CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 CONCLUSIONS

The present study notes that with the demise of apartheid and the implementation of Employment Equity (EE) and Affirmative Action (AA) legislation since 1994, for the first time, formal, legislated equality for people of different races and gender in the Higher Education workplace in South Africa is operational. In 1997, a White Paper entitled 'A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education' was published and the Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997 was passed by Parliament framing, *inter alia*, how Employment Equity is to be addressed in Higher Education. Following the recommendations of the White Paper, Higher Education institutions were required, as part of their three-year rolling plans, to submit human resource development plans and Equity goals to the Department of Education and Department of Labour. A perusal of the three-year rolling plans of Higher Education institutions indicated that whilst Higher Education institutions have been somewhat successful in meeting their Equity targets in respect of student profiles, the progress in respect of staff Equity targets, especially academic staff Equity targets, have been disappointingly slow. The findings in the present study and those of Cloete and Bunting (2000 : 85) lend support to this notion. They maintain that one of the most serious threats facing Higher Education in South Africa is not funding or a shortage of students but the failure to retain high quality staff, and changing the racial and gender profile of the staff complement.

An important observation made in the present study is that, despite the efforts in implementing various Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies at some institutions, very little impact is evident in respect of changes in the demographic distribution of staff in those institutions. In addition, the implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy appears to be rather haphazard and fragmented and calls for some urgent measures to ensure an effective standardized procedure for the implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. This conclusion is supported

by the fact that, whilst the three year rolling plans of all the Higher Education institutions show commitment to achieving Equity in respect of staff demography, the data obtained from institutions, qualitative interviews and the findings of Subotsky (2001 : 37) provide evidence that indicates little change in the demographic distribution of staff at Higher Education institutions over a three year period. Paradoxically, this was found to be the case in those institutions that claim to have an established and well-resourced equal opportunity office. The findings of this study have exposed Higher Education institutions as lagging behind government and business in the racial composition of their staff, in their approaches to staff retention and staff recruitment strategies and, generally, in implementing Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy in terms of the requirements of the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998.This suggests that the various structural, institutional and practice-embedded impediments still exist in Higher Education.

The major challenges arising from the findings of this study are to improve the manner in which Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies are implemented in Higher Education institutions, and for the Higher Education sector as a whole, as well as to publicise and market the appeal and intrinsic rewards of academic life in order to attract and retain quality staff. Meeting this challenge will also involve developing a range of new, proactive and innovative methods of ensuring the successful implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy with its recruitment and retention strategies. The debate about what counts for transformation has been a heated one since the early 1990s and has gained momentum in the last two years with the publication of the proposals for restructuring of Higher Education and the Employment Equity Act.

The Education White Paper of 1997 sets out a detailed strategy and provides a number of specific goals and performance measures for Higher Education as a system and more especially, for Higher Education institutions. What is sought in the idea of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity is essentially the revision of standards and practices to ensure that institutions are in fact drawing from the largest marketplace of

human resources in their staffing. It also focuses on a critical review of appointment and advancement criteria to ensure that they do not inadvertently foreclose consideration of the best-qualified persons by untested presuppositions, which operate to exclude women and persons from the designated group. Since the publication of the Education White Paper in 1997, the commitment of Higher Education institutions to Affirmative Action/Employment Equity in Higher Education has remained strong in theory, but not in practice which was also one of the conclusions of this study. The findings in the present study draw the following general and specific conclusions in support of the aforementioned.

A fundamental concept entrenched in the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 is the notion of the 'designated group' who are the intended beneficiaries of the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy. The conclusions drawn from the findings in respect of who should comprise the 'designated group' reflects a rejection of the concept of 'designated group' by the majority of the members of the non-designated group. The findings serve as proof that the majority of the academics were not *au fait* with both the contents of the Act and how the 'designated group' was defined therein. The majority of the total sample also ignored, largely two categories of the designated group, namely, women and the disabled, which suggests further that academics had not adequately comprehended the contents of the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 as it relates to the Higher Education sector. The assumption emanating from the above conclusion implies that members of the 'non-designated group' do not subscribe to preferential treatment being afforded to the previously disadvantaged. An underlying assumption arising from this finding is an overt denial by the non-designated group of the history of discrimination that was experienced by the designated group. A further conclusion in this regard is that consideration must be granted to the minorities (Indians/Coloureds) within the designated group in Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes, given their experiences with discrimination in the past.

An interesting conclusion that followed from the above is that there was also no clear

understanding of what Affirmative Action really meant. Affirmative Action appeared to be misconstrued by the majority of the non-designated group as being a form of reverse discrimination. Hence, the concept of 'designated group' has been rejected by them. Further, supporting the conclusion above and the findings of other studies conducted by, *inter alia,* Innes (1993(a) : 15), Human (1991 : 16), Ramphele (1994 : 12), the findings in the present study revealed an acceptance of the notion of Affirmative Action being a form of tokenism. However, both the designated and non-designated groups rejected the concept of entitlement as being a form of Affirmative Action. The above reinforces the conclusion that academic staff has a limited knowledge and understanding of the concept Affirmative Action. These conclusions call for deeper probing in more in-depth studies.

The researcher's call for further in-depth study into the extent of understanding of concepts that are enshrined in Affirmative Action/Employment Equity is not unwarranted. The findings in the study amplify the conclusion that both managers as well as academics are clearly unaware of the crucial difference between Equity and equality of opportunity, a central tenet of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. The researcher concludes further that these misconceptions or misunderstandings of core concepts can and, perhaps, already have had a negative impact on the implementation of the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy in the institutions under study. The slow progress of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity in meeting the targets set in the three year rolling plans may be attributed to this very phenomenon. The researcher is of the opinion that these misconceptions may also serve as barriers to the successful implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies in the institutions of Higher Education in KwaZulu-Natal. The conclusion that misconceptions and misunderstanding of concepts related to Affirmative Action/Employment Equity impacts negatively on its successful implementation, is given overwhelming support by several researchers, namely, Nel and van Staden (1988 : 19), Fleming et al. (1978 : 4), Human (1991 : 15) and Naidoo *et al.* (2001 : 42) who drew similar conclusions in their respective studies.

