth” revealed high agreement rate (66.10%). The results represent an increase from the percentage recorded in the 2019 institutional climate report that revealed that less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that the UFS provides unique opportunities for staff growth. This study recommends 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 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 18.5 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. The results revealed that while 64.07 percent of support staff indicated that they received regular feedback from their leaders, 57.93 percent of academic staff indicated that they regularly received feedback from their leaders. This compares with the 2019 Institutional Climate report which revealed that 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. We recommend that academic staff should be given regular feedback on their teaching and other assigned roles.

4.1.6 Learning and development

Learning and staff development are important elements in every higher education institution. The feedback from participants showed that more than 50 percent agreed to the statement that there is commitment by management to ongoing training and development of staff (71.60%) and that, the training given to staff improves their performance (71.00%). Similarly, a little above 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that new employees are given adequate guidance and training on their jobs when they start work. In relation to career opportunities for staff, the feedback revealed that more than 50 percent of participants spent more time and effort in planning their career (58.30%), were offered opportunities to develop the skills required for their career progression (61.90%) and believe that there are enough opportunities for career progression at the UFS (52.50%). The results revealed an increase in staff perception about the opportunities available at the UFS for staff progression from 45.30 percent in 2019 to 52.50 percent in 2021. Participants who contributed to the study via open-ended mode commended management for the learning opportunities offered to staff especially through staff study benefits. This study recommends that the HR department should find alternate modes of increasing the number of staff participation in training programmes.

4.1.7 Resources, technology and facilities

An analysis of the data revealed marked percentage increase in the perception of participants about the provision of resources and technology when compared to the 2019 institutional climate report. First, the study revealed that more than 70 percent of staff indicated that, they were provided with appropriate resources and had easy access to information and working materials. Furthermore, , average to high percentages were recorded with respect to the frequent update of the technology used by staff (81.50%), high proficiency in the application of technology by staff (90.00%) and, regular support in the use of technology (68.70%). Comparatively, less than 50 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein and South

campuses indicated in 2019 that they receive frequent training in technology application in their department. In relation to facilities, the results revealed that more than 70 percent of participants indicated that the facilities on campus were in good condition while 67.20 percent of staff indicated that the buildings and grounds were accessible by persons living with disability. The written comments by staff pointed to the fact that the People Soft campus solutions was not optimally used as expected while other applications developed for some departments were either not used or are under-utilised. We recommend that the university continues to provide access to the various buildings and facilities for persons living with disability on all three campuses. Also we recommend that an audit of applications either purchased or developed for the various department should be conducted to enable the university avoid the cost of paying for applications that may not be in use.

4.1.8 Safety

The responses by participants on safety revealed staff concerns regarding safety arrangements for staff and students during the COVID period and concerns about safety protocols. Notwithstanding these concerns, more than 75 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, and that management encourage good safety practices. The written comments revealed staff concerns about COVID-19 vaccinations and the need for management to ensure that staff and students who enter the university produce their COVID-19 PCR test results and their vaccination certificates. This study recommends that management should ensure that staff and students who enter the university produce their COVID-19 PCR test results and their vaccination certificates.

4.1.9 Rewards, recognition and appraisal

Feedback from participants revealed that more than 50 percent of participants indicated that the UFS fulfils its obligations with respect to remuneration and other benefits and that they were satisfied with the conditions of service. Contrastingly, less than 50 percent of participants indicated that the rewards they received from their work was fair (42.80%) and that they were satisfied with the income they receive (41.40%). These percentages compare with the results obtained in the 2019 institutional climate study where 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, 40.74 percent of academic staff and 43.10 percent of support staff indicated that the rewards they received from their job

was fair. In relation to staff performance management, more than 50 percent of staff indicated that their job performance is reviewed and evaluated as scheduled (68.00%), the evaluation of their performance is fairly conducted (64.20%) and, the feedback provides clear guidelines on areas for improvement (51.40%). Four major issues were highlighted by staff in the open-ended section. Perceived favouritism in the promotion of academic staff, the lack of clearly defined promotion criteria in some departments and discrepancies in the salary structure of staff, and job-grading issues. This study recommends that the promotion of academic and support staff should be done through a committee structure rather than at an individual level to avoid all forms of perceived discrimination and favouritism in the promotion of staff. 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 and job-grading seemed to be a major concern for 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 Personal accomplishment, Intention to stay and staff commitment

