

**A VALIDATION OF LECTURERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF THE REASONS WHY HOSTEL
STUDENTS ABANDON THEIR STUDIES.**

BY

WILLIAM B. STEVENS

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS (COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY.)
in the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts,
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
Pretoria, January 1996**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express his sincere thanks to the following people and organisations:

- 1) Supervisor: Prof G. Smit, University of Pretoria
- 2) Martin Slabbert, Teresa Seaward, Marius Boshoff, Everdon Estate, for the use of computer equipment.
- 3) My parents, Rodney and Marie Stevens, my brothers, Thomas and Andrew, and my sister, Gerrida Stevens, for their encouragement, support and their belief in me.

SPECIAL THANKS

to my wife, ADEL, who assisted me throughout the project.

Contents

Chapter 1 The Research Problem	1
1.1 Complexity of the Problem	3
1.2 Aim of Research.	7
1.3 Research format.	8
Chapter 2 Literature Study	10
2.1 Introduction	10
2.1.1 Abandoning of studies	10
2.1.1.1 Academic failure	11
2.1.1.2 Academic under-achievement	11
2.2 Reasons for students abandoning their studies	12
2.2.1 Cognitive Factors	13
2.2.1.1 Intelligence	13
2.2.1.2 Aptitude	15
2.2.2 Non-cognitive factors	16
2.2.2.1 Interest	17
2.2.2.2 Self-concept	19
2.2.2.3 Motivation	20
2.2.2.4 Social adaptation and interaction	22
2.2.2.5 Hostel Initiation	24
2.2.2.6 Student extra mural activities	26
2.2.3 Academic factors	26
2.2.3.1 Problematic study methods	26
2.2.3.2 Incorrect career choice	31
a. The Family	31
b. Peer group	32
c. Career counselling	32
d. Career expectations	34

2.2.3.3	Inadequate academic preparation at school for university	35
2.2.3.4	Method of lecturing	36
2.2.3.5	Inadequate entrance barriers for students.	39
2.2.4	Socio-economic factors	40
2.2.4.1	Family background	41
2.2.4.2	Place of residence	41
2.2.4.3	Economic/Financial factors	42
2.2.5	Biographical factors	43
2.2.5.1	Age	43
2.2.5.2	Gender	43
2.2.5.3	Health	44
	Conclusion	45
Chapter 3	Research Method	47
3.1.	Introduction	47
3.2.	Research problem	48
3.3.	Selection of research subjects.	49
3.3.1.	Selection of lecturers	49
3.3.2	Selection of students	50
3.3.2.1.	Selection of one male and one female hostel.	50
3.3.2.2.	Selection of 100 male and 100 female students.	50
3.4.	Research design	52
3.5.	Collection of data	53
3.5.1	Lecturer symposium	53
3.5.2	The research instrument	53
3.5.2.2	Reasons for abandoning studies	54
3.6	Research hypothesis	55
3.7	Research validity	56
Chapter 4	Research Results	57
4.1	Introduction.	57

4.2	Reasons why students abandon their studies.	58
4.2.1	Factor 1: Adaptation from school to University.	58
4.2.2	Factor 2: Incorrect career choice	61
4.2.3	Factor 3: Weak motivation to study	64
4.2.4	Factor 4: Poor academic preparation at school	67
4.2.5	Factor 5: Incorrect study methods	70
4.2.6	Factor 6: Financial factors	73
4.2.7	Factor 7: Student social activities	75
4.2.8	Factor 8: Ineffective lecturing methods	78
4.2.9	Factor 9: Low university entrance requirements	82
4.2.10	Factor 10: Hostel initiation	85
Chapter 5	Interpretation of Research Results	88
5.1	Introduction	88
5.2	Interpretation of research results.	88
5.2.1	Factor 1: Adaptation from school to university	88
5.2.2	Factor 2: Incorrect career choice	90
5.2.3	Factor 3: Weak motivation to study	92
5.2.4	Factor 4: Poor Academic preparation at school for university	94
5.2.5	Factor 5: Incorrect study methods	95
5.2.6	Factor 6: Financial factors	97
5.2.7	Factor 7: Student social activities	98
5.2.8	Factor 8: Ineffective lecturing methods	99
5.2.9	Factor 9: Low university entrance requirements	100
5.2.10	Factor 10: Hostel initiation	101

Chapter 1

The Research Problem

"Eighteen is a momentous birthday. Upon reaching this age a person may, for the first time on his or her own volition – vote, marry, stop school, join the armed forces or work in industry. The two or three years before and immediately after this birthday are very significant in choosing a career. Society expects the mature adolescent to have to become independent, and to begin partaking in its work." (Healy, 1982, p7)

As Healy (1982) states eighteen is a very important age in one's life. After having left school adolescents are expected to make a very significant decision, whether or not to study at a university. The reasons for this choice are varied.

Some adolescents want to study at university because it is the socially expected thing to do, others choose to study at university to prepare themselves for their chosen careers. Whatever the reasons, the adolescent is faced with a new, exciting, and demanding environment. This decision to enter university is a voluntary one. Students choose to enter university because it seems the best option for them and their parents from among several available possibilities. They make this choice because they see university as the best way of attaining certain goals of importance to them.

New challenges lie ahead for the student, challenges which the student will either meet or fail to meet. The new environment will bring new social contacts, greater competition and responsibility.

Academic success at university does not only imply making the correct career choice or merely selecting the correct university. Academic success at university is dependent on many factors such as commitment and motivation to study.

A motivated student, eager to learn and determined to succeed, is more likely to achieve his or her goals. However, these factors are not the only ones that determine whether or not a student will be successful at university.

Unhappy, perplexed, frustrated, lost, depressed, disappointed, irritated, confused – these terms describe the feelings that come over almost every university student at times, particularly during the first few months when [s]he feels the full impact of the university experience. Although each student considers his experience to be unique some feelings of disorientation and confusion are virtually universal. Even students who appear happy and in control of the situation have their moments of doubt and despair. These reactions are normal.

They occur partly because students have entered an environment that is new to them, but also – more importantly – because this new environment probably allows them more freedom than they have ever experienced or will experience afterwards, but is, at the same time, both demanding and exacting.

The reasons for a student's success or disappointment may be found, for the most part, in the way in which choices and decisions are generated by this perplexing situation.

The academic personnel at the University of Pretoria are particularly concerned about the number of first year students that are abandoning their studies. In February 1989, a symposium was held at the University, at which the problem of the attrition of first year students was discussed. Lecturers who attended the symposium felt that more had to be found out about why so many first year students were abandoning their studies.

The authorities at the University of Pretoria view the problem of academic failure and the abandoning of studies by first year students in a very serious light. A number of official investigations have been carried out on the subject.

This focus was already evident in 1950 when a senate committee, led by Prof G Cronje, started an investigation. Subsequently, Prof B F Nel continued the investigation. Academic failure and academic achievement were studied from all angles. However, even after detailed analysis of all the findings no conclusive or satisfactory counter-measures have been found.

1.1 Complexity of the Problem

Academic problems occur most frequently between the ages of six and twenty one years, because it is during this period that young people find themselves in an educational setting for much of their time.

The individual not only learns at school but is at the same time confronted with various developmental issues of childhood, adolescence and early adulthood.

In the United States of America over 40 % of all students leave school before having completed their studies. This occurs regardless of the fact that more than half of those students who leave school early have above average intellectual ability. (Barnard, 1983) In this respect Sacks (1968) claims that "higher education has to be reviewed with regards to existing conditions which are possible causes of academic manpower wastage. The demand for highly qualified manpower is increasing and this will effect the national economy." (p1)

A comparison of the investigation by Smit (1971) with that of Clark (1989), seems to show that the percentage of students abandoning their studies has not changed dramatically. In 1971 Smit found, after analysing the academic progress of students for the years 1966 - 1968, that the percentage of students

abandoning their studies was in the region of 13 %.

He came to the following conclusion: "dat die probleem van akademiese mislukking van eerste jaar universiteitstudente onrusbarend in omvang is. Behalwe vir finansiële implikasies en waardevolle mannekrag wat tot diens aan die gemeenskap weerhou word deur druijing is daar nog die demoraliserende invloed van druijing enersyds in die bepaalde groep waar dit plaasvind en andersyds op die druijeling self. Uit die ontleding blyk dit dat daar 'n dringende behoefte bestaan aan optrede wat tot 'n verhoogde slaagsyfer onder eerstejaar universiteit studente sal lei." (p 51)

At the University of Pretoria an average of 12,25 % of first year students have abandoned their studies yearly since 1985. The actual drop-out rates at the University of Pretoria are indicated in the table below.

Table 1.1: Drop out rates for first year students at University of Pretoria.

Year	Enrolment	Drop-outs	Drop-out %
1985	3741	502	13.4
1986	3884	462	11,9
1987	4133	502	12,1
1988	4177	466	11.6
Ave	3985	483	12,25

(Clark, 1989)

It may be concluded that, in spite of all the attempts to reduce the number of students abandoning their studies, the statistics remain consistent. The assumption can be made that the efforts that have been made to address the problem have not been successful.

Students leave university prematurely for various reasons. Table 1.2 indicates that students who leave the university have either failed or have dropped out. Also indicated in the table are the number of students who continue to study who are either partially or totally successful.

Table 1.2: Academic Performance levels of first year students.

Year	Enrolment	Drop-out%	Failure%	Other%	Successful
1985	3741	7,8	10,8	11,5	69,9
1986	3884	8,4	12,0	9,1	70,5
1987	4133	10,0	11,9	9,1	69,0
Ave	3919	8,73	11,56	9,9	69,8

[Clark, 1989]

Approximately 8,73% of all first year students abandon their studies. Only 69,8% of first year students successfully complete their first year. The indications are therefore that 30,2% of first year students are unsuccessful students.

The implications for both the students and the University are considerable, particularly in financial terms. In the current economic situation it cannot be allowed that such large numbers of students who enrol at tertiary institutions do not complete their studies.

Universities are very dependent on state subsidies, which are only paid in respect of successful students. Proportionately, students only contribute a small amount through fees.

The following example illustrates the financial implications of a student who abandons his/her studies.

Male student studying for a B.A degree and residing in hostel:

1. Hostel fees	R 6000,00
2. Class fees	R 5000,00 {paid by student}
	—————
Total	R 11,000
	—————
3. State subsidy —	R 6403,00 {successful student}
	R 3701,00 {half successful}

N.B. The above are approximate figures which may vary as a result of fewer subjects taken, meals eaten, etc.

If a student is successful the state pays the university the sum of R 6403,00. However, if the student passes only half of the year the state will pay only R 3701,00. For students who abandon their studies no subsidy is paid.

If a student who abandoned his/her studies in the first year had obtained a B.A Hons degree (4yrs) the university would have received approximately R50 000 from this student and the state in class and hostel fees and subsidy. No university can afford to lose this amount of money. Moreover, a student who abandons his/her studies will have paid out approximately R11,000, which has then also been lost.

Although there are high levels of unemployment in South Africa, there is at the same time a considerable shortage of skilled and highly trained workers. Students who abandon their studies add to this shortage.

A further important implication for universities that lose first year students is in respect of research. The academic future and value of a university is largely

determined by the research carried out within the university. Research publications are of great value to the university, particularly in financial terms.

Students who obtain their degrees often enrol for post graduate courses which then initiates much needed research.

To go through the entire procedure of applying for entrance to a university and then to be unsuccessful within the first year is a costly experience. Regretably, it is an experience which two out of every ten first year students are bound to go through.

1.2 Aim of Research.

At a symposium held at the University of Pretoria in February 1989 lecturers were asked to address the problem of first year students abandoning their studies. It became clear that much of the research into the problem has focused on the student: What problems were the students perceived to have? Were they adequately prepared at school? Did they have personal or personality problems? From what type of family did the student come from? In other words, the focus fell on those personality characteristics that differentiate a successful student from an unsuccessful student.

Lecturers who work from this perspective imply that if their perceptions were correct then they could address such problems during their lectures.

Many lecturers attending the symposium stressed that more research on the problem was necessary. It was decided that the focus of the research should be to evaluate lecturers perceptions of why first year students abandon their studies. The aim of the research would be to determine what lecturers consider to be the important causes of students abandoning their studies and then to determine whether or not students agree on the importance of those reasons.

At the symposium, lecturers mentioned a number of possible causes for the problem. This list was reduced to the ten most frequent factors mentioned by the lecturers.

It must be stated that there are a number of other factors that may influence students to abandon their studies. The factors being investigated, however, are those that were identified by the lecturers in other words those factors that represent the perceptions of most lecturers.

The aim of this research is therefore to attempt a validation of the perceptions of lecturers of why students abandon their studies. If it were to be found that lecturers perceptions are valid, the question of what they could do to alleviate the problem can then be addressed.

The validation would be achieved by determining to what extent students agree with the perceptions of the lecturers.

1.3 Research format.

This research report consists of five chapters. Each chapter deals with a specific section of the research.

Chapter 2 will present an integrated literature study of the field of research. In it, terms will be defined, and various notions about and theories of the possible causes of students abandoning their studies will be reviewed.

Chapter 3 will describe the research methodology in detail. Particular emphasis is placed on the selection of the research sample and the statistical methods involved in the analysis of the results.

Chapter 4 will focus on the results of the research. This chapter will present the

results in tabular form and each of the ten factors investigated will be reflected.

Chapter 5 will present a discussion and interpretation of the research results. Conclusions drawn from the results will also be presented in this chapter.

As has been mentioned this research aims to shed light on why so many first year students abandon their studies. As it is a highly complex problem it will not be feasible to discuss all the probable causes, nor their solution. However, an attempt will be made to deal with whatever appears to have a bearing on the main thrust of this research : the validation of the perceptions of lecturers of why first year students abandon their studies.

If there is a correlation between lecturers' and students' views, then the deduction can be made that lecturers understand the problems experienced by students who abandon their studies. Once the major causes of the problem have been identified it will become possible for lecturers to develop strategies for dealing with the problem.

Chapter 2

Literature Study

2.1 Introduction

This study will focus on reasons why first year students abandon their academic studies. It is therefore necessary to define what is meant by the term "abandoning studies" .

Although the main thrust of this research is concerned with lecturers' perceptions of why first year students abandon their studies, this chapter will focus on earlier research to determine which factors determine academic success, the intention is to obtain as broad a picture as possible of the phenomenon of academic failure and abandoning of studies so as to provide the theoretical foundation for this research.

2.1.1 Abandoning of studies

When first year students abandon their studies they leave the university without completing the academic year. This may be because the quality of their academic work during the year has been such that they do not qualify to sit the examinations, or, in some cases, students who do qualify to write the examination fail to turn up at the venue on the day. The latter group may well have the intellectual potential to complete a course at university. They have met the set minimum requirements for matriculation qualification and have gained exemption to enter a university. In some instances they have passed stringent entrance requirements and selection procedures to certain specialist faculties. Yet they

abandon their studies.

The grounds for abandoning studies fall into two categories: (1) academic failure, and (2) academic under-achievement.

2.1.1.1 Academic failure

Many students who fail courses during the academic year enrol again and continue in their quest to obtain a qualification. Other students, however, fail courses during the year and then abandon their studies. In such instances the fact that these students failed their courses has led to them abandoning their studies.

2.1.1.2 Academic under-achievement

Academic underachievement is a term used to describe cases where a person who has the intellectual potential to complete a course, fails to do so. (Barnard, 1983) Ralph, Goldberg and Passow (1966) say that under-achievement is the failure of people to develop to their full potential.

Likewise, Bower (in Weiner, 1970) states that an under-achiever is a person who performs below his or her capacity to learn. By definition, the under-achiever is that person who has the potential but fails to complete a task.

Primarily, this study is concerned with those students who fall into the category of "under-achievers", in other words those students that have the potential to complete a university course successfully, but abandon their studies during or after their first year on campus. However, academic failure will also need to be brought into the final analysis of why students abandon their studies.

The university should be most concerned about those students who abandon their

studies although they have the potential to pass, in other words, the under-achiever.

This research will attempt to validate lecturer perceptions of why students that have potential, fail to realise their potential.

2.2 Reasons for students abandoning their studies

Du Plessis (1986) maintains that because of financial and economic implications students are expected to perform well at university. When students enrol for a particular course they are invariably highly motivated and eager to succeed. However, any academic setback can result in frustration and feelings of failure can encroach negatively on the academic domain.

Malan (1980) views student academic problems against the background of three sets of factors: (1) those relating to the schooling system, (2) those relating to the student's personality, and (3) those that can be related to the university lecturing system.

Studying at university cannot be seen as a continuation of the schooling system. Du Plessis (1986) explains: "to a large extent new university students are being confronted by a magnitude of factual knowledge, handbooks and problems that need to be addressed. These factors make great demands on their self-discipline, commitment and intellectual potential." (p4)

Although academic failure and termination of studies are the most noticeable outcomes of problems experienced by first year students, they are actually symptomatic of other, less obvious difficulties they experience.

A large number of possible reasons have been identified as causing students to abandon their studies. These factors can be divided into five categories:

- (1) Cognitive factors
- (2) Socio-economic factors
- (3) Non-intellectual factors
- (4) Academic factors
- (5) Biographical factors

The possible causes for abandoning studies or failure in examinations will be addressed under these headings.

2.2.1 Cognitive Factors

Cognitive factors relate to the students' intellectual ability to complete a university course. The academic standards maintained by the university places a high premium on cognitive ability.

If students abandon their studies it is often readily assumed that they did not have the cognitive potential to succeed at university. This is not necessarily the case. Other factors may have had a negative impact on the students' realisation of their cognitive potential.

This literature study will consider intelligence and aptitude and their influence on academic performance.

2.2.1.1 Intelligence

Much has been said and written about the concept of intelligence. Intelligence is seen as the ability to handle abstract concepts effectively, to relate to and master new information and to adapt to new circumstances. (Definition of Intelligence:Gouws Louw , Meyer & Plug ,1979)

The definition of Gouws et al (1979) states that the ability to adapt to new

circumstances or changes within the environment is a function of intelligence. First year students have to adapt from the school environment to the university.

Students who adapt easily from the school environment to the university are likely to be more successful than their less adaptive peers.

Theoretically, students with higher intellectual ability are more likely to adapt effectively to the demands of university life and are therefore more likely to be academically successful, according to Gouws et al (1979). In practice, however, this is not necessarily the case.

Those students who are unable to adapt effectively to their new environment may be experiencing difficulties in their studies. External pressures which are not handled effectively can make it difficult for them to adapt to the new environment. Marais (1987) has shown that successful students have invariably adapted better to their new surroundings than those students that were unsuccessful. Therefore, according to Marais (1987), students with a higher intellectual potential adapt better to their new circumstances, or at least have the potential to adapt better.

Why do so many students who have the intellectual potential to succeed at university abandon their studies or fail? In recent years the academic entrance requirements that students must satisfy before they can enroll at a university have increased dramatically. While higher matriculation qualifications are required before they are allowed to enroll at the university, the numbers of students abandoning their studies remain high.

Scholtz (1987) found that although intelligence is a valid indicator of academic potential, other factors can be seen to have either a productive or non-productive influence. For example, students may have above average intellectual ability, but they use inappropriate study methods, or they lack sufficient motivation to study. Consequently, they abandon their studies.

Intelligence can therefore not be seen to be a singular determinant of academic achievement.

Cognitive ability is a genetically given potential and is developed through specific acts and thought activities. The students' intellectual potential will determine what levels their lives will take, and what their academic goals will be, and their levels of motivation and perseverance will determine on what level they will function. It must always be remembered that cognitive ability is not a guarantee for academic success. Cognitive ability cannot be viewed as an absolute because human beings function in totality and many other factors such as motivation, interests, study capabilities and personality factors influence the effectiveness of the learning process.

Smit (1971) states, "dat 'n student oor 'n ietwat bo-gemiddelde intellektuele vermoë moet beskik om suksvol te wees in die akademiese opleidingsituasie. Die blote beskikking oor hierdie potensialiteit is egter nog geensins 'n waarborg vir akademiese sukses nie . Die skrywer voel dat dit nie soseer die potensialiteit is nie, maar eerder die intellektuele styl wat in die akademiese situasie van primêre belang is." (p8)

Barnard (1983) states that there is a positive association between intellectual ability and academic achievement. There are a number of factors, however, that must be taken into consideration, such as personality, sociological and interpersonal factors, that exert an influence on the use of this potential.

2.2.1.2 Aptitude

Garber (1960) has indicated that a correlation exists between aptitude and academic performance. Louw (1984) states that a student possesses certain high aptitudes or, as he states, a combination of high aptitudes, which will enable such a student to be successful in one particular career and yet (s)he may fail in another which requires different high aptitudes.

A person with a high aptitude in a certain field is more likely to be successful in a related career. For example, a student that has a high mechanical aptitude is more likely to succeed in a mechanical career than a student who does not have a high mechanical aptitude.

However, other researchers have contradicted this view. Van Dyk (1978) maintains that aptitude has little value as a predictor of all round academic performance.

2.2.2 Non-cognitive factors

The factors discussed thus far have covered some of the potential causes for students abandoning their studies. However, these factors do not provide all the answers. Much research has been done on "non-cognitive" factors in an attempt to determine to what extent personality factors influence academic performance. (Scholtz, 1987)

Other researchers – Gouws (1957), Van Zyl (1960), Moller (1965), Gous (1966), Van Tonder (1969), Smit (1971) and Du Plessis (1986) – have corroborated this view.

In the foregoing discussion it has been suggested that university students are not only dependent on intellectual potential to be academically successful, but are just as dependent on non-cognitive factors.

With regard to non-cognitive factors Flaherty and Reutzel (1965) stated: "Students who succeed academically do not do so in an intellectual vacuum, rather they do so while contending and interacting with other non- intellectual circumstances, personal and social." (p409)

Tiebart (1943), Hawkes (1950), Bower and Holmes (1959) Van Zyl (1960) and

Arkhoff (1968) found in their research that poor academic performance in intellectually strong students could be accounted to personality factors. Hunter (1949) found that when students were questioned about their academic problems at university these students would name problems that were of an academic nature and not of a personal nature. These findings highlighted how a student experienced academic problems. The poor performer usually had little insight into his academic problems.

Research has also shown that students who do well academically have greater insight into their problems and were therefore able to make constructive effort to solve those problems. Interests indicate the likes or dislikes in specific activities. Because individuals have their own unique personality characteristics they will develop their own unique fields of interest. Therefore, it is important that interests are taken into consideration.