Apartheid legislation clearly subscribed to degrees of preferential treatment for Whites, Indians/Coloureds and Africans, in that order, which resulted in different degrees of disadvantage amongst the race groups. Overwhelming support by the sample, for the consideration of this phenomenon when applying Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy supports the researcher's conclusion that degrees of disadvantage is an essential element in the successful implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies. The researcher contends further that Black women experienced a double disadvantage in terms of race and gender and that minority groups, namely, Indians and Coloureds experienced specific disadvantages in respect of their demographic distribution across the country. These issues, therefore, require special consideration when applying Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies.

The findings with regard to academic merit and Affirmative Action/Employment Equity efforts provide reason to conclude that: Affirmative Action/Employment Equity in Higher Education institutions is perceived to be poorly implemented. This may be attributed to the fact that institutions do not provide clear definitions of this concept and, further, it is often used in isolation of other conditions that are given consideration. Both the legislation as well as the findings in this study highlight the importance of academic merit being considered in conjunction with the 'potential to succeed.' These two issues must be prioritised when applying the principles of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity especially in the present transforming climate of Higher Education. The conclusions emerging from the findings caution that failure to link merit with potential to succeed may result in failure of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes in the Higher Education sector.

Interestingly, the general conclusion drawn from this study emphasises that there appears to be strong rejection by both the majority of academic staff and management, to the suggestion of employing quotas to achieve Equity. However, qualitative data obtained in this study do, however, emphasise the obligation of institutions to provide effective internal means to speed up redress and end discriminatory practices and

policies. Once again, failure to consider these mechanisms of redress may result in staff (faculty) members resorting to legal recourse through the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) or the courts. Data obtained from interviews with Equity Officers and Human Resources (HR) managers make the point that it is precisely these legal actions of staff that contribute to a negative impact on the institutional climate and ultimately productivity of the academic workforce. It also creates a poor image of the value of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. The research cited gives credence to the conclusion that applying quotas may negatively influence institutional planning, achieving institutional Equity targets and ultimately institutional autonomy. The need for further in-depth research in this area of study cannot be overemphasised.

The conclusions drawn in respect of knowledge about and dissemination of information pertaining to Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies provide a profound explanation for why the academic staff perceive implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity to be poor at their respective institutions. The conclusions made from the findings support other researchers' conclusions that, the lack of a clear understanding of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies and the absence of a proactive fully consulted upon Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy in practice, may be exacerbated by the failure of institutions to make visible the presence, authority and importance of the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Officer. The conclusion drawn from this study is that these factors most definitely influenced the perceptions of academic staff towards Affirmative Action/Employment Equity and the implementation thereof. This conclusion is supported by findings in the study that reflect that academic staff display an overt dissatisfaction with the way the institution implements, promotes and disseminates information about Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. A vital conclusion emerging from this finding is that there is an overall perception of academic staff that the implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies is largely unsuccessful. The researcher is of the opinion that these negative perceptions about Affirmative Action/Employment Equity in institutions of Higher Education prevail because of poor information dissemination

techniques utilized by institutions of Higher Education and the failure of institutions to promote the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity office. There is clearly a reliance on traditional modes of information dissemination, namely, memoranda, newsletter, Intranet, etc., to deal with a highly emotive and sensitive issue. The researcher concludes that the effectiveness of the methods and techniques of information dissemination about Affirmative Action/Employment Equity will determine the effectiveness of both the understanding of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity and its implementation.

Another vital conclusion emerging from this study relates to the extent of provisions made by Higher Education institutions to promote the success of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy and practice. While the management and staff of the institutions in the present study indicated their support in principle for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy and procedures, their failure to give priority to specific provisions to enable and influence the successful implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy and practice appear to have contributed to the prevailing negative perception about Affirmative Action/Employment Equity.

This perception may have contributed to the resultant lack of commitment to its effective implementation. This conclusion is supported by the finding that the majority of the sample indicated that they were either unsure or did not know of provisions made in respect of staff development and mentoring. They were also unsure or were unaware of the provision of a written and communicated plan and procedures for monitoring and evaluating progress of the plan.

This conclusion is given further support by the finding that despite the majority of staff being aware that a dedicated Affirmative Action/Employment Equity officer was appointed, they raised the concern that no provision was made for equity surveys to be conducted to assess Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation or for the dissemination of progress reports in regard to Affirmative Action/Employment Equity.

Absence of visible and clearly enunciated provisions for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity, supported by carefully formulated grievance procedures, exacerbated the poor perception of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity in the Higher Education institutions studied. The general conclusion made is that unless specific provisions and monitoring mechanisms are institutionalised in Higher Education institutions, Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies and practices will not be given support by its staff.

The researcher concludes that in addition to the absence of specific provisions contributing to the failure of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy and practice, the manner in which Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy implementation is practised and conducted will determine support or lack thereof for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes. The conclusions arrived at in the present study were that the internal and external communication strategies emphasised a politically correct picture rather than commitment to Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy and practice.

It was clearly evident from this study that there was a lack of adequate, active, visible and vocal support from top management. Contrary to this was the conclusion that Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy must be driven by the top management for it to be effective. This is also supported by various other studies conducted in Zimbabwe, the USA, Canada and Australia. This particular conclusion is important in our present transforming Higher Education environment, not only, because it will enhance the values of the collegiality of diversity, but moreover because there are still pockets of resistance and small groups of individuals who perceive that there is resentment by the non-designated and groupings within the designated group towards beneficiaries of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. The conclusion suggests that promotion of the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy of an institution from a management level will do much to encourage 'buy in' of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity and dispel the current assumption that Affirmative Action/Employment Equity efforts lower appointment and promotion standards at Higher Education institutions.

This conclusion also lends itself to further probing and future research in especially the area of strategies for change management.

An important conclusion drawn from the findings is that, an incremental and consultative approach/strategy to policy implementation must be carefully constructed to achieve the aims of fast tracking Affirmative Action/Employment Equity initiatives and the appointment of Black women. The conclusion that emerges from the analysis is that the manner in which these processes are handled is cause for concern. If conducted properly it will determine the 'buy in' and support for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity initiatives by the diverse stakeholder groupings within Higher Education institutions.

Another conclusion of the study is that there are specific barriers to implementing Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies in South African Higher Education institutions. Some are considered more influential than others. The barriers considered most influential in preventing the successful implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity initiatives are, institutional culture and climate, failure to build capacities of AA beneficiaries, poor management of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes by HR Manager/Equity Officer, institutions' failure to support Affirmative Action/Employment Equity beneficiaries and the institutions' inability to manage diversity.

