CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1   Introduction

The success of managing student affairs will depend on the positive involvement of stakeholders, particularly student affairs officers and students. However, the efficient and effective management of student affairs cannot be realized in isolation. A university is composed of many structures such as:

- The Council
- Top management (Rector, Vice Rector/s, and Registrar)
- Senate
- Faculties
- Academic Departments
- Support services divisions

Therefore, the integration of activities of these different categories is essential for delivery. In addition, people from different cultural groups, as is the case with student affairs, will depend on one another. Irrespective of a student community being constituted by people with diverse cultural backgrounds, interdependence cannot be avoided. Students need to know and understand one another in order to co-exist peacefully. There is no way an understanding can be reached if strangers remain strangers. Furthermore, if there is no functional interaction through various forms of communication, stereotypes may be perpetuated since an opportunity for clearing misperceptions is not created. Such an interaction can always be created if students would accept the fact that they need one another and that they have to communicate.

However, interdependence within a university cannot be confined to a student community. All the structures and people at a university need one another. A university would definitely succeed, provided people from various cultural backgrounds and various structures in a university function as a unit. In such a situation the management of change and conflict resolution could be efficiently and effectively realized.

As indicated in the previous chapters, the management of student affairs is not a one-man show, nor is it the responsibility of a particular group. It is the responsibility of all stakeholders. However, student affairs professionals should be accountable for what happens within student affairs. That should be the case since they are professionals and responsible for making student affairs a success. It is therefore expected of them to assist students in the practical implementation of a university policy. They should further facilitate the development of new policies. Managing change and facilitating resolution of conflicts would also be their prime responsibilities.

Continuity of practices that are of benefit to an institution is of vital importance. Thus, in the face of student leaders completing their studies and disappearing into the broader society, student affairs professionals will play an important role in assisting new structures and student leaders. They therefore constitute an important component that would facilitate continuity and development of new policies.

It is not implied that student affairs professionals are expected to do everything. Indirectly they are, because in case of need they will have to make use of consultants.

Furthermore, it is essential that a blind approach in managing change and facilitating conflict resolution be avoided. Acquiring knowledge about a culturally diverse student community is indispensable. As a result, the following aspects should be critically and objectively investigated. That could, in one-way or the other, facilitate efficient and effective

management of change and conflict resolution within the framework of managing change and conflict as provided in Chapter 6.

In order to provide practical suggestions which will promote efficiency and effectiveness in change management and conflict resolution in student affairs, a summary and findings of the study is given, followed by recommendations.

7.2   Summary

An indication of what has been achieved as a result of the research project is provided in this paragraph.

7.2.1 Chapter 1

In Chapter 1, the foundation of the study is laid through the accomplishment of the following activities:

-       **Orientation**

In the orientation, the South African national situation regarding intercultural relations is outlined. That is done within the context of the changing South Africa. Focus is also placed on the fact that these changes bring about racial tension, which results in racial conflict. The student affairs situations within universities are discussed within this context. To qualify the exposition of the situation, perceptions of various authorities are reflected.

-       **Demarcation of the study area**

The study has been embraced in education management because of its nature which treats the management of change and conflict resolution in student affairs at the historically white universities in South Africa. It is therefore part of the management of the entire field of student affairs.

273

Furthermore, the study is multicultural because of the culturally diverse nature of the research population.

The problem statement was explicitly stated in the form of a question: How can change within student affairs in historically white universities in South Africa be effectively managed to the extent that cultural conflict within student communities is either avoided or effectively resolved?

Subsequently, a hypothesis and aims that would guide the research were formulated. The research methods that would be employed were also outlined. Finally, key concepts of the study were explicated.

7.2.2 Chapter 2

Chapter 2 reflects on the literature study with regard to the management of change. Insight into change management facilitated the formulation of relevant questions that were included in the questionnaire. In addition, information regarding the following important aspects which should be considered when dealing with change, is provided:

-   Communication

The importance of communication as well as its various forms is given. Hints as to how to ensure efficient and effective communication are provided. In addition, intercultural communication is specifically highlighted because of the nature of the study, which addresses culturally diverse student affairs.

