

HOW DO STUDENTS PERCEIVE PRODUCT, SERVICE, QUALITY, FEAR, AND BARRIERS WITH RESPECT TO DEMING'S 14 POINTS?

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ABSTRACT

Deming set forth 14 points that any type of organization can implement to achieve a successful total quality management program. These points refer to product, service, quality, fear, and barriers. The focus of this study is to assess students' perceptions of these five terms, in the context of Deming's 14 points, as they pertain to the university and college academic environment. A survey instrument was developed to collect these perceptions and administered to 56 students in a junior level required production and operations management course.

RESULTS SUMMARY

This research indicates that "education" was the students' dominant perspective for defining both product and service, while "value of education" was their primary definition of quality — cited by 57 percent, 87 percent, and 57 percent of respondents, respectively. "Degree" was the second most frequent definition for product (52 percent). "Facilities" was the number two definition for service (30 percent). The "ability of faculty" was the second most frequent definition of quality (27 percent). Unexpectedly, only a few students mentioned (1) "research" or (2) "academic support" and other student services (e.g., financial aid).

Regarding fear, the most frequent definition was "fear of unknown/self-doubt" which was mentioned by 55 percent of students. The second most cited definition of fear was "discrimination/intimidation" (21 percent).

Most students (52 percent) viewed barriers, in general, as any "hindrance of education". Two other frequently stated barriers were "communication/cooperation" and "finances", each being cited by 20 percent of respondents.

Also, the students' perceptions decidedly supported Deming's 14 points as being applicable to the university and college environment. Over 50 percent responded that 11 of the 14 points **do apply**. Three points received over 90 percent **do apply**. These relate to instituting programs of continual education and self-improvement (point 13), to the purpose for improvement of product and service to be competitive (point 1), and to breaking down barriers (point 9).

Three points seemed to be in the category of **does not apply**. These relate to ceasing dependence on inspection to achieve quality (point 3), eliminating slogans and targets that urge employees to improve performance (point 10), and substituting leadership to eliminate quotas and management by objectives (point 11).