2.2.2.1 Interest

Interest in a career or type of work is crucial to ensuring success in that work. Interest in a career reflects a basic need to enjoy what one does. Erens (1977) claims that an interest in a career is a prerequisite for success in that career. Persons who enjoy themselves in what they are doing are more likely to succeed in the activity.

Englebrecht (1972) maintains that it is interest which determines what people will do. It is not how, or how well something is or can be done which motivates people to do something; rather, if they are interested in doing something, they will do it. Gouws et al (1979) also stress that interest in a specific field has a strong motivational aspect. An absence of interest in a specific field usually results in poor motivation to succeed in that career.

Super (1962) claims that interest plays a very important role in career choice and

the eventual motivation to succeed in that career. The following ten statements reflect the foundation of Super's theory;

- people differ in areas of potential, interest and personality.
- these differing characteristics result in people being eligible for various careers.
- every career demands a specific pattern of interests and personality factors.
- the self-concept of individuals vary from time to time forcing the individual to continuously adapt to changes and make choices.
- the process of change coincides with life stages (Super, 1957). During each life stage the individual progresses towards making a career choice.
- the nature of the career chosen is mostly influenced by the socio-economic level of the parents, the stability of the family and personality characteristics.
- Progression through the life stages is related to the ability of the individual to become more mature and to allow certain interests to develop.
- the process of making a career choice is essentially based on the ability to develop a self-concept. The process involves a compromise between natural talents or aptitudes and the opportunity to evaluate certain roles and attempt to gain the approval of seniors and peers.
- through role play the individual learns to compromise between self-concept and reality and between social and individual concerns.
- job satisfaction is dependent on how effective the individual is able to satisfy interests and personality characteristics in the chosen career.

Super's theory clearly suggests that interest plays a significant role in determining the extent to which people will succeed in a career. Non-intellectual factors are prominent in most aspects of selecting a career, developing towards that career and ultimate job satisfaction.

If career motives and job satisfaction are so important, then it must follow that for students – who are, after all, moving through a particular life stage towards a career – interest (or lack thereof) in that specific field is also going to influence academic performance.

Accordingly, it is crucial that students need to have insight into their fields of interests in order that they can make meaningful and responsible career choices. Where students are able to enjoy their interests in their chosen career they should be academically successful. Interest supports the motivation to study and directs the students' learning activities. Furthermore, interest can be seen to be the motivation behind self-discipline.

2.2.2.2 Self-concept

Wiechers (1979) argues as follows: "Die selfkonsep is die moontlikheidsvoorwaarde vir selfaktualisering. 'n Persoon se selfkonsep gaan bepaal hoe hy homself aanslaan, waartoe hy dink hy is instaat, en uiteindelik wat hy gaan aandurf, omdat 'n mens jouself teen mislukking en kritiek wil beskerm Die selfkonsep is dus inderdaad 'n persoon se geevalueerde selfbeeld." (p46)

The core of Super's theory is the "self-concept". Super (1957) claims that the self-concept is a product of a person's interaction with him/herself, his/her experiences and the environment. As people become older they develop an increasingly more realistic perception of their abilities, interests and values.

The question should be asked, how the self-concept influences students to

abandon their studies. Super's theory would suggest that students who have made career choices based on an inflated or unrealistic self-concept are likely to experience difficulties with their studies. These are the people who have over-estimated their potential or the interest that they have in that particular career.

A positive self-image, therefore, is likely to lead to higher objectives which in turn lead to a greater need to achieve. This leads to greater motivation to achieve the goal. Constructive feedback from lecturers to students and the necessary recognition would make a significant contribution to a positive self-image.

Barnard (1983) refers to research that clearly supports the notion that a definite relationship exists between self-concept and academic achievement.

Specific career choices are made as part of the development of a self-concept. People choose particular careers because of the influence that career will have on the self-concept.

The status of a career – the manner in which society views that career – exerts a strong influence on the way in which people following that career feel about themselves.

The same principles apply to students. Students who have healthy and realistic self-concepts, who feel good about themselves, are more likely to succeed. Students that have poor self-concepts are more likely to experience academic problems.

2.2.2.3 Motivation

Gouws et al (1979) say that motivation is a term used to describe a class of factors that determine or regulate behaviour. (Scholtz, 1987)

Certain researchers (Wankowski & Prince, 1969; Mouton 1972; Erens 1977)

have stressed the relationship between motivation and academic performance.

White (1969) proposes that motivation is an internal factor that stimulates, directs and regulates a person's behaviour.

According to Lindgren (1969) successful students attribute their success mainly to two factors: the way in which they studied, and their motivation. The same two factors were negatively prominent in the explanations of those students who had abandoned their studies. Their reports indicated that motivation was as important as methods of studying.

Marais (1987) states that motivation should simply be seen as the need to achieve success, power and to affiliate. Motivation and goal-directedness are most important in achieving academic success.

Students that lack goal direction and motivation will find academic success hard to achieve. Such students often do not prepare for examinations, have a lack of self-discipline, and are simply not interested in what they are doing. Motivation and interest are connected. Students with strong interests in a particular field of study will be motivated to be successful in that field.

Conversely, if students have no interest in what they are doing they are less likely to have the motivation to be successful in that field. (Erasmus, 1988)

The influence of lecturers on the motivation of their students should not be underestimated. It is an important and useful feature which should be incorporated into any lecturing situation. The quality of the lecture has a direct influence on the level of motivation or lack of interest. It is clear that motivation is of such importance that it must be activated in the lecturing situation.

Motivation may be regarded as the key to successful learning, and, consequently,

to academic success. A positive motivation is not always a given, and therefore the lecturer must take definite steps to stimulate the motivation of students.

The question is simple: if the lecturer is not motivated how can the students be motivated?

2.2.2.4 Social adaptation and interaction

Scholtz (1987) argues that the manner in which the individual adapts and interacts with the environment strongly influences that person's functioning within that environment.

Some significant emotional demands are made of first-year students. They have to meet new people, make new friends and become involved in new, more mature relationships. Very often the relationships from school, friendships that were supposed to last forever, come to an end. First year hostel students are provided with the opportunity to meet many people through activities such as rag, sport, and social gatherings. Often these events place enormous pressures on those students that are not socially inclined, and students that prefer more secure and stable relationships. The large city with all its many people can be a frightening experience.

Loneliness can become very real.

Students who are in hostels may be living away from home for the first time in their lives. (Malan, 1987) These students may become lonely, may not be used to living in the large city, may not be used to sharing a room with someone else, are uncomfortable with communal ablution facilities, find it difficult to eat hostel food and find it difficult to adapt to the social environment. Marais (1987) has stated that the students who adapt easily are the students who will be successful.

It is important that first-year students adapt as quickly as possible to their new environment. Van Zyl (1960) found that successful students maintain good interpersonal relations. Social interaction forms an important part of a balanced student life. Some students isolate themselves from social activities and often become lonely and so miss the opportunity of developing on all levels of society. (Marais, 1987) Social interaction forms part of a balanced student life. Life involves far more than just an academic career. To a greater or lesser degree every individual will have some form of social life. After all, man is a social being and needs to have some form of social affiliation with other people. At the same time, students cannot invest all their efforts into social activities.

The students' ability to maintain the fine balance between academic work and social interaction is crucial. To avoid becoming lonely students must have some form of social life and this must be balanced against their academic responsibilities.

An important factor related to social activities is the development of good social judgement and responsibility. Social activities become a problem when the student fails to act responsibly.

University priorities must not clash with social priorities.

Students must accept that they are at university to obtain a qualification and ultimately this is the major priority. Failure to accept this could result in academic problems. It is important that students set goals for themselves and in relation to these goals establish a pattern of time management which will enable them to satisfy all their needs.

Participation in sport also needs to be considered part of non-academic campus activities. Malan (1987) states that the absence of a balanced university life – in other words, academic priorities as well as social and sporting activities – will be

to the detriment of all round university performance.

South Africans tend to be fanatical about sport and many sporting achievers are university students. In a study conducted by Malan (1987) no significant differences were found between successful and unsuccessful students with regard to participation in and time spent on sport activities. This would indicate that students at university do not allow sport activities to interfere with their studies. It must be noted that participation in sporting events is not necessarily seen to lead to improved academic performance.

Grobler (1973) found that students who abandon their studies were less group-dependent than students who continued with their studies. (Scholtz, 1987)

Smit (1971) has concurred with this finding. He stated that extrovert students are less likely to abandon their studies than introverts.

Throughout history men and women have faced all kinds of challenges, some of which even affected the futures of whole nations. At the level of the individual the ability to adapt to a new situation can determine whether a person makes a success of that situation or not.

2.2.2.5 Hostel Initiation

Hostel initiation is probably the most controversial issue facing both students and university authorities. There is little literature that deals specifically with this particular feature. Not much research has been done to investigate what the function and influence of hostel initiation procedures are.

The Oxford Dictionary (1978) defines *initiate* as, "originate, begin, admit person into office, secret, or into mysteries".

Initiation rituals and procedures vary from one hostel to the next. An argument frequently advanced to support the practice is that persons who go through a great deal of trouble to gain something, value it more highly than persons who attain something without much effort. Students who go through a severe initiation to gain admission to a hostel will tend to think highly of that hostel. (Aronson and Mills , 1959)

Tradition and "hostel culture" play a significant role in influencing the form which initiation procedures take place. Initiation brings about a change in status.

Young adults undergo numerous changes in status: changes in interpersonal status, changes in political status , changes in economic status and changes in legal status. (Steinberg , 1985)

First year students who pass through an initiation process gain a new status in the process. An important aspect of initiation is the amount of time that can be involved in inducting the new students. In recent years university authorities have clamped down on certain initiation activities that are dangerous or that are too time consuming.

There is a need for some form of induction into the university. It enables the first year student to make new friends, to identify with the new environment and to feel a sense of belonging to a new social group. Initiation procedures should aim to make a positive contribution towards this life stage of the student.

Problems arise, however, because induction or initiation procedures are seldom intended to develop students. The quasi discipline and team building exercises are supposed to instil some form of loyalty in the individual. But often they are occasions when people are degraded and humiliated. These activities can result in students not having sufficient time to study or spend on other academic activities. Furthermore, students that are unable to cope with the initiation

become unhappy, negative and even angry and this can lead to decisions to leave university. This type of initiation fails to recognise that people are different, have different needs, and that they should not be placed in situations that result in their becoming frustrated or negative.

2.2.2.6 Student extra mural activities

Most first year students find the new social possibilities of campus life very tempting. They are suddenly faced with increased social freedom. Hostel students in particular are very quickly exposed to social activities such as rag , hostel dances and other social gatherings. All of these activities can have a positive role to play in the development of the student. New friends are made or a new, more serious relationship is started with a person of the opposite sex. Many parents feel particularly worried about the influence these social activities will have on their children. Marais (1987) points out that these social activities form a very important part of a balanced student life. Students that isolate themselves from social activities often become lonely and consequently miss the opportunity of developing on all levels of society.

2.2.3 Academic factors

2.2.3.1 Problematic study methods

Jorissen (1985) states that students' study skills are influenced by their attitude towards studying and study methods. These in turn influence their tempo of learning and the measure of success they will achieve. Smit (1971) came to the conclusion that students with above average intellectual ability have the potential to be successful at university . However, possession of this ability does not imply success. It is not necessarily the potential, but rather the style, that is important in an academic situation. (Erasmus, 1987)

Although conflicting results have been recorded, most of the research conducted has found a very strong correlation between study methods used and academic success.

Preston (1961) says that the study methods of successful students are not necessarily correct study methods. Because of their intellectual potential and motivation they develop a study method that suits them and enables them to pass.

Du Plessis states (1985):

"hoewel sommige navorsers wel 'n verband tussen studiegewoontes en houdings en akademiese prestasie vind, is dit hoogs twyfelagtig of die gebruik van korrekte tegnieke en metodes tot enige noemenswaardige verbetering in akademiese prestasie sal lei. Die komplekse aard van studiegedrag vereis van voorligters dat hulle die student as individu met sy eie unieke studiestrategie en persoonlikheidstyl as vertrekpunt gebruik." (p5)

Marais (1987) says that students must become accustomed to the difference between "learning" and "studying". At school the scholar learned. At university the student is expected to study.

At school the emphasis was placed on obtaining and memorising information. At university students are required to do more than learn and memorise information. They are expected to study so as to gain insight into and understanding of the subject matter.

Students who use unsuitable or inadequate study methods have a greater chance of failing than students who apply appropriate ones. Erasmus (1987) states that poor academic performance can often be related to incorrect study methods, approaches, motivation and academic orientation.

Du Plessis (1986) indicates that studying at a university can not be regarded as a simple extension of going to school. She explains:

"In 'n toenemende mate word die nuweling student gekonfronteer met 'n magdom feite, kennis, handboeke en probleme wat aanspraak maak op sy toewyding en dissipline As in ag geneem word dat hierdie oorgangsfase in lewensfase geskied, is dit te verstane dat bepaalde probleme na vore sal tree." (p4)

Studying at university can be described as a goal-directed activity and not simply a one-way academic communication where lecturers are the sole providers of information and students the passive receivers of that information.

Malan (1980) found that students who abandon their studies admitted to a far greater extent than students who continued with their studies that they had experienced study problems long before even starting at university.

Lindgren (1961) found that 33% of successful students attributed their success to good study methods, while 25% of those students that failed claimed they did not have suitable study methods.

Because university studies demand much more from the student than school did, important adaptations have to be made with regards to method of study. Study method problems often reflect an emotional problem. Every individual must experiment with study methods to find the ones that are appropriate to his/her situation. No two persons study in the same manner.

There are no "miracle solutions". Du Plessis (1985) states that in choosing a study method the student must accept that which he wants to become will be determined by what he does now.

Erasmus and Du Plessis (1989) present a simple model to enable individual

students to develop a study method or learning style that fit their personalities best.

In choosing the correct study method the student must consider the following:

a: Planning and organisation

Planning and organisation implies that the students will

- exercise self-discipline, execute their plans, strike a balance between social life and academic life.
- use their time productively.
- quantitative.

The productive and effective use of time creates problems for most students. University life does not only involve academic activities but also many social activities in which the students can and do get involved. Where time becomes important, self-discipline must be exercised. Many students find it very difficult to apply self-discipline.

b: Note taking

In taking notes during lectures students have to

- differentiate between important facts and detail.
- evaluate information.
- create a logical structure.

It is not possible for students to remember everything that has been said during a lecture. It is therefore necessary to take notes. Notes are useful in helping a student to differentiate between important facts and details. Taking notes in a planned and structured way is a crucial part of effective study methods.

c: Reading techniques (comprehension)

When reading students must

- obtain a holistic view.
- orient the subject matter.
- isolation of important facts.

Basic reading techniques are also important aspects of study methods. Effective reading allows the student to obtain an overall image of the subject matter and to determine how facts are linked to one another.

d: Qualitative study

To ensure the best study outcomes students should

- avoid memorization whenever possible.
- be aware that comprehension is important.
- create a logical framework within which facts should be learned and understood.

Qualitative study and not quantitative study becomes important at university. In other words, it is not a question of how much one studies, but how much well one studies, which counts.

Comprehension, insight and understanding of the subject are the important ingredients.

Qualitative study is aimed at understanding a subject, being able to analyse and criticize information. Rote learning of facts does not lead to qualitative learning.

Malan (1982) carried out research at the University of Pretoria to determine why first year students terminate their studies. Incorrect study methods were

identified as an important cause of that problem. Malan found that 55% of students who terminated their studies claimed that they had used an incorrect study method.

Malan's research further shows that 46% of successful students attributed their success to the study method used. (Malan, 1982)

2.2.3.2 Incorrect career choice

Many students abandon their studies because of an incorrect career choice. While they may have the cognitive potential to pass a university course, they end up abandoning their studies because of an incorrect career choice. (Scholtz, 1987) This is often due to the fact that these students are not motivated, do not enjoy studying, and do not enjoy the particular course.

a. The Family

In a study conducted at the university of Pretoria the wishes of the parents were found to be an important factor in determining the career choice of students. (Malan, 1982)

The wishes of the parents very often exercise an enormous amount of pressure on students when choosing their careers. Many students are forced into making a career choice which will satisfy the parents or other family members. For example, the father who never had the opportunity to study medicine but now expects his son to study medicine.

Many students are afraid to disappoint their parents and therefore select a course in which they have little or no interest. The expectations of the parents are often unreasonably high, the student is never able to meet these expectations and consequently begins to rebel against the parents by abandoning his studies.

Parental or family pressures frequently have the effect on students that they abandon their studies, either because the expectations set for them are too high, or the career chosen was otherwise incorrect.

Those students who study a course that they did not want to may develop a passive aggressive attitude towards the course. This often manifests itself in students not attending lectures or absenting themselves from tests or examinations.

b. Peer group

Erens (1977) has shown that as many as 6% of all first year students are influenced by their friends when making a career choice. The pressure exerted by peers can be severe.

In particular a student who feels insecure or unsure, and who is dependent on the acceptance of his friends, may be influenced into a decision that meets the approval of his friends. The need to be accepted by one's peers and to have their approval of what one does has a strong influence on the careers selection process.

Cultural and sociological theories stress the role played by organisations such as the church, school or peer groups in determining the choice of a career. (Gauche, 1983)

c. Career counselling

Career counselling plays a significant role in making an appropriate career choice. The aim of career counselling should be to bring the scholar closer to the reality of making a career choice. (Joubert, 1982)

Many students are unable to incorporate cognitive potential, interest and personality into a realistic career choice. Career counselling is intended to help such students. Research has shown that students who have established clear vocational objectives are likely to perform better at university than students who have not. Lindgren (1969) points out that most students who have selected an appropriate occupation have an understanding of who they are, or at least, who they want to be.

Gauche (1983) states that career counselling should be considered from two perspectives.

Firstly from the client's point of view.

- The client has specific expectations, such as to obtain information about his potential and aptitudes.
- Often the person wants clarification of and approval for a choice that has already been made.

The second perspective is that of the the career counsellor. The career counsellor will attempt to lead the person through a process that will enable the person to make an objective and responsible decision. Wiechers (1979) has said that career counselling should provide the individual with an opportunity and the ability to select a career that will suit him.

The emphasis in career counselling should be placed on aspects such as work opportunities, nature of the work, length of studies, and academic requirements. The emphasis should not fall on aspects such as the status of the occupation or salaries and benefits. If students base their decisions on the right reasons they have a better chance of being successful.

Healy (1982) claims that as few as 14% of scholars make use of career counselling. This figure seems to indicate that many students enrol at university without knowing for certain that they have chosen a career which is right for them.

d. Career expectations

Many students arrive at university with stereotyped ideas about campus life and the academic reality of being a student. These expectations are very often unrealistic.

Students find it difficult to link their course of study to their career expectations.

Once students have chosen a specific course of study, they then have to choose how they can best use their qualifications.

Some students find university courses they have selected too theoretical and not in keeping with what they thought their chosen career would entail.

e. Factors inherent in the student

1. Incorrect career motives

Often students will base their career choices on incorrect motives, such as financial considerations such as salaries, benefits, subsidies and allowances. The status and power related to a career are also seen to be important. The following factors often influence a career choice, and if incorrectly interpreted can result in wrong decisions being made:

- a. career qualifications.
- b. job opportunities
- c. job descriptions
- d. job environment

2.2.3.3 Inadequate academic preparation at school for university

Lecturers at the University of Pretoria stressed that students were not receiving adequate preparation at school for university careers. The sentiment is that school requirements to pass are too low.

Two particular areas have been criticized:

a. Tempo of teaching

At school the tempo of teaching is determined by the class as a whole. The speed at which the scholars learn influences the tempo of teaching. At university, however, the lecturer and the curriculum determine the tempo of teaching. (Malan, 1987)

b. Absence of independent study

Lecturers feel that the development of creative thinking and independent study should have started at school. However, in the school situation, scholars are coached to achieve good marks. Too much emphasis is placed on rote or mechanical learning.

When students start at university they find it difficult to adjust to more independent learning aimed at developing insight into the subject matter. (Malan, 1987)

2.2.3.4 Method of lecturing

Lecturers are often blamed for the poor performance of their students. A university lecturer has to meet certain minimum academic requirements before being accepted at the university. Lecturers are ranked from junior lecturer through to senior professor. The responsibilities of the lecturer vary with rank.

Students will be lectured by lecturers that vary in seniority and experience. However, often it is the first year students who are exposed to the less experienced lecturers.

There are some specific areas in which lecturers receive criticism. Firstly, the tempo at which the lecturer presents the work is often said to change drastically. The amount of work that has to be covered before a test or examination has been pre-determined , but lecturers often find it difficult to present the work in the required time. As a result the work is presented hastily or left for students to study by themselves. This suggests that there is insufficient curricula and planning.

Lecturers differ in their teaching styles. Some prefer to make use of "discussion" classes, while others prefer to present a lecture to the class. It is up to the lecturer to develop a style of lecturing that is entertaining, informative and academic.

Not all people are cut out to be lecturers. Lecturers should be well informed and up-to-date about developments in their subjects and be able to integrate new developments with existing knowledge and to present this information to the student as a synthesised whole.

Students often blame their lecturers for not being properly prepared. They claim that the lecturer merely repeats what is written in the prescribed textbook.

Jorissen (1988) states that the power of the lecture method lies in the ability of the lecturer to transmit his/her knowledge to the student. Malan (1988) states that there are certain basic didactic principles that are important in making the lecture as powerful as possible.

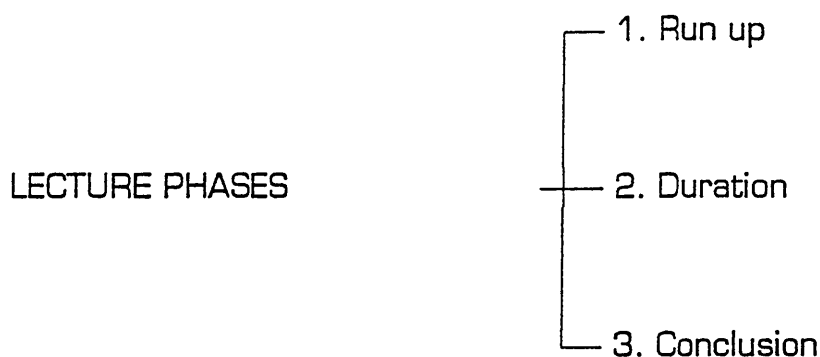
The first is empathy. Malan says that empathy implies having a positive teaching attitude, through which a favourable teaching and learning environment is created, one where students are motivated willingly to involve themselves in learning.