-   Sources of change

The establishment of the exact source of change would contribute to the development of an appropriate strategy to deal with change. Therefore, both internal and external sources of change are indicated. The following

examples of internal and external sources of change are provided: students and political change in the country.

-   People and change

Knowing the type of people your are dealing with in a change process would be strategic. Thus, in a change process, the following types of people would be experienced: The drifters, the survivors and the winners. Strategies of how to change people were further established. The process of changing people will require knowledge on how people are affected by change. Thus, the fact that people can either be operationally, psychologically or socially affected by change is validated.

-   Factors for successful management of change

It has been established that besides communication, there are several other factors that would facilitate efficient and effective management of change. The approaches to change management, power tools for change, forces of change and the life-cycle of change are important and must be taken into consideration when managing change.

-   The change process

The following steps that should be followed when managing change are highlighted within the framework of Warner's change cycle model:

- Identification and involvement of key players
- Identifying the need for change and clarifying it
- Determining the "as is" and the "to be"
- Barrier assessment
- Empowering key players
- The change action

- **Resistance to change**

It is established that resistance to change will be experienced because of the fact that change touches on the established practices of people. Resistance can either be passive or active. The following aspects are identified as focal points in dealing with resistance to change:

- **Factors that may cause resistance to change**

- Uncertainty regarding change
- Fear
- Disruption of routine
- Loss of existing benefits
- Conformity to norms and culture

The following factors that may assist to minimize resistance to change must be borne in mind, namely understanding resistant behaviour, compulsion, persuasion, fear and security, understanding, time, involvement, criticism, flexibility, understanding organizational culture, education and communication.

7.2.3 Chapter 3

Chapter 3 entails the management of conflict. The following aspects are discussed:

- **Resolution of conflict**

Detailed information on how to practically resolve conflict is provided. Various activities of resolving a conflict are categorized as follows: Identification and tracking of conflict, identification of a solution and implementation of the solution.

\- **Causes of conflict**

Guarding against only addressing symptoms of conflict without paying attention to the actual cause, is crucial for efficient and effective management of conflict. It is therefore important to consider, amongst others, the following causes of conflict: power struggle, norms and values (traditions) and barriers.

\- **Approaches**

Developing an appropriate approach to a particular conflict is essential because a wrong approach may exacerbate the conflict. Thus, taking into consideration the following approaches could possibly contribute in developing the right approach: Narrow approach, wider approach, subjective approach and objective approach.

\- **Framing a strategy**

A process of conflict management should always include an aspect of framing a specific strategy for the resolution of the conflict. Attention is placed on the following strategies: Forcing/Acting, accommodation, avoiding, compromising and collaboration.

\- **Stages of conflict**

Conflict resolution is a process, which has particular stages. The following stages, which are important to be taken into consideration, are identified: Antecedent conditions, perceived or felt conflict and action or manifest behavior.

\- **Levels of conflict**

An understanding of the following levels of conflict would assist in developing the right strategy and an appropriate approach: No

conflict/pseudo conflict, latent conflict, role conflict, problem to solve, dispute, help, fight or flight and intractable.

- Types of conflict

It is indispensable to identify and understand the types of conflict because that could facilitate the development of an appropriate strategy to resolve a conflict.

The following types of conflict that could possibly be experienced in student affairs are identified: Interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, individual institutional conflict and intergroup conflict.

- Negotiation/Arbitration/Mediation

A resolution of conflict may be achieved through negotiation, arbitration or mediation. The choice of the use of one of the above-named strategies would depend on the type of conflict. As a result, the concepts 'negotiation, arbitration and mediation' are defined.

7.2.4 Chapter 4

Chapter 4 provides information on the methods of research employed in the research project. Motivation as to why particular methods of research are used is also provided.

The literature review has been used with the intention of providing the study with the background knowledge of change management and conflict resolution.

A questionnaire is employed for the purposes of establishing views of respondents from the four racial groups (Black, White, Coloured, and Indian) regarding change management and conflict resolution. The

establishment of such views would assist in promoting efficiency and effectiveness in managing change and conflict.