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, enjoy the work they do, and are satisfied with their jobs. The study further revealed that 70.70 percent of participants indicated that they were likely to stay and work at the UFS in the next five years while 58.40 percent noted that they will be working at the UFS in the next 10 years. Similarly, 58.70 percent of staff indicated that, they could see a future for them at the UFS. Comparatively, the institutional climate report for 2019 revealed the following: 66.60 percent of participants noted that they were likely to stay and work at the UFS in the next five years; 51.50 percent noted that they will be working at the UFS in the next 10 years; and 53.20 percent of staff indicated that, they could see a future for them at the UFS. The responses of staff also revealed a high sense of loyalty and commitment to the UFS (79.40%), a sense of pride to work for the UFS (78.60%), willingness of staff to put in extra effort for the UFS (84.80%) and a sense of belongingness (67.90%). The written comments revealed that there is a lack of retention policy at the university while some staff feel that the promotion criteria used by their leaders are not consistent with what is stated in the university's policy documents. This study recommends that the HR department ensure that all staff grievances concerning promotion, job-grading and remuneration are thoroughly addressed.

4.1.11 Staff welfare and work-life balance

Results from this study show that, more than 60 percent of staff feel emotionally well at work, keep their stress level low, are aware of the benefits of physical activities and are aware of a fitness centre on campus. Similarly, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that they regularly participate in physical activities on campus. In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic results for the work-life balance sub-section showed that the majority of participants maintain a good balance between work and other aspects of their life, maintain a social life outside work and are able to meet their family responsibilities while still doing what is expected of them at work. What the result suggest is that, most participants maintain a good work-life balance. The written feedback from participants – especially academic staff showed that high teaching workload and student thesis supervision affect work-life balance and teaching innovation. This study recommends that the various academic departments should ensure that academic staff are assigned teaching workloads that allows them to also conduct research and perform other duties as expected.

4.1.12 Victimisation, discrimination and harassment

The results revealed that 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 gender 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 17.80 percent by male participants. This finding compares to the results of the 2019 Institutional Climate study where 21.40 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. In relation to campus distribution of the responses by staff, 23.33 percent of participants at the QwaQwa campus indicated some form of victimisation compared to those in Bloemfontein (19.66%) and South Campus (40.00%). The results further revealed that more than 60 percent of participants indicated low levels of discrimination based on physical or mental disabilities, staff social class, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and ethnicity. However, the percentage of participants who indicated that they experienced low level of discrimination based on race were 57 percent.

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. The study further recommends that the diversity and inclusivity training workshop that are organised for staff on campus

should be continued to enable all staff appreciate the importance of respecting the rights of their colleagues and to eschew all forms of harassment, victimisation and discrimination. 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

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 result showed that more than 60 percent of the participants had read the vision statement of the UFS while less than 10 percent indicated that they had not read the vision statement. These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate report that showed that 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. The results also revealed that less than 50 percent of the participants indicated that they understood the purpose of the ITP. The subsection 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 less than 50 percent of participants were of the opinion that UFS encourage students to participate in decision-making Committees and that they are involved in the decision-making committees. The written comments from participants points to the need for lecturers to be trained on diversity issues, continuous dialogue between management and students' representatives, and the need for frequent and prompt feedback to student mails. We 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 create a good feedback loop in all the departments to enable

students receive responses to their inquiries. 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

The findings show that participants who reside on campus indicated strong sense of belonging. In particular, more than 60 percent of participants at the QwaQwa Campus and South Campus indicated that their experience living in a residence on campus made them feel belonged. Similarly, 58.70 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein Campus indicated that their experience living in a residence on campus made them feel that they belonged. This finding compares with results of the 2019 institutional climate study which showed that more than 60 percent of participants at the Bloemfontein Campus, QwaQwa Campus and South Campus indicated that their experience living in a residence on campus made them feel that they belonged. The result further revealed that more than 60 percent of the participants indicated that, they interface with people from different environments at the residences and that residence heads interact with students through meetings. Similarly, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that they are satisfied with the activities in the residences that are aimed at social integration and that, they feel that there are supportive programmes at the residences. The written comments revealed students' discontentment at the decision of some residence heads to choose events for students without asking for their opinion and the need for more activities that enhance cross cultural interaction. In order to enhance social cohesion on campus, this study recommends that first residence heads consult students before drawing programmes. Also, there should be more cross-cultural activities to enhance social cohesion among students.

4.2.3 Off-campus residence experience

Three main issues emerged under the off-campus residence domain – security, accommodation and transportation seemed to be of importance to students who reside outside the UFS. Feedback from the participants revealed that while the release of funds for the payment of private accommodation by students are delayed, there are also the lack of communication concerning the status (accreditation) of some private accommodation. Other students also touched on safety concerns as well as the need for the university to provide students with transportation. This study recommends that first, management of the UFS provide adequate security for students who reside outside campus. Secondly, it is important for the university to communicate the status of the various private accommodation to students to ensure that students who rely on NSFAS to move into only accredited private accommodation. Furthermore, 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.