The overall conclusion that emerges from this study is that insufficient progress has been noted in removing the vestiges of discrimination and achieving Equity in staff profile. Although some academic staff have vigorously supported the principles of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity they have often abrogated their traditional role in contributing to institutional policy formulation and implementation by waiting for administrators to assume the major responsibility in Affirmative Action/Employment

Equity initiatives. This has certainly contributed to slowing the pace of achieving Equity in the Higher Education staff demography.

In view of these conclusions, now is an appropriate time for institutions of Higher Education to not only reaffirm their stand in support of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity but also to suggest ways that Affirmative Action/Employment Equity might be implemented in such a fashion so as to be both effective and consonant with the legislation. Although Affirmative Action/Employment Equity involves the identification of groups, such identification need not and should not imply a remedy which sacrifices individual rights to purported group entitlements. Eliminating unfair discrimination and recruiting persons from the designated group is not sufficient by itself. In order to avoid what many respondents refer to as tokenism and retain well-qualified staff who are performing efficiently in their jobs, efforts need to be made to ensure that persons from the designated group are gaining the capacity required to compete and complete the jobs they are appointed into.

7.2   RECOMMENDATIONS

It will be recalled, that the general objective of this study was to ascertain the perceptions and attitudes of academics towards the implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity at their respective institutions. Having drawn the abovementioned conclusions the researcher makes the recommendations listed below, in response to the principles enshrined in the Higher Education Act, The White Paper entitled 'A programme for Transformation of Higher Education', The National Plan for Higher Education, The Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 and more specifically the conclusions drawn from the present study.

Given that the findings and conclusions of this study allude to substantive and process issues, the researcher will make recommendations for the substantive issues within the

process. The researcher wishes to point out at this juncture that the sequence with which institutions implement the substantive issues within the process steps will be dependent upon the circumstances of the individual institutions. It must also be noted that process issues and substantive issues intersect at different points, depending on how these issues surface at the different institutions but, for the purpose of this study, the researcher will discuss the substantive recommendations as part of the process recommendations, followed by other recommendations for the successful implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity.

7.2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

The conclusions highlight the necessity for an efficient and much improved procedure for the successful implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. It also draws attention to the fact that Affirmative Action/Employment Equity planning is not an event but a process. Hence, the recommendation that institutions must implement Affirmative Action/Employment Equity in three phases, namely, the pre-implementation phase, the implementation phase and the post-implementation phase. This recommendation is based on the conclusions that the current approach to Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes has been fragmented and often piecemeal focusing mainly on satisfying legislative requirements.

The researcher proposes that the pre-implementation phase focus on the planning for implementation and the development of a business case. Such planning should include a series of specific interventions, *inter alia*, identifying the substantive issues that are involved in the implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity, reviewing the institution's current policies, its status in respect of its staff demography, etc. The implementation phase will involve specifically, the unfolding of the business case and the post-implementation phase will involve monitoring, evaluation and

refinement of the plan for future implementation. The researcher recommends that the facilitation of this entire process be driven and led from 'the top', and implemented by a dedicated Affirmative Action/Employment Equity team led by a powerful committed Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Officer or Human Resources Manager. Specific recommendations for each of the phases follow.

7.2.1.1   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PRE-IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

7.2.1.1.1   Identifying the Substantive Issues

The most important exercise that any institution will benefit from, prior to embarking on an implementation programme for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity, will be to identify upfront some of the critical substantive issues that are necessary for planning for successful Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation. Identifying these issues early in the process will allow for preparation to deal with the issues as they present or manifest themselves in the course of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation. This recommendation is the outcome of both the conclusions drawn in this study and the recommendations made by researchers cited in this study. Deciding what substantive issues need to be resolved before, during and after the process of implementing Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plans which will provide the vital information necessary for the preparation and development of a business case for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity are critical. The more important substantive issues that must be considered are indicated in Table 24 below :

TABLE 24 : CHECKLIST OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES	WHAT IT ENTAILS
The vision for a transformed institution	What are the institution's Affirmative Action/Employment Equity objectives and what does it hope to achieve?
Procedures for implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity	What procedures and criteria will be used to implement and define specific concepts

policy	pertaining to Affirmative Action/Employment Equity, e.g., potential to succeed, etc.?
Timeframes	What timeframes are envisaged for the attainment of specific Affirmative Action/Employment Equity goals?
Structures for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation	What structures are required to address Affirmative Action/ Employment Equity implementation?
Human Resources issues	How will this structure be established in terms of staff and who will drive the process?
Finance and budget	How will the exercise be financed? What budget will it come from and over what period will this funding be available?
Policies and procedures	What policies and procedures will apply to ensure a successful Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plan, e.g., recruitment and merit policies, etc.?
Communicating, monitoring and evaluating the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plan	What communication strategies will be employed to disseminate information? Who and how will the plan be monitored and evaluated?

In the discussion that follows, the above substantive issues are dealt with both directly and indirectly. Accordingly, recommendations are made in respect of how to deal with the issues in order to achieve success in Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. This step also provides an 'early checklist' against which Higher Education institutions can benchmark their strategy as they embark on Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation. Recognizing these issues early in the implementation process will give direction and prevent the unnecessary inefficiencies that currently characterize Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation in Higher Education institutions. This first step will, in addition to highlighting issues that need to be clarified early in the process, also assist in identifying issues that need to be considered in each of the phases.

7.2.1.1.2 Sensitising and Awareness-raising Workshops to Explode Myths, Misconceptions and Misunderstandings about Affirmative Action/Employment Equity

The most profound general conclusion made in this study is the lack of understanding of the concept Affirmative Action/Employment Equity and the principles underlying it, resulting in negative perceptions towards its implementation. Sensitising and awareness raising workshops and seminars for all stakeholders at all stages of the process must be conducted. As an initial pre-implementation exercise, such workshops and seminars must be arranged for the prime purpose of involving all stakeholders to begin to understand the principles underlying Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies and practices of the institution as a prerequisite to the successful implementation of the Affirmative Action/ Employment Equity policy. Such workshops should focus specifically on change management and change enabling, removing stereotypes and the resentment that lay dormant amongst the various groups as was indicated in the findings. Unless and until these issues are given careful consideration, Affirmative Action/Employment Equity efforts will continue to be fragmented, resulting in the changes that do occur remaining cosmetic.