Jorissen (1982) emphasizes some other didactic principles:

- a. They must have a positive attitude towards their students
- b. They must understand the problems the students may be experiencing
- c. They must develop a rapport with students.
- d. They must develop the academic potential of the students.
- e. They must develop a pleasant academic atmosphere in which the students can function.

Each lecturer has his/her own unique style of presenting a lecture. But what is important to remember is that it is the task of the lecturer to make the lecture as interesting and as informative as possible.

A good lecture will consist of a number of phases;



It is important that the value of each of these phases is understood. During the *Run up* phase the lecturer greets the students. This greeting is crucial in establishing the correct atmosphere. The *Duration* of the lecture involves the presentation of the information to the students. (Jorissen, 1982)

Karl Jaspers (1959) has said that "lecturers belong to what is irreplaceable tradition. The memory of outstanding scholars accompanies one throughout life. The printed lecture, perhaps even taken down word for word, is only a pale residue. True, what is of value in the lecture, still communicates in printed form. But the lecturer himself presents this content in such a way as to suggest the total content which motivates his scholarship. Through his tone of voice, his gestures, the real presence of his thinking, the lecturer can unconsciously convey the feel of the subject. No doubt this can only be conveyed by the spoken word and only in a lecture – not in conversation or discussion." (Jorissen H, 1982)

Jaspers' statement clearly emphasizes the importance of lecturing. However, in recent years significant changes have taken place in the format of lectures.

More and more lecturers are making use of "discussion classes". This has resulted in greater participation by the students and a reduction in the more traditional "one-way" communication. More contact between lecturer and student should ensure better communication and a better understanding of the subject.

Lecturers are in a difficult position. They have a curriculum to complete which has defined objectives that have to be met within given time constraint. On the other hand, they are increasingly prone to criticism from their students.

Lecturer evaluation is a controversial issue, but it is a practice that is increasingly applied on university campuses.

The literature consulted generally suggests that the lecturers have an important

role in determining the success of their students. However, in the discussions there is greater emphasis on preventing students from abandoning their studies than on lecturers being part of the actual cause of students abandoning their studies.

2.2.3.5 Inadequate entrance barriers for students.

The number of first year students enrolling at a university continues to increase yearly. However, the number of positions available for university graduates are not increasing at the same rate. In recent years university authorities have increasingly felt a need to raise the minimum entrance requirements for certain courses, such as veterinary science , medicine and architecture.

Courses are not only limited because of a lack of career possibilities, but also, in certain cases, because a better, more effective training programme can be presented to a smaller number of students. Under such circumstances the lecturer is able to spend more time on each individual student.

The selection of students on the basis of certain minimum requirements has a positive influence on the academic environment. R Boyd (1988) has written that if students are placed in the correct academic environment, conducive to academic achievement, they rarely fail. The selection of students is one way in which the university authorities can develop such an academic atmosphere.

At the University of Pretoria the selection of students on the basis of minimum academic requirements is fairly common. For students to enrol they must have obtained a full matriculation exemption. Added to this, students have to meet the additional minimum requirements of the faculty in which they want to study.

The minimum entrance requirements for the Faculty of Natural Sciences are that students must have passed Mathematics and Science on the Higher Grade in

their matric to qualify for entrance to that faculty. (Faculty of Science Yearbook, 1994)

Other faculties, in particular Veterinary Science , Medicine, and Dentistry, allow only a certain number of students to enrol. Selection of these students is very strict .

Table 2.1

Student drop out rates for courses with and with out selection criteria.

	Students enrolled	Drop-outs	%
Social Science	788	61	7.44
Veterinary Science	87	3	3.44

(Clark W , 1989)

Table 2.1 indicates the importance of selection of students. In the Veterinary Sciences Faculty just over 3% of students terminate their studies during the first year. These students are usually not lost to the university as they tend to enrol for other courses such as a B.Sc. or B.Sc. Agric.

The same cannot be said for students that drop out of the Social Sciences. Just over 7% of the first year students drop out during the first year and do not enrol for other courses. The indications are that those students that meet stringent entrance requirements tend to be the more successful students. It can be expected that the university will be limiting the number of students in all courses in the near future.

2.2.4 Socio-economic factors

In a society that is both culturally and economically diverse, certain socio-economic factors could strongly influence students who are not performing

academically, to abandon their studies. Three factors in particular are found to influence academic performance:

- Family background
- Place of residence
- Economic factors

[Scholtz , 1987]

2.2.4.1 Family background

Worthington and Grant (1971) state that family size has an effect on the academic performance of the student. The typical academic achiever is usually from a small family. The quality and quantity of time parents can spend with a child is proportional to the number of children in the family. The implication therefore is that the students who are successful in their studies most likely come from a smaller family where the parents encourage academic activities.

2.2.4.2 Place of residence

Research has shown that students who live in flats, communes or in rooms away from home showed a poorer academic performance than students who live at home with their parents. (Englebrecht, 1972) However, Scholtz (1987) emphasizes that contradicting research findings also exist. For example, Cope (1975) found that the place of residence has no significant influence on academic performance.

It may therefore be assumed that students who abandon their studies will be found to live in a variety of places of residence. (Scholtz, 1987)

This study is concerned with the academic performance of hostel students. One particular factor, hostel initiation, will be investigated in this study. It will be

important to determine to what extent hostel initiation can influence first year students to abandon their studies. Hostel initiation will be discussed in more detail as a separate cause of students abandoning their studies.

2.2.4.3 Economic/Financial factors

Students are funded from three possible sources: firstly, there are students who are financed entirely by their parents; secondly, there are students who are partially financed by their parents as well as through loans or bursaries; and, thirdly, there are students who are financed entirely through bursaries or study loans. (Malan, 1982)

Malan indicates that students who are financed by their parents have the greatest tendency to abandon their studies (47%). Students who receive partial financing from loans or bursaries constitute 44% of the students that abandon their studies. Students who are financed entirely through bursaries are found to be the most successful students.

Having had to qualify for their bursaries, the latter is usually a select group of students. Moreover, if students studying with loans were to experience academic problems they would most likely abandon their studies early, before having incurred too large a debt. (Malan, 1982)

Demos (1968) stresses that economic factors have been found to be the one major factor causing students to abandon their studies. This study has included finance as one of ten factors that were identified by lecturers to be causes of students leaving university before completing their first year. (Scholtz, 1987)

The literature consulted stresses that finance has a direct influence on students leaving the university, but it has only an indirect influence on actual academic performance. (Scholtz, 1987)

2.2.5 Biographical factors

Biographical factors relate to matters such as age , gender and health. These are factors over which the student has little or no influence.

2.2.5.1 Age

Until recently white male students in South Africa either enrolled at universities directly after school or after having completed national service.

Moller (1965) has shown that younger students tend to do better academically than those older students in the same group. The implication is that students who completed their military training before going on to university would not do as well as students who went to university directly after completing their schooling.

Other researchers, for example Van der Walt (1987), found that no significant difference existed between the academic achievement of younger and older students in the same group, while Nell (1984) found that students who had already completed two years of national service displayed certain personality traits that are characteristic of a more mature student.

The literature consulted reflects conflicting views on the importance of age as a factor in causing students to abandon their studies. On balance, however, we may conclude that age cannot be completely excluded as a factor when considering the causes of this problem.

2.2.5.2 Gender

P. Scholtz (1987) has noted in summarising the role played by gender, that "although differences are seen to exist within certain courses, no significant differences are present in the academic achievement of male and female students." (p13)

However, Louw (1984) found that first year female students tend to perform better academically than first year male students. An analysis of the performance of students to determine any differences based on gender, will however have to take differences in the field of study, school background, and career aspirations into consideration.

The literature consulted stressed that differences in gender have proved to be of little significance in influencing academic performance. Once again, it will not be advisable to draw definite conclusions about the importance of gender in causing students to abandon their studies.

2.2.5.3 Health

Sinha (1970) found that academic underachievers have had more major health problems during their school careers than those students who perform well academically. Scholtz emphasizes these findings in his research. (Scholtz, 1987)

The old saying that "a healthy body supports a healthy mind," would suggest that students who are healthy would have a greater chance of performing academically and would thus abandon their studies less readily than those students who are less healthy. Universities encourage physical activities, such as sport, aerobics and the like, because of the need for students to lead a healthy and balanced life.

Biographical factors may exercise an influence on academic performance. The literature presents conflicting opinions on the role played by factors such as age. The influence exerted by such a factor can only be determined in relation to other factors such as motivation to study, change in life style, social factors such as marriage and so on.

Under certain circumstances the same applies to gender. Gender has to be

considered in relation to other compounding factors as a potential cause of students abandoning their studies.

The extent to which these two factors may influence students to abandon their studies will therefore depend considerably on the influence of other social, cultural, and environmental factors.

However, health can have a direct influence on academic performance. Research has clearly shown that poor health can be a cause of poor academic performance. Students who miss a number of lectures due to ill health, or who are unable to prepare for an examination due to illness, are distinctly disadvantaged in their academic endeavours.

Conclusion

The literature and researches consulted in this study have made one thing abundantly clear: the reasons for students abandoning their studies are complex and diverse.

It is all too easy to lay the blame either on the lecturer or the schooling system on the one hand, or on the other hand to claim that students lack motivation, that they socialize too much, and that they are lazy.

There are no clear-cut causes. Any one of a number of possibilities could influence students' decisions to abandon their studies. Super's theory emphasising the importance of the self-concept should not be underestimated. A university course is by no means an easy task to complete. When selecting a career – and therefore a course at university – students must base their decision on valid and realistic facts. Career counselling can contribute towards making a good decision.

At the same time, the university authorities have to meet certain responsibilities. Well trained and committed lecturers who understand that successful students are the key to the future success of the university, are required. A university has an obligation to provide well educated people for society. Therefore, standards should never be compromised. As Du Plesis(1988) states, the university will have to choose between having a recipe for education or having a concept-orientated approach to education.

The saying that "if you give a hungry man a fish he will eat for a day, but if you teach him to fish you feed him for a life time", is applicable. The student must develop the ability to solve problems that cannot be predicted. This ability should be developed at school before the student goes on to university.

Marais (1988) claimed that a career counselling programme resulted in a success rate of over 75% in a study conducted at the University of Pretoria, and that career counselling provided the student with the security of knowing that the best possible career had been chosen.

The responsibility of being a successful student lies primarily with students. They have committed themselves to at least three years of studying and must therefore apply suitable study methods and habits in order to succeed.

It must be realised, however, that the problem is complex and that a vast number of factors influence students to abandon their studies.

What has been emphasised in the literature is that most, if not all, the problems can be prevented.

It is important to determine to what extent students at university experience these problems, and then to initiate discussion about what can be done to solve them.

Chapter 3

Research Method

3.1. Introduction

The need for research into the reasons why first year students abandon their studies has motivated this project. This point was stressed at the lecturer symposium held at the University of Pretoria in January of 1989.

Previous research focused on students and what they perceived to be the reasons for their academic problems. The current research focuses on aspects suggested by lecturers, such as personal factors, adjustment from school to university, incorrect career choices, and inadequate study methods. Du Plessis (1986) studied the affects of study methods on the academic success of first year students. Although the research provided insights into the importance of sound study methods for the achievement of academic success, it did not investigate other reasons for academic failure.

The lecturers who attended the symposium stressed that more needed to be known about the reasons why the university was losing so many first year students, especially those residing in hostels.

Because much of the research carried out on this problem only used students in the investigation it was decided that this study would use an alternative approach to obtain answers. The opinions of lecturers would be used to ascertain whether or not consensus between lecturers and students could be achieved with regard to the importance of the factors being researched.

This chapter will introduce the research method used in this study. Aspects such as the research problem, the selection of subjects, the research design, and the collection of data are discussed.

3.2. Research problem

This study is primarily concerned with the reasons for which students abandon their studies. The implications of students abandoning their studies are serious for both the student and the university. Considerable research has been carried out and yet few significant findings have been made and the problem continues to exist. From the onset this study has attempted to evaluate the perceptions of lecturers about why their students abandon their studies.

The aim of this study is to validate factors that were proposed by lecturers as being probable causes for students abandoning their studies. The research will attempt to determine if there are any similarities between the perceptions of students and lecturers. Any similarities between students' and lecturers' perceptions with regard to the importance of a particular factor will highlight the value of that factor.

In order to determine if a similarity or difference exists between the two groups the chi square statistical method will be used. If both lecturers and students state that a factor is significant and there is no significant difference then the factor will be considered to be significant.

Acceptable levels of significance were fixed at the 5% level. Where difference on the 10% or lower level were found, they were regarded as being not significant.

If however a significant difference was found between the lecturer group and the student group, it would suggest that one group regards that factor to be more significant than the other group did.

3.3. Selection of research subjects.

This study has involved two prominent population groups on campus , namely the lecturers and the first year hostel students.

3.3.1. Selection of lecturers

Lecturers that were included in the research sample, all attended the symposium held in January 1989. These lecturers were divided into two groups: those working in the social sciences, and those working in the natural sciences. All the lecturers who attended the symposium were included in the sample.

In total 191 lecturers were included in the sample. Figure 3.1 indicates that there were 127 (66%) in the social sciences grouping, while there were 64 (34%) in the natural sciences grouping.

Table 3.1 Frequency and percentage of lecturers in research sample.

Social sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Economics — Law — Education — Arts 	} 127 (66%)
Natural sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Veterinary — Medical — Engineering — Natural science 	} 64 (34%)

This form of sample selection is termed convenient or incidental sampling.

Sheridan (1971) says, "In practice experimenters typically use a kind of catch-as-catch-can sampling procedure." (p71) This sampling procedure allows the researcher to make use of those people that can be easily reached. Smit (1983) states that this method can only be used to indicate any differences that may exist between groups that were used in the study. This method was opted for because of the convenience of having many lecturers available at one time.

3.3.2 Selection of students

Before selection of students could take place it was first necessary to define the student population on whom the research would be carried out.

Two criteria had to be taken into consideration: firstly, the study is about first year students that abandon their studies, and, secondly, the study was to focus on students residing in hostels.

The students were selected as follows:

3.3.2.1. Selection of one male and one female hostel.

The University of Pretoria has six male and six female hostels. For the purpose of this study one male and one female hostels were chosen.

This selection took place randomly. Each of the hostels within the two groupings had an equal chance of being selected.

3.3.2.2. Selection of one hundred male and one hundred female students.

Once the respective hostels had been chosen the next step was to select the actual student sample. It was decided for the sake of simple statistical procedures that this sample would be divided into two groups, 100 male and 100

female students. The selection of these two samples also took place randomly.

Smit (1983) lists a number of advantages and disadvantages in using the above mentioned method.

Some of the prominent advantages are: minimum prior knowledge of the population is required; data obtained is relatively free of classification errors and is easy to analyse.

On the other hand the method does have its limitations. Smit (1983) refers in particular to the subjective element of inexperienced researchers in choosing the sample, for example choosing only those elements that are easily obtainable.

Table 3.2 Students incorporated in sample

Social science Male		Social science Female		Natural science Male		Natural science Female	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
40	20	63	32	60	30	37	18

200 students were included in the research sample, 100 male and 100 female students. All the students were resident in university hostels and were first-year students.

Figure 3.2 indicates that the two largest sub-groups in the sample are the social sciences (female) and the natural sciences (male) groups.

This is attributed to the fact that male students tend to opt for careers in the natural sciences, such as engineering and medicine, while female students opt for careers in the social sciences, such as teaching and social work.

Table 3.3 Ages of students in sample

Age	Social science Male		Social science Female		Natural science Male		Natural Science Female	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
17	-	-	5	8	-	-	-	-
18	28	70	49	78	35	58	25	68
19	8	20	7	11	17	28	12	32
20	4	10	2	3	5	8	-	-
21	-	-	-	-	3	6	-	-
\bar{x}	18.40		18.09		18.60		18.32	
Mo	18		18		18		18	

Figure 3.3 indicates that the average age of the students in the sample is 18 years.

3.4. Research design

Smit (1983) distinguishes between four basic research designs: natural observation, systematic observation with controlled stimuli, experimental research, and ex post facto research. This particular study falls within the category of systematic observation with controlled stimuli.

Meyers et al (1974) describe this procedure as one involving the investigator entering a subject population and measuring a specific set of responses.

Smit (1983) confirms that in this technique one will find neither the manipulation of an independent variable nor the setting up of a control condition.

This research technique is only possible if the research sample is fully representative of the total population.

3.5. Collection of data

The data used in this study was collected during two distinct phases.

3.5.1 Lecturer symposium

At the symposium held for lecturers in January 1989 all the lecturers were verbally instructed to write down in no specific order those factors they believed were important causes for first year students abandoning their studies.

All the responses given by the lecturers were noted. Through simply adding up the frequency of each of the factors named by the lecturers, it was possible to identify the ten most prominent factors.

The ten most prominent factors were chosen for two reasons: firstly, because of the large number of factors cited by the lecturers, which would have made the research very bulky, and, secondly, that the study aimed to determine the validity of lecturer perceptions of why students abandon their studies. For these reasons the factors chosen for this study should be the most frequently held perceptions of lecturers of why students abandon their studies.

3.5.2 The research instrument

To be able to evaluate the lecturers' perceptions of why students abandon their studies it was necessary to devise an instrument that would measure the responses of students in the research sample. A questionnaire based on the ten most frequently mentioned reasons indicated by lecturers was therefore devised.

The questionnaire consisted of 2 sections:

3.5.2.1 Biographic information

This section was aimed at obtaining information pertaining to the following:

- (i) *Course of study*: This information was required so as to place the student into one of the two sub-groups, i.e. social or natural sciences.

- (ii) *Gender*: The sample sub-groups were further divided into male and female groups. This information would be required to draw comparisons between students within the same sub-group.

- (iii) *Age*: Because not all students attend university immediately after completing std 10 – for example due to military obligations – it is necessary to draw comparisons between the older and younger first-year students.

3.5.2.2 Reasons for abandoning studies

The ten factors selected for the questionnaire were numbered from 1 to 10, in no specific order. The respondents were asked to allocate to each factor a value ranging between 1 and 2. Each of these numbers represented a specific value as indicated below:

1 = NOT Important

2 = Important

The ten factors that were selected for the research questionnaire were:

1. Adaptation from school to university.
2. Incorrect career choice.
3. Lack of motivation.
4. Poor preparation at school for university.
5. Incorrect study methods.
6. Financial factors.
7. Student social activities.
8. Method of lecturing.
9. Inadequate selection of students.
10. Hostel initiation.

A comprehensive explanatory page was included in the questionnaire.

3.6 Research hypothesis

This study aims at comparing the perceptions of lecturers and students in respect of the significance of the ten factors.

This study has made use of two separate research samples: lecturers and first year hostel students.

Each of the two samples were sub-divided into those studying in either the social sciences or the natural sciences. From the outset differences can be anticipated to exist between the sample sub-groups.

A Null Hypothesis (H_0) and an Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) are the statistical means whereby the research hypotheses are tested. The Null Hypothesis is the hypothesis which is being tested, while the Alternative Hypothesis is that hypothesis that will be accepted if the Null Hypothesis is rejected.

The Null Hypothesis set for this research in each of the ten factors is that *it is not*

a significant cause for students to abandon their studies. In other words, there will be no similarity between the opinions of lectures and students. Therefore the Alternative Hypothesis states that each of the ten factors *is significant in causing students to abandon their studies.* In other words, there will be a similarity between the opinions of lecturers and students on the significance of the factors.

3.7 Research validity

As the title of this research document indicates the research attempts to validate lecturers' perceptions of the reasons why first year students abandon their studies.

This validation has to be made by the first year students. It is therefore imperative for the success of the research that the results indicated be a valid reflection of the attitudes of the first year student population.

It has been indicated that the Null Hypothesis should be rejected in favour of the Alternative Hypothesis. In rejecting the Null Hypothesis there is a possibility, however, that the Null Hypothesis is actually true.

A critical value of under 0.05 would mean that the Null Hypothesis would be rejected incorrectly for 5 % of all the samples drawn from the population.

The method of research was chosen so as to simplify the study. Lecturers at the University of Pretoria indicated that research on the reasons why first year students abandon their studies was very important. This study has been devised so as to provide lecturers with meaningful information on how valid their perceptions of the reasons for students abandoning their studies have been.

Chapter 4

Research Results

4.1 Introduction.

Each of the students identified in the research sample completed a questionnaire. This questionnaire was based on the ten factors that were listed by lecturers during the lecturer symposium. The research results presented in this chapter will include both the results obtained at the lecturer symposium held in 1989 where lecturers were asked to indicate what factors were important causes, in their opinion, of students abandoning their studies as well as the results of the questionnaire completed by the students. The results obtained for each of the ten factors are presented individually in table format for both lecturers and students. A discussion and interpretation of the results is presented in the final chapter.

It must be noted that when lecturers were asked to identify those factors that they regarded to be important causes of students abandoning their studies, they indicated only those factors which were important to them and did not indicate other factors which they regarded as less important or those factors which they had not themselves thought of at that time. Therefore, in the tables that present the results obtained for lecturers, it should be remembered that the numbers obtained for "not important" in fact only suggest that these factors were not identified by all the lecturers as being important.

In other words, if for example (x) number of lecturers regard a certain factor as being an important cause of students abandoning their studies it does not imply

that (N-x) should be regarded as not important. The possibility exists that those lecturers that did not identify the factor may simply not have thought of it.

4.2 Reasons why students abandon their studies.

4.2.1 Factor 1: Adaptation from school to University.

This factor refers to the emotional and academic adaptation that the first year student must make at university. Those students who fail to adapt to the new environment are likely to experience academic problems.

Table 4.1.1 Adaptation from school to university: Lecturers

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social science	58	69	0,96	10%
Natural science	27	37	1.58	10%
Total	85	106	2,30	10%

Table 4.1.1 indicates the following for Factor 1:

- (i) Although this factor is regarded as an important cause of students abandoning their studies, an analysis of the results indicates that this factor has not been seen to be important by significantly more lecturers than those who did not regard this factor to be important. (p = 10%: Social sciences and p = 10%: Natural sciences.)
- (ii) A comparison of the two disciplines further indicates that there is no significant difference between the opinions of lecturers from either the social sciences or the natural sciences. (p = 10%). Therefore, the majority of lecturers indicated that this factor was not important, or they had not indicated that this factor could be important.