7.2.5 Chapter 5

In Chapter 5 the findings of the empirical research are outlined. The description of data, which highlights the responses of respondents in general without taking race into consideration, is provided. That is followed by the interpretation of data, which provides racial responses to change and conflict aspects. In this chapter, differences between the four racial groups (White, Black, Indian and Coloured) are established.

An outline of the findings as recorded in Chapter 5 is provided as follows:

- **Changes in student affairs**

The majority of the four racial groups agree that the following aspects were changed: student leadership structures, admission requirements, staff composition, medium of communication and social activities. However, the majority of the white respondents uphold that aspects such as traditions and sport were not affected.

- **Racial representation in student affairs**

The majority of the four racial groups have confirmed the importance of racial representation in the student affairs personnel corps. The following reasons for racial representation have been indicated: To ensure efficient and effective communication, promotion of good human relations and to secure an understanding of various racial groups.

- **Communication**

Clear majorities of all the racial groups highlighted the following: Firstly, the need for efficient and effective communication necessitates racial

representation in the student affairs personnel corps. Secondly, communication is the principal factor that could facilitate successful change programs. Thirdly, the use of the necessary medium of communication could facilitate communication across culture.

- ### Roles of student structures in processes of change management and conflict resolution

The majority of the four racial groups (White, Black, Indian and Coloured) are unanimous that student structures should be involved in all matters affecting students. Such an involvement would ensure effective communication and the positive involvement of students in processes of change and conflict management.

- ### Attitude

According to the findings, White students would either support an evolutionary type of change or be opposed to change. Black students prefer revolutionary change while Indian and Coloured students are positive about change but would rather prefer evolutionary change to revolutionary change.

- ### Resistance to change

All four the racial groups are agreed on the following factors as the causes of resistance to change: Negative attitude towards other racial groups, fear of the unknown, uncertainty, poor communication, lack of information about change, established traditions, not prepared to change, lack of consultation, confidence in the status quo and selfishness.

Furthermore, respondents are unanimous on the following factors that could assist in minimizing resistance to conflict: Ensuring understanding about change for those involved, effective information communication,

involvement of all stakeholders as well as guaranteeing of security and persuasion.

- **Change management**

The majority of the four racial groups are agreed that the following factors may positively contribute toward efficient and effective management of change: Effective communication, clarity on the envisaged change, inclusive participation in student activities, exposure to other cultures, bilingual language policy (Afrikaans and English) and cultural representation on corridors in the residences.

- **Conflict resolution**

The majority of the four racial groups are agreed on the following factors that could cause conflict in the residences: Negative attitude towards other cultures, lack of appreciation for cultural diversity, racist attitude, not prepared to interact across cultures, stereotypes, differences in culture, poor communication, enforcement of historically white traditions, exclusion of other racial groups in residence activities and inflexible language policy.

- **Minimizing resistance to change**

The medium of communication as an aspect that can be used to minimize conflict has been the first one to be considered. All four the racial groups dismiss the use of Afrikaans as the only medium of communication. The majority of Black, Indian and Coloured respondents prefer the use of English as the only medium of communication. On the other hand, the majority of White respondents is against the use of English as the only medium of communication.

Furthermore, the majority of the four racial groups are unanimous that the following factors would contribute to minimizing conflict: Equal treatment by the leadership, respect for other cultures, creation of a consultative

body wherein all cultures are represented, running programs which will provide exposure to other cultures, encouraging mixed social activities, involvement of stakeholders in decision-making processes, separate residences and separate lectures. However, it important to note that the respondents differ as far as the following factors are concerned: It is only the majority of the White respondents that is against the mixing of students according to race on floors. Furthermore, as far as the mixing of students according to race in double rooms is concerned, the majority of both the White and Indian respondents are opposed to it. However, Black and Coloured respondents are in favor of the idea.

7.2.6 Chapter 6

Chapter 6 provides guidelines for the management of change and conflict resolution. The guidelines are based on the information that has been gathered through the literature study and the empirical research. Information regarding a strategic and effective way of communicating is provided. Furthermore, models of how change and conflict could be efficiently and effectively managed are provided and explained.

7.2.7 Chapter 7

Chapter 7 provides the summary, findings, conclusion and recommendations.

7.3   Conclusion

The research project has been based on a particular identified problem as far as managing change and conflict in student affairs at historically white universities is concerned. The identified problem statement, as reflected in Chapter 1, which has been stated in a question form, is as follows: "How can change within student affairs at historically white universities in South Africa be effectively managed to the extent that cultural conflict within student communities is either avoided or effectively resolved?" The

problem revolves around the fact that political changes in the country made it imperative for historically white universities to admit students from other racial groups, thus student communities became multicultural. That precipitated particular changes which would affect established traditions in order to accommodate other racial groups. Such changes brought about resistance to change and cultural conflict.

In order to address the above-stated problem, the following aspects, which facilitated the research process, were clarified in Chapter 1:

- The hypothesis
- The aim of the study

The hypothesis: Substantial consultation, communication, inclusive participation of stakeholders and racial representation within the student affairs personnel corps may ensure successful processes of change and thereby avert or resolve cultural conflict effectively.

As far as the hypothesis is concerned, the findings, as recorded in Chapter 5, confirm the following aspects to be central in change management and conflict resolution:

- Involvement of stakeholders;
- Effective communication; and
- Racial representivity.

According to the findings the majority of all the four racial groups are unanimous that efficiency and effectiveness in the management of change and conflict resolution will depend on the extent that stakeholders are involved. In addition, good communication is indispensable for the realization of maximal participation of stakeholders. Furthermore, the racial representation of the student affairs personnel corps is essential because, as indicated by the findings, it will promote an understanding of various

racial groups and thereby ensure racial harmony as well as efficiency and effectiveness in managing change and conflict resolution.

The aim of the study: The following aims, related to the stated problems, were formulated:

1. to establish the impact of perceived threats and cohesion to the possibility of peaceful processes of change and the avoidance and/or resolution of cultural conflicts.

2. to provide strategies which can be employed for the smooth management of change and the avoidance and/or effective management of conflict in managing student affairs in multicultural universities.

Regarding the first part of the aim, the following perceptions surfaced: It was established through the questionnaire that amongst the factors that caused resistance to change and conflict were fears of all four the racial groups, namely White, Black, Indian and Coloured. To a certain extent every race was threatened by the envisaged changes. White respondents in particular are uncertain about the future because of the belief that what belongs to them, such as traditions, are being changed. That is the fundamental reason why White students would either be against change or prefer evolutionary change. Thus, being uncertain about the future makes people to develop negative attitudes towards change. That results in behaviours that cause conflict, which also becomes extremely difficult to manage because of the mistrust that prevails.

In order to eradicate the mistrust, student affairs officers must relentlessly create an environment in which racial interaction will take place. People must get to know and understand one another. White students should also be involved in and be assisted to see the benefits of change. Such an approach contributes to addressing attitudes of White students.

The following sub-aims, related to the stated sub-questions of the problem statement, intend to:

- Sketch the current state of affairs at historically white universities in South Africa in terms of student demographics

It has been established that White students are still in the majority. However, the number of students from Black, Indian and Coloured racial groups is on the increase. It has been further established that racial representation in the SRCs has been achieved to a great extent. However, in as far as residence structures are concerned, racial representation is still lacking at some universities as indicated in Chapter 4. Furthermore, of the seven universities, only two do not have racial representation in the student affairs personnel corps. In spite of the racial composition there are not many incidents of conflict on the campuses or in the residences.

- Provide a literature study on change management at universities

According to the information contained in Chapter 2 the sub-aim was achieved through the establishment of the following aspects which are to be considered important for the efficient and effective management of change: Communication, factors that would cause change, how people are affected by change, factors for successful management of change, the change process and resistance to change.

- Provide a literature study on conflict management at universities

The attainment of this sub-aim provided insight into the following aspects of the conflict resolution process: conflict resolution processes, types of conflict, elements of conflict, approaches to conflict management and stages of conflict.

- Establish by means of the questionnaire strategies for efficient and effective management of change and conflict resolution

The questionnaire was used for gathering information on the various perceptions regarding change management and conflict resolution. As indicated in Chapter 5, various perceptions regarding the management of change and conflict resolution were secured. For instance, the respondents highlighted the importance of racial representation in student affairs and student leadership structures, effective communication, causes of resistance to change and how conflict could be efficiently and effectively managed.

- Provide guidelines for efficient and effective management of change and conflict

The last sub-aim was achieved through the development of guidelines as contained in Chapter 6. Strategies are provided as to how change and conflict could be efficiently and effectively managed. These guidelines are based on the literature study and the results of the empirical study.

For example, the fact that the attitudes of students towards change would differ from one racial group to the other would require efficient and effective consultation by way of involving all stakeholders and effective communication across cultures. As indicated in Chapter 6, effective communication across cultures would entail respecting other cultures and the use of an appropriate medium of communication. Furthermore, as highlighted in Chapter 6, a communication model which is intended to involve all the stakeholders in change management or conflict resolution has been developed.

Having established that perceptions regarding the management of change and conflict resolution are polarized on the basis of race, it becames necessary to devise strategies that could be employed in the management

of change and conflict resolution. Chapter 6 provides a change management model and a conflict management model.

7.4 Recommendations

On the basis of the information that has been gathered through the literature and empirical studies recommendations could be formulated.

Focus should be placed on the following aspects in order to promote efficiency and effectiveness in managing change and conflict resolution in student affairs at multicultural universities:

7.4.1 Development of efficient and effective communication system

- **Using the right language for communication**

It is important that both Afrikaans and English be used as media of instruction at universities where the student population would require it. In paragraph 5.3.9 c, it is pointed out that the majority of Black, Indian and Coloured respondents prefer the use of only English as a medium of communication. On the other hand, White respondents prefer the use of both English and Afrikaans. However, the fact that White Afrikaans speaking students attend in great numbers at some of these universities, require careful consideration of the continued use of both Afrikaans and English.

The use of the right medium of communication could contribute in averting the following problems which may be experienced if the language used is not understood by the recipient:

- Miscommunication
- High failure rate
- Obstruction of intercultural interaction

287

- Prevailing of mistrust

- **Structures of communication**

In addition to the use of the right language, good communication procedures and structures as highlighted in Chapter 6 should be in place. For example, the hierarchical and integrated forms of communication procedures should be strategically employed. It is advisable to focus more on the hierarchical form of procedure because it promotes order and co-operation. However, when required by circumstances, the integrated form of communication may be employed.

It should be noted that the right communication procedures and structures may be in place, but if the right medium of communication is not employed, efficient and effective communication will not be realized.

7.4.2 There must be racial representation in the student affairs division and the entire personnel corps of the university

Racial representation in the staff complement is necessitated by the following reasons, which are supported by all the four racial groups (White, Black, Indian and Coloured), as reflected in Chapter 5, table 5.31:

- ensuring efficient and effective communication;
- ensuring the legitimacy of activities;
- facilitating an understanding of diverse cultures;
- ensuring prompt and accurate attendance to the needs of diverse cultural groups;
- improving cross-cultural relations; and
- providing a reflection of national demographics.

In addition, a staff which is racially representative, would serve as a model for the student community. The necessity of promoting racial integration

and interaction across cultures would be demonstrated to students by a racially representative staff. Thus, racial representation in staff is fundamental for the promotion and advancement of racial integration in the student community.

However, in the process of making a staff racially representative, guarding against tokenism is crucial. Placing people in positions where they would not necessarily be productive for the sake of wanting to appear to be racially representative, will be a terrible mistake. Consequently, students would not respect such appointees. As a result, the good intention of promoting racial integration would be defeated. Therefore, qualified people and those who could be identified as having the potential to perform in certain areas should be appointed.

7.4.3 Racial representation in all official aspects of student life

Official aspects of student life would include aspects such as placement in the residences, residence activities, community involvement, fund-raising projects, entertainment and sport.

The inclusive participation of the various racial groups in activities such as the above-mentioned could expose students to other cultures. Interaction of some sort would definitely take place and understanding others could be facilitated in the process. However, students may not be aware of the importance of participating together in various activities. As a result, a deliberate plan to afford students an opportunity to participate together should be put in place.

7.4.4 Dealing with attitudes

In an environment where change and conflict management is experienced, the attitudes and emotions of people would be affected because traditions would be affected. Thus it becomes crucial to pay special attention to

dealing with attitudes in order to have positive stakeholders involved in either the change or conflict process.

For example, in as far as the findings in paragraph 5.3.6 are concerned, White students would either prefer evolutionary change or be against change because of the fear of losing what they believe belongs to them. On the other hand, Black students are eager to see change taking place and would therefore prefer revolutionary change.

In such a situation, focus should therefore be placed on helping stakeholders understand the need for change and the importance of resolving conflict amicably. Ensuring effective communication and making relevant information available could contribute to addressing attitudes. Furthermore, racial representation in the various organs of a university could also contribute to addressing the issue.

7.4.5 Multiculturalism awareness training

An attitude is born out of experiences. Certain perceptions that would develop into stereotypes shape an attitude. Thus, in addition to the strategies for dealing with attitude as indicated in paragraph 6.4.4, exposing students and staff to other cultures could assist in clearing stereotypes.

In this era where multiculturalism has manifested itself as a reality in all the aspects of life, recognition and acceptance of the diversity of cultures should be central in any formulated policy. Furthermore, an institution should develop programs which would promote and facilitate cultural interaction and integration.

Therefore, first-year students (students from high school) at a university, should follow a course on multiculturalism in order to empower students with an understanding of other cultures. Understanding the patterns of interaction, values and cross-cultural communication of other cultures is

important. Students should be encouraged to be knowledgeable regarding the diverse cultural heritages of a university. Knowledge and understanding of other cultures would facilitate adaptability. Adaptability in this context refers to the preparedness to accommodate cultural aspects of other cultures by way of suspending some of the old cultural practices. It is central particularly when it comes to intercultural interaction, which, if successfully realized, would make multiculturalism an enjoyable reality.

An ideal starting point would be that even before a person can be enrolled with any university, she/he should be exposed to cultural heritages of the country because universities reflect the cultural heritages of the country. Thus the process of developing young people to adulthood in the primary and high school should include some form of exposure to the cultural heritage of South Africa.

Development of such an attitude by an institution would actually empower student affairs professionals to protect both major and minority cultures. In addition, the major culture will not be tempted or be given a chance to take advantage of the minor cultures and oppress them. Interaction amongst students would also be promoted. As a result, chances for the clearing stereotypes would be created.

7.4.6 The adoption of change and conflict management strategies

The strategies as outlined in Chapter 6 could serve to facilitate change management and conflict resolution or could provide guidelines for successful change management and conflict resolution.

7.4.7 Empowerment of student leadership in terms of change management, conflict resolution, multiculturalism and other diversity issues

Student leaders should be subjected to training in the above-mentioned issues. Other aspects that could be identified as relevant for the

empowerment of student leaders in a particular environment should also be taken into consideration.

A follow-up on the training is essential. An assessment of the effectiveness of the training should be made. The effectiveness of the training could be measured through the assessment of the practical operation of student leaders. Some form of performance management has therefore to be applied.

7.4.8 Empowerment of student affairs officers in terms of change management, conflict resolution, multiculturalism and diversity issues

Student affairs officers should be continuously trained in regard to all identified issues which would promote efficiency and effectiveness of change management and other student affairs services. The training can be accomplished through the following ways:

- conferences and workshops of professional bodies;
- internal workshops on identified issues; and
- further relevant studies.

It is further suggested that the following key aspects as far as student affairs officers are concerned, be taken into consideration in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness of student affairs services:

- **Knowledge about student services**

Knowledge about student affairs and the historical background thereof is essential. Having acquired such knowledge, one will be able to realize the importance of student affairs for the entire university. Secondly, the historical background would enlighten student affairs professionals about the central role of student affairs, which is to take care of the needs of

students and harmonize the various cultural groups within a student community. That will further promote a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the profession. The end-result of the acquirement of such knowledge could help student affairs professionals to become proud of their role within a university and as a result develop positive attitudes in dealing with students, not to be impatient, but to treat all students and attend to their needs equally, irrespective of color, race or creed.

The needs of students would, amongst others, include the following:

- Admissions
- Registration
- Financial assistance
- Accommodation
- Orientation
- Counseling and social services
- Health services
- Intercultural interaction
- Student development
- Sport
- Discipline
- Special needs for disabled students

- **Skilled in research**

Student affairs officers would, through research skills, be able to formulate questions that would stimulate answers, which would bring about the development of the student affairs profession as well as the establishment of student needs. The establishment of the actual needs of students will generate the relevant services. As a result, efficiency and effectiveness of student affairs services would be realized.

- **Competence as a planner**

Planning is central for any activity. Therefore, student affairs professionals should be good planners in order to prevent confusion and the reaction of students. Equally important is the ability to organize. Planning should be characterized by long term (3-5 years) and short-term (yearly) goals. The short-term goals should be directed toward facilitating the achievement of long-term goals and should be geared towards the delivery of high quality programs and service.

Therefore, they should be engaged in thorough planning as to how the attitudes of students can be positively influenced and what form of communication could be employed for a particular change program or conflict resolution to succeed.

- **Be a visionary**

Student affairs officers should be able to project the future and plan for it. Commitment in serving students will enable student affairs officers to visualize the future and plan accordingly. A vision of student affairs programs should characterize student affairs. The following factors should be taken into consideration when organizing student activities:

- Diversity issues
- Effectiveness
- Integration with other institutional functions
- Clear line of communication
- Flexibility

The vision of a student affairs officer should include the intention to promote the following aspects:

- Proportional racial representation on student structures;

294

- Respect for cultural differences;
- An ongoing dialogue on cultural diversity which should permeate the entire student community;
- Workshops on multiculturalism;
- Paying attention to issues of cultural diversity when reading newspapers;
- Management by wandering around (walking around) student enters and establishing what they think;
- Visit churches where some students do attend;
- Attend sporting activities; and
- Organize a cultural diversity day.

- **Be strategic leaders**

Strategic leaders who will be able to handle transformation are essential. Thus, a strategic student affairs officer should be a leader who;

- is ready to handle change;
- acknowledges that change is there, and is positive towards it and is competent to deal with resistance, hostility and confusion inherent in a change process. Competence in this regard could be enhanced by positively accepting that resistance to change can be destructive but that it is also possible to turn resistance into renewal not antagonizing resisters of change, instead, developing strategies that can help transform them;
- is able to deal with intangible, subjective and ambiguous issues and feelings. In order to handle such feelings, patience, maturity and the ability to take the long view of things would be indispensable;
- appreciates the legitimacy of various reactions to the change process; and
- is prepared to create new opportunities for the abilities that are revealed in the process of change.

7.4.9 Institutional policy

A policy of an institution should categorically state its stance regarding diversity and cultural diversity in particular. Ambiguity will not help because students would always be suspicious and develop stereotypes and ultimately mistrust towards the management of an institution.

7.5 Summary

This chapter provided a summary of the work that has been accomplished by means of this study as well as an indication of how the aims were achieved. In addition, recommendations that are based on what has been accomplished through the research have been formulated. Thus the literature study, the results of the empirical study and the final recommendations could contribute in ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in student affairs regarding the management of change and conflict resolution.

Finally, further investigations could be made in the following areas in order to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the field of university management and governance:

- The composition and functioning of the Student Representative Council and student leadership structures in the residences.
- Strategies that could be employed to promote racial integration and racial harmony.
- How traditional students and staff members could be assisted to cope with change.