All too often such workshops are arranged to meet legislative requirements rather than a response to embracing the spirit of Employment Equity Act. Workshops should aim to inculcate a spirit enshrined in the Employment Equity Act to ensure greater awareness and, hence, success for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. It is, therefore, a foregone conclusion that such workshops must be carefully planned and monitored, to ensure success in achieving its aims. It is vitally important that all stakeholder leaders are represented at these workshops and that monitoring strategies are put into operation to ensure that the information from the workshops is cascaded to the institutional community. The researcher supports the recommendation of several researchers that incentives for workshop attendance and dissemination of knowledge

must be given serious consideration. Incentives can take the form of CPD (Continuous Professional Development) points or internal certification for staff attending these workshops. This strategy will have two outcomes, namely, a sensitised and informed staff and would provide one of the criteria for measuring, e.g., the 'potential to succeed' for promotion purpose. These ongoing sensitising workshops with all the stakeholders in the institution must be designed to:

- Identify and explain the need for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity intervention in South African institutions of Higher Education.

- Create opportunities for dialogue about the implications of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity for individuals within departments and as well as within the institution as a whole.

- Define Affirmative Action/Employment Equity and its relation to the principle of Equity, and clarify its impact and relevance to individuals and the institution.

- Bring about change in attitudes, stereotypes and misconceptions.

- Engage in role-reversal exercises where staff from the non-designated group trade positions with those from the designated related to Affirmative Action/Employment Equity to be able to appreciate each other's perspectives and concern.

- Identify and remove those practices of the past that still exist and have exclusionary impacts on women and members of the designated group.

- Identify the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity targets for the respective institution.

- Consider timeframes by which the targets will be achieved.

- Identify structures that will be necessary to evaluate and monitor Affirmative Action/Employment Equity.

- Identify staff perceptions about Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation.

- Examine and review existing policy in line with national Affirmative

Action/Employment Equity imperatives.

Ideally, an independent facilitator should conduct such workshops to avoid any chance of bias and/or perceived victimization. These workshops will in addition determine what the institutional objectives are and what it hopes to achieve ('vision') and will prepare the institution for dealing with other essential substantive issues required to achieve successful Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation.

7.2.1.1.3 The Development of a Guideline Document/manual for the Implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plans

The need for a guideline document to assist Higher Education institutions in developing, preparing, implementing and monitoring their respective Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plans, cannot be overemphasised. The necessity for such a document is captured in the conclusions of this study which highlights the present confusion, misunderstanding and misconceptions about Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. The recommendations of process and substantive steps in this study will form the basis for the development of a detailed protocol document to ensure a successful implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes. Presently, Higher Education institutions are often engaged in meeting the legislative requirements at the expense of a process driven, stakeholder accepted Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programme. Such a guideline document must include exemplars of best practice processes in Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation and must suggest techniques to identify the substantive issues that must be considered for the standardized and efficient implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policies in the respective institutions. The guideline must provide detailed information to assist Higher Education institutions in the :

7.2.1.1.3.1 Design and Development of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plan

Developing optimal action plans will enable Higher Education institutions develop a business case for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity and thereby translate their respective visions (state of being) to operational plans (state of doing). Consonant with principles of sound academic governance the staff (faculty), from the lowest to the highest level, should play a major role in formulating an institution's Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plan. The extent, to which persons from the lowest level upwards participate in the development and ratification of a plan, will influence the acceptability of the plan. The content of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plans should be sensitive to classifications of staff and its requirements for academic expertise. Attention must be paid to institutional policies, governing contracts, promotion, fringe benefits, salary and any other area of professional life where vestiges of bias may persist.

The most difficult aspect of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plan development is the formulation of goals and timetables that not only are realistic, but also will serve as an incentive to maximum effort in providing for Employment Equity. Such goals must not be interpreted as only numerical targets but should also include objectives as well, In order that these goals and objectives are well formulated the SMART design principle (specific, measurable, achievable, responsible and time-bound) must be adopted. Goals must also be scrutinized to ensure that they are not quotas in disguise.

In establishing these goals and objectives, a sense of realism must prevail. Realism requires an honest recognition of diminishing resources, shrinking enrollments, and the limits of the candidate pool available to a specific institution and in specific disciplines or professional fields. It must also be noted that the setting of goals does not necessarily guarantee representation for groups for whom the goals are set but its value lies also in the fact that it serves as a useful monitoring device for the institution,

consistent with the principle of non-discrimination and rights of individuals. Its advantage, therefore, lies in the fact that it is flexible and not mandatory.

In order to expedite the achievement of Employment Equity goals it is recommended that responsibilities be assigned and timetables for completion be established and indicated in the plan. In other words for each goal the action to be taken, the person/s responsible for this action and the timetable must be set down in the Equity plan. Such a procedure should, as has been the case abroad, contribute to success in achieving Employment Equity.

The existence of a formal document which sets forth the institution's commitment to Equity obligations, including goals, timetables, and procedures for the rectification of inequities, should be publicised aggressively within the institution, from the lowest level of staff upwards and externally. A personal public statement by the Vice-Chancellor as driver of the plan would be very effective in gaining support for the programme and thereby reducing resistance to it. Incorporating the plan in faculty, staff and student handbooks, increases knowledge about it, ensures its availability and facilitates its use as a ready reference. In order that this logical formulation step is truly workable, weekly and monthly operational review discipline is imperative. Time tabling this as well into the plan is critical for success.

7.2.1.1.3.2 Review of Recruitment Policies in Planning for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Implementation

This is a critical step in designing and developing an Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plan for a Higher Education institution. The primary purpose of this exercise is to ascertain that the policies are scrupulously non-discriminatory in principle and in practice, followed by corrective action where needed. A review of recruitment practices, to ensure all qualified candidates applying for positions at Higher Education

institutions are fairly considered, must be included in this process. This review must ensure that stereotyping assumptions are eliminated and adequate internal grievance procedures are in place for those who perceive that they have been the victims of discrimination. All race and gender exclusionary policies should be identified and eliminated or replaced with less exclusionary policies designed to accomplish the same legitimate purpose. The goal is to do away with barriers to the fair consideration of women and other persons from the designated group.