Table 4.1.2 Adaptation from school to university: Students

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	3	8	26	40	10	16	6	16	45	23
2. Important	37	92	37	60	50	84	31	84	155	67
$\chi^2 =$	28,90		1,92		26,60		16,60		44,98	
Significance level	0.01%		10%		0.01%		0.01%		0.01%	

When students are compared the results indicate the following:

- (i) Significantly more students regarded this factor as being important. 155 students out of a total of 200 indicated that this factor was important. (0,01% level of significance)
- (ii) In the social sciences subgroups the male students indicated that this factor is important with an $p = 10\%$ value indicating that significantly more male students were of the opinion that this factor is important. Their female counterparts, however, did not show a significant difference of opinion between students who regarded this factor to be important and those who did not.
- (iii) In the natural sciences both the male and female students regarded this factor to be important with a significant difference of opinion existing between those who regarded the factor as important and those who regarded the factor as being not important.

*Table 4.1.3 Comparison of Lecturers and Students
Adaptation school to university*

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	85	106	191	17,3
Students	155	45	200	27,6
$\chi^2 =$			44,96	p 0,01%

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	58	69	127	6,75
Students	74	29	103	9,10
$\chi^2 =$			15,85	p 1%

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	37	27	64	3,48
Students	81	16	97	9,50
$\chi^2 =$			12.98	p 1%

A comparison of lecturers with students on the importance of Factor 1 shows the following:

- (i) A significant difference of opinion in that the majority of lecturers did not mention Factor 1 to be important, whilst the majority of students regarded this factor to be an important cause of students abandoning their studies.
- (ii) In the social sciences a significant difference of opinion existed between the two groups. In the natural sciences a significant difference of opinion (p=1%) was found.

- (iii) The results indicate that in the case of Factor 1 students and lecturers differ on the importance of the factor. Most lecturers did not mention the importance of the factor whilst most students emphasised that this factor was important.

4.2.2 Factor 2: Incorrect career choice

Making a career choice is a crucial phase in the student's life. Most important is making the correct career choice. Factors such as motivation to study and to be successful are influenced by the career choice.

Table 4.2.1 Incorrect career choice :Lecturers

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social sciences	42	85	14,56	1%
Natural sciences	26	38	2,25	10%
Total	68	123	15,82	0.01%

Table 4.2.1 indicates the following for Factor 2:

- (i) More lecturers in this research sample have not mentioned that this factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies. 64% of lecturers did not indicate that this factor was important. The $p = 0,01\%$ indicates that a significant difference of opinion exists between those lecturers that mentioned that this factor is important and those that indicated otherwise.
- (ii) Significantly more lecturers from the social sciences did not mention that this factor is important. The difference of opinion in this group was significant on the $0,01\%$ level.

- (iii) Although more lecturers from the natural sciences also failed to mention that this factor is important, no significant difference of opinion was found in this respect.

Table 4.2.2 Incorrect career choice :Students

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	12	30	29	49	20	34	15	40	76	38
2. Important	28	70	34	51	40	66	22	60	124	62
$\chi^2 =$	6,40		0,40		6,60		1,32		13,33	
Significance level	5%		10%		5%		5%		1%	

The results presented in Table 4.2.2 suggests the following:

- (i) More students from both the disciplines are of the opinion that this factor is important. The difference of opinion being significant, on the 1% level.
- (ii) In the social sciences the students' responses varied. In the male subgroup significantly more students, at the 5% level, were of the opinion that this factor is important whilst in the female subgroup the difference was not significant.
- (iii) In the natural sciences (males) the CHI-SQUARE was significant, with a 5% level of significance being recorded for the female students.
- (iv) In conclusion, significantly more students were of the opinion that this factor is a significant cause of students abandoning their studies.

*Table 4.2.3 Comparison of Lecturers and Students
Incorrect career choice*

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	68	123	191	13,86
Students	124	76	200	13,33
$\chi^2 =$			27,19	p 0,01%

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	42	85	127	9,23
Students	62	41	103	7,60
$\chi^2 =$			6,83	p 0.01%

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	26	38	64	3,82
Students	62	35	97	4,60
$\chi^2 =$			8,42	p 5%

Table 4.2.3 indicates the following:

- (i) In a comparison of lecturers with students a significant difference of opinion (0,01% level) has been found with most lecturers not mentioning that the factor was important and students indicating that the factor was important.
- (ii) In the social sciences the research sample indicated that a significant difference of opinion existed between lecturers and students (0,01% level). In the natural sciences the difference of opinion was significant, being on the 5% level.

- (iii) In conclusion, students found this factor to be important whilst most lecturers had failed to mention that the factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies.

4.2.3 Factor 3: Weak motivation to study

Academic success is largely dependent on the student's motivation to succeed. Having the motivation to study is therefore an integral part of the students' approach to their studies.

Table 4.3.1 Weak motivation to study: Lecturers

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social sciences	69	58	0,96	10%
Natural sciences	26	38	2,26	10%
Total	95	96	,005	10%

An analysis of this factor reveals the following:

- (i) No significant difference exists between lecturers that were of the opinion that this factor is important and those that had not mentioned that this is an important factor. (10% level)
- (ii) An analysis of both the disciplines further indicates that there is no significant difference of opinion between the lecturers in either the social sciences or the natural sciences within the subgroups. (10% level)

Table 4.3.2 Weak motivation to study: Students

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	6	15	18	28	19	32	17	45	60	30
2. Important	34	85	45	72	41	68	20	55	140	70
$\chi^2 =$	19,60		11,57		8,06		0,24		10,05	
Significance level	0,01%		1%		5%		10%		1%	

The results of Table 4.3.2 indicate the following:

- (i) 140 of 200 students regard this factor to be an important cause of students abandoning their studies. 75% of male students indicated that this factor is important and 63% of the female students indicated the same. The difference between students that indicated that the factor is important and those that did not is significant on the 1% level. It is important to note that male students in particular felt that this factor, weak motivation to study, is a significant cause of students abandoning their studies.
- (ii) With almost 99% certainty male and female students from the social sciences indicate that this factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies.
- (iii) In the natural sciences the male students were also of the opinion that this factor was important, on the 5% level. In the case of the natural sciences female group, no significant difference of opinion was found (10% level). 46 % of the female students in the natural sciences indicated that this factor is not important.

*Table 4.3.3 Comparison of lecturers and students
Weak motivation to study*

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	95	96	191	6,67
Students	140	60	200	10,05
$\chi^2 =$			16,72	p 0,01%

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	69	58	127	4,40
Students	79	24	103	7,96
$\chi^2 =$			12,35	p 1%

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	26	38	64	2,3
Students	61	36	97	4,16
$\chi^2 =$			6,46	p 5%

Table 4.3.3 indicated the following:

- (i) A significant difference of opinion exists between lecturers and students on the importance of this factor. While there was no significant difference amongst lecturers on the importance of this factor, a significant number of students indicated that the factor is important. (0,01% level of significance.)
- (ii) Also, in the social sciences a significant difference of opinion was found between lecturers and students (1% level). In the natural sciences the difference was significant on the 5% level.

- (iii) Lecturers were divided on the importance of this factor, whilst significantly more students were of the opinion that this factor does play an important role in causing students to abandon their studies than those who believed the factor was not important.

4.2.4 Factor 4: Poor academic preparation at school for university

There has been much debate in recent years on factors such as the standard of the matriculation examination and the preparation that scholars receive for university studies. Has the preparation at school focused on obtaining the best possible matriculation symbols or has the teacher focused on developing sound study methods and an understanding of the subject matter?

Table 4.4.1 Poor academic preparation at school for university: Lecturers

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social sciences	47	80	8,58	5%
Natural sciences	27	37	1,58	10%
Total	74	117	9,68	5%

Table 4.4.1 indicates the following:

- (i) The majority of lecturers did not mention that this factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies.
- (ii) In the social sciences a difference of opinion on the 5% level of significance was found, with the majority of lecturers not indicating that this factor is important.
- (iii) In the case of the natural sciences no significant difference existed, although more lecturers were of the opinion that this factor was not important.

Table 4.4.2 Poor academic preparation at school for university: Students

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	0	0	9	10	7	11	6	16	22	11
2. Important	40	100	54	90	53	89	31	84	178	89
$\chi^2 =$	40,00		32,14		35,26		11,77		69,40	
Significance level	0,01%		0,01%		0,01%		1,0%		0,01%	

Table 4.4.2 suggests the following:

- (i) Significantly more students were of the opinion that this factor is important, a result of 178 (89%) out of 200 being obtained, indicating the significance of this factor.
- (ii) In the social sciences a significant difference was found in both the male and female groups. In the male group no single student indicated that this factor was not important. (0,01% level)
- (iii) In the natural sciences, again, both the male and female students indicated that this factor is important as a significant difference existed between students who felt the factor was important and those who did not. (0,01% level)

Table 4.4.3 Comparison of lecturers and students
 Poor academic preparation at school for university

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	74	117	191	28,3
Students	178	22	200	69,4
	$\chi^2 =$		107,7	p 0,01

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	47	80	127	27,38
Students	94	9	103	43,32
$\chi^2 =$			70,70	p 0.01

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	27	37	64	11,0
Students	84	13	97	24,41
$\chi^2 =$			35,41	p 0,01

Table 4.4.3 suggests the following;

- (i) A significant difference of opinion exists between lecturers and students on the importance of Factor 4. The majority of lecturers did not mention that this factor is important while students are of the opinion that this factor is important. A difference significant on the 0,01% level was observed.
- (ii) In the social sciences a significant difference of opinion exists between lecturers and students (0.01%).
- (iii) In the natural sciences a significant difference existed between lecturers and students. The majority of the students from the natural sciences indicated that this factor was important, whilst most lecturers did not mention that this factor was important.

4.2.5 Factor 5: Incorrect study methods

Research has emphasised the importance of having an effective study method in order for a student to be academically successful. A study method not only involves the actual way in which a student studies but also incorporates aspects such as the student's attitude towards studying, motivation, learning procedures and management of time.

Table 4.5.1 Incorrect study methods: Lecturers

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social sciences	36	91	23,82	0,01%
Natural sciences	22	42	6,25	5%
Total	58	133	29,46	0,01%

An analysis of Table 4.5.1 presents the following:

- (i) A significant number of lecturers did not mention this factor as being important (0,01%).
- (ii) A comparison of the two disciplines indicates that in both cases a significant difference exists between those lecturers that were of the opinion that this factor was important and those who had not mentioned that this factor is important. Significantly more lecturers did not mention this factor as being an important cause of students abandoning their studies

Table 4.5.2 Incorrect study methods: Students

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	3	7	5	8	5	8	9	24	22	11
2. Important	37	93	58	92	55	91	28	76	178	89
$\chi^2 =$	28,90		44,60		41,66		9,76		84,5	
Significance level	0,10%		0,01%		0,01%		5,0%		0,01%	

Table 4.5.2 indicates the following:

- (i) That this factor is regarded by students as a significant cause of students abandoning their studies. The results from Table 4.5.2 indicate that for most of the student groups values significant on the 0,01% level were observed. Therefore it can be accepted with 99,99% certainty that students in the research sample were of the opinion that this factor plays an important role in academic achievement.
- (ii) Students from the social sciences were of the opinion that this factor is important and a significant difference of opinion was observed in this regard for both male and female students. (0,01% level)
- (iii) Students in the natural sciences also indicated that this factor is important. The difference in the female group was significant at 5% and in the male group at 0,01%.

Table 4.5.3 Comparison of lecturers and students: Incorrect study methods

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	58	133	191	55,5
Students	178	22	200	84,5
	$\chi^2 =$		140,0	p 0,01

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	36	91	127	37,7
Students	95	8	103	54,04
$\chi^2 =$			91,74	p 0,01

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	22	42	64	15,43
Students	83	14	97	28,91
$\chi^2 =$			44,35	- p 0.01

The above table indicates the following:

- (i) A significant difference of opinion exists between students and lecturers on the importance of this factor. Most lecturers did not mention that this factor is important, whilst significantly more students stressed the importance of this factor.
- (ii) In the social sciences the difference between students and lecturers was significant. Most lecturers did not mention that the factor was important and students indicated that the factor was important.
- (iii) In the natural sciences a significant difference of opinion on the importance of this factor existed between lecturers and students. Significantly more students were of the opinion that this factor was important, where as significantly more lecturers had not mentioned that this factor was important.

4.2.6 Factor 6: Financial factors

Increases in university fees, the acute shortage of bursaries and the financial difficulties that many parents are experiencing, has highlighted this factor as a possible cause of students abandoning their studies.

Table 4.6.1 Financial factors: Lecturers.

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social sciences	30	97	35,34	0,01
Natural sciences	52	12	25,0	0,01
Total	82	109	3,82	10,0

Table 4.6.1 indicates the following:

- (i) In the social sciences significantly more lecturers were of the opinion that this factor is not important as most lecturers did not mention the factor.
- (ii) An analysis of the natural sciences subgroup indicates a totally opposite trend with significantly more lecturers being of the opinion that this factor is important.

Table 4.6.2 Financial factors :Students

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	21	52	44	71	37	60	20	54	122	61
2. Important	19	48	19	29	23	40	17	46	78	39
$\chi^2 =$	0,1		9,92		3,26		0,24		7,37	
Significance level	10,0%		5,0%		10,0%		10,0%		5%	

Table 4.6.2 indicates the following:

Table 4.6.2 indicates the following:

- (i) Among social sciences students no significant difference of opinion existed in the case of the male students. However, in the case of the female students significantly more students were of the opinion that this factor was not important. (5% level)
- (ii) In the natural sciences subgroup the opinions of neither the male nor the female students differed significantly.
- (iii) However, the results, once combined for all the subgroups, do indicate that significantly more students are of the opinion that this is not an important reason for students abandoning their studies. (5% level)

Table 4.6.3 Comparison of lecturers and students: Financial factors

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	82	109	191	0,35
Students	78	122	200	7,37
$\chi^2 =$			7,72	p 5%

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	30	97	127	18,0
Students	38	65	103	7,25
$\chi^2 =$			25,25	p 0,01%

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	52	12	64	10,75
Students	40	57	97	4,35
$\chi^2 =$			15,11	p 1%

Table 4.6.3 indicates the following:

- (i) A significant difference of opinion exists on the 5% level between those who indicated that this factor is or is not important. The results observed indicate that the factor was not mentioned by lecturers as being an important cause of students abandoning their studies, while a significant number of students indicated that the factor was not important.
- (ii) In the social sciences no significant difference was found between lecturers and students, with the majority responding that the factor is not important. There was, however, a significant difference between those in the sample that felt the factor was or was not important. Significantly more lecturers and students indicated the factor was not important. (0,01% level)
- (iii) In the natural sciences subgroup significantly more lecturers were of the opinion that this factor is important, whilst amongst the students no significant difference of opinion was found. This difference of opinion between lecturers and students was significant on the 0,01% level.

4.2.7 Factor 7: Student social activities

Much of students' free time is spent on social activities such as sport, cultural activities or parties, dances, rag, intervarsities and hobbies. Poor academic performance has often been blamed on students spending too much time on social activities and too little time studying. Being a "well balanced student" is crucial for developing not only as a student but also as a person.

Table 4.7.1 Student social activities: Lecturers

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social sciences	22	105	54,24	0,01
Natural sciences	26	38	2,25	10
Total	48	143	47,28	0,01

Table 4.7.1 indicates that:

- (i) That lecturers as a whole did not indicate that this factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies. A significant difference of opinion was observed on the (0,01%) level of significance.
- (ii) Lecturers from the social sciences did not indicate that the factor was important with a result significant on the 0,01% level . Therefore with 99,99% certainty most of the lecturers in the social sciences would not mention this factor as being an important cause of students abandoning their studies.
- (iii) No significant difference of opinion was found amongst lecturers from the natural sciences on the importance of this factor.

Table 4.7.2 Student social activities:

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	18	45	18	28	25	41	0	0	61	30
2. Important	22	55	45	72	35	59	37	100	139	70
$\chi^2 =$	0,40		11,58		1,66		18,50		36,70	
Significance level	10%		5%		10%		0,01%		0,01%	

Table 4.7.2 indicates:

- (i) Significantly more students were of the opinion that this factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies. A significant difference existed between those who indicated that the factor was important and those that did not. (0,01% level)
- (ii) In the social sciences subgroup CHI-SQUARE value on the 10% level of significance, in other words regarded as being not significant, was recorded for the male students. The female students had a difference significant on the 5% level with most of the group indicating that the factor was important.
- (iii) In the case of the male students in the natural sciences subgroup no significant difference on the importance of this factor was found. The female group, however, indicated that this factor is an important cause with a significant difference of opinion existing. (0.01% level)

Table 4.7.3 Comparison of lecturers and students: Social activities

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	48	143	191	40,12
Students	139	61	200	36,7
$\chi^2 =$			76,82	p 0,01

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	22	105	127	33,40
Students	67	36	103	21.05
$\chi^2 =$			54,45	p 0,01

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	26	38	64	7,11
Students	72	25	97	11,02
	$\chi^2 =$		18,13	p 0,01

The above table indicates the following:

- (i) A significant difference of opinion exists between lecturers and students on the importance of this factor.

Of the total number of lecturers significantly more lecturers did not mention this factor. On the other hand significantly more students indicated that this factor is important.

- (ii) Students from the social sciences indicated that this factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies. The difference of opinion between lecturers and students was significant.

- (iii) The natural sciences students indicated that this factor is an important cause of academic problems. The difference of opinion was significant on the 0,01% level. In the case of the lecturers from the natural sciences no significant difference existed between those who had and had not mentioned this factor. However, the difference between lecturers and students was significant.

4.2.8 Factor 8: Ineffective lecturing methods

Researching, preparing and presenting a subject is the responsibility of the lecturer and these activities remain among the most crucial aspects of a lecturer's job. In recent years much emphasis has been placed on the role the

lecturer plays in the academic development of the student. Lecturer evaluation has become a controversial means of ensuring that a lecturer performs according to expectations. But can a lecturer be held responsible for the poor academic performance of a student?

Table 4.8.1 Ineffective lecturing methods: Lecturers

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social sciences	18	109	65,20	0,01
Natural sciences	13	51	22,56	0,01
Total	31	160	87,12	0,01

The results obtained for this factor indicate the following:

- (i) Lecturers did not mention that ineffective lecturing is a cause of students abandoning their studies. The difference of opinion was significant on the 0,01% level.
- (ii) Lecturers from the social sciences did not mention this factor as being important. 86% of lecturers did not mention that this factor is important which is significant on the 0,01% level.
- (iii) The majority of lecturers from the natural sciences did not mention this factor and this was significant on the 0,01% level. Therefore, it can be accepted there can with 99,99% certainty that most of the lecturers did not regard this factor as contributing to academic failure, as most lecturers did not mention this factor at the symposium.

Table 4.8.2 Ineffective lecturing: Students

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	9	22	35	55	6	11	11	29	61	30
2. Important	31	78	28	45	54	89	26	71	139	70
$\chi^2 =$	12,22		2,68		38,40		6,08		49,14	
Significance level	1,0%		10%		0,01%		5,0%		0,01%	

Table 4.8.2 indicates the following;

- (i) 70% of students were of the opinion that this factor is important. Within the subgroups there were differences, however. The difference of opinion between students that indicated that the factor is important and those that did not is significant on the 0,01 % level of significance.
- ii) Students from the social sciences produced varying opinions. The male students were of the opinion that this factor is important (0,01% level of significance). On the other hand, although more female students indicated that this factor was not important, the difference of opinion within this group was not significant.
- (iii) Results from the natural sciences subgroup indicated that the male students were of the opinion that this factor is important (0,01% level of significance), while the female students also indicated that the factor is important, but at the 5,0% level of significance.

Table 4.8.3 Comparison of lecturers and students: Ineffective lecturing

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	31	160	191	63,89
Students	139	61	200	49,14
	$\chi^2 =$		113,03	p 0,01

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	18	109	127	31,52
Students	59	44	103	15,86
	$\chi^2 =$		47,38	p 0,01

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	13	51	64	25,65
Students	80	17	97	35,03
	$\chi^2 =$		60,68	p 0,01

Table 4.8.3 indicates the following:

- (i) 57% of the research sample indicated that this factor is not important and this was found to be significant on the 0,01% level. Most lecturers had not mentioned that the factor was important while most students indicated the opposite.
- (ii) In the case of the social sciences this factor is regarded as being not important, with 65% of the sample indicating this. Most students in the social sciences were of the opinion that this factor is not important, while most lecturers did not mention that this factor is important.

- (iii) In the natural sciences the results indicate that this factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies with over 80% of students stressing the importance of the factor. Lecturers, however, did not indicate that this factor is important. This difference is significant on the 0,01% level.

4.2.9 Factor 9: Low university entrance requirements

University entrance requirements have been raised significantly in the last number of years. Minimum requirements for most faculties are no longer merely a university exemption. Are the university entrance requirements still insufficient? Should these requirements be raised even further?

Table 4.9.1 University entrance requirements: Lecturers

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social sciences	19	108	62,38	0,01
Natural sciences	28	36	1,00	10
Total	47	144	49,20	0,01

Table 4.9.1 indicates the following:

- (i) Lecturers differ significantly on the importance of this factor. 75% of lecturers did not indicate that this factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies. The difference of opinion is significant on the 0,01 % level.
- (ii) Lecturers from the social sciences did not indicate that this factor was important, this being significant at the 0,01% level.

- (iii) In the natural sciences subgroup no significant difference was found, although more lecturers were of the opinion that the factor was important.

Table 4.9.2 University entrance requirements: Students

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	22	56	44	70	41	68	20	54	127	63
2. Important	18	44	19	30	19	32	17	46	73	37
$\chi^2 =$	0,40		9,92		8,12		0,24		1,98	
Significance level	10%		1.0%		1.0%		10%		10%	

The above table indicates the following:

- (i) 64 % of students were of the opinion that this factor is not important, yet differences of opinion did exist within the two disciplines, as indicated below.
- (ii) In the social sciences subgroup most students were of the opinion that the factor was not important. The male students did not have a difference of opinion that was significant (10%) while in the case of the female students the difference was significant on the 1.0% level.
- (iii) The natural sciences subgroup indicated that this factor is not important, with the male students having a difference significant on the 1% level while the female students had no significant difference (10%).