4.2.4 Students' sense of belonging

The results revealed that more than 60 percent of participants felt valued as students, that the UFS culture allow for free and open expression of individual beliefs and that their interaction with staff and students provided them with a sense of belonging. Furthermore, more than 50 percent of participants agreed with the statement that the UFS environment allows for open expression of ideas by students, and that they felt that the university recognises their humanity. These results compare with the 2019 institutional climate report that showed that more than 50 percent of participants felt valued as students and that the university recognises their humanity. The feedback from participants by way of written feedback showed that some staff communicate with students in languages they do not understand.

4.2.5 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 with fellow students on campus. Also, more than 60 percent of participants noted that staff of the UFS respect the different religious or spiritual beliefs of students other than Christianity and that they felt comfortable expressing my religious identity on campus. Similarly, 76.70 percent of participants indicated that lecturers respect the different religious beliefs of their students other than Christianity.

4.2.6 Diversity climate

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. Furthermore, more than 70 percent of participants were of the opinion that creating an inclusive environment on campus is important for the UFS, making staff & students aware that we all need each other is very important for the UFS, and recruiting

more white students should be one of the priorities for the UFS. Concerning interaction with diverse peers, the results revealed that more than 70 percent of participant agreed to the statement that: respecting someone from a different racial/ethnic group promotes social cohesion; studying with colleagues from different racial/ethnic groups is necessary for integration and peaceful coexistence and; sharing meals with colleagues from different racial/ethnic groups enhances cross racial and cross cultural integration. 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, diversity-related courses are effective to foster deep understanding among students and staff from different social backgrounds, and that it is important for students to take a course that addresses LGBTQIA + issues. 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.

The result from the sub-section on LGBTQIA+ inclusive curriculum revealed that more than 50 percent of participants opined that lecturers recognise the humanity of LGBTQIA+ students in their language of teaching. Conversely, less than 50 percent of participants agreed to the statement that lecturers incorporate gender variant issues as significant in the curriculum and, lecturers/supervisors incorporate issues about homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity. This study recommends that the university should promote more diversity related programme among off-campus students. Secondly, lecturers should be encouraged to incorporate gender variant issues as significant in the curriculum as well as incorporate issues about homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity in their teaching.

4.2.7 Race relations

The findings revealed that 16.3 percent of participants indicated that they had experienced racism on campus while 20.0 percent of the participants indicated that students are treated differently by the administrative staff based on their race. Conversely, more than 50 percent of participants indicated that they felt that lecturers cared about students irrespective of their race. Furthermore, more than 60 percent of participants indicated that they considered the UFS as a learning environment that embraces the multiplicity of races, that the UFS is a learning environment that promotes the principles of equity, human rights & human dignity and that they believe that the UFS treats all races equitably. The results also show that more than 50 percent of participants in the faculties of Law (60.00%) Theology (59.10%), Education (55.50%), Natural and Agricultural Sciences (59.60%), Humanities (58.80%) and Economic and Management Sciences (57.80%) were of the opinion that the UFS treats students of all races equitably. Contrariwise, less than 35 percent of participants in the Faculty of Health Sciences (31.30%) were of the opinion that the UFS

treats students of all races equitably. These results compare with the 2019 Institutional Climate study which revealed that 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

This study recommends that staff and students of all races should be continuously reminded to treat persons of other race with respect. Importantly, 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. 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. Beyond social activities, this study recommends 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.

4.2.10 Finance

The results on students' opinion about the importance of financial aid to their study revealed that more than 70 percent of participants rely on funds from the NSFAS to pay for their accommodation, buy food and pay their fees. Similarly, 50 percent of students noted that students' financial aid is helpful. These results compare with the findings of the 2019 institutional climate results which showed that less than 50 percent of participants relied on funds from the NSFAS to pay for their accommodation, buy food and pay their fees. The feedback from participants via the open-ended section of the survey revealed that students are not happy with the support they receive from the NSFAS office. Others also decried what they termed as a lack of quality services from the NSFAS office especially in relation to responding to inquiries and providing students with urgent feedback. The current study strongly recommends that students' complaints about NSFAS should be expedited and prompt feedback should be given to students when they request for any information regarding their funds disbursement.