7.2.1.1.3.3   Defining Criteria for Merit and Potential to Succeed

Directly linked to the above recommendation is defining the controversial issue of merit and potential to succeed. Excellence and quality are aspirations of Higher Education, which are espoused by seeking certain attributes and skills in those to be considered for academic positions. We cannot assume uncritically that present criteria of merit and procedures for their application have yielded the excellence intended. The researcher believes that such criteria must be redefined to include both merit and potential to succeed and should not be based purely on academic qualifications as was the case in the past. This reconceptualisation of merit is based on the structural limits to opportunity experienced in the past that had mitigated against and continues to mitigate against those individuals from previously disadvantaged race and gender groups, many of whom do not have the traditionally required high qualifications because of the poor education during the apartheid era. The reconceptualisation or changing of standards under the prevailing circumstances in Higher Education, given its apartheid legacy, should not be confused with lowering of standards.

It is strongly advised that employers at institutions of Higher Education look beyond traditional criteria and reflect on those characteristics that directly impact on job performance. This will enable employers to select members from the previously disadvantaged groups who have the ability and potential to succeed in a particular job.

7.2.1.1.3.4 Improving Equity Planning Processes and Developing Human Resources Practitioners.

In developing implementation plans for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity, Human Resources practitioners need to be made aware of the institutional obstacles and the distinctive institutional challenges that undermine effective Employment Equity planning. The preceding recommendations imply the motivation for this exercise. HR practitioners must :

- pay particular attention to the presence of hierarchical authority in their respective institutions;

- identify the existence of dual academic and administrative occupational structures;

- determine the status of Employment Equity strategies;

- establish the extent of student and staff apathy; and,

- the degree of change and transformation fatigue that exists in their respective institutions.

All of the above information will reveal how organizational culture acts as both a change barrier and/or a change enabler. These practices can either block or enhance optimal Employment Equity planning, implementation and desired outcomes and is therefore, critical information for any Affirmative Action/Employment Equity team to have in order that planning is effective.

In addition to the present research findings suggesting a foundation upon which Higher Education institutions can build a plan for the future, it also offers specific recommendations to develop HR/Employment Equity practitioners with the following critical information planning tasks and related capacities :

- In both planning and executing diversity, HR practitioners including the Equity Officer and Equity team members, need to understand the relationship between quality information and optimal Employment Equity data usage. The former dimension (quality information on staff profiles) relates to how accurate and relevant the information is to Employment Equity planning in the institution.

- The second dimension (data usage) refers to quality in the use of this information, which suggests that institutions in future need to assess how effectively and efficiently the institution accesses and applies the information that it possesses internally to achieve its Employment Equity targets.

- It must be noted that the degree to which an institution achieves both the high quality and high use of its Equity information is the degree to which that institution achieves and maintains its strategic and operational Employment Equity targets and pursuits.

The findings in this study intimate that an institution's decision to formulate Equity goals does not necessarily mean the institution automatically or easily succeeds in knowing how to interpret and manage the perceived dichotomies between Excellence and Equity and the challenges between Equity and efficiency needs. Hence, developing Human Resources practitioners in these dimensions will help prevent the tensions identified earlier and will ensure professionalism in resolving them.

7.2.1.1.3.5   Expansion of Human Resources (HR) Capacity

The extent of success of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation is not only contingent upon HR practitioners skills but also on their complete command of the legislative framework governing HR practice, especially of the Labour Relations Act, Basic Conditions of Employment Act and Employment Equity Act. This implies knowing how to use the legislation both reactively (defensively) in situations of restructuring, merging and incorporation that might result in retrenchments and conflicts with unions, etc., and knowing how to use it proactively to develop progressive policies and

practices that can help pre-empt situations of conflict and costly litigation. Hence, strategic thinking and activity in HR must be an ongoing effort, in addition to traditional operational capacity. In this regard intensive training of the HR/Equity Officer and Equity team is necessary.

The central role that HR/Equity Officer plays in developing, implementing and monitoring Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plans suggests that HR be repositioned within the institutions to give it greater authority and influence in strategic planning and action. Given the finding of this study where the majority of staff indicated that they were either unaware of the appointment of the EE Officer/HR, or did not know of the appointment, it is imperative that such an office be 'visible' to the entire institutional community physically and by means of effective communication. This implies developing internal relationships with key sectors in the administration with academic staff at grass-roots level and external relationships with other institutions to strengthen the position of HR.

Currently, most institutions are governed by a combination of narrowly focused administrators with no strategic vision and/or academics with no managerial training or experience. International experience shows success when administrators of Higher Education institutions are trained on the two legs of academic stature and professional managerial knowledge. In the South African context, this requires a paradigm shift in the way institutions think about filling senior managerial positions. Affirmative Action/Employment Equity responsibilities should be built into the manager's job description and performance contract, as is the case abroad. It is felt that in this way the managers would be better equipped and in a strong enough position both in status and in actual reporting to ensure that the institutional policy development conform to Affirmative Action/Employment Equity principles. A corollary of this is that HR departments need to develop career paths for academic administrators, with appropriate professional training.

7.2.1.1.3.6   Communication Strategies for Employment Equity

The conclusions in the present study and those of numerous studies cited in the review of literature suggest that the residual misunderstanding of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity being confused with tokenism, reverse discrimination and lowering of standards, etc., calls for strategies that will improve and facilitate successful Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes. An inclusive stakeholder involvement in and responsibility for bringing about conditions that will be conducive for the achievement of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity is emphasised. Ongoing communication and opportunities to debate Affirmative Action/Employment Equity must be given priority to encourage the break down of misconceptions of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. This implies that the strategies employed must include and reach every member of staff, must address specifically the perceived gap between policy and practice and ensure that both policy and practice are visible campus wide. Some strategies that may be utilized to achieve 'buy in' are as follows:

- Conducting ongoing equity/climate surveys and obtaining regular trends reports to identify perceptions about Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation at the respective institutions. The findings could also be used as a prerequisite for the development of sensitising workshops/seminars, etc. It was abundantly clear that they were conspicuous by their absence at most of the institutions investigated in the present study.

- Publishing the findings of trend reports and the remedial actions taken.

- Trend reports generally provide clues as to the types of communication mechanisms that serve the institution best. Making use of a variety of communication strategies, namely workshops, seminars, publications, online newsletters and chat lines will maintain interest and inevitably yield better results. In each of these cases follow-up is imperative if success is to be achieved.