*Table 4.9.3 Comparison of lecturers and students:
University entrance requirements*

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	47	144	191	4,49
Students	73	127	200	1,98
$\chi^2 =$			6,47	p 5%

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	19	108	127	10,2
Students	37	66	103	3,28
$\chi^2 =$			13,50	p 1%

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	28	36	64	0,44
Students	36	61	97	0,30
$\chi^2 =$			0,74	p 10%

Table 4.9.3 indicates the following:

- (i) In the total research sample this factor is regarded as being not important with a difference of opinion on the 0.01% level being observed.
- (ii) In the social sciences sample the factor is regarded by both lecturers and students as being not important. 76% of the sample indicated that the factor was not important and this is significant on the 0,01% level.

- (iii) Although 40 % of the natural sciences sample did indicate that this factor is important, the difference was not significant (10% level).

4.2.10 Factor 10: Hostel initiation

Hostel initiation remains one of the most controversial factors that university authorities and students have to deal with. Although many of the traditional practises have ended, there are still a number of students and lecturers that are of the opinion that hostel initiation can cause students to abandon their studies.

Table 4.10.1 Hostel initiation: Lecturers

	Important	Not important	χ^2	P
Social sciences	39	88	18.91	0,01%
Natural sciences	30	34	0,25	10%
Total	69	122	14,70	1%

Table 4.10.1 suggests the following:

- (i) The majority of lecturers did not mention that this factor is important. 64% of lecturers did not indicate that this factor causes students to abandon their studies and this was found to be significant on the 1% level.
- (ii) In the social sciences the lecturers did not mention this factor as important with a significant difference on the 0,01% level being recorded.
- (iii) For lecturers from the natural sciences no significant difference of opinion existed. Only four more lecturers did not mention the importance of this factor, than those that did.

Table 4.10.2 Hostel initiation: Students

	Soc. sci. Male		Soc. Sci. Female		Nat. sci. Male		Nat. Sci. Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Not important	6	15	35	55	4	7	9	24	54	27 %
2. Important	34	85	28	45	56	93	28	76	146	73 %
$\chi^2 =$	19,60		0,78		45,06		9,76		30,30	
Significance level	0,01%		10%		0,01%		1%		0,01%	

The above table indicates the following:

- (i) Significantly more students were of the opinion that this factor was an important cause of students abandoning their studies.
- (ii) In the social sciences the male students indicated that this factor was an important factor.(0,01%) The female students, however, did not have a significant difference of opinion (10%) between those students that were of the opinion that the factor is or is not important.
- (iii) In the natural sciences the male students indicated that this factor was important, a 0,01% level of significance being observed. The female students also indicated that the factor is important (1%).

Table 4.10.3 Comparison of lecturers and students

a. Total

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	69	122	191	24,78
Students	146	54	200	30,30
	$\chi^2 =$		55,08	p 0,01

b. Social sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	39	88	127	11,15
Students	62	41	103	8,73
$\chi^2 =$			19,88	p 0,01

c. Natural sciences

	Important	Not important	Total	χ^2
Lecturers	30	34	64	8,56
Students	84	13	97	20,28
$\chi^2 =$			29,36	p 0,01

The above table indicates the following:

- (i) Students were mostly of the opinion that this factor was important while most lecturers did not mention that this factor was important. A 0,01% level of significance in the difference of opinion was found.
- (ii) In the social sciences subgroup students and lecturers differed significantly. Lecturers did not mention this factor as being important whilst students were of the opinion that this was an important factor, the difference being 0,01%.
- (iii) In the natural sciences sample a significant difference of opinion was found. 71% of the sample indicated that this factor was important and the difference of opinion was significant on the 0.01% level.

The research results indicate that in most instances lecturers and students differ on the importance of the ten factors investigated. Similarly, in certain factors differences between students in the different sciences also existed. These differences are discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Interpretation of Research Results

5.1 Introduction

The objective set for the research was to validate lecturer opinions on the reasons for first year students abandoning their studies. The results presented in Chapter 4 have demonstrated the opinions of both lecturers and students with regards to the ten possible causes. For most of those factors lecturers and students differed in their opinions on the importance of those factors. In this chapter each of the factors will be interpreted in more detail.

5.2 Interpretation of research results.

5.2.1 Factor 1: Adaptation from school to university

The research results have indicated that lecturers from both the natural and social sciences did not mention that adaptation from school to university was an important cause of students abandoning their studies. The CHI-SQUARE value of 2.30 (10% level) in a comparison of the two groups indicates that there was no significant difference of opinion between the lecturers from the different faculties.

The reasons why lecturers did not mention that this is a significant factor are not clear. Lecturers may have been of the opinion that the adaptation from school to university is not as traumatic as some would suggest. Furthermore, because the average age of a first year student is over eighteen years and students have

already successfully completed 12 years of schooling, lecturers may be of the opinion that students should therefore be both intellectually and emotionally prepared to make a successful transition from school to university.

Lecturers may also believe that a further factor that helps the student make the transition from school to university is the university induction programme. All first year students arrive on campus approximately fourteen days before the start of formal classes. During this period the students are introduced to all aspects of campus life, the various departments in which they will study, and the facilities that can be of assistance to them.

On the other hand, lecturers may simply not have thought of this factor, taking for granted that students are making the transition successfully and that this factor therefore does not warrant any further consideration.

Students are of the opinion that the transition from school to university is a significant cause of students abandoning their studies. All four student subgroups indicated that this factor is significant.

Why do students indicate that this factor is significant? Do students experience the transition from school to university as a situation which is difficult to handle?

The university presents many new challenges to first year students. During the last year at school the matriculant is compared to the proverbial "big fish in a small pond"; and the move to a large university campus changes all this. The first year student is faced with a new environment, many new faces, new academic pressures, career choice decisions and new relationships. The first year student must make the transition on both an academic and emotional level. To fail in any of these two areas results in severe pressure on the student.

In a very short time students are forced to come to terms with these pressures.

To the student it would seem obvious that the university authorities, senior students and service departments should do more in order to help the student during the transition period.

It may well be that a fourteen day induction programme is not enough to assist students. What may be needed is an Induction course similar to the "University 101" programmes presented in many universities and colleges in the United States of America many of which last as long as six months. These programmes aim to bridge the gap between school and university and focus on assistance in career choices, appropriate study methods, how to do appropriate research and literature studies, etc.

Only once students have successfully made the transition from school to university are they able to focus all their attention on the task at hand, and the successful achievement of a qualification.

5.2.2 Factor 2: Incorrect career choice

Although in the final analysis the results from neither group of lecturers indicated that this was a significant cause of students abandoning their studies, there were those lecturers who were of the opinion that the factor was important. The CHI-SQUARE of 14.56 indicates that lecturers differed in opinion significant on the 1 % level.

Over 68% of those lecturers that were of the opinion that this factor was significant are from the social sciences, indicating the extent to which lecturers differed on the significance of this factor.

Most courses in the social sciences are generally not as directly career orientated as those offered in the natural sciences. Therefore lecturers from the social sciences may be more concerned about the influence this factor could exert in

causing students to abandon their studies. More of their students may be uncertain about the career they should choose and this would exert a negative influence on their ability to complete their studies successfully. It is often observed that those students who are unsure what courses to study or those who were unable to gain entrance to other faculties then enrol for courses in the social sciences.

It is reasonable to anticipate that these students would form a large portion of the group that eventually abandon their studies.

However, most lecturers did not mention that this factor is important, presumably because they did not think of it as a significant cause of students abandoning their studies.

Three of the student subgroups have indicated that incorrect career choice is a significant cause of students abandoning their studies. The social sciences (female) group indicated that this factor is not a significant cause of students abandoning their studies.

The making of a career choice was discussed earlier in the literature study, and it was shown that this is a complicated and critical decision to make. An incorrect career choice invariably results in study problems, loss of motivation, personal problems, financial problems and ultimately results in students abandoning their studies.

Both the natural sciences subgroups have indicated that students from this discipline who make an incorrect career choice are likely to abandon their studies. This is because these faculties have more career orientated courses, such as medicine and engineering.

It is interesting to note the difference between the opinions of male and female

social science students. The male students indicated that this is a significant factor, yet the female students were of the opinion that incorrect career choice is less important. However, the difference was not significant.

The traditional expectations of society, where male students are placed under pressure through being expected to obtain a qualification and employment, has resulted in male students being more concerned about their choice of career and how it will meet these expectations.

The importance of making the correct career choice is crucial to ensuring academic success at university. The foundation for obtaining a qualification is the selection of a course of study that meets all the expectations and needs of a student. This selection relates directly to the career which the individual wants to follow.

It is important that the student makes a career choice which is realistic, a goal that can be achieved. Many support systems already exist that can help the student make the correct choice and thus ensure a better chance at academic success. Making an incorrect career choice must therefore be seen as a significant cause of students abandoning their studies.

It should also be noted that only 49% of the entire research sample of lecturers and students were of the opinion that this factor is important. The question therefore arises: Is it possible that over half of lecturers and students disregard the importance of making a correct career choice?

5.2.3 Factor 3: Weak motivation to study

Lecturers differ on the significance of weak motivation to study as a factor contributing towards students abandoning their studies. Lecturers from the

natural sciences are divided over the significance of this factor. Only 8 more lecturers mentioned that this factor was not important compared with those who felt the factor was important. Lecturers from the social sciences are also divided on the importance of this factor, although they were generally of the opinion that weak motivation to study is significant.

The difference of opinions between the lecturer subgroups, ($= 0.42$) is not significant, being on the 10% level of significance. This is therefore not regarded as showing any specific tendencies.

Why are lecturers divided on the importance of this factor? Could it be that lecturers consider that students do not lack motivation, but rather that they lack self-discipline?

It would appear that lecturers are unsure about whether or not students are motivated to study and the extent to which this lack of motivation influences students to abandon their studies. Once again the possibility that lecturers simply did not think of this factor must be considered.

Students are of the opinion that a lack of motivation is an important cause of students abandoning their studies. The results indicate that three of the student subgroups were of the opinion that this factor is important. The only subgroup to question the importance of this factor were the natural sciences (females) group. This subgroup were undecided on the importance with only 20 of the 37 indicating that weak motivation to study is an important factor.

Weak motivation to study is a significant cause of students abandoning their studies. Students cannot expect to be successful academically if they lack the motivation to study. Motivation to study implies the willpower to be successful, the need to achieve and to continue one's development. However, it also implies the ability to be disciplined, and to study and prepare for tests and examinations. Hence, the student who lacks the motivation to study is more likely to fail and thus abandon his studies.

Although the results do not fully support the significance of this factor, it can be accepted (according to the students) that weak motivation to study is a significant cause of students abandoning their studies.

5.2.4 Factor 4: Poor Academic preparation at school for university

In recent years much has been said and written about the standard of matriculation examinations. Numerous universities have raised the entrance requirements for students wishing to study at university. Is this an attempt by university authorities simply to limit the number of students enrolling at university, or are universities now beginning to question the matriculation standards?

Moreover, other questions are now also being asked. Are South African schools too results orientated? Is too much emphasis being placed on the memorising of facts, the obtaining of high marks and distinctions?

However, lecturers did not indicated that this factor – poor academic preparation at school for university – is a major cause of students abandoning their studies. 63% of lecturers from the social sciences and 57% of lecturers from the natural sciences did not mention this factor as important. The CHI-SQUARE 9.68 in the comparison of the lecturers on the importance of this factor is significant on the 5% level.

An increase in university entrance requirements could be used as a solution to the problem of poor academic preparation at school. Those students who meet the entrance criteria should be adequately prepared to study at university, whilst it could be argued that those who do not meet these requirements were not adequately prepared to be successful at university.

The results obtained for the student subgroups contradict the opinions of the

school is a significant cause of students abandoning their studies.

Often the emphasis at school is on mechanical learning. The rote memorisation of facts in the attempt to achieve the best possible symbols in the final examinations is very prevalent at schools. Teachers and parents place a heavy emphasis on the need to perform well academically. Although the syllabi for the various subjects require many important topics to be covered in depth, these subjects are not always covered in sufficient detail and many students fail to gain the necessary insight into the subject matter. Consequently a student with good matriculation results does not necessarily perform well at university.

The lecturers and students differ in their opinions with a CHI-SQUARE significant on the 0.01% level. Most lecturers did not mention that this factor is important whilst most students regarded the factor as being important. A possible explanation is that lecturers do not devalue matriculation standards and teaching methods at school whilst students, as a result of difficulties experienced during the transition, believe they did not receive sufficient or adequate academic preparation at school.

5.2.5 Factor 5: Incorrect study methods

Lecturers from both the social and natural sciences did not rate that incorrect study methods are a significant cause of students abandoning their studies. 67.5% of all lecturers in the research sample failed to indicate that Factor 5 was important. The CHI-SQUARE value of 29.46 is significant on the 0.01% level.

Why lecturers did not indicate incorrect study methods as important is uncertain. It could be argued that if the university recruits or selects students with the potential to succeed at university, these students should, presumably, be able to apply the correct study methods. At the least, students should have developed the correct study methods at school in their preparation for the matriculation examinations.

Students differed from the lecturers in that they clearly indicated that Factor 5 is a significant cause of the problem. 89% of all the students in the research sample were of the opinion that incorrect study methods constitute an important cause of students abandoning their studies. The difference between each of the student subgroups was significant on the 0.01% level.

One of the major transitions that students have to make as they progress from school to university is in the area of study methods. Furthermore, different subjects call for different study techniques. A few subject areas require the memorisation of facts, but most subjects require the student to gain insight into subject matter.

Once again the study methods applied, or developed at school are brought into question. Are these methods ineffective at university? From the results it can be deduced that students feel insecure about the study methods they use. The fact that students flood study method training sessions at the Student Counselling Centre is further indication that students are concerned about study methods.

The most obvious solution to this problem is to provide training in study methods. Students experiencing academic problems should be encouraged to attend courses in study methods or receive support from their lecturers.

However, the major effort in developing study methods should be concentrated at school level. If scholars are trained to study correctly at school, to gain insight into their subjects, and not simply required to remember facts, the seed for effective study methods will be reaped at tertiary level. Incorrect study methods must therefore be recognized (as regarded by students) as a significant cause of students abandoning their studies.

5.2.6 Factor 6: Financial factors

The results indicate that lecturers from the social sciences did not consider that financial factors are an important cause of students abandoning their studies. 76% of lecturers from the social sciences failed to mention this factor as important, while 81% of lecturers from the natural sciences were of the opinion that this factor is important. This represents a considerable difference of opinion between the two lecturer groups.

The comparison of the two groups produced a CHI-SQUARE of 3.82 only being significant on the 10% level.

What are the reasons for this difference of opinion? Firstly, the costs of courses in the natural sciences are higher than those in the Social Sciences. The average duration of courses in the natural sciences is from 4 to 5 years, while courses in the social sciences are between 3 and 4 years in duration. The third reason is that if a student from the natural sciences fails only one course during a year, the entire year has to be repeated, while the same ruling does not necessarily apply in the social sciences. Understandable, the costs involved in studying would therefore be more of a concern to students from the natural sciences.

However, all the student subgroups indicated that financial factors are not significant. 61% of all students were of the opinion that this factor was not important. There was not a significant difference of opinion between the different subgroups. Moreover, a perceived availability of bursaries and study loans has resulted in students not being over concerned about financial factors. Many students find temporary, part-time or vacation work which further helps to alleviate financial problems. Thus, for the average white student financial implications have not been severe. However, this will differ for students from other race groups. As the university fees continue to rise and the South African economy remains under pressure this trend could well change.

It must be stressed that this scenario may have changed since the initial research was conducted, as university fees have soared, whilst stringent student loan regulations have come into force.

5.2.7 Factor 7: Student social activities

Much has been said and written about student social activities on and off campus that adversely affect academic work. Rag, Intervarsity and events such as "Spring Day" often receive considerable criticism from lecturers. However, the results from this research shows that the majority of lecturers in the research sample were of the opinion that these social activities were not a major cause of students abandoning their studies, or the respondents did not mention this factor as being important. 72% of lecturers in the sample had either not considered this factor or did not indicate that the factor was significant.

The extent to which lecturers are aware of what student activities entail and how this affects academic activities needs to be questioned. During the symposium lecturers gave verbal utterance to their concern over the influence of this factor, yet they did not mention this factor in any great numbers when requested to write down the important factors.

Three of the student groups indicated that social activities are not important causes of students abandoning their studies. Only the natural sciences (females) group were of the opinion that this factor is important.

During the first year on campus students are compelled to participate in social activities. For the natural sciences (female) subgroup social activities are seen to have a negative effect on academic performance. Considerable pressure is exerted on female students studying in courses such as engineering, medicine or veterinary sciences. In these fields the numbers of females studying is limited through selection procedures which tend to favour male students.

In conclusion, although the results do indicate that both lecturers and students do not regard social activities as being a significant cause of students abandoning their studies, the influence of the factor should not be underestimated.

5.2.8 Factor 8: Ineffective lecturing methods

When a scapegoat is needed, it is easy for students to blame lecturers for their academic failures. University lecturers are often blamed for the failures of first year students.

The results of this study indicate that lecturers from both groups did not consider that this factor – ineffective lecturing, or even poor lecturing – was to blame for students abandoning their studies. 81% of lecturers did not mention that this factor was important.

Only 14% of lecturers from the social sciences and 20% of lecturers from the natural sciences indicated that the factor was important. Naturally, it can hardly be expected that lecturers would blame themselves for the academic problems experienced by first year students, but lecturers will have to take a closer look at the styles of lecturing they use, if only to ensure that students with the potential to be successful do, in fact, succeed. As indicated in the literature study, lectures will have to manage the curriculum more effectively in order to ensure that all the required work is covered effectively.

As might be expected, 69% of students in the research sample were of the opinion that ineffective lecturing was an important cause of students abandoning their studies.

Students in the natural sciences subgroups were particularly concerned about the effect of poor lecturing. At school students were used to the special attention of a teacher for each subject. Class sizes were limited to between 20 and 30

scholars. At university all this changes. Students no longer receive special attention, in most cases the lecturers do not even know their names. The size of classes vary from 100 to 300 students.

Lecturing styles also change dramatically. The pace at which subject matter is covered is significantly faster. In many instances it is the lecturer alone who has to shoulder the blame, but the question needs to be asked whether it is not also the students' inability to adapt to the new style and form of class. Admittedly, the failure of lecturers to recognize this and their inability (or unwillingness) to help the students to make the transition must add to the problem.

5.2.9 Factor 9: Low university entrance requirements

As the entrance requirements set to study at a university have gradually risen over the past years, it was not surprising that the subject was once again raised at the lecturer symposium held at the University of Pretoria. It was expected that lecturers would indicate that entrance requirements were still too low and that this could be a reason why students would later abandon their studies when faced with academic problems. However, this was not the case. The research results show that a large number of lecturers did not mention that this factor was an important cause of students abandoning their studies. It should be noted that lecturers from the natural sciences were not as convinced as their colleagues in the social sciences that this factor is unimportant.

It is a fact that the natural sciences have the most stringent entrance requirements for its various courses. Not unexpectedly a number of the lecturers felt that these entrance requirements were still not stringent enough.

The student groups felt quite different about the factor. All of the groups indicated that university entrance requirements were not too low and that these were not to blame for students abandoning their studies. It should be born in mind that the

students respondents in this research have all met the entrance requirements set for them and they will therefore be inclined to believe that they have the potential to succeed at university. Thus they would not consider low entrance requirements as a cause for potential failure.

New developments in the field of "potential testing" have recently been applied at the University of Pretoria. Future research should focus on the validity of psychometric testing as a yardstick to determine academic potential, thus reducing the reliance on matriculation results.

5.2.10 Factor 10: Hostel initiation

One of the most controversial aspects of campus life to affect first year students is hostel initiation.

All first year hostel students are involved in initiation activities up until at least September each year. During this period the students are exposed to many time consuming and exhausting tasks that in many instances prevent them from giving as much attention to studying as required.

However, lecturers participating in this study have not indicated that this factor is important. 69% of lecturers from the social sciences did not mention this factor, while the results from the natural sciences subgroup are slightly different. Only 53% of lecturers in the natural sciences did not mention that hostel initiation was an important cause of students abandoning their studies. It would seem that more lecturers from the natural sciences were concerned about the affects of hostel initiation on academic performance.

The major concern of lecturers from the natural sciences was that hostel initiation was too time consuming and often resulted in students either not having time to study or sometimes being so tired that they fall asleep in class.

For many students in the natural sciences the first year lays the foundation for careers in Engineering or Medicine. For many of them it is thus a "make or break year". Although these faculties have stringent entrance requirements, and students who obtain entrance should therefore have the necessary potential to succeed, there are those among them who cannot afford to spend too much time on activities such as hostel initiation.

Lecturers from the social sciences appear to be less concerned about initiation. It is possible that the merits of an initiation programme are more readily accepted by lecturers in the social sciences. Lecturers from the social sciences are more "people orientated" by the vary nature of their careers and are therefore concerned not only with the academic growth of their students but also the personal and emotional developments that take place within the hostel environment during the first year.

With the exception of the social sciences (female) subgroup all the remaining student groups were of the opinion that this factor is an important cause of students abandoning their studies. Male first year students go through a fairly extensive initiation process which involves not only physical activities but also makes heavy psychological/emotional demands. Not surprisingly some first year students are found sleeping in the classroom during a lecture.

The natural sciences (female) subgroup have a concern similar to that of their male counterparts about social activities in that these initiation procedures are too time consuming and prevent them from giving their full attention to their studies. On the other hand, the social sciences (female) students indicated that they were not concerned about the affects of hostel initiation on their studies. These students are often not specifically career orientated, and are more people orientated and therefore interested in interacting with other people and developing on a personal level.

In 1989 an unpublished report, based on the research conducted for this thesis, was submitted to the University of Pretoria. Subsequently a major development in hostel initiation was implemented at the University in 1994. As recommended in the report hostel initiation activities were limited to the first two weeks that the first year student is on campus. This represents a significant attempt by the university authorities to limit the negative impact of disruptive and time consuming rituals.

* * *

The results presented in this study have shown that in general lecturers and students do not agree on the importance of certain factors as being causes of students abandoning their studies. Only small differences have been noticed in the opinions of students from the social and natural sciences.

A major concern highlighted by this study is that most lecturers did not mention most of the ten factors investigated in this research, either indicating that these factors were not important causes of students abandoning their studies, or that they had simply not considered these factors. The extent to which lecturers know why or due to what causes students actually abandon their studies is thus brought into question.