4.3 List of Recommendations Table

	Recommendations	Activity	Responsible Stakeholder
1	Change and transformation: While the survey data shows that the majority of the participants are aware of the transformation agenda of the UFS (as compared to the 2019 institutional climate survey report), it is still 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 continuous stakeholder engagement and information dissemination should be broadly undertaken to enable staff to understand the transformation agenda of the UFS. Top management and middle management appointments that are aimed at transforming the UFS should be continually communicated to the university community.	Strategic planning/implementation workshops and revision of the communication plan.	DIRAP Department of Communication and Marketing
2	Leadership and staff involvement (planning): 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. Administrative tasks that are not required of academic staff should be given to administrative staff to enable academic staff perform their core functions of teaching and research satisfactorily.	Improve the planning regime to ensure more staff involvement. Review faculty support availed to early career academics. Clarify roles and responsibilities (academic and support/admin staff)	Deans and HoDs
3	Motivation and initiative: We recommend that issues regarding staff motivation and the need to take up higher job responsibilities especially at the Bloemfontein Campus should be addressed. Additionally, there should be clearly defined pathways for growth and opportunities for staff to develop themselves to occupy higher positions.	Review the successes and challenges facing the current succession planning regime.	HR

4	Job processes: The study recommends 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.	An evaluation of the implementation of the promotion policy Assess availability of all HR policies on the UFS website An engagement with the Deans on effective implementation of the new workload model	HR
5	Role clarity: The study recommends that academic staff should be given regular feedback on their teaching and other assigned roles.	Faculty feedback engagements on staff roles as a core agenda item on Faculty Boards.	Deans
6	Learning and development: This study recommends that the HR department should find alternate modes of increasing the number of staff participation in training programmes.	A project to evaluate other feasible models of staff training in order to increase participation.	HR
7	Resources, technology and facilities: The study recommends that the university continues to provide access to the various buildings and facilities for persons living with disability on all three campuses. It is further recommended that an audit of applications either purchased or developed for the various department should be conducted to enable the university avoid the cost of paying for applications that may not be in use	An audit of all applications at the UFS purchased or developed internally, in order to evaluate the efficiency of using such applications.	ICT
8	Rewards, recognition and appraisal: The study recommends an evaluation of the implementation of the academic staff and support staff promotion policy to avoid forms of perceived discrimination and favouritism in the promotion of staff. 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	An evaluation of the implementation of the promotion policy.	HR

	is very important for promotion of staff to be based on fairness and very clear procedures. Issues regarding career progression and job- grading seemed to be a major concern for 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.		
9	Personal accomplishment, Intention to stay and staff commitment: The study recommends 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. The study further recommends that the diversity and inclusivity training workshop that are organised for staff on campus should be continued to enable all staff appreciate the importance of respecting the rights of their colleagues and to eschew all forms of harassment, victimisation and discrimination.	Evaluate the feasibility of creating a dedicated structure handling all staff complaints about discrimination. More diversity and inclusive workshops.	HR
10	Student voice: Management should evaluate the effectiveness of student representation on the various decision-making Committees of the University. It is important for management of the UFS to take the necessary steps to create a good feedback loop in all the departments to enable students receive responses to their inquiries.	Evaluation of student representation More awareness among members of management about responsiveness to student concerns.	Student Affairs SLG
11	Improving on-campus residences student experience: This study recommends that residence heads consult students before drawing programmes. Also, there should be more cross-cultural activities to enhance social cohesion among students.	More consultative student engagements More cross-cultural activities	Student Affairs
12	Improving off-campus accommodation student experience: The study recommends that management provides adequate security for students who reside outside campus. The university should communicate the status of the various private accommodation to students to ensure that students who rely on NSFAS move into only accredited	Evaluate ways of providing more security Improve communication of accredited residence facilities Evaluate the possibility of	Student Affairs

	private accommodation. Management should explore the possibility of developing off-campus community projects where students are housed in residential clusters with additional support from the UFS.	creating off-campus residential clusters for community projects.	
13	Diversity: The study recommends that the university should promote more diversity related programmes among off-campus students. Secondly, lecturers should be encouraged to incorporate gender variant issues as significant in the curriculum as well as incorporate issues about homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity in their teaching.	More diversity programmes for off-campus students Encourage lecturers to include diversity themes in their teaching	Student Affairs Deans
14	Race relations: The study recommends that staff and students of all races should be continuously reminded to treat persons of other race with respect. Importantly, students who are racially abused should be encouraged to report all such incidents to the appropriate offices for redress.	Diversity training More social-cultural activities on all campuses More awareness among students about the role of the Unit for Institutional Change and Social Justice	HR Unit for Institutional Change and Social Justice
15	Improving NSFAS Office services: The study strongly recommends that students' complaints about NASFAS should be expedited and prompt feedback should be given to students when they request for information regarding their funds disbursement.	To evaluate ways of improving services provided and responsiveness to student requests for further information.	Finance

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