7.2.1.1.3.7 Developing an Institutional Business Case for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity

The preceding recommendations suggesting a review of policy and practice and data collecting processes, are prerequisites to developing the institution's specific Affirmative Action/Employment Equity business case and rationale for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. Such a business case must provide all stakeholders with the motivating factors and plan for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation. Managers at all levels, leaders and stakeholders must be *au fait* with business case and should be involved in the process from start to end. Each business case must be customized to meet the particular challenges of the institution and will encourage 'buy in' and create the necessary momentum to 'fast track' the process when the business case is announced. While current legislation exerts some pressure for change, it will not succeed in renewing institutional stakeholder interest and commitment unless the business case for diversity is developed institutionally (from within) to proactively articulate Affirmative Action/Employment Equity as a policy that makes good educational sense for all staff.

While a business case provides an argument for urgency beyond the legal injunctions, it introduces the strategic argument case for case. The institution is thus provided with the opportunity to assess and articulate its past and future roles with genuine intent. It also provides the opportunity to mobilize the institution behind a planned, rational and well-conceptualised strategy, which supports the implementation of the goals. It articulates a plan that builds a climate for diversity as opposed to focusing the Equity project on numerical representations. More importantly, developing a monitoring mechanism to ensure that the business case is cascaded down to the lowest level of staff is a strong recommendation for success of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes.

7.2.1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Implementation of successful Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plans can only commence once the business case for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity has been approved and consulted upon by all the stakeholders and the sensitising process is complete. The present study found that these aspects were neglected in the haste to meet the legislative requirements of the Employment Equity Act. The implementation phase of the process deals mainly with unfolding approved plans and with specific substantive issues required for successful implementation.

7.2.1.2.1 Structure of Human Resources Required for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Programmes.

A structure, staffed by qualified HR personnel including the Equity Officer, that has been approved by the stakeholders, will command the respect of staff and will ensure successful implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plans and programmes. It is recommended that the HR or Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Officer :

- have the power to oversee search and appointment procedures for academic and administrative positions and the implementation thereof. For example, the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity officer should have the authority, upon determining that a department's search for candidates has not been adequate, to defer an appointment pending appropriate departmental and administrative review;

- be able to play a role in the normal personnel-action procedures of the institution, including promotion, appointment and salary determinations;

- conduct timely reviews of individual or departmental progress which must be complemented by public disclosure through periodic reports on the overall situation at the institution, and,

- should command respect and be able to motivate and provide a mechanism for academic staff participation from all levels. Support from members of the academic staff and the administration is of the utmost importance in achieving the objectives of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity.

In addition the following support structures to complement the HR structures are recommended :

- An institution-wide Affirmative Action/Employment Equity committee, established by the appropriate institutional governing body whose responsibility should be the promotion of policies established in the institution's Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plan and the periodic review of the plan once adopted. This committee must ensure the integration of the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plan into the HR decision-making processes. It must also ensure that the implementation of the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plan is driven by the Vice-Chancellor of the institution. The Vice-Chancellor may delegate tasks that are relevant to the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Officer and to the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity committee, overseeing responsibilities for the implementation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity. This delegation of tasks must be communicated to the staff and students to ensure their participation in the process and to ensure legitimacy of the process.

- An Employment Equity Unit, staffed by the Employment Equity Recruitment Manager and the Employment Equity Officer, for the promotion of Employment Equity at institutions and to maintain the standardized processes must be agreed upon. Such an office should ideally be located in the Human Resources Management Department and accountable to the Human Resources Director and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor responsible for Employment Equity. This office will also serve as a repository for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity data and play a significant role in providing data for institutional planning.

- The location of these structures near the 'sources of power' at the institution, are

also important as a show of commitment and for legitimacy of the office.

- It is recommended that a Vice-Chancellor's Equity Network be established and that this network comprise high level leadership and members of Council to reflect leadership commitment and support for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes at the respective institution.

- The establishment of Faculty-wide Employment Equity Committees will also guarantee 'buy in' and promote Employment Equity within it.

7.2.1.2.2   Recruitment: Attracting, Recruiting and Retaining Staff from the Designated Group

Selection committee members need to be better prepared for the professional and effective recruitment and selection of quality staff from diverse candidate pools. Training of all members of the selection committee is a necessity, if institutions are committed to recruiting from the designated groups. The principle that should underlie all recruitment policies is that equality of opportunity is a necessary condition but not a sufficient one under the prevailing circumstances in South African institutions of Higher Education. Therefore, the principle of Equity should be given prominence when recruiting. The Affirmative Action/Employment Equity office must provide updated departmental Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plans to members of selection committees prior to the committee engaging in drafting the advertisement and implementing the selection process. In addition, the Head of the respective Department must be able to provide data about senior students with 'potential to succeed' so as to enable institutions to 'grow their own timber'. This strategy implies that the academic departments will engage in conscious efforts to inculcate a love for academe and an interest in teaching. This is not, however, straightforward, as many other factors such as institutional culture, competition with industry and competition with private Higher Education institutions create other challenges in determining the ability of public Higher Education institutions to retain staff and students from the designated groups.

It is common knowledge that conditions of service at Higher Education institutions are not as attractive as those in industry and the private sector. This competitiveness especially in the highly skilled job market is likely to become more vigorous with the introduction of the Employment Equity Act as public and private sector employers compete with each other to fulfill their Equity targets. Given such a competitive job environment, it is recommended that conditions of service at institutions of Higher Education be improved as part of national policy. In the absence of the aforementioned, the Higher Education sector will need to vigorously publicise and market the appeal for and intrinsic rewards of academe in order to attract quality staff and to retrain them, especially from among their own graduates.

More important than competitive compensation is the building up of a strongly inclusive and supportive institutional culture and the introduction of programmes and practices for the systematic support and development of junior academic staff or new incumbents from the designated group. Exit interview data must be collected to examine more systematically the reasons for staff leaving. This should shed more light on where specifically the institution's efforts need to be channelled and where remedial action is required.

Although the study of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity for the Disabled was regarded beyond the scope of the present study, the conclusion (mentioned earlier), that the Disabled were ignored by the majority in their views about the composition of the designated group, necessitates that recommendations be made for the recruitment of the Disabled lest they be omitted from Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plans.