In some instances lecturers from the social and natural sciences differed from each other in respect of the importance of certain factors. For example, Factor 3, Motivation to study, was regarded as important by lecturers from the social sciences but not by those from the natural sciences. Factor 6, Financial factors, was considered important by the lecturers from the natural sciences but not by those from the social sciences.

In most instances the student subgroups were in agreement over the importance of a certain factor.

In order to validate the perceptions of lecturers about the reasons why first year students abandon their studies only those factors where both students and lecturers agreed on the importance of factor can be considered.

Those factors are:

a. *Important cause*

- *Factor 3: Weak motivation to study*

Only to a certain extent.

This study has therefore failed to validate lecturer perceptions on why first year students abandon their studies for most of the factors that were presented.

The predominant problem experienced lies in the design of the research instrument in that lecturers were unable to focus on specific causes and as a direct result failed to mention or did not think of all the possible factors, thereby creating the impression that these factors were not important.

However, the study does underline the complexity of the research problem. Every student differs from every other student. A cliché, perhaps, but at the same time a truth that no lecturer can afford to ignore. The reasons why first year students abandon their studies will become more complex and integrated.

One possibility that this study has not considered is that students who abandon their studies may do so because of the influence of a number of different factors and not because of one particular factor.

With the continued pressures being placed on universities through rationalization programmes, cuts in state subsidies and other financial restraints affecting

students, a university will not be able to afford to continue allowing such a large number of students abandoning their studies.

During this transition phase in South Africa's history the country requires well trained and qualified manpower in order to develop the economy. Only a part of that manpower will pass through universities. Of necessity universities will play a crucial role in providing as many graduates as possible in to the work environment. There will always be students who fail, or abandon their studies. But the number of students who abandon their studies is the real concern. Lecturers will have to find the necessary solutions to these problems and that implies becoming more involved with their students, recognizing their individual differences and providing support and assistance where required. The quality of a university qualification is not lessened because a student was helped to achieve it. After all, a qualification is not based on whether individuals have the ability to succeed on their own within an academic vacuum.

The same applies to students. Those experiencing academic or other problems that may affect their academic performance should obtain assistance from either their lecturers or from those support systems that exist on campus.

The focus should also not rest entirely on treating problems, but there should be a positive thrust coming from schools through the preparation of their scholars both academically and emotionally for the careers that lie ahead.

To resolve the problem of first year students abandoning their studies, a multi-functional and concerted effort will be required. All parties involved, both on and off campus, will have to play their part. More research is required and relevant plans of action will have to be developed.

In conclusion, while this study has failed in its objective to validate lecturer perceptions of why students abandon their studies, it has provided lecturers with

food for thought in that it would appear from the results that, by and large, they are out of touch with the causes of students abandoning their studies.

Every lecturer and every student has an obligation to ensure that students succeed at university. Until each accepts that responsibility universities will continue to be plagued by high levels of students abandoning their studies.

Appendix 1

Opsomming:

'n Validasie van dosente-waarnemings van die redes waarom koshuisstudente hul studies staak.

Tydens 'n simposium gehou aan die Universiteit van Pretoria in Februarie 1989 is daar beklemtoon dat verdere navorsing belangrik is om vas te stel waarom ongeveer 7% van eerstejaar studente hul studies staak. Hierdie persentasie weerspieël daardie studente wat die potensiaal het om op universiteit te slaag maar wat hul studies tydens of aan die einde van hul eerste jaar staak. Tydens die simposium is dosente gevra om enige redes wat moontlike oorsake mag wees vir studente-slytasie aan te wys. Om die' waarnemings van dosente te evalueer, is daar gebruik gemaak van 'n steekproef eerstejaar studente om die' waarnemings te toets.

'n Literatuurstudie het aangedui dat die navorsingsprobleem 'n ingewikkelde probleem is. Redes vir akademiese slytasie is in diepte bespreek. Die volgende hoofemas is gedek;

biografiese faktore, sosio-ekonomiese faktore, kognitiewe faktore en persoonlikheids faktore.

Die literatuur verskaf teenstrydige menings oor die bogenoemde temas. Die literatuurstudie het wel aangedui dat akademiese slytasie deur verskeie faktore veroorsaak kan word. 'n Belangrike feit wat in ag geneem moet word, is dat baie gevalle van slytasie verhoed kan word indien die probleem reeds vroegtydig geïdentifiseer is en 'n oplossing toegepas word.

Die navorsingsprobleem is gekies omdat daar 'n behoefte bestaan om dosente

meer in te lig oor die oorsake van slytasie. Die doel van die navorsing was om dosente-waarnemings oor waarom studente staak te evalueer.

'n Vraelys wat bestaan het uit die tien belangrikste oorsake soos angedui deur die dosente, is aan 200 koshuis-eerstejaarstudente gegee om te voltooi. Elke student is gevra om die faktore te evalueer deur 'n waarde tussen 1 en 2 toe te ken, 1 gelykstaande aan **nie belangrik nie** en 2 gelykstaande aan **baie belangrik**.

Die voltooide vraelyste is ontleed. Die geldigheid en belangrikheid van elke faktor is vasgestel. Die resultate het onvoldoende nuwe bewyse gelewer. Die dosente kon geen spesifieke faktore uitlig nie. Daar was met sommige van die faktore merkwaardige verskille tussen die standpunte van dosente van die geesteswetenskappe en die natuurwetenskappe.

Die studente het die meeste van die faktore as belangrik beskou. Die belangrikste faktore het in verband gestaan met die kognitiewe en emosionele ontwikkeling van die student. Die navorsingsresultate verskaf geen nuwe inligting oor die spesifieke faktore nie. Die navorsing het wel aangedui dat dosente aan die Universiteit van Pretoria nie ingelig is oor waarom hul eerstejaar studente die Universiteit verlaat nie. Dit is noodsaaklik dat dosente meer insig moet kry in die probleme wat hul studente ervaar.

Die studente het aangedui dat voorbereiding wat op skool aangebied word ter voorbereiding vir universiteit, onvoldoende is.

Toekomstige navorsing moet studente wat van voorneme is om hulle studies te staak of reeds gestaak het, betrek. Die universiteit kan gebruik maak van 'n onderhoud voor 'n student finaal staak om meer inligting te bekom. Die inligting sal waardevol wees vir beide dosente en studente-voorligters in hulle pogings om te verhoed dat studente in die toekoms hulle studies staak..

Appendix 2

Summary:

A validation of lecturers' perceptions of the reasons why hostel students abandon their studies.

A symposium held at the University of Pretoria in February 1989, stressed that research on why first year students abandon their studies, was imperative to gain an understanding of why approximately 7% of first year students abandon their studies. This percentage reflects those students who had the potential to succeed at university, but dropped out for reasons other than academic failure. At the symposium lecturers were asked to indicate factors which they considered prominent causes of students abandoning their studies. To validate the perceptions of lecturers, the causes were presented to a sample of students.

A study of the existing literature indicated that the research problem was a complex one. Causes of academic attrition were discussed in detail.

The following main themes were discussed:

biographical factors, socio-economic factors, cognitive factors, and personality factors.

The literature offers conflicting views on these themes. However, the research consulted did indicate that academic attrition is often complex and caused by a variety of different factors. An important fact is that most cases of academic attrition could have been prevented through early identification of the problems and the implementation of solutions as soon as possible.

The research problem was selected because of the need for lecturers to be more aware of some of the most prominent causes of academic attrition. The aim of the research was to evaluate lecturer perceptions of why students abandon their studies.

A questionnaire consisting of the ten most prominent causes as identified by the lecturers was presented to 200 hostel-residing first year students. Each student was asked to evaluate the factors on a scale of 1 to 2, 1 being equivalent to **not important** and 2 being equivalent to **very important**.

The completed questionnaires were analysed. The validity of the results and significance of each factor was determined. The results failed to provide any significant new trends. The lecturers failed to highlight any specific factors. With most of the factors a significant difference of opinion between lecturers of the social sciences and natural sciences was found to exist.

The students regarded most of the factors to be important, the most important factors being related to the cognitive and emotional development of the student. The research results provided no new information on the specific problems. However, the results did indicate that there was a significant difference of opinion between lecturers and students on the importance of these factors. Thus it appears that lecturers need to gain greater insight into the importance of these factors.

The students indicated that preparation for university at school was a major concern. Future research should involve students who are about to or have already abandoned their studies. The university could make use of an exit interview before the students' final decision to abandon their studies. The information obtained from such interviews would be crucial to both lecturers and student counsellors in attempts to counteract students abandoning their studies in the future.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. **Academic Failure:** the failure to complete or pass an academic course or year.
2. **Academic Underachievement:** to under perform; to perform below academic potential; failure to develop full potential.
3. **Intelligence:** endowed with a faculty of reason; alert; bright; quick of mind; well informed; skill or knowledge.
4. **Aptitude:** natural ability; readiness to learn.
5. **Interest:** that in which one is interested in or has interest in; having an interest or concern; affected by bias or personal considerations.
6. **Self-concept:** product of one's interaction with oneself, experiences and the environment.
7. **Motivation:** a factor that regulates behaviour, to provide with a motive.
8. **Loneliness:** isolated, unaccompanied, solitary; being alone.
9. **Initiation:** serving to initiate; introductory first step.
10. **Study:** to apply the mind to in order to acquire knowledge.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ARKOFF, A. 1968. *Adjustment and Mental Health*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- ARONSON, E and MILLS. 1959. The effect of severity of initiation on liking a group. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. Volume 59.
- BARNARD, L.F. 1984. *'n Psigodinamiese studie van Hoërskool leerlinge wat onderpresteer*. M.A. Verhandelings. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.
- BOWER, E.M. and HOLMES, J. 1959. Emotional Factors and academic achievement. *Review of Educational Research*, 29, 529 – 544.
- BOYD, R. 1988. Environmental influence on the writing of gifted high school girls. *Adolescence*, 22, No 89.
- CLARK, W. 1989. *A preliminary investigation into the phenomenon of first year undergraduate drop out rates at the University of Pretoria*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- CILLIERS, S.P. 1970. *Maatskaplike Navorsing*: Stellenbosch, Kosmos.
- COPE, R.G. and HANNAH. 1975. *Revolving college doors – the causes and consequences of dropping out, stopping out and transferring*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- DEMOS, G.D. 1968. Analysis of College drop out - some manifest and some covert reasons. *Personnel and Guidance Journal*: 46, 681 - 684.
- Du PLESSIS, W.F. 1986. *Logoterapie: Die plek daarvan onder ander psigoterapieë*. Psychotherapia.

- Du PLESSIS, G and PRYBA, W. 1987. *Studie Vaardigheid*. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.
- ENGELBRECHT, S.W. 1972. *Die korrelasie tussen eksamen prestasie en enkele persoonlikheidstrekke*. M.A. Verhandeling. Pretoria: Unisa.
- ENGLER, B. 1985. *Personality Theories*. 2 ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.
- ERASMUS, J.A.J. 1987. *Profesionele studente dienste*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- ERASMUS, J.A.J. and LOURENS, W.H. 1981. Faktore wat 'n rol speel in die akademiese prestasie van 'n student. *U.P Dosent*, 5, 40 – 46. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.
- ERENS, G. 1977. *Profiles and opinions of unsuccessful first year students of the academic year 1975*. Pretoria: Committee of University Principles.
- FERREIRA, J.G. 1988. Verbetering van Onderrig. *U.P Dosent*, 9, 21 – 25. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.
- FOOT, H.C , CHAPMAN, A.J., and SMITH, J.R. (eds). 1980. *Friendship and Social Relations in Children*. New York: Wiley and Chichester.
- FLAHERTY, R. and REUTZEL, E. 1965. Personality traits of high and low achievers in college. *Journal of Educational Research*, 58, 409 – 411.
- GARBERS, J.G. 1960. *Gradueering Tendense in Suid Afrika, 1918 –1957*. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.
- GAUCHE, M. 1983. *Die 16 PF as hulpmiddel by beroeps voorligting*. M.A. Verhandeling. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

GOUS, H.T. 1966. Slaag - Druiplyers aan 'n universiteit. *Die Suid Afrikaanse Sielkundige Monografieë*. 49, 1 – 10.

GOUWS, D.J. 1957. *Die akademiese vordering en aanpassing van eerstejaar universiteit studente*. Pretoria: J.L Van Schaik

GOUWS, L.A. , LOUW, MEYER and PLUG. 1979. *Psigologiese Woordeboek*. Johannesburg: McGraw Hill.

GROBLER, J.J. 1973. *'n Ondersoek na persoonlikheidseienskappe van eerstejaar universiteit studente wat hulle studies staak*. M.A. Verhandeling. Bloemfontein: Universiteit van die Oranje Vrystaat.

HAWKES, G.R. 1950. The use of the M.M.P.I in screening college students for counseling purposes. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 41, 116 – 121.

HEALY , C.C. 1982. *Career development: Counseling through life stages*. Boston: Allan Bacon Inc.

HUNTER, R.A. and MORGAN, D.H. 1949. Problems of college students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 40, 79 - 92.

JEWLER, A.J. 1972. *University 101. Who are we, what we do, and what we have accomplished?* Davis College: University of South Carolina.

JORISSEN, H.W and POTTAS, 1984. *Onderrig ontwikkeling: Besprekings klasse as onderrigwyse*. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

JORISSEN, H.W. 1982. *Onderrig Ontwikkeling: Lesing fases en onderrigwyses*. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

JORISSEN, H.W. 1988. *'n Didaktiese model vir doeltreffende tersiere onderwys*. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

JOUBERT, D.M. 1982. Dosentekursus openingsrede. *U.P. Dosent* 3, 1 – 6. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

KAPLAN, H.I. and SADOCK, B.J. 1985. *Modern Synopsis of comprehensive textbook of Psychiatry*. Hed. London: Williams and Wilkins.

KORNICH, M. 1963. *Underachievement U.S.A.* New York: Charles Thomas Publishers.

LESSING, J.C. 1979. *Eerstejaar druiwing en verband houdende faktore. 'n Empiriese ondersoek*. Pretoria: R.G.N Jaarverslag.

LINDGREN, H.C. 1969. *The psychology of college success*. London: John Wiley and Sons.

LOUW, J. 1984. *Persoonlikheid en akademiese prestasie. 'n Psigometriese ondersoek*. M.A. Verhandeling. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom Universiteit vir H.C.O.

MALAN, S.P.T. 1980. Evaluering van dosente se onderrig deur studente – waardeloos of waardevol. *U.P. Dosent* 1, 26 - 31. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

MALAN, S.P.T. 1982. *Agtergrond vergelyking tussen stakers en nie staker studente*. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

MALAN, S.P.T. 1982. *Onderrig Ontwikkeling: Toepassing van Onderrigbeginsels*. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

MALAN, S.P.T. 1987. *Oorgang van skool na universiteit*. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

MALAN, S.P.T. 1988. Evaluating teacher effectiveness; a fresh approach to an elusive issue. *SAJHE/SATHO*, Vol 2, No 2.

- MARAIS, D.D. 1987. *'n Gebalanseerde studente lewe*. Pretoria: Univeriteit van Pretoria.
- MEDORA, N. and WOODWARD, J.C. 1986. Loneliness amongst college students at a mid western university. *Adolescence*, Vol 21, No 82.
- MOELWYN HUGHES, J.T. 1988. How can lecturers more effectively evaluate their own performance. *Bulletin for Teachers*, vol 20, No 2. Johannesburg.
- MOLLER, N.J. 1965. *'n Ondersoek na die invleod van enkele nie – intellektuele faktore op universiteit prestasie*. M.A. Verhandeling. Pretoria: Unisa.
- MOUTON. P.J. 1972. *Die aanwending van 'n syfertoets met die oog op voorspelling van akademiese sukses by eerstejaar universiteit studente*. M.A. Verhandeling. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.
- NEL, Z. 1984. Die persoonlikheids ontwikkeling van afrikaans sprekende mans studente in vergelyking met militere dienspligtiges. *V.S.S.A. Referaatbundel*. Bloemfontein: Universiteit van die Oranje Vrystaat.
- OFFSHE, R.J. 1973. *Interpersonal behavior in small groups*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- PRESTON, R.C. 1961. Improving validity of study method inventories. *Educational Psychology Measurements*, 21, 129 – 137.
- RAMSDEN, P and ENTWISTLE. 1981. Effects of academic departments on students' approaches to studying. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 51, 68 – 383.
- SACK, M.G. 1968. *An evaluation of a group of students of the highly professional biological sciences with regard to their passivity in academic achievement*. M.A. Thesis. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

- SCHOLTZ, P.E. 1987. *Die implementering van akademiese ondersteuningsprogramme op vroeë geïdentifiseerde risiko studente; 'n psigologiese ondersoek*. Doktorale Tesis. Potchefstroom: Universiteit van Potchefstroom vir C.H.O.
- SMIT, G. 1971. *Die verband tussen bepaalde nie – intellektuele faktore en akademiese sukses*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- SMIT, G. 1983. *Navorsing in die Gedragwetenskappe*. Pretoria: HAUM.
- STARLING, R. 1987. *Professor as a student; the view from the other side*. Florida: Rollins College.
- STEINBERG, L. 1985. *Adolescence*. Madison: University of Wisconsin.
- SUPER, D.E. 1957. *The psychology of careers*. New York: Harper and Row.
- SUPER, D.E. 1962. Consistency of vocational preferences as indices of vocational maturity in the ninth grade. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 52, 35 - 43.
- TIEBAUT, H.M. 1943. The misnamed lazy student. *Educational Research*, 24, 113 - 129.
- VAN BRAKEL, P.A. 1986. *Dosente simposium - onderrig en leerbestuur: 'n strategie vir onderrig en leersukses*. Pretoria: Buro vir Akademiese steundienste, Universiteit van Pretoria.
- VAN DYK, T. 1987. *Elemente van die druiplingsprobleem: faktore wat in die student geleë is*. Pretoria: K.U.H.
- VAN TONDER, J.A. 1969. *Die voorspelling van akademiese sukses van eerstejaar studente aan die Universiteit van Pretoria*. M.A. Verhandeling. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

VAN ZYL, R.J. 1960. *'n Statisties-kliniese ondersoek na die persoonlikheidseienskappe van suksesvolle en onsuksesvolle universiteit studente*. M.A. Verhandeling. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

WANKOWSKO, J.A. and PRINCE. 1969. *Students – why some fail*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

WEINER, I.B. 1970. *Psychological disturbance in adolescence*. New York: John Wiley and son.

WHITE, W.F. 1969. *Psychological principles applied to classroom teaching*. New York: Mc Cuen Hill.

WIECHERS, 1979. *'n Diepte studie na die selfkonsep van enkele eerstejaar studente met beroepskeuse onsekerheid*. M.A. Verhandeling. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

WITHEY, S.B. 1971. *A degree and what else?* The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching: U.S.A..

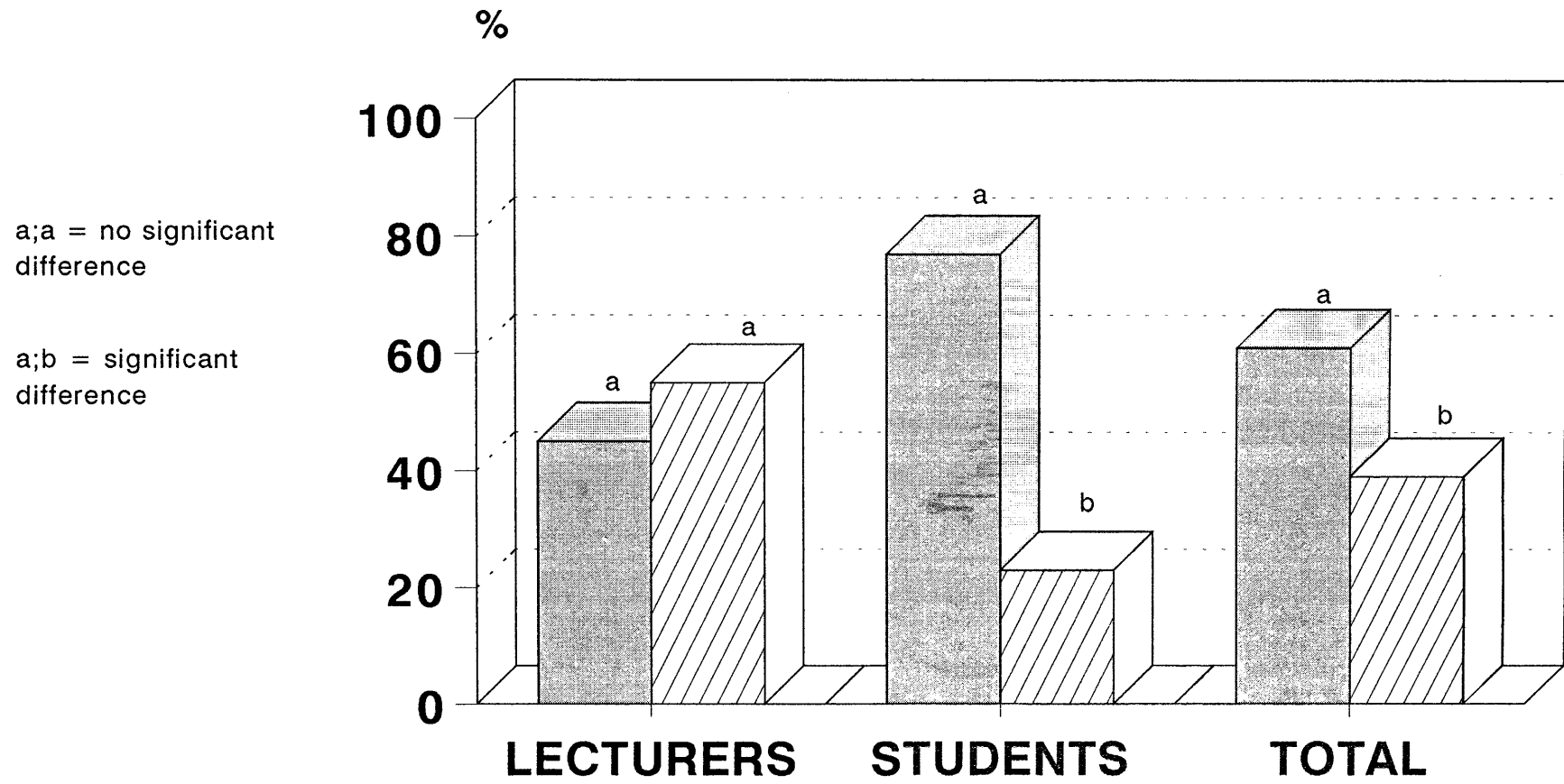
ZARB, J. 1981. Non-Academic predictors of successful academic achievement in normal adolescent sample. *Adolescence*, vol 16.

OTHER LITERATURE

Oxford Dictionary, 6th ed .1981

Faculty of Natural Sciences: Year book. University of Pretoria. Pretoria. 1994

1. ADAPTATION FROM SCHOOL TO UNIVERSITY

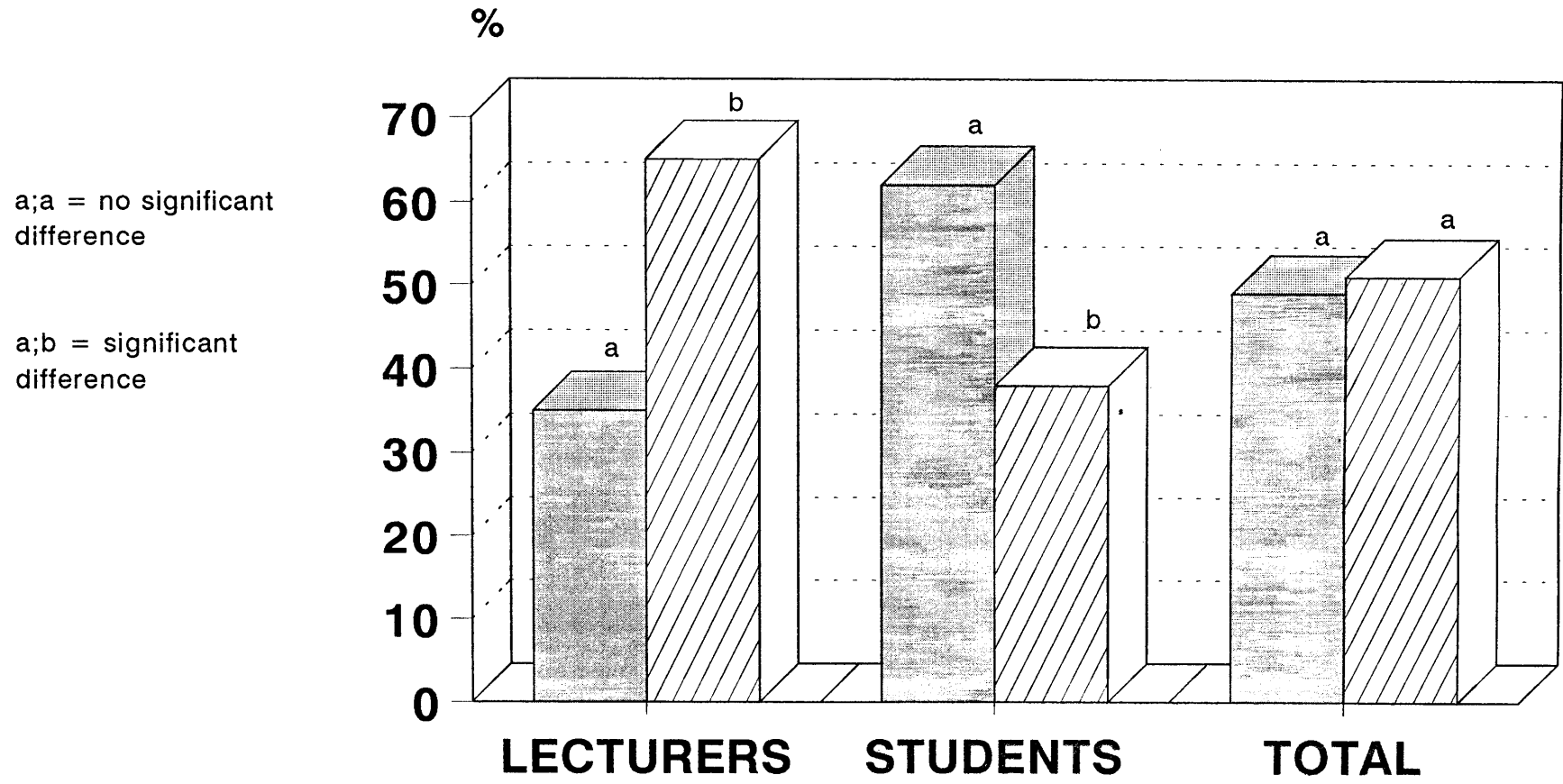


IMPORTANT	45	77	61
NOT IMPORTANT	55	23	39

SAMPLE

IMPORTANT
 NOT IMPORTANT

2. INCORRECT CAREER CHOICE



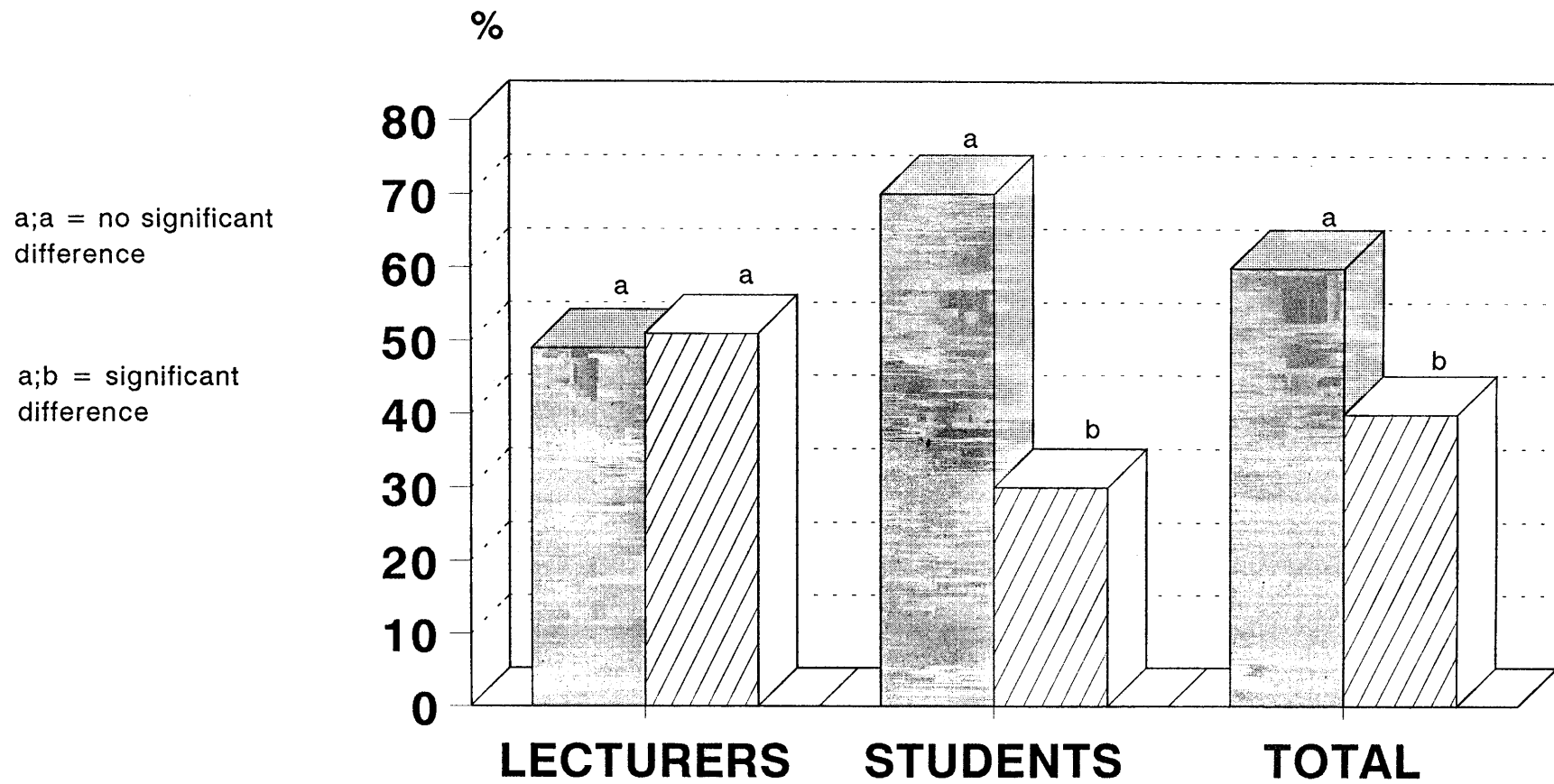
IMPORTANT	35	62	49
NOT IMPORTANT	65	38	51

SAMPLE

IMPORTANT

NOT IMPORTANT

3. WEAK MOTIVATION TO STUDY

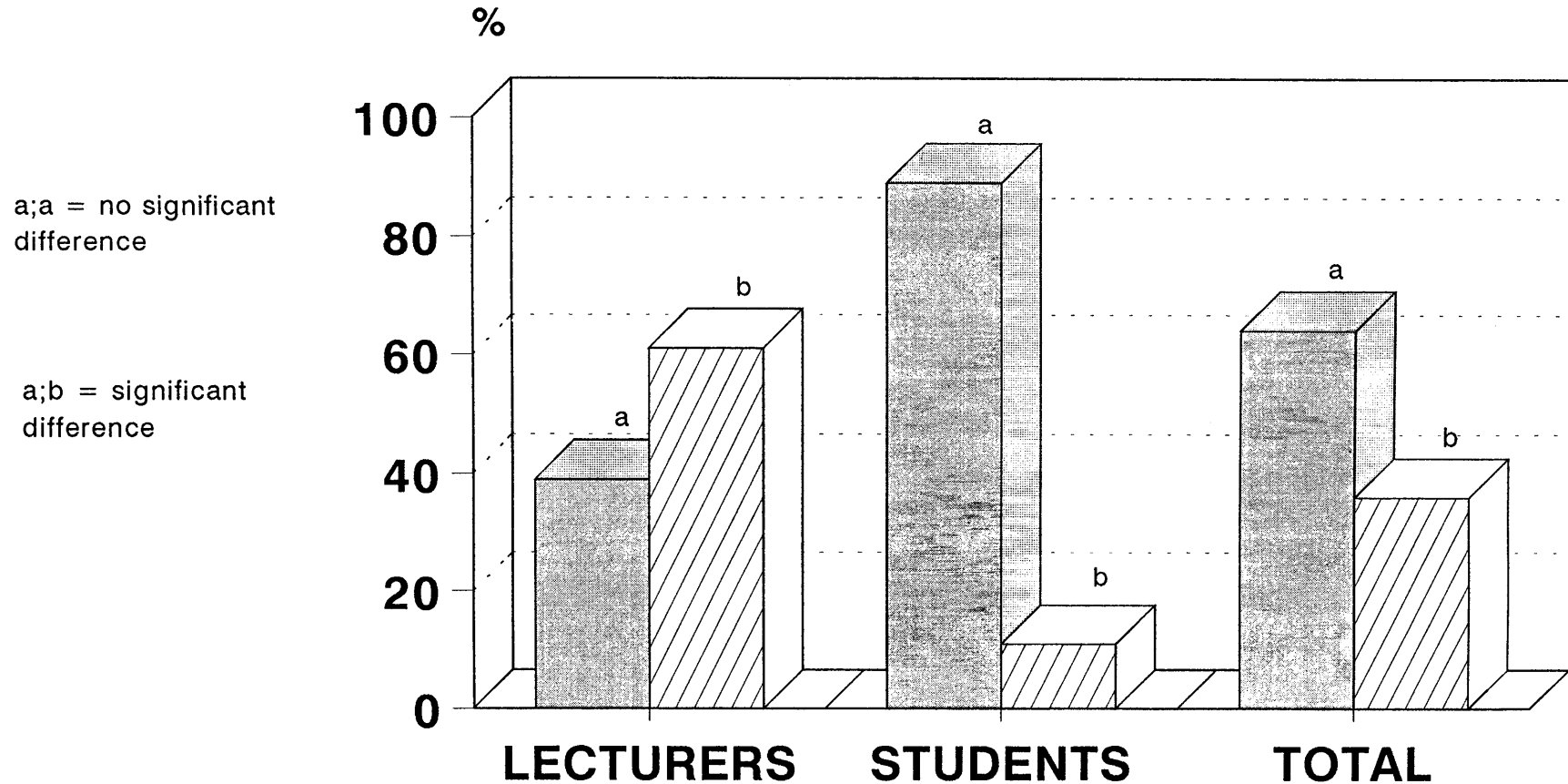


IMPORTANT	49	70	60
NOT IMPORTANT	51	30	40

SAMPLE

 IMPORTANT
  NOT IMPORTANT

4. POOR ACADEMIC PREPARATION AT SCHOOL

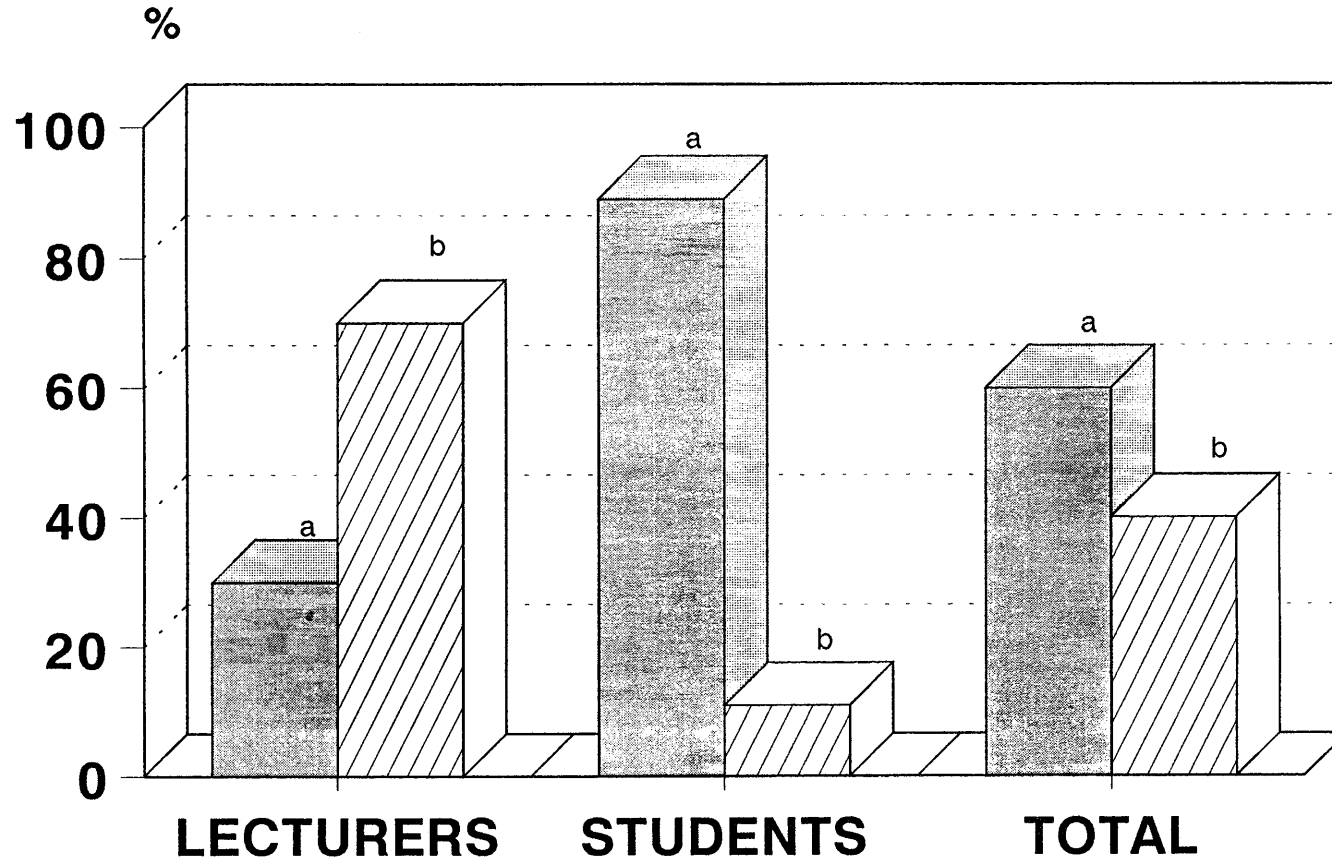


IMPORTANT	39	89	64
NOT IMPORTANT	61	11	36

SAMPLE

IMPORTANT
 NOT IMPORTANT


5. INCORRECT STUDY METHODS



a;a = no significant difference

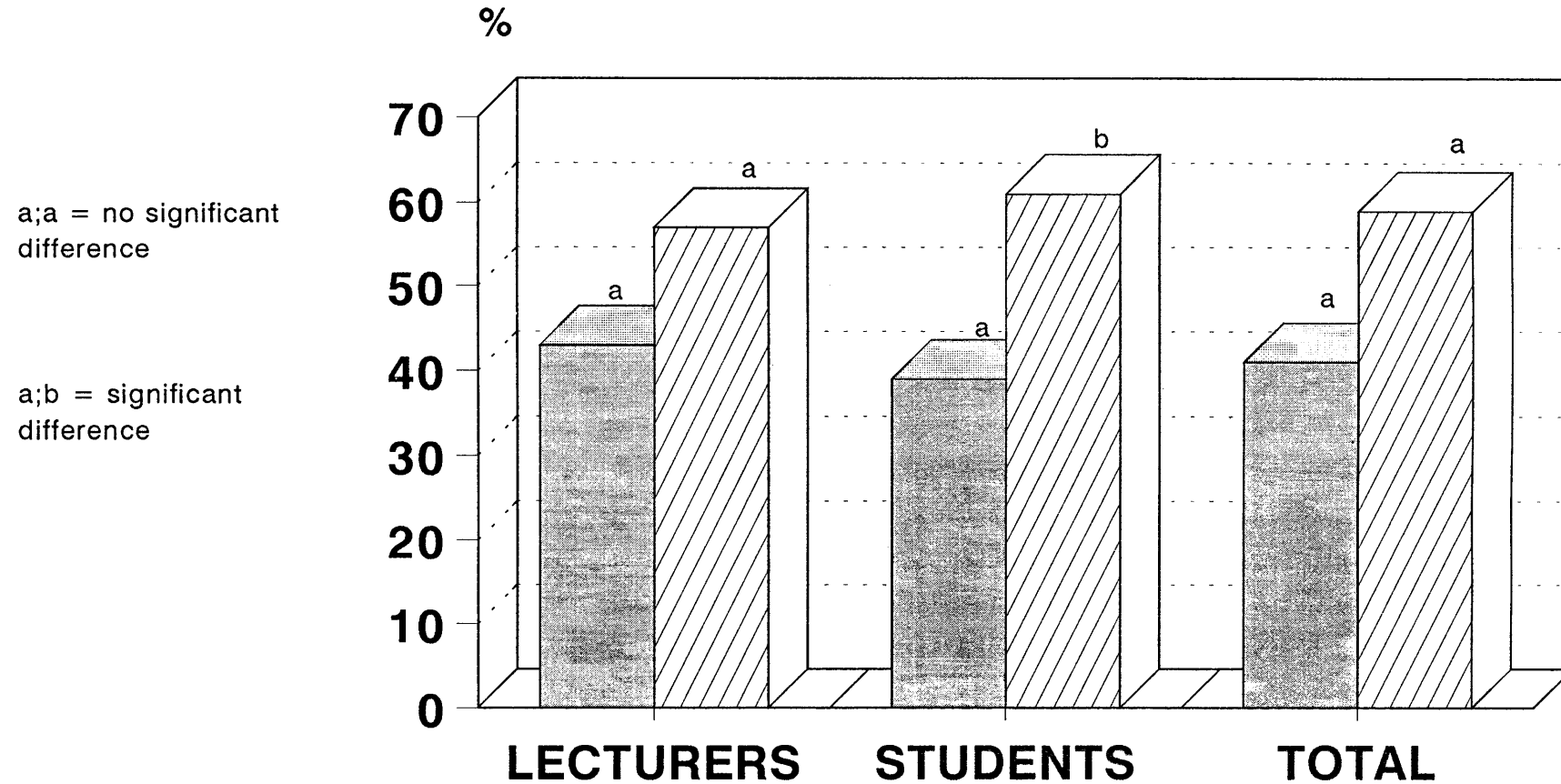
a;b = significant difference

IMPORTANT	30	89	60
NOT IMPORTANT	70	11	40

SAMPLE

 **IMPORTANT**
  **NOT IMPORTANT**

6. FINANCIAL FACTORS



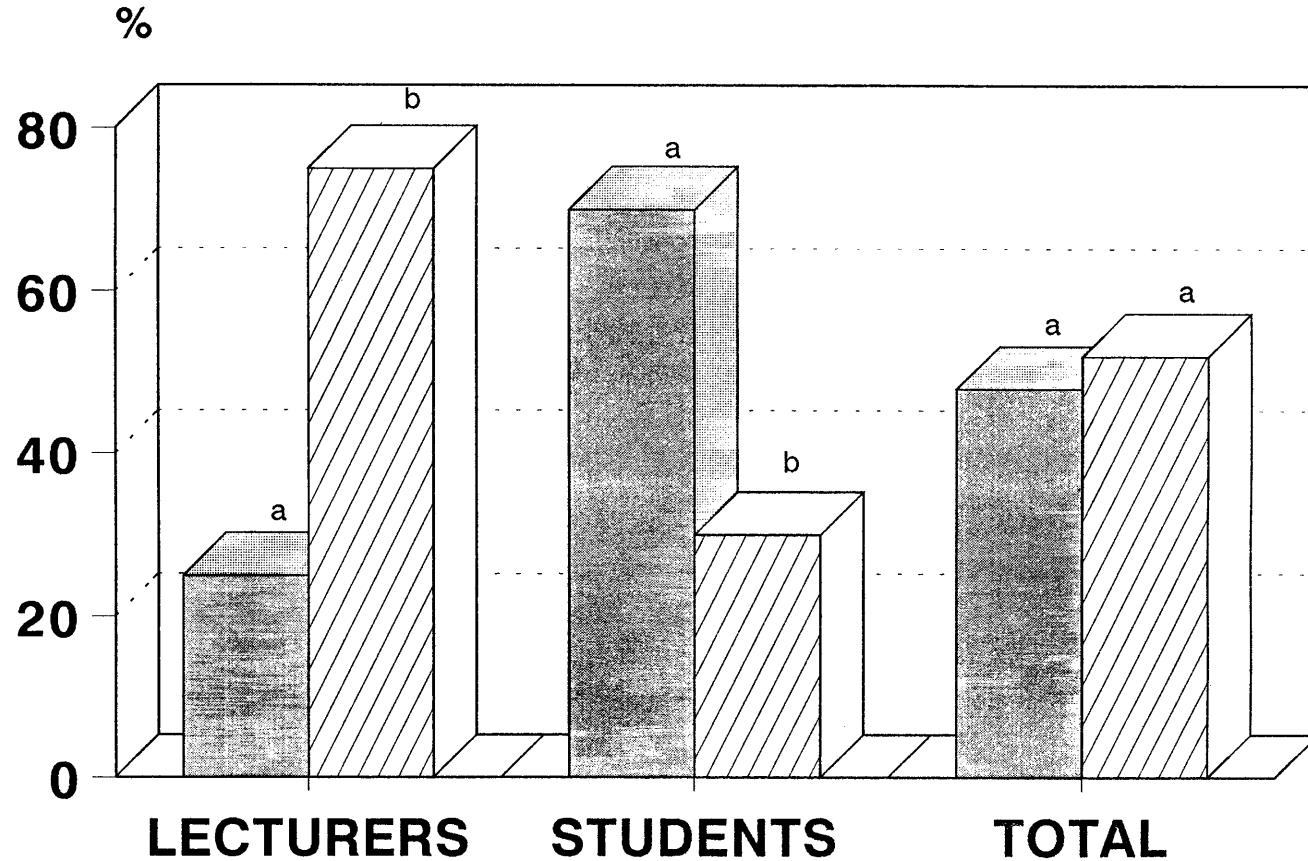
IMPORTANT	43	39	41
NOT IMPORTANT	57	61	59

SAMPLE

IMPORTANT

NOT IMPORTANT

7. STUDENT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES



a;a = no significant difference

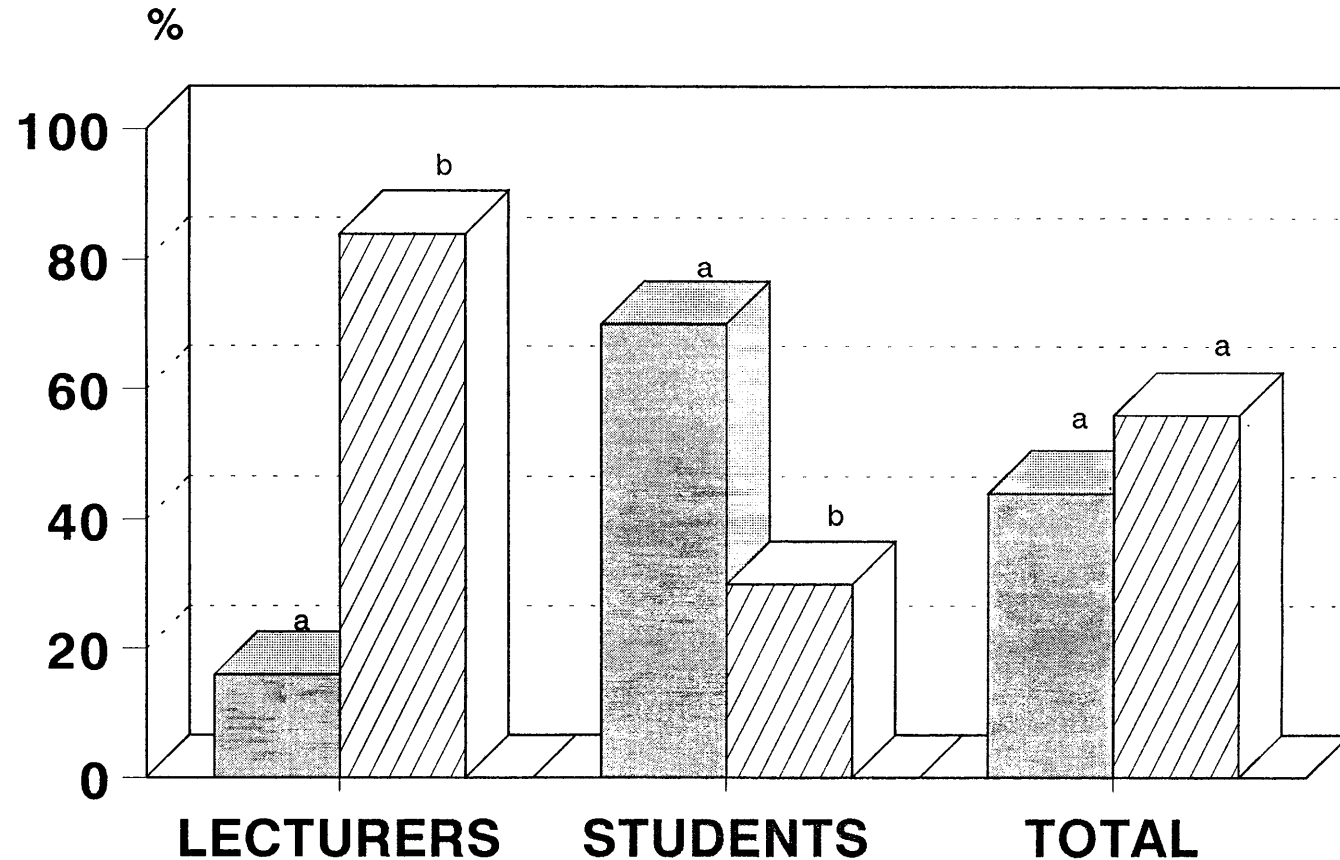
a;b = significant difference

IMPORTANT	25	70	48
NOT IMPORTANT	75	30	52

SAMPLE

 IMPORTANT
  NOT IMPORTANT

8. INEFFECTIVE LECTURING METHODS

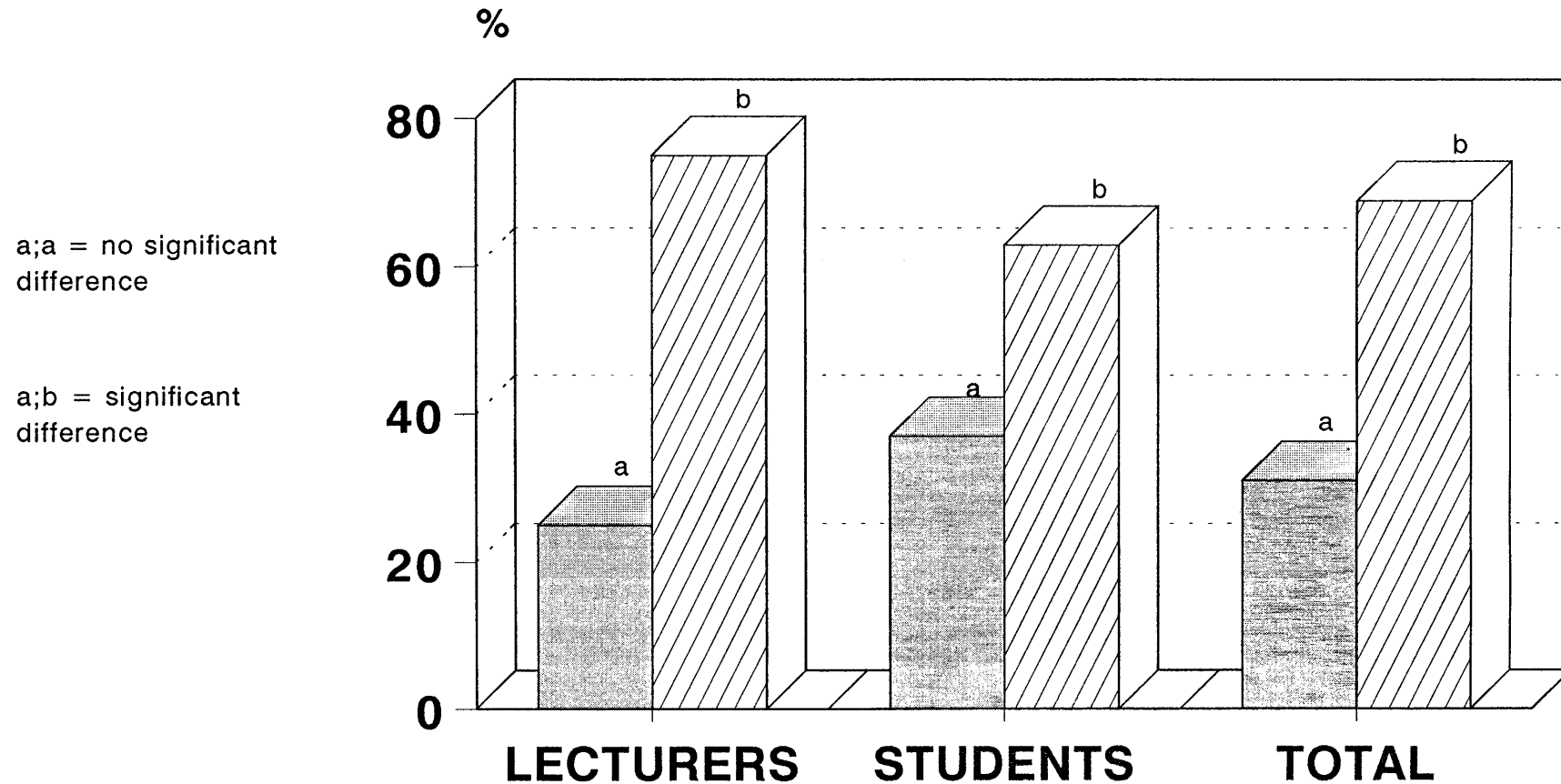


IMPORTANT	16	70	44
NOT IMPORTANT	84	30	56

SAMPLE

IMPORTANT
 NOT IMPORTANT

9. LOW UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

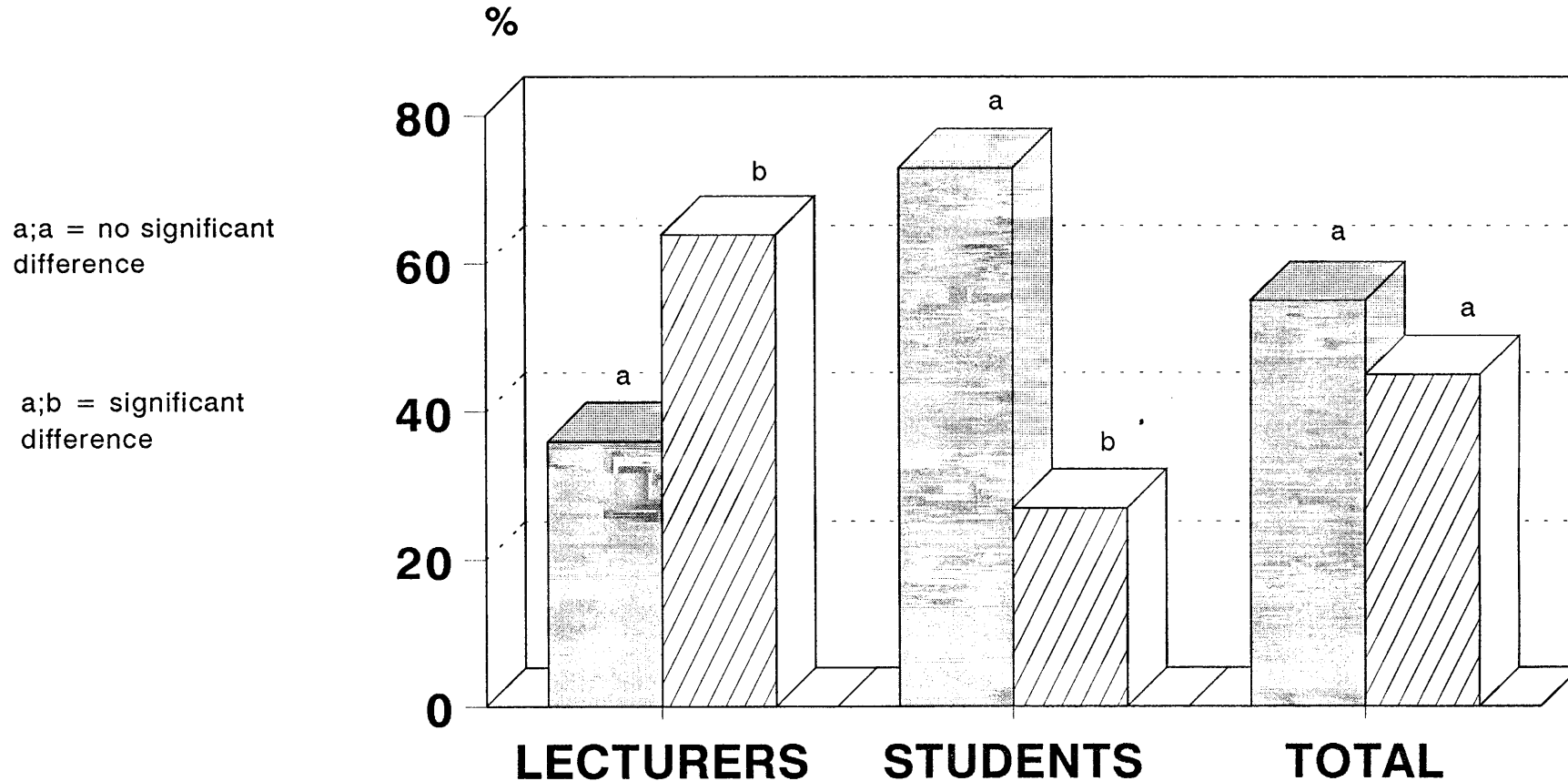


IMPORTANT	25	37	31
NOT IMPORTANT	75	63	69

SAMPLE

IMPORTANT
 NOT IMPORTANT


10. HOSTEL INITIATION



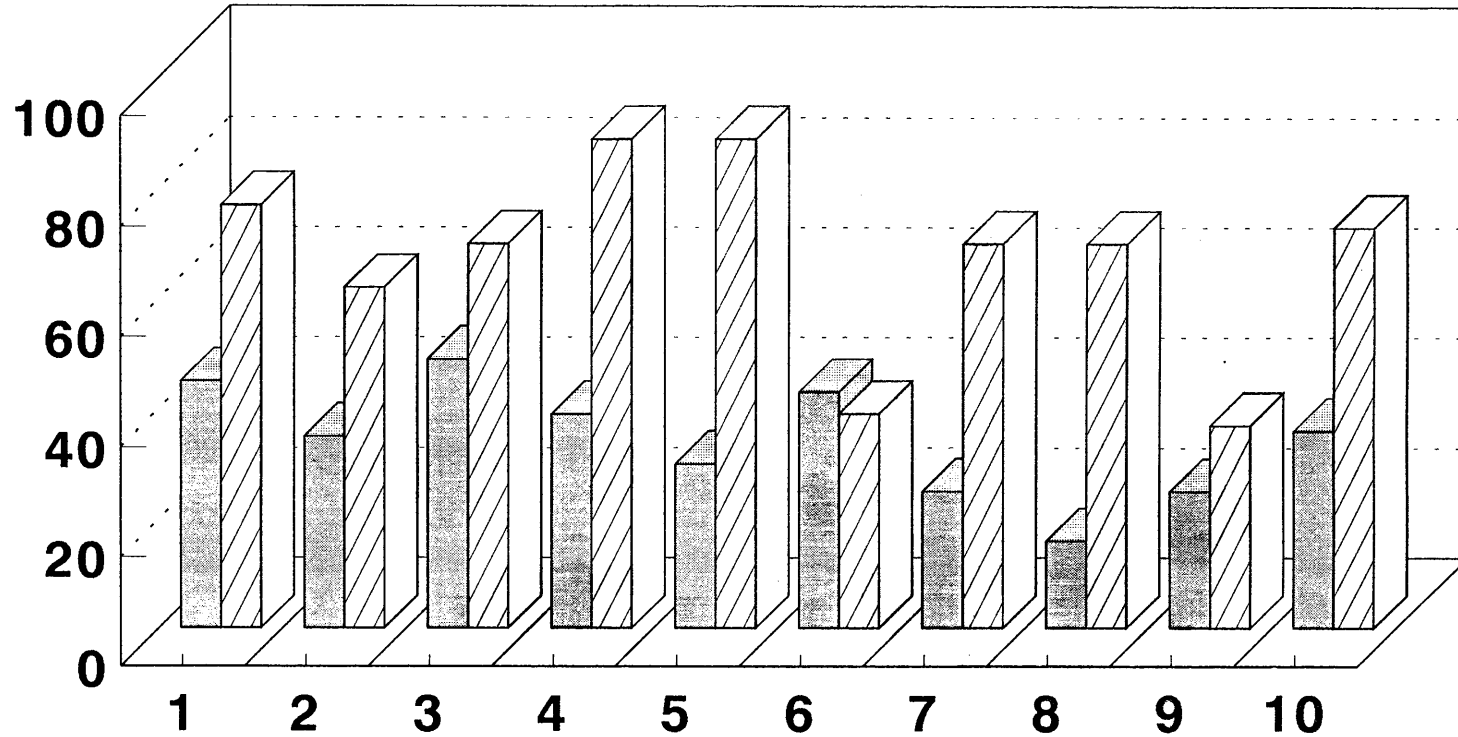
IMPORTANT	36	73	55
NOT IMPORTANT	64	27	45

SAMPLE

 **IMPORTANT**
 **NOT IMPORTANT**

COMPARISON OF LECTURERS TO STUDENTS FACTORS 1-10

% N = IMPORTANT



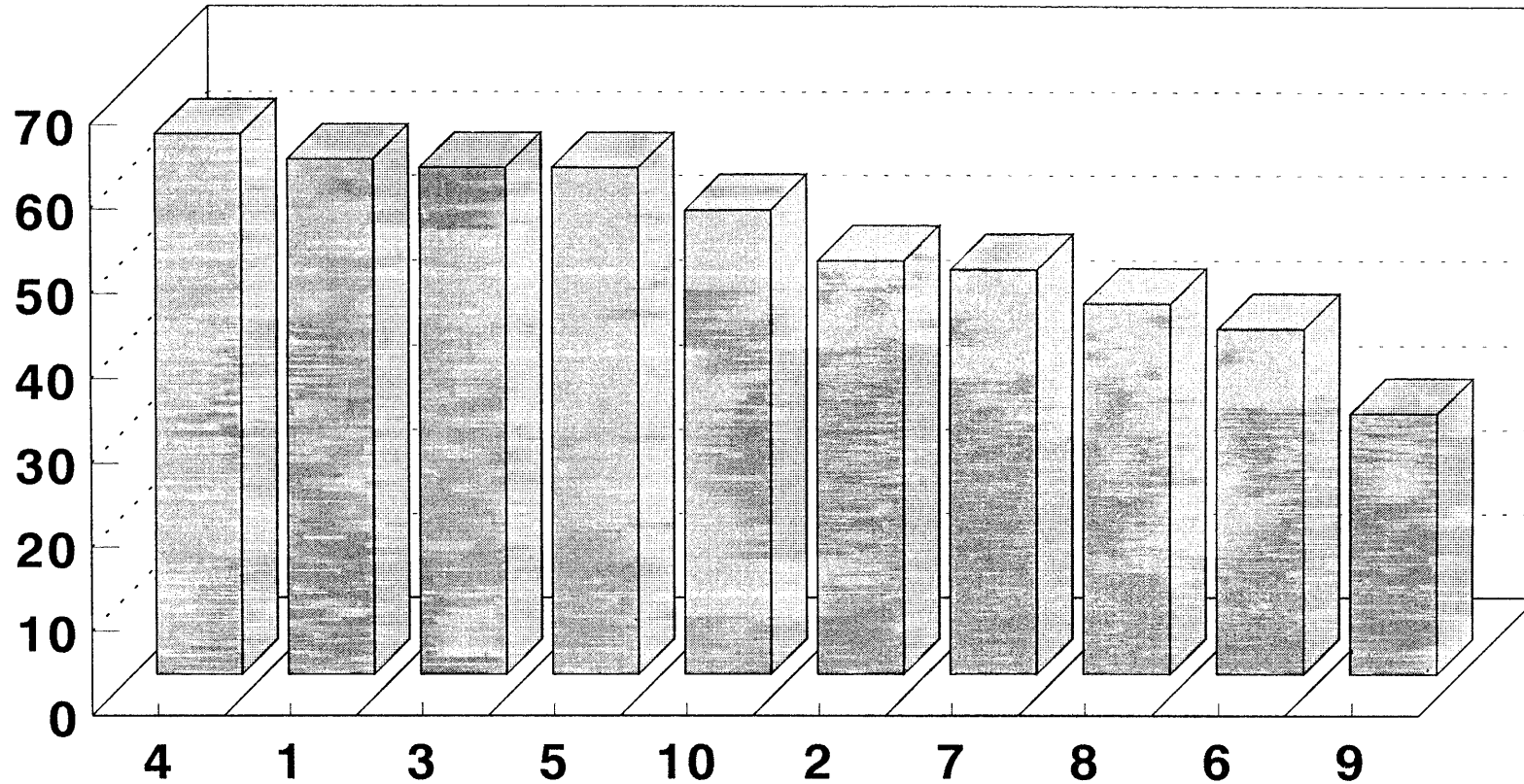
LECTURERS	45	35	49	39	30	43	25	16	25	36
STUDENTS	77	62	70	89	89	39	70	70	37	73

FACTORS

LECTURERS
 STUDENTS

SIGNIFICANCE OF EACH FACTOR RATED FROM MOST TO LEAST IMPORTANT

% N = IMPORTANT



TOTAL	64	61	60	60	55	49	48	44	41	31
-------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

FACTORS

■ TOTAL

Beoordeel die volgende tien faktore as moontlike oorsake waarom eerstejaar studente hulle studies staak.

1= nie belangrik

2=belangrik

1. Aanpassing van skool na universiteit	1	2
2. Verkeerde beroepskeuse	1	2
3. Swak studie metodes	1	2
4. Geen motivering om te studeer	1	2
5. Onvoldoende voorbereiding op skool vir universiteit	1	2
6. Finansiële redes	1	2
7. Sosiale aktiviteite	1	2
8. Oneffektiewe dosente	1	2
9. Onvoldoende keuring	1	2
10. Ontgroening	1	2

Verskaf asseblief ook die volgende inligting;

Geslag

M/V

Ouderdom (in jare)

Studierigting (bv. BA)

Dankie vir u samewerking

W.B. Stevens