Provisions must be made for the creation of posts for a Disability Officer within the HR Manager's office to focus on recruitment, placement and follow-up of staff with disabilities. This issue must be given priority in addition to an analysis of the institution's built environment when ascertaining what changes need to be made to promote the capacity to employ people with disabilities. Policy must be developed on

the purchase of equipment that will open up employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The institutions must also embark on initiatives to promote an understanding of the capabilities of people with disabilities in the workplace, the image of capable Disabled employees and the career potential for staff with disabilities.

7.2.1.2.3   Screening of Candidates

Search committees should make every effort to include among the applicants a diversity of candidates. Where feasible, the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity officer should be invited to meet with candidates from the designated group to provide them with information about current staff members who are persons from the designated group or women. Such an effort will serve to promote a supportive climate for candidates from the designated group and promote the principles of equality of opportunity espoused in both the legislation and the AA/EE plans of Higher Education institutions.

7.2.1.2.4   Appointments

Appointments should be made on the basis of individual merit and potential to succeed and not on academic qualifications alone. Careful consideration must be given to the criteria traditionally used for merit to be certain that they serve to further academic excellence. It is especially important to reconsider any facially neutral policies, which have an adverse impact on Affirmative Action/Employment Equity efforts that are disproportionate to their contribution to the determination of merit. The need for an institution to justify a criterion as appropriate rises in direct proportion to its exclusionary effect.

Reports on appointment decisions should include information on the department's search for persons from the designated group and women candidates, interviews held,

and the basis for a final choice. These must be made available for scrutiny.

Awareness of race and gender in the appointment and retention process is a more difficult concept to understand, given the strong patriarchal environment of Higher Education institutions and the overt male dominance in terms of numbers and the consequent masculine culture at such institutions. Affirmative Action/Employment Equity may thus permit the inclusion of sex or race among a number of characteristics assessed in a potential candidate along with his or her publications, area of specialization, academic credentials, etc. Sound academic practice requires that these criteria provide the basis for a complex assessment of relative merit and not merely establish a large pool of minimally qualified candidates, as was the perception in the present study.

It is frequently the case that the selection process produces a group of two or more highly rated candidates who are appointable and are viewed as approximately equivalent. In such circumstances and in the interests of diversity, Affirmative Action/Employment Equity considerations must control the final selection. This type of selectivity is still consistent with the principle of non-discrimination in that, as a matter of staff (faculty) judgement, the decision may be made that more males are needed in a predominantly female department or more Whites at a predominantly Black institution. It is tantamount to equitable rather than identical treatment, which is necessary if Affirmative Action/Employment Equity is to succeed. It should be emphasised, however, that what is permissible or desirable in race or gender sensitive selectivity in the appointment process differs from what may be permissible in subsequent personnel decisions.

7.2.1.2.5   Professional Advancement

Given, the findings of the study, the review and revision of criteria for academic appointment and advancement should be sensitive to the following considerations:

- Criteria for reappointment, promotion or contract must be made clear to the candidate at the time of his or her appointment. They should be reviewed with the appointee on a regular basis afterwards.

- Gender or racial qualifications for reappointment, promotion or the granting of permanent appointments should not be introduced. Although a decision to seek diversity may be a legitimate factor in the appointment process, denial of retention or advancement because of this consideration is inappropriate and often a breach of stated criteria and expectations. While it is understood that needs of institutions change, a redefinition of criteria and/or the imposition of requirements substantially different from those stated at the time of the initial appointment must be carefully examined for their potentially discriminatory impact.

- As in the case of all new appointees, care should be taken not to appoint a woman or person from the designated group to a position for which she or he is marginally qualified and then to provide no opportunity for professional development, such as, e.g., a lighter teaching load to enable access to further study or research opportunities. Without support for professional development of all new appointees from the designated group, there may be the appearance of a viable Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programme without the reality of one.

- Because the number of persons from the designated group at most institutions is small, it is important that a well planned induction, staff development and INSET(in-service education and training) programme as suggested by Bagwandeen(1991 : 545) be made formally available to such persons.

- Institutions are encouraged by the researcher to provide various incentives for the professional development of staff (faculty) members from the designated group. Such incentives must include, post-doctoral opportunities in those fields historically closed to women and persons from designated groups, early leave or sabbaticals, research grants and funds for attendance at professional meetings and conferences. Since women and persons from designated groups have traditionally been excluded in disproportionate numbers from such support, special encouragement may be required to ensure their participation. Once again, the INSET recommendation made by Bagwandeen(1991 : 544) for both new staff as well as 'old' staff from the designated group, will contribute to the successful implementation of Employment Equity.

7.2.1.2.6. Mentoring and Support for Staff from the Designated Group

As the conclusions of this study indicated, there is great need for providing support, nurturing and mentoring staff from the designated groups. At the same time there is also the need to recognize and reward those responsible for such mentoring and support since much of their work occurs in addition to what is often seen as their 'other' or 'actual' work. The mentorship and development of more junior staff particularly those from the designated group needs to be integrated into the workload of mentors and those academics given the responsibility of developing other staff. The position currently, is that those staff responsible for mentoring are so overloaded that they claim with some justification, that they do not have time to develop new staff with inadequate prior experience. The planned development of a formalized mentoring programme will assist in this regard. What is also important is that such mentoring programmes must be timetabled and monitored by some higher authority and should not be done on an *ad hoc* basis. Also award bearing and other incentives must be created to attract those with invaluable experience and particular discipline skills to become mentors. A number of complex and competing planning and developing priorities currently facing institutions of Higher Education fall into the domain of HR, hence, overburdening this department.

Delegating staff development to HR departments alone is not advisable as the findings in the present study found it to be ineffective. What is, therefore, necessary is an integrated, institution-wide Human Resources and staff development strategy.

7.2.1.2.7   Skills Development and Training

Given the conclusion of this study that capacity building programmes are inadequate especially among staff from the designated group, a Workplace Skills plan can, apart from being a cost benefit to institutions, contribute to capacity building of staff at institutions. Bagwandeen(1991 : 535) drew attention to the benefit of what he referred to as INSET (in-service education and training) in his study, prior to the formalization of the Skills Development Act being formalized. This recommendation made by him and supported by the conclusions in this study, will serve to improve the skills of new incumbents from the designated groups. It must be emphasised that whatever measures are undertaken to improve the skills of the previously disadvantaged, must be done so with a sense of commitment and a passion for the success of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity rather than fulfilling the legislative imperatives of the Skills Development Act.

7.2.1.2.8.   Responsibility for Implementation of Plan

While ultimate responsibility for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity rests with the Vice-Chancellor for the effective and efficient implementation.The AA/EE Officer, must provide leadership and support for the cause of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity throughout the Higher Education community. He/she must be responsible for the effective organization, implementation and administration of the institution's Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plan. The AA/EE Officer will represent the institution in compliance with all applicable laws and orders. The Deans, Directors and Heads of Support Departments must be accountable to the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity

Officer for the implementation of their faculty's or department's Employment Equity Plan including the achievement of the numerical goals, objectives or targets contained therein.

The Employment Equity Structures, reporting to the HR Director and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor responsible for Employment Equity, should be held responsible for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the institution's Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plan. Further, the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Structures must be required to prepare quarterly progress reports for consideration by the Consultative Forum on Employment Equity and annual reports for consideration by the Council of the institution.

7.2.1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE POST-IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

This final phase in the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity process will reveal crucial information necessary for future planning for Higher Education institutions. It will not only provide an evaluation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plan and programmes, but will provide important indicators for future planning. An important recommendation in this phase of the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity process is monitoring of the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plan.

7.2.1.3.1 Monitoring the Plan

The considerable work that has been done to give effect to the institution's commitment to Equity needs to be rigorously and systematically assessed at this stage of the process of AA/EE implementation. Apart from this process being good practice, such assessment will provide further insight into progress that has been made, the remaining barriers that need to be addressed and what additional strategies for the promotion of Employment Equity are likely to prove helpful. This process is particularly helpful for institutional planning and budgeting, but more importantly provides indicators of the

institution's successes and failures regarding their respective Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plan.

The findings in the present study support the view that commitment coupled with action in areas of monitoring, are important for both leaders and staff. Further, both qualitative and quantitative measures that are derived from monitoring exercises are important indicators for leaders to report on and take action. Mechanisms for management monitoring are, therefore, the *sine qua non* in Affirmative Action/Employment Equity policy implementation. The data will also provide suggestions on processes for managing the diversity it has achieved through its Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plan.

7.2.2 OTHER GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

7.2.2.1   Managing Diversity

Only when diversity is seen as a strategic competence and a necessary condition for institutional success, will the issue of numbers shift from compliance to a realization of the necessity to be strategic. This strategic sense will move institutions to understanding how the right mix (race, gender and disability) increases student choice and numbers in its favour, while also ensuring success at recruiting and retaining the right mix of managers and professionals to fit the institutional character.

The success of any Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programme is contingent upon how the achieved diversity is managed. In this regard, the researcher makes the following recommendations with regard to requirements for managing diversity:

- strategic commitment and management monitoring;
- visible support from top management to drive the process;

- strong participative leadership and a business case, which favours a legal and business Equity change;

- all staff must be prepared for their new role and new measures of success where Equity performance targets would be central; and,

- training programmes which are calibrated to the needs of diverse groups are essential.

7.2.2.2   Resources and Organizational Culture

As regards financial resources, institutions need to radically revisit how budgeting is executed. Budgeting needs to be diversity sensitive, but realistic so that it meets the infra-structural needs of the Disabled, training, mentoring and staff advancement programmes. Further, funds for day-care and other related expenditure to heighten attraction of the designated group to the institution must be carefully considered. The findings reveal that institutional culture emerged as a major barrier to Employment Equity. The historically White, eurocentric, male dominated culture that still exists in many HWI's portray the assimilation or 'melting pot' syndrome where the organization remains the same and the minorities are expected to change. The researcher recommends that organization culture will have to change to reflect a diverse culture with revisited beliefs and value systems. Hence, change management and change-enabling programmes must be given urgent attention for Affirmative Action/Employment Equity programmes to be effective and efficient.

7.3   FURTHER RESEARCH ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION / EMPLOYMENT EQUITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

Future research in this area should investigate how faculty is involved in diversity planning, implementation, how they rate the quality of available information and how

effectively they use the data to shape and influence future goals and strategies of implementation.

Additional research should also assess how diversity goals compare in importance to other institutional goals of faculty. Understanding how the teaching staff, as opposed to management staff, view diversity and rate the creation of a diverse institution, is critically important.

The research undertaken indicates that in the perception of some staff, institutional culture and climate are major barriers to Equity. It is unclear to what extent the negative aspects of this culture have changed over time as a result of all the efforts that have been made by institutions in this regard. Indications are, nonetheless, that there are issues, which remain unresolved and these issues are fertile ground for further research and need to be addressed further.

The areas of the recruitment, retention and challenges of women in Higher Education were outside the scope of the present study, but emerged as an area deserving urgent in-depth research. A similar recommendation is made for the investigation of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity implementation for the Disabled.

The present restructuring and mergers of Higher Education institutions are suggested as a means to addressing some of the Equity issues explored in this study. The pre-merger and post-merger environment presents with interesting scenarios for future research in the area of the impact of mergers on Equity, managing diversity and change management issues.

7.4   CONCLUSION

Progress in the appointment and professional advancement of women and persons from the designated group in Higher Education has been exceedingly slow. There are few persons from the designated group and women staff (faculty) members in most academic fields; those there tend to be concentrated in the lower academic ranks and in part-time and temporary positions. Unequal treatment of the underrepresented groups continues. It is clear that discrimination has not been eliminated and more aggressive Affirmative Action/Employment Equity plans are necessary. The researcher urges a greater commitment psychologically, ideologically and materially to the basic principles of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity and to the implementation and monitoring of Affirmative Action/Employment Equity Plans in order to approach Equity and not only equality of opportunity.

Another major challenge is that of improving leadership and management capacity in the new, vastly more complex South African Higher Education environment. The recently published merger proposals, which claim to assist with 'fast tracking' transformation, may in fact exacerbate the already volatile Higher Education environment. However, it is quite clear that institutions do not all face the same capacity needs. Nevertheless, meeting the Affirmative Action/Employment Equity goals set out in the legislation and other national policies require strategic and decisive leadership. This study recognises that leadership capacity will be directly linked to the reshaping of a transformed Higher Education system